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MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTHOUSE • PO BOX 311
NORRISTOWN, PA 19404-0311
610-278-3722
FAX: 610-278-3941 • TDD: 610-631-1211
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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 10, 2024

Ms. Marianne McConnell, Director of Planning & Zoning
Montgomery Township
1001 Stump Road
Montgomeryville, Pennsylvania 18936-9605

Re: MCPC #24-0101-001
Plan Name: 109 Holly Drive
(2 lots, approximately 1.16 acres)
Situate: 109 Holly Drive, near Rosewood Drive
Montgomery Township

Dear Ms. McConnell:

We have reviewed the above-referenced subdivision and land development proposal in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on May 2, 2024. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

David J. Caracausa has submitted a subdivision and land development application to demolish an existing residential structure at 109 Holly Drive and subdivide its parcel into 2 residential buildable lots. While the property was originally shown on the 1962 neighborhood subdivision plan as two individual lots (25 and 26), it was developed with one house straddling the anticipated property line; this proposal would restore the lots as originally anticipated. The existing parcel measures 50,329 square feet, which will be divided into two lots of 25,164 square feet, which is greater than the minimum 20,000 square feet lot size required by the R-2 Residential zoning district. Additional zoning requirements will all be met regarding setbacks, impervious coverage, and building heights. The existing driveway curb cut onto Holly Lane will be reused by Lot 2, although the macadam driveway area will be redesigned. Lot 1's driveway will be installed near the western edge of the property. Three waivers are being requested for this proposal: to not install sidewalk along Holly Drive, for the landscape plan to be prepared by the design engineer, and to limit the extent of displaying off-site existing features.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

Montgomery County's 2015 Comprehensive Plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*, identifies this parcel as part of the Suburban Residential Area on its future land use map, and supports infill development that respects the

character of existing residential communities while minimizing the impact of new development on neighboring developed properties. We believe that the land development application is compliant with *Montco 2040*.

Montgomery Township's 2022 Comprehensive Plan actually shows this property as two separate lots on its Future Land Use Map, in the Lower Density Residential area, which is characterized by 15,000 to 40,000 square foot lots containing single-family detached residential units. The housing implementation strategies section includes encouraging a variety of housing types at appropriate densities and scale through land use and adaptive re-use provisions. We believe that this proposal is compliant with the 2022 Comprehensive Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the applicant's proposal, however, in the course of our review we have identified the following issues that the applicant and municipality may wish to consider prior to final plan approval. Our comments are as follows.

REVIEW COMMENTS

SITE DESIGN

1. A waiver has been requested to not install sidewalk along the Holly Drive frontage. While it is true that this neighborhood does not currently contain sidewalks, with the nearest sidewalk segment located on Lansdale Avenue, Montgomery County maintains its commitment to improving walkability throughout all residential areas of the county. The buildout of a comprehensive network has to begin somewhere, and the curbing along Holly Drive has already been installed. We would therefore recommend against granting the waiver, or at the very least receiving a fee in lieu for future sidewalk installation.
2. The applicant has also asked for a waiver from using a landscape architect for the landscape plan. One of the reasons that it is important to utilize a landscape architect is to emphasize proper plant species selection and arrangement. While we are glad to see street trees proposed along Holly Drive, and while red maples and red oaks are both considered good street trees, certain cultivars can be specified in the plan that would be better for certain conditions; for example, if a sidewalk was to be installed with this proposal, the red oak should be avoided because its acorns can pose a tripping hazard. We would recommend that the tree species be grouped together in clusters of three or four instead of alternating one by one along Holly Drive. We would also recommend that the applicant consider additional vegetation along the rear property line as a buffer to the existing properties, since most of the existing vegetation will be removed as part of the construction process. The applicant should work to ensure that any additional comments from the township's landscape architecture and shade tree consultants are incorporated into the final plan.

CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the township's proposal but we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve Montgomery Township's planning objectives for residential development.

Please note that the review comments and recommendations contained in this report are advisory to the municipality and final disposition for the approval of any proposal will be made by the municipality.

Should the governing body approve a final plat of this proposal, the applicant must present the plan to our office for seal and signature prior to recording with the Recorder of Deeds office. A paper copy bearing the municipal seal and signature of approval must be supplied for our files. Please print the assigned MCPC number (#24-0101-001) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,

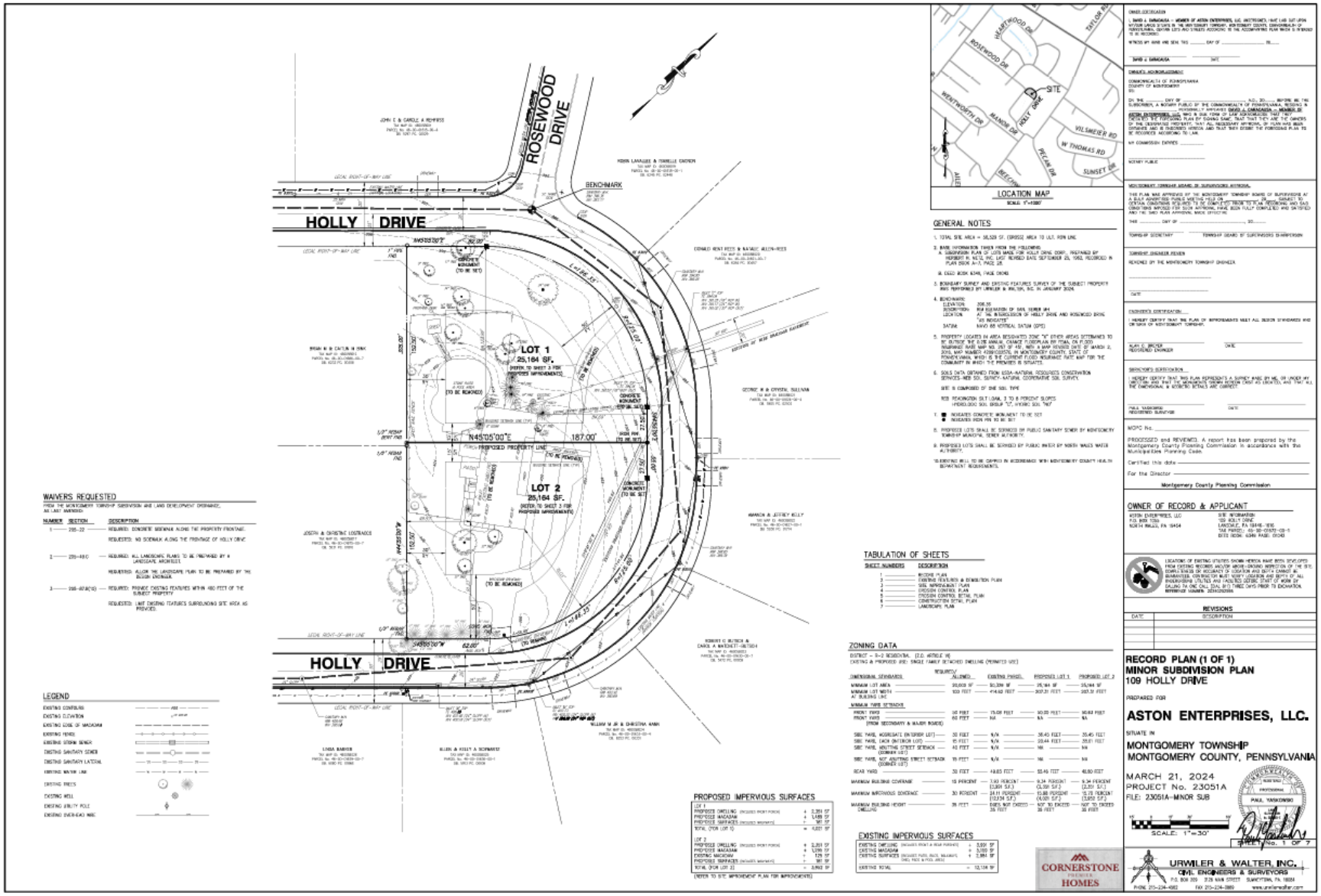
Matthew Popek

Matthew Popek, AICP
Transportation Planning Assistant Manager
Matthew.Popek@montgomerycountypa.gov - 610-278-3730

c: Carolyn McCreary, Twp. Manager
Jim Rall, Chrm., Twp. Planning Commission

Attachments: (1) Site Plan
(2) Aerial

Site Plan – 109 Holly Drive, Montgomery Township



Aerial – 109 Holly Drive, Montgomery Township



109 Holly Drive
MCPC#240101001