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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 5, 2024

Tamara Twardowski, Borough Manager
Collegeville Borough
491 E. Main Street
Collegeville, PA 19426

Re: MCPC #24-0121-001
Plan Name: Chase Bank
(1 lot comprising 0.3 acres)
Situate: 222 E. Main Street
Collegeville Borough

Dear Ms. Twardowski,

We have reviewed the above-referenced land development in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on May 16, 2024. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

JP Morgan Chase Bank is proposing to demolish the existing Wells Fargo bank building and construct a new reoriented 2,955 square-foot retail banking center with associated landscaping on the existing 0.3-acre site in the Collegeville Plaza. The applicant was granted several variances on February 22, 2024, including to permit a shorter front-yard setback than required, a larger building coverage than stipulated, to permit the building to be constructed closer to other buildings, and for several signs. The site is located in the SC Shopping Center district and is served by public water and sewer. The applicant is requesting several waivers from the subdivision and land development ordinance, including to review the plan as combined preliminary/final, to install a narrower buffer, fewer street trees, and fewer trees in planting strips and islands due to site constraints.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

The proposal is generally consistent with Montgomery County's Comprehensive Plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*. The property is shown to be a Community Mixed Use Area in the Future Land Use Plan of the County's Comprehensive Plan. Primary uses in Community Mixed Use Areas include community and neighborhood shopping centers and retail uses in concentrated nodes, as well as professional or business offices. The plan recommends that developments share driveways, have interconnected parking lots, be designed for walking and be compatible with abutting village areas. Extensive buffering should be provided next to residential areas.

The proposal is consistent with the Central Perkiomen Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan. The property is shown to be located within the Borough Conservation Area, where commercial development should be directed. A maximum intensity of 50,000 square-feet for a single use is permitted in this area, and the design, scale, and massing of commercial development shall be consistent with the existing character of the surrounding area.

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 Collegeville Borough may wish to consider prior to plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

There is currently no pedestrian connection from 2nd Avenue to the Collegeville Shopping Center. We recommend that a pedestrian connection, as originally shown on the sketch plan dated November 7, 2023, be installed from the entrance of the shopping center off of 2nd Avenue next to the retaining wall and ADA ramp to the proposed bank building. The grading appears to allow for this pedestrian connection.

LANDSCAPING

The applicant is requesting several landscaping waivers from the subdivision and land development ordinance, including: §600-53.C.2.A to permit fewer than the required number of street trees, §600-53.E.2 to permit fewer than the required number of trees in planting strips, and §600-53.E.3 to permit fewer than the required number of trees in planting islands. We do not recommend that the borough grant these waiver requests. This land development presents an opportunity for the borough to add in more trees to shade the shopping center parking lot as well as more street trees on 2nd Avenue. We defer to the borough solicitor on whether the applicant can meet the landscaping requirements outside of the leasehold area, and note that parking is already being applied in this manner.

CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal but we believe that our suggested comments will better achieve Collegeville Borough's planning objectives for commercial 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 24-0121-001 on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,

Naomi Crimm

Naomi Crimm, Senior Community Planner
naomi.crimm@montgomerycountypa.gov – 620-378-3748

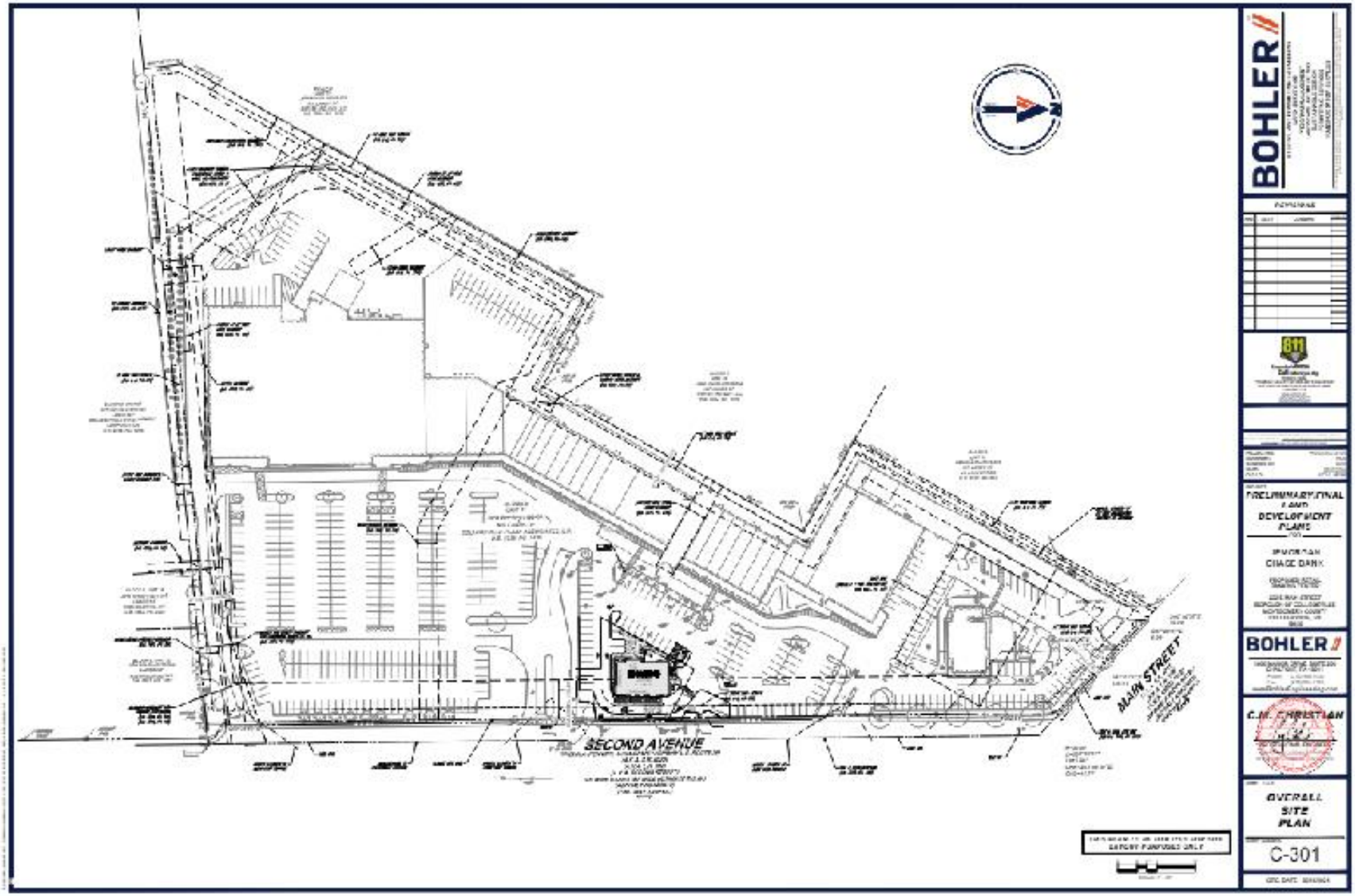
c: Todd Samms, Applicant's Representative
Rebecca Geiser, Borough Solicitor
David Leh, Borough Engineer
Charles Faulkner, Collegeville Planning Commission Chair

Attachments: A. Aerial Image of Site
B. Reduced Copy of Applicant's Proposed Site Plan

ATTACHMENTS A & B



Chase Bank
MCPC#240121001


BOHLER
SECOND AVENUE
MAIN STREET
PRELIMINARY/FINAL
DEVELOPMENT
PLANS
CHASE BANK
BOHLER
C.H. CHRISTIAN
OVERALL
SITE
PLAN
C-301