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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 4, 2024

Mr. Paul Purtell, Director, Planning, Zoning & Inspections
Upper Moreland Township
117 Park Avenue
Willow Grove, Pennsylvania 19090-3215

Re: MCPC # 24-0041-002
Plan Name: Conditional Use - 2405 - 2425 Maryland Road
(53 dwelling units on 1 parcel comprising approximately 1.65 acres, 10.06 acres when consolidated)
Situate: Maryland Road (cross street: Computer Avenue)
Upper Moreland Township

Dear Mr. Purtell:

We have reviewed the above-referenced conditional use plan as you requested on August 27, 2024. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, 2405-2425 Maryland Road Property Owner, LLC, is proposing a conditional use plan to add one new apartment building to the Willow Pointe Apartment development. The proposed building would contain 53 one-bedroom and two-bedroom units. The property is located in the I-Limited Industrial Zoning District, within which apartments are permitted by conditional use (§ 350-102(V)(3)). The property would be consolidated with the adjacent parcel (No. 590012322003, located at 2405 Maryland Road) to allow for the expansion of the Willow Pointe development.

The property currently contains an existing one-story industrial building, which would be demolished. The proposed apartment building would have a footprint of 16,640 square feet and contain 53 dwelling units and 4,650 square feet of indoor amenity space. The development would provide 80 parking spaces, including 50 surface parking spaces and 30 parking spaces on the ground floor of the building. We reviewed a previous submission for this property in a letter dated March 13, 2024.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

A. *MONTCO 2040* – The proposal is generally consistent with the county's comprehensive plan*, MONTCO 2040: A Shared Vision,* which shows the proposed area as "Business Area" future land use category. Business Areas

are concentrations of employment-oriented land uses. Residential uses in Business Areas should not be placed next to industrial uses that will create nuisances for the residents.

B. *Upper Moreland 2040* Comprehensive Plan – The proposal is located in the "Employment Center" future land use category of the township comprehensive plan. The future land use plan states that appropriate uses include industrial, office, research and development, and multifamily residential. Pedestrian connections are important for this area and should support the future expansion of the Power Line and Cross County Trails.

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the applicant's proposal, however, in the course of our review we have identified a number of key issues that we believe the applicant and township should consider prior to final plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

CONDITIONAL USE

An apartment complex must meet the conditional use criteria for apartments as outlined in the Light Industrial District, Section 350-102.V(1) of the zoning ordinance. We generally support the use and proposed expansion of the apartment complex.

SITE DESIGN

We note that the positioning of the building has shifted slightly to accommodate the revised vehicular circulation plan; in particular, the side parking lot wraps to the rear of the building and the road ties into the existing traffic circle. We commend the applicant on changes made to the plan since we last reviewed the site design in the previously submitted letter, dated March 13, 2024. We wish to reiterate the following comments from our previous review letter that we feel are important to the overall success of the development.

A. Pedestrian Connectivity. In the previously submitted plan, there was a sidewalk along three sides of the building. In the current proposal, while there is a walkway directly up the front entrance of the building, there does not appear to be an easy pedestrian connection from the front to the back of the building, without going through the building or walking in the driveway or parking lot. We recommend adding a walkway that leads from around the building, possibly from the front entrance to the amenity area. The addition of a walkway along the western side of the building would have the benefit of activating the side of the building where there is street parking and improving the connections to the amenity area.

1. *Walkways and Sidewalks*. Our previous review letter emphasized the importance of improving the streetscape with a sidewalk, building frontage along the sidewalk, and street trees. We reiterate the recommendation that the applicant add a sidewalk along the existing access driveway, with shade trees and landscaping, to improve connection to the entire apartment complex.

2. *Multi-Use Trail.* We reiterate our recommendation that the applicant extend the trail from the proposed sidewalks/paths of the new building to the existing trail. A multi-use trail was constructed as part of the Willow Pointe development that connects residents to the trail and dog park amenities.

3. *Crosswalks.*

    i. *Driveway Apron.* A sidewalk is proposed along Maryland Road, which will greatly improve the pedestrian connectivity in the area. We recommend that the applicant design the sidewalk and driveway apron in such a way that it is accessible and highly visible. We suggest using the same material for the sidewalk across the driveway apron and ensuring that it is level for people walking or rolling. These design strategies will signal a continuation of the pedestrian area.

    ii. *ADA Accessible Ramp*. The sidewalk would cross the proposed driveway, where there would be ADA accessible ramps with detectable warning pads. A detectable warning pad is the tactile strip that is meant to guide movement for persons of all levels of mobility. Based on the plan provided, it appears that the detectable strips at the driveway are not oriented to meet the ADA guidelines, and should be installed to be perpendicular to the crosswalk.

CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal but we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve Upper Moreland's planning objectives for multifamily 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 (24-0041-002) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,



Claire Warner, Senior Community Planner
Claire.Warner@montgomerycountypa.gov – 610-278-3755

c: Andrew R. Freimuth, Applicant's Representative
Matt Candland, Manager, Upper Moreland Township
Jennifer Mullen, APA Vice Chair, Upper Moreland Township

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

ATTACHMENTS A & B



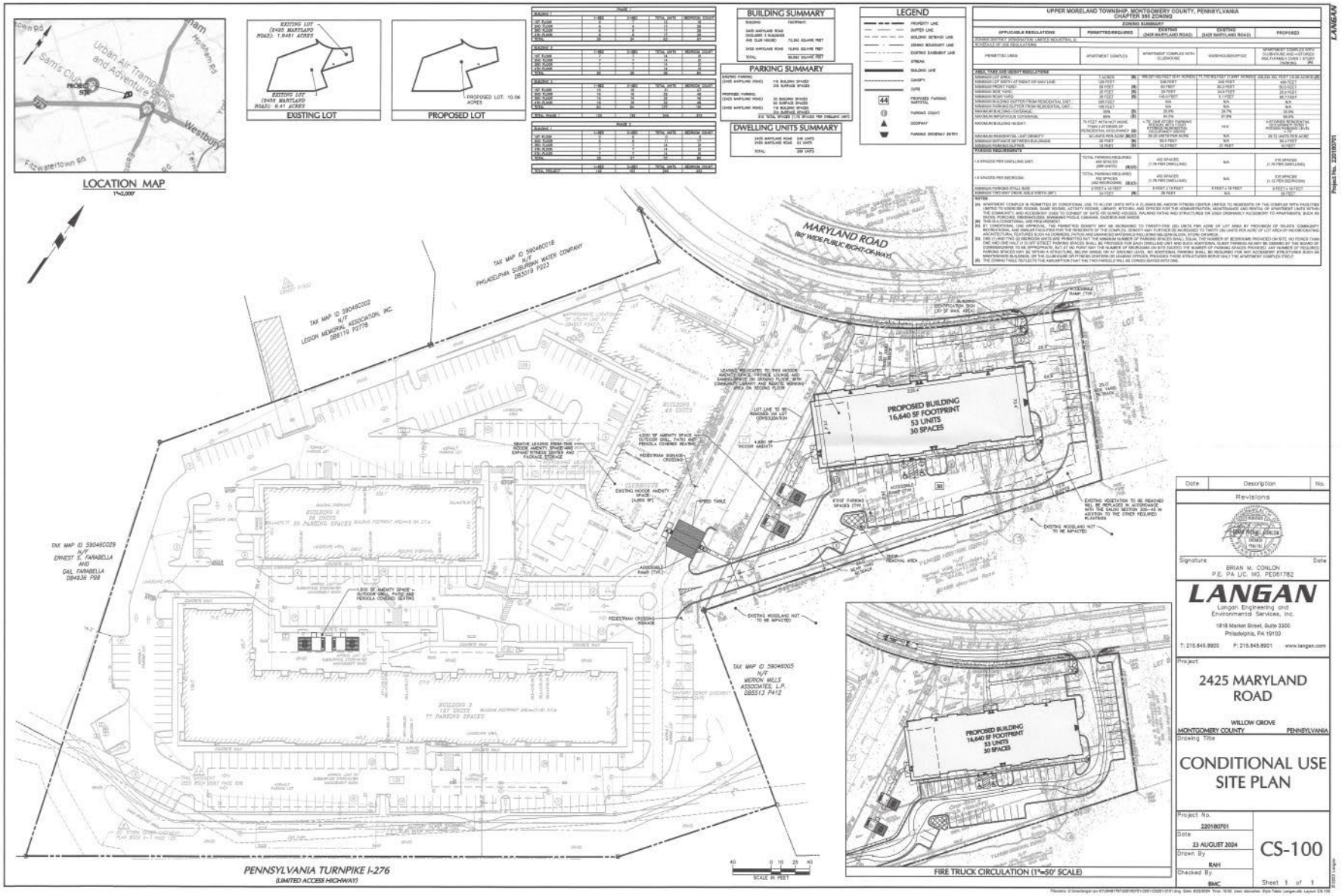
Conditional Use
MCPC#240041002

Montgomery County Planning Commission

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Montgomery County Courthouse - Planning Commission
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www.montcopa.org/plancom
Aerial photography provided by Nearmap


LOCATION MAP
EXISTING LOT
PROPOSED LOT
BUILDING SUMMARY
PARKING SUMMARY
DWELLING UNITS SUMMARY
LEGEND
UPPER MORELAND TOWNSHIP, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
CHAPTER 390 ZONING
ZONING SUMMARY
MARYLAND ROAD
100' WIDE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY
PROPOSED BUILDING
16,640 SF FOOTPRINT
53 UNITS
30 SPACES
TAX MAP ID 59046C002
N/F
LEGION MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION, INC.
DB8119 P278
TAX MAP ID 59046C018
N/F
PHILADELPHIA SUBURBAN WATER COMPANY
DB5019 P223
TAX MAP ID 59046C029
N/F
ERNEST S. FARABELLA
AND
GAIL FARABELLA
DB4936 P98
TAX MAP ID 59046005
N/F
MERRON MILLS
ASSOCIATES, L.P.
DB5513 P412
PENNSYLVANIA TURNPIKE I-276
(LIMITED ACCESS HIGHWAY)
FIRE TRUCK CIRCULATION (1"=50' SCALE)
LANGAN
2425 MARYLAND ROAD
WILLOW GROVE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA
CONDITIONAL USE SITE PLAN
CS-100