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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

October 7, 2024

Mr. Leonard Lightner, Norristown Municipal Administrator
Municipality of Norristown
235 E. Airy Street
Norristown, PA 19401

Re: MCPC # 24-0196-001
Plan Name: Roosevelt Field Subdivision
Situate: 1161 Markley Street, Norristown
(1 lot comprised of 7.32 acres)

Dear Mr. Lightner:

We have reviewed the above-referenced subdivision plan in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on September 6, 2024. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Norristown Area School District, proposes to subdivide an existing parcel (tax parcel number 13-00-03136-00-1) into two lots. The existing 7.32-acre parcel would be divided into Lot 1 comprised of 2.32 acres and Lot 2 comprised of 5.00 acres. Lot 1 would continue to operate as a public school and Lot 2 is proposed to serve as a playground or park. The property is located in the R-2 Residential District.

We understand a variance would be sought by the Norristown Area School District for the maximum allowable impervious coverage for the proposed Lot 1. The maximum allowable impervious coverage in this district is 30% and the proposed impervious coverage would be 64.54%.

The yard setbacks for the proposed Lot 2 would be existing nonconforming. The front yard setback for this district is 25 feet; existing conditions result in a 3.92-foot setback on Sterigere Street and zero setback on James Street. The rear yard setback for this district is 50 feet; existing conditions would result in a 13.83-foot setback. Additionally, the maximum building height for this district is 25 feet while the existing bleacher structures are 28 feet high.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

While the proposal is generally consistent with the 2009 *Norristown Comprehensive Plan*, the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) recommends following our comments below in order to improve the proposal's consistency with the Natural and Historic Resources Actions set forth in the comprehensive plan.

The proposal is also generally consistent with the county's comprehensive plan, *Montco 2020: A Shared Vision*, which promotes the following three main themes: connected communities, sustainable places, and vibrant economy. The proposed project would contribute to "connected communities" through its proposed community playground or park. By following the recommendations below, the proposed project would better respond to the goals detailed in the plan for "sustainable places."

RECOMMENDATION

The MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal, however, in the course of our review we have identified the following issues that the applicant and the Municipality of Norristown may wish to consider prior to final approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

IMPERVIOUS COVERAGE ON PROPOSED LOT 1

A. While we understand that the proposed Lot 2 would be converted into a playground or park thus likely maintaining a substantial amount of pervious surface, the proposed Lot 1 would result in a lot with a substantial amount of impervious coverage, which would require a variance as noted in the review request. Given this result, we relay the following recommendations for site improvements on Lot 1 that could assist with stormwater infiltration while also further beautifying the school grounds:

    1. **Renovate existing parking lot:** The existing parking lot could be renovated to minimize the amount of paved area and to include raingarden swales and trees. We recommend that the applicant refer to MCPC's *Sustainable Green Parking Lots* publication for ideas on how this renovation might be accomplished.
    2. **Install raingardens:** Raingardens with pollinator species could be installed in existing lawn areas to assist with infiltration. These gardens could then be incorporated into the curriculum.
    3. **Plant additional trees:** Additional trees planted in existing lawn areas could further assist with infiltration.

SETBACKS ON PROPOSED LOTS 1 AND 2

A. Lot 1 – Rear Yard Setback for Existing School: In addition to the nonconforming maximum allowable impervious coverage as noted above, the creation of Lot 1 would result in a new nonconforming rear yard setback, given the existing snack bar structure located in the southwestern corner of the

proposed lot. In order to address this proposed new nonconformity, either the snack bar structure could be removed or a variance could be sought.

B. Lot 1 – Parking Lot Setback for Existing School: Section 282-430.2.B of the Norristown Subdivision and Land Development Code states in part: "…parking areas shall not be located closer than 15 feet from any tract boundary line..." As shown on the plan, the existing parking lot would have no setback from the lot line. We recommend that this proposed new nonconformity be addressed by modifying the existing parking lot to follow the regulations set forth in Norristown's code including aspects such as planting strips and pedestrian safety.

C. Lot 2 – Rear Yard Setback for Proposed Playground or Park: From the plan submitted, we understand that the existing bleachers are proposed to be removed. Upon removal, the existing nonconforming setbacks noted in the background section above would no longer be present. If not removed, then a new nonconforming setback would exist for the rear yard of Lot 2 and would need to be addressed.

CONCLUSION

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 24-0196-001 on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,

Ellen Miramontes, PLA, Principal Trails and Open Space Planner
ellen.miramontes@montgomerycountypa.gov – 610-278-3486

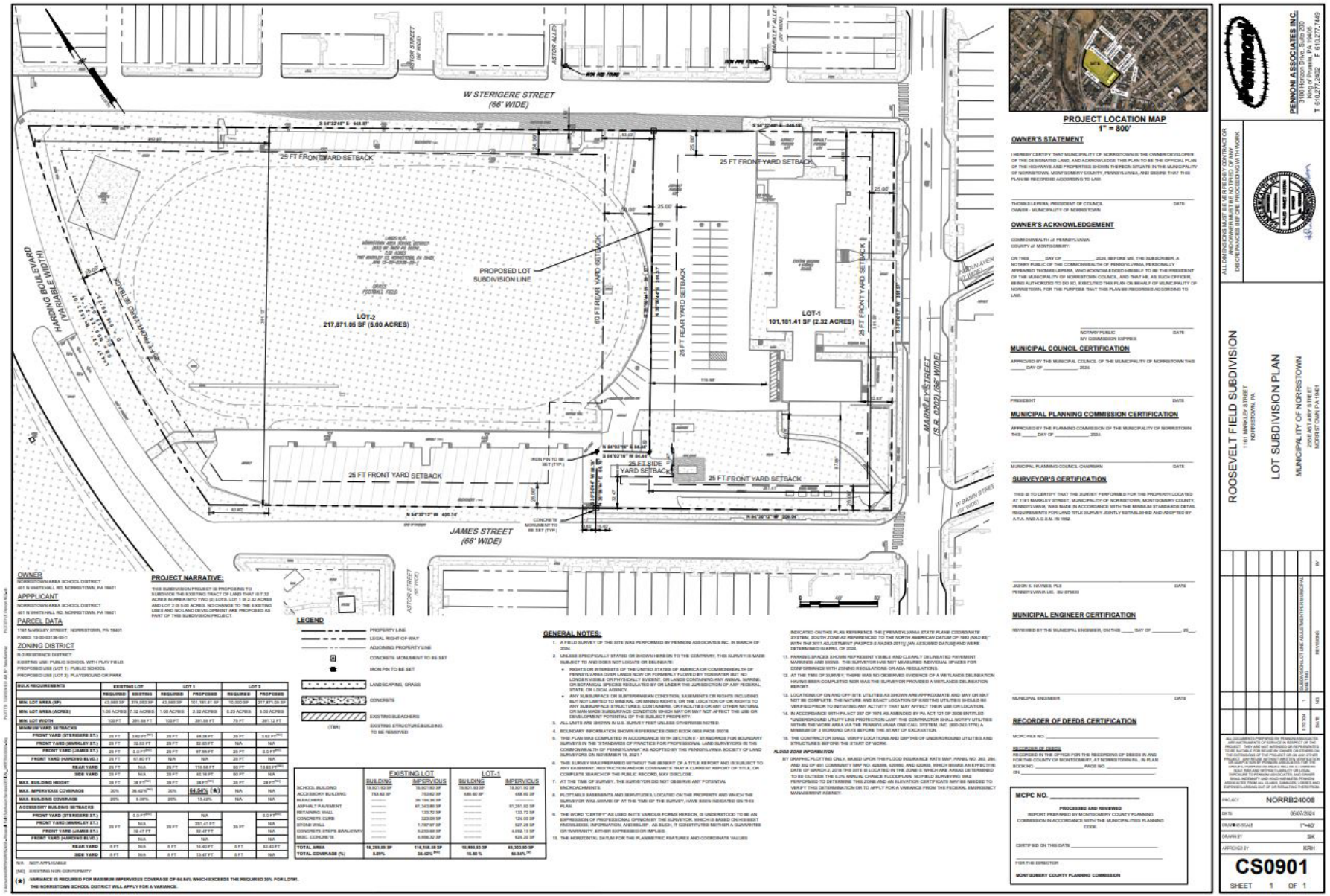
c: Jayne Musonye, Norristown Director of Planning and Development
Adam Lang, Chair, Norristown Planning Commission

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



Roosevelt Field Subdivision
MCPC#240196001

Montgomery County Planning Commission
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www.montcopa.org/planning
Aerial photography provided by Nearmap



BULK REQUIREMENTS	EXISTING LOT		LOT 1		LOT 2	
	REQUIRED	EXISTING	REQUIRED	PROPOSED	REQUIRED	PROPOSED
MIN. LOT AREA (SF)	43,560 SF	219,053 SF	43,560 SF	101,181.41 SF	10,000 SF	217,871.05 SF
MIN. LOT AREA (ACRES)	1.00 ACRES	7.32 ACRES	1.00 ACRES	2.32 ACRES	0.23 ACRES	5.00 ACRES
MIN. LOT WIDTH	100 FT	285.59 FT	100 FT	285.59 FT	70 FT	282.12 FT
MINIMUM YARD SETBACKS						
FRONT YARD (STERIGERE ST.)	25 FT	3.62 FT(NC)	25 FT	68.38 FT	25 FT	3.62 FT(NC)
FRONT YARD (MARKLEY ST.)	25 FT	32.83 FT	25 FT	32.83 FT	N/A	N/A
FRONT YARD (JAMES ST.)	25 FT	3.03 FT(NC)	25 FT	97.99 FT	25 FT	3.03 FT(NC)
FRONT YARD (HARDING BLVD.)	25 FT	61.80 FT	N/A	N/A	25 FT	N/A
REAR YARD	25 FT	N/A	25 FT	119.56 FT	50 FT	13.83 FT(NC)
SIDE YARD	25 FT	N/A	25 FT	62.16 FT	50 FT	N/A
MAX. BUILDING HEIGHT	35 FT	39 FT(NC)	35 FT	39 FT(NC)	35 FT	39 FT(NC)
MAX. IMPERVIOUS COVERAGE	35%	36.42%(NC)	35%	64.54% (●)	N/A	N/A
MAX. BUILDING COVERAGE	20%	9.08%	20%	13.42%	N/A	N/A
ACCESSORY BUILDING SETBACKS						
FRONT YARD (STERIGERE ST.)	25 FT	3.03 FT(NC)	25 FT	N/A	25 FT	3.03 FT(NC)
FRONT YARD (MARKLEY ST.)		N/A		251.61 FT		N/A
FRONT YARD (JAMES ST.)		32.47 FT		32.47 FT		N/A
FRONT YARD (HARDING BLVD.)		N/A		N/A		N/A
REAR YARD	5 FT	N/A	5 FT	14.40 FT	5 FT	53.43 FT
SIDE YARD	5 FT	N/A	5 FT	13.47 FT	5 FT	N/A

N/A NOT APPLICABLE
(NC) EXISTING NON-CONFORMITY
(●) VARIANCE IS REQUIRED FOR MAXIMUM IMPERVIOUS COVERAGE OF 64.54% WHICH EXCEEDS THE REQUIRED 35% FOR LOT#1.
THE NORRISTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL APPLY FOR A VARIANCE.

	EXISTING LOT		LOT-1	
	BUILDING	IMPERVIOUS	BUILDING	IMPERVIOUS
SCHOOL BUILDING	19,801.83 SF	19,801.83 SF	19,801.83 SF	19,801.83 SF
ACCESSORY BUILDING	753.62 SF	753.62 SF	486.60 SF	486.60 SF
BLEACHERS	———	26,159.26 SF	———	———
ASPHALT PAVEMENT	———	87,343.86 SF	———	61,281.82 SF
RETAINING WALL	———	133.72 SF	———	133.72 SF
CONCRETE CURB	———	323.08 SF	———	124.03 SF
STONE WALL	———	1,787.97 SF	———	527.28 SF
CONCRETE STEPS &WALKWAY	———	8,233.88 SF	———	6,602.13 SF
MISC. CONCRETE	———	4,868.32 SF	———	624.20 SF
TOTAL AREA	18,255.55 SF	114,155.55 SF	12,888.83 SF	69,303.80 SF
TOTAL COVERAGE (%)	8.09%	36.42%(NC)	10.80 %	64.54%(●)