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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December 16, 2024

Mr. George Locke, Borough Manager
Jenkintown Borough
700 Summit Avenue
Jenkintown, PA 19046

Re: MCPC # 24-0263-001
Plan Name: 459-471 Old York Road
(3 lots comprising 0.73 acres)
Situate: Old York Road (cross streets: Cherry Street (s) and Johnson Street (w))
Jenkintown Borough

Dear Mr. Locke:

We have reviewed the above-referenced subdivision and land development in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on November 27, 2024. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, 459-471 Old York Road, LLC, is proposing a four-story mixed use development consisting of 3,519 square feet of ground-floor commercial and 40 residential units. The proposed building would have frontage on Old York Road, Cherry Street, and Johnson Street with commercial entrances fronting Old York Road. The entrance to the underground parking garage and loading area would be located on Johnson Street, with a green roof located above the parking garage, elevated from the sidewalk. A pocket park is proposed for the corner of Johnson and Cherry Streets.

Three parcels would be consolidated for the proposed development. To accommodate the building's loading area on Johnson Street, the northernmost parcel would be subdivided, creating two lots: Proposed Lot 1 with 28,237 gross square feet and Proposed Lot 2 with 3,664 gross square feet. The property contains an existing two-story building, two accessory structures, surface parking, and a wooded area along Cherry Street, all of which would be demolished. An existing building on Lot 2 shares a party wall with the abutting property.

A total of 50 parking spaces would be provided, two of which would be in the loading area and the rest on the ground floor of the mixed use building. The proposed parking amount is reduced from 1.5 to 1 spaces per unit because the proposed lots are mixed-use buildings (§151-51(C)(3)(b)). The property is in the Neighborhood Commercial Residential District.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

This area of Jenkintown Borough is identified as a Town Center area in the Future Land Use Plan of the Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*. Town Center Areas are traditional downtown areas with a mix of retail, institutional, office, and residential uses. Town Center Areas are intended to be pedestrian-oriented, with buildings built close to sidewalks and often attached, side to side.

The Future Land Use Map of the *Jenkintown2035 Comprehensive Plan* shows this area of Jenkintown Borough as Community Mixed Use. Community Mixed Use areas offer community-and neighborhood-oriented shopping and services adjacent to residential neighborhoods, with some residential interspersed.

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 should be resolved prior to final plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

STREETSCAPE

In general, the proposed development appears to have a lot of pavement with limited greenery. The following comments address our concerns about the potential this proposal has for creating a streetscape along the building that is out of human scale and does not relate to the surrounding community.

A. Sidewalks. The existing 10-foot wide existing sidewalks along Old York Road are proposed to remain. We recommend continuing the sidewalk pattern to connect with the rest of the borough. Section 160-26. establishes design and construction standards for sidewalks. In addition, sidewalks along York Road are required to comply with the York Road Design Standards, available at borough hall, for consistency with the established streetscape.

B. Pedestrian-Scaled Lighting. We recommend the applicant add pedestrian-scaled light fixtures that are consistent with the established design of Jenkintown's commercial streetscape. Pedestrian-scaled lighting would help to continue to the streetscape north along Old York Road.

LANDSCAPING

A landscape plan was not provided as part of the proposed development submission. Section 160-8.D.(3)(m) requires that a proposed landscape plan be provided as part of the site improvement plan for a preliminary land development submission. We feel that a landscape plan should be provided as part of future submissions demonstrating compliance with the landscape standards contained in the borough's subdivision and land development ordinance.

A. Street Trees. We recommend planting street trees along Old York Road and Cherry Street. Section 160-29.A.1. requires that street trees be planted "along both sides of all existing streets when they abut or lie

within the proposed subdivision or land development" and §160-29.C.1. states that "trees shall be planted at a rate of at least one (1) tree per 30 feet of public or private street frontage," or portion thereof.

1. *Old York Road*. Generally, the streetscape along this property frontage should be consistent with the existing streetscape along York Road, including sidewalk pattern and street trees. Because the property is located on Old York Road where an established street tree planting pattern exists, street trees should be planted in tree pits, as per Section 169-29.B.(2). Street trees should be planted in tree pits with structured soils to ensure healthy roots and longevity.

2. *Cherry Street*. We recommend that street trees be planted along Cherry Street. Section 169-29.B.1. requires that street trees be planted within the verge "Where a landscape verge of at least five feet in width is provided between the sidewalk and the curb".

B. Planter Beds. Based on the plans provided, planter beds would be located between the 10-foot wide existing sidewalk along York Road and the covered walkway along the commercial portion of the building. We feel that the planter beds could create a feeling of separation between the commercial entrances and the sidewalk, disrupting the pedestrian rhythm.

SITE DESIGN

A. Ground Floor Parking

1. *Screening.* Ground-floor parking is proposed and would be accessed from Johnson Street. Ground-floor parking should be screened, per Section 181.51.F.

2. *Building design standards*. Based on the plans provided, the ground-floor parking would be adjacent to the sidewalks along Johnson Street and Cherry Streets with no separation between the sidewalks, which could feel oppressive if not designed for the human scale. Section 181-54.B.(3) prohibits blank walls and requires at least four architectural treatments. We recommend the applicant integrate architectural elements to help screen the parking as well as create interest for people walking along Cherry Street.

B. Loading Zone. A single loading area is shown; however, based on the plans provided, it is unclear if there will be any screening, lighting, or landscaping. The NCR District requires that service and loading areas "be visually screened from street and pedestrianways" (§ 181-51.F.(4)). We recommend providing a landscaping plan and rendering that illustrates how the development will comply with the requirements.

C. Lighting. A lighting plan was not provided as part of the proposed development submission. A proposed outdoor lighting plan is required to be provided as part of the site improvement plan for a preliminary land development submission (§ 160-8.D(n)). We recommend that the applicant design the lighting for the property in a manner that is sensitive to the surrounding properties. In the NCR District, lighting must be "designed to prevent glare onto adjacent properties" (§ 181-51.D).

TRANSPORTATION

A. Pedestrian Connectivity. We recommend the applicant coordinate with the borough and PennDOT on the potential upgrades to the mid-block pedestrian crossing of Old York Road.

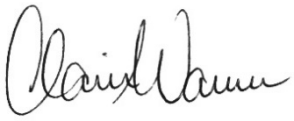
CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal but we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve Jenkintown's planning objectives for mixed-use development in the Neighborhood Commercial Residential District.

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 (MCPC # 24-0263-001) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,

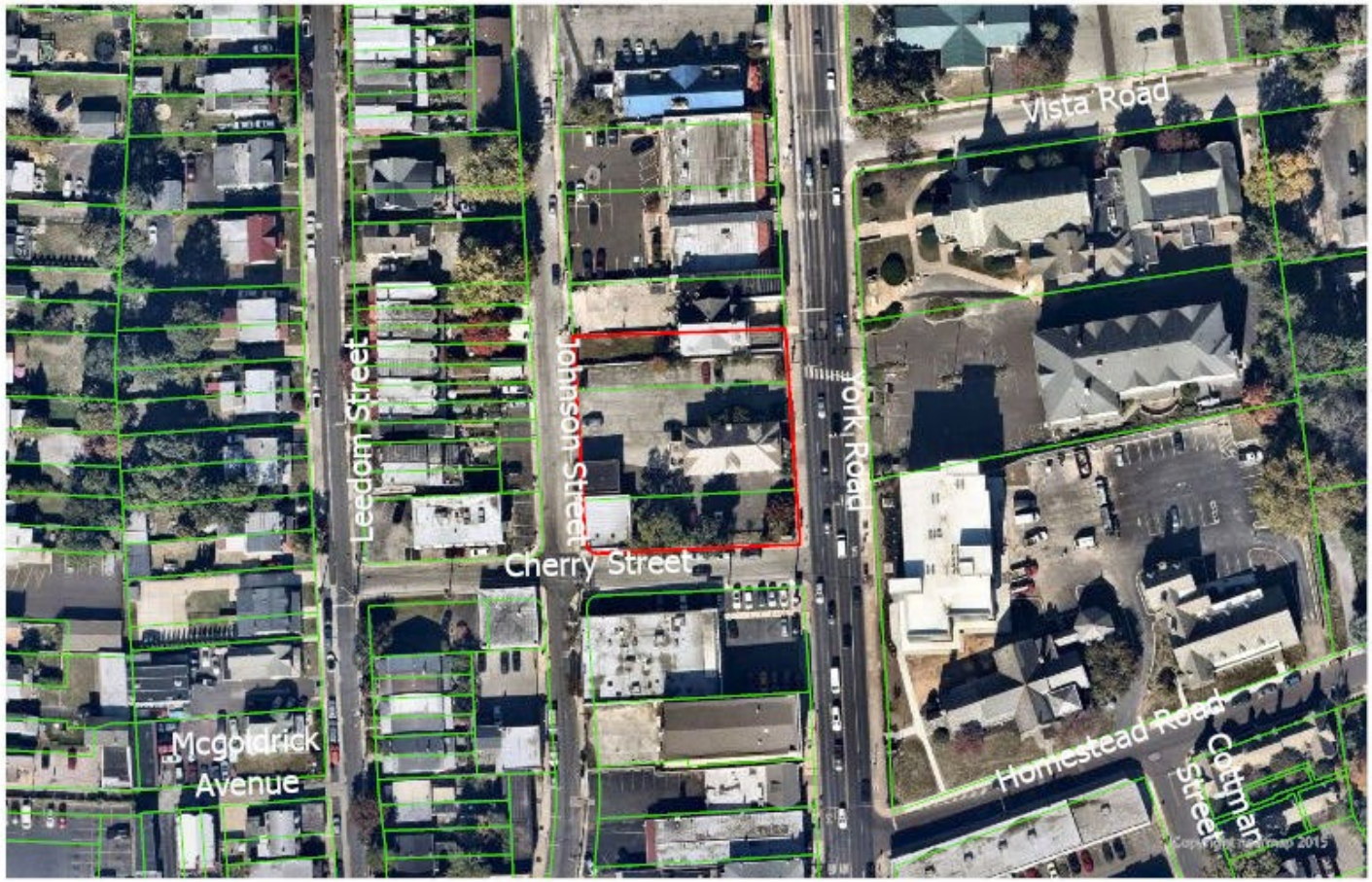


Claire Warner, Senior Community Planner
claire.warner@montgomerycountypa.gov – 610-278-3755

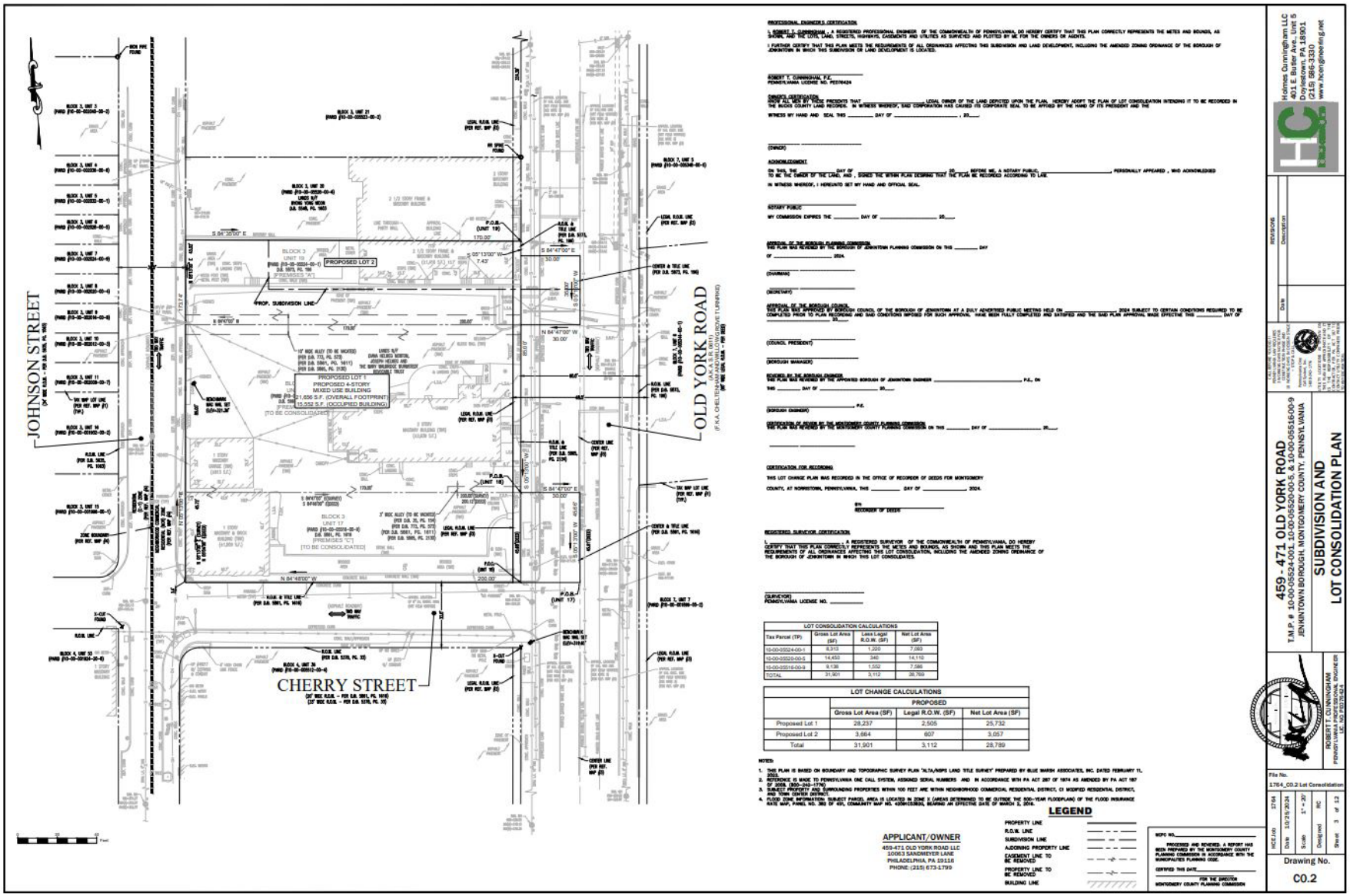
c: Matthew McHugh, Applicant's Representative
Jon McCandlish, Chair, Borough Planning Commission
Khal Hassan, P.E., Borough Engineer
Patrick M. Hitchens, Esq., Borough Solicitor
Fran Hanney, Scott Burton, Paul Lutz, PennDOT

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

ATTACHMENTS A & B



459-471 Old York Road
MCPC#240263001



LOT CONSOLIDATION CALCULATIONS			
Tax Parcel (TP)	Gross Lot Area (SF)	Less Legal R.O.W. (SF)	Net Lot Area (SF)
10-00-05524-00-1	8,313	1,220	7,093
10-00-05520-00-5	14,450	340	14,110
10-00-05516-00-9	9,138	1,552	7,586
TOTAL	31,901	3,112	28,789

LOT CHANGE CALCULATIONS			
	PROPOSED		
	Gross Lot Area (SF)	Legal R.O.W. (SF)	Net Lot Area (SF)
Proposed Lot 1	28,237	2,505	25,732
Proposed Lot 2	3,664	607	3,057
Total	31,901	3,112	28,789

1. THIS PLAN IS BASED ON BOUNDARY AND TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY PLAN "ALTA/NSPS LAND TITLE SURVEY" PREPARED BY BLUE MARSH ASSOCIATES, INC. DATED FEBRUARY 11, 2003.
2. REFERENCE IS MADE TO PENNSYLVANIA ONE CALL SYSTEM, ASSIGNED SERIAL NUMBERS AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH PA ACT 287 OF 1974 AS AMENDED BY PA ACT 187 OF 2006. (800-242-1776)
3. SUBJECT PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING PROPERTIES WITHIN 100 FEET ARE WITHIN NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT, C1 MODIFIED RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT, AND TOWN CENTER DISTRICT.
4. FLOOD ZONE INFORMATION: SUBJECT PARCEL AREA IS LOCATED IN ZONE X (AREAS DETERMINED TO BE OUTSIDE THE 500-YEAR FLOODPLAIN) OF THE FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP, PANEL NO. 382 OF 425, COMMUNITY MAP NO. 42091C0382G, BEARING AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF MARCH 2, 2016.