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MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

March 20, 2025

Mr. Joseph Czajkowski, Manager
Lower Salford Township
379 Main Street
Harleysville, Pennsylvania 19438-2391

Re: MCPC #20-0068-002
Plan Name: SBE Realty, LP - Office building
(10,000 sq ft building on 1 lot on approximately 12.79 acre)
Schoolhouse Road (cross street: Wambold Road)
Lower Salford Township

Dear Mr. Czajkowski:

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 March 10, 2025. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant is proposing to construct a three-story 30,000 square-foot office building at the corner of Wambold Road and Schoolhouse Road. The site currently contains industrial uses in three existing buildings. Two of the buildings, one 20,000 square-feet and one 9,587 square-feet, currently contain office or warehouse uses and are proposed to be used solely as warehouse, resulting in a total of 49,657 square feet of warehouse between three buildings.

The site contains parking for the current offices and warehouses. The proposal includes parking spaces associated with the new office building. There is also an existing pond, basin, and street trees, which would remain. The site is located within the I-Industrial Zoning District, and not adjacent to any residential uses. We reviewed a previously submitted proposal for this site in a letter dated March 18, 2020.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

The proposal is generally consistent with *MONTCO 2040: A Shared Vision*, which designates the area as a *Business Area* future land use category. Business Areas are concentrations of employment-oriented land uses, such as offices, research facilities, and industrial parks. The land development plan is also generally

consistent with the Indian Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan, as it is located in the Future Land Use map's designated growth area. The development aligns with the Regional Comprehensive Plan's initiative to encourage industrial development in established industrial areas.

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 township may wish to consider prior to final plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

LANDSCAPING

In general, we recommend more landscaping around the parking lot and the building for a more attractive view from the street and shade for parking. We hope that the applicant intends to plant additional trees and shrubs, which we believe would make a more attractive building.

A. Parking Lot Landscaping. We recommend the applicant plant more trees in and around the parking lot. There are twenty-four parking spaces proposed to be located along a curved line fronting the building. A sidewalk follows that same curve of the parking lot and leads to the building entrances. There are no trees proposed for this curved stretch of parking or the between sidewalk and building. We suggest that the addition of trees would help to shade the parking lot, as well as the paved area around the building, which could be used as a seating area.

B. Foundation Landscaping. We recommend the applicant plant foundation landscaping between the sidewalk and the building, where there appears to be unused space. No shrubs are shown on the landscape plans provided.

TRANSPORTATION

A. Parking Lot Circulation. Due to the location of the entrance driveway, all drivers will have to bypass the warehouses and existing parking to access the parking lot of the new office building. We recommend that the applicant consider if additional directional signage is needed on the property to ensure that the parking areas are easily located by visitors.

B. Required Parking. The applicant is proposing to exceed the amount of parking that is required for the office and warehouse uses. The township requires that a warehouse use provide one space per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area or one space per employee, whichever is greater (§ 164-99). Based on the parking calculations on the plan, it appears that the applicant anticipates a total of 16 employees, but due to the requirement to provide the greatest amount of parking based on the two calculation options, they are providing 50 parking spaces for the three warehouses. We recommend that the

applicant and the township evaluate the needs for warehouses and consider if the required parking is disproportionate to the need.

C. Trail on Wambold. A 15-foot-wide trail easement is shown on the plans along Wambold Road. The second phase (HT2) of the PA 63(Sumneytown Pike)/PA 309 Connector project includes a proposed multi-use trail between Allentown Road and Cowpath Road. We recommend that the applicant and township consider potential future trail connections to the Sumneytown Pike/PA 309 Connector trail. Further south on the same side of Wambold Road, a multi-use trail currently exists along the front of an industrial property. On the other side of Wambold Road, there are existing trail segments. We recommend that the trail be constructed during land development to help connect the various segments of trails to the proposed Sumneytown Pike/PA 309 Connector trail.

1. *Street Trees*. Existing street trees are located within the trail easement. We recommend preserving the existing trees during trail construction. To ensure that there is space for the trail and to preserve the trees, the easement may need to be widened.

2. *Schoolhouse Road Connection*. We recommend extending the trail up Schoolhouse Road, at least to the first driveway, where the sidewalk could connect the trail to the building. If the trail is continued along Schoolhouse Road, a highly visible pedestrian crosswalk should be installed across the driveway.

3. *Pedestrian Connection to Trails.* We recommend that pedestrian connections be installed to connect the proposed office building to the future trail on Wambold Road. For example, the sidewalks could be extended from the building/parking area to Wambold Road.



4. *Crosswalks.* We recommend coordinating with PennDOT to upgrade the crosswalks across Wambold Road. There are existing crosswalks, but they should be upgraded to be highly visible in order to more safely connect people to the trail on the opposite side of Wambold Road. The aerial image (right) is of the intersection and shows how the crosswalks were improved with the new development (Nearmap, October 2024).

CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal but we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve the Lower Salford's planning objectives for industrial 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 (20-0068-002) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,

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

c: SBE Realty, LP, Applicant
Susan Rice, S.T.A. Engineering, Applicant's Engineer
Manus McHugh, Chair, Township Planning Commission
Michael Beuke, Director of Building and Zoning
Andrew Freimuth, Township Solicitor
Michele Fountain, P.E., Township Engineer
John Evarts, P.E., Township Engineer
Stephanie Butler, P.E., Township Traffic Engineer
Keith Bergman, Chair, Township Board of Supervisors
Patti Reimel, Codes Administrative Assistant
Holly Hosterman, Assistant to the Township Manager
Scott Burton, PennDOT
Paul Lutz, PennDOT
Fran Hanney, P.E., PennDOT

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

ATTACHMENTS A & B



SBE Realty LP - Office Building
MCPC#200068002

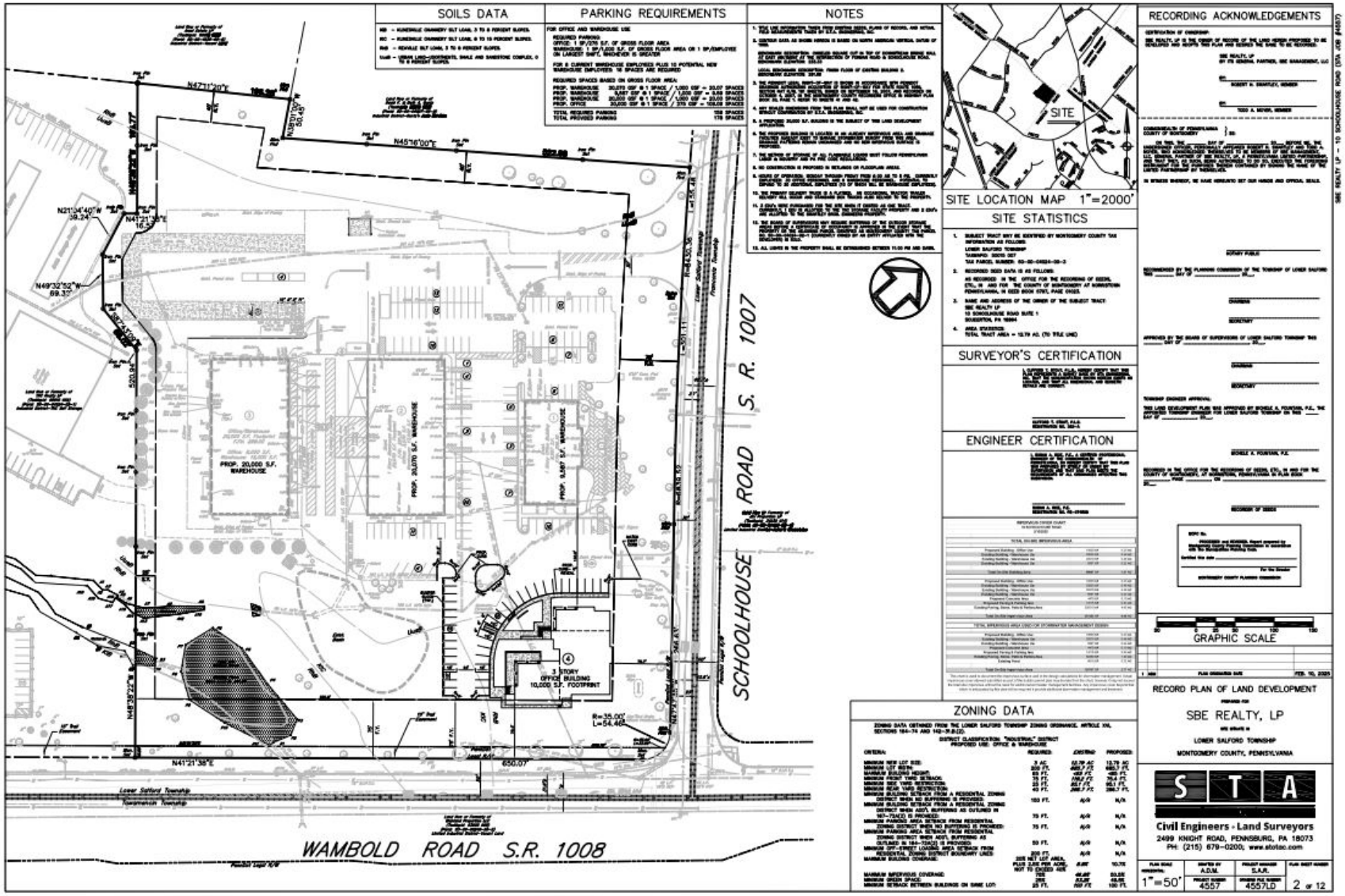
Montgomery County Planning Commission

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Aerial photography provided by Nearmap


SOILS DATA
PARKING REQUIREMENTS
NOTES
SITE LOCATION MAP 1"=2000'
SITE STATISTICS
SURVEYOR'S CERTIFICATION
ENGINEER CERTIFICATION
ZONING DATA
RECORDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
GRAPHIC SCALE
RECORD PLAN OF LAND DEVELOPMENT
SBE REALTY, LP
LOWER SALFORD TOWNSHIP
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
Civil Engineers • Land Surveyors
2499 KNIGHT ROAD, PENNSBURG, PA 18073
PH: (215) 679-0200; www.stotac.com
1"=50'
4557
4557LD
2 of 12
SCHOOLHOUSE ROAD S. R. 1007
WAMBOLD ROAD S.R. 1008
PROP. 20,000 S.F. WAREHOUSE
3 STORY OFFICE BUILDING 10,000 S.F. FOOTPRINT