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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 22, 2025

Ms. Marianne McConnell, Director of Planning & Zoning
Montgomery Township
1001 Stump Road
Montgomeryville, Pennsylvania 18936-9605

Re: MCPC #24-0195-003
Plan Name: Connect Veterinary Surgical Services – Conditional Use Application
(2 lots, approximately 1.67 acres)
Situate: 1008 Upper State Road, near Horsham Road
Montgomery Township

Dear Ms. McConnell:

We have reviewed the above-referenced conditional use application as you requested on April 29, 2025. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

Nicole Salas has submitted a conditional use application to redevelop a property at the corner of Horsham and Upper State Roads by razing a dilapidated house and constructing an animal hospital on what will be a merged lot measuring 1.67 acres. The property, located in the BP-Business Professional zoning district, will eventually proceed through the land development process, but conditional use approval is needed first under Section 230-80.A of the township's zoning code to permit an Animal Hospital use. The hospital would measure 10,000 square feet with 40 parking spaces and access from Upper State Road only. According to the zoning table on the conditional use plans, the site will comply with all other required zoning ordinance requirements.

A previous letter dated October 4, 2024 covered a zoning ordinance change that concerned this property, allowing for an increase in building footprint in the BP zone from 5,000 to 10,000 square feet and for the Animal Hospital use to be an allowable use in the BP-Business Professional zoning district with conditional use approval.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

Comments are adapted from a previous letter.

Montgomery County's comprehensive plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*, shows this property along with its neighbors on the north side of Horsham Road as part of the "Suburban Residential Area" future land use area. However, the other side of Horsham Road from this location, along with the Montgomeryville/Five Points corridor just northwest along Horsham Road, is part of the "Regional Mixed Use Center" area. While developments that fit with the general character of suburban residential areas are expected, the location is close enough to denser development to make sense as an area with slightly more intensive building developments than are present now. We feel that this proposed conditional use application is broadly in compliance with *Montco 2040.*

Similar to the county's plan, Montgomery Township's 2022 comprehensive plan denotes this area as "Lower Density Residential" on its future land use map, but it is across Horsham Road from a "Mixed Use" zone and down the street from Commercial zones. The plan's economic development implementation strategies also lists that the township will "analyze potential for adaptive reuse of underutilized properties and promote appropriate redevelopment options". While it is not explicitly aligned with the future land use map, the Business Professional zone was meant to offer the potential to include professional office spaces in a more low-density residential setting when it was developed in 2008. Indeed, most of the other BP zones across the township are included in non lower-density residential future land use areas. Therefore, we believe this conditional use application is compatible with the spirit of Montgomery Township's comprehensive plan.

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

REVIEW COMMENTS

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The plan set provided for the conditional use application did not include any information on stormwater management. If stormwater detention is proposed underneath the parking lot, it should be in an area that is free from trees in planted islands above the facility.

LANDSCAPING

The property has a substantial number of trees now that appear to be largely removed for the building's development. Is there room for any accommodation of additional trees on the Horsham Road frontage of the property? An animal surgery center is more of a intended destination than a drive-up-on-a-whim location, so while the building is suited for a monument sign out front, most of the building does not need to be seen from the roadway to attract passing drivers. Perhaps some additional existing tree cover can be maintained or preserved during the construction process.

CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal but we believe that our comments will better achieve Montgomery Township's planning objectives for 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 (#24-0195-003) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,

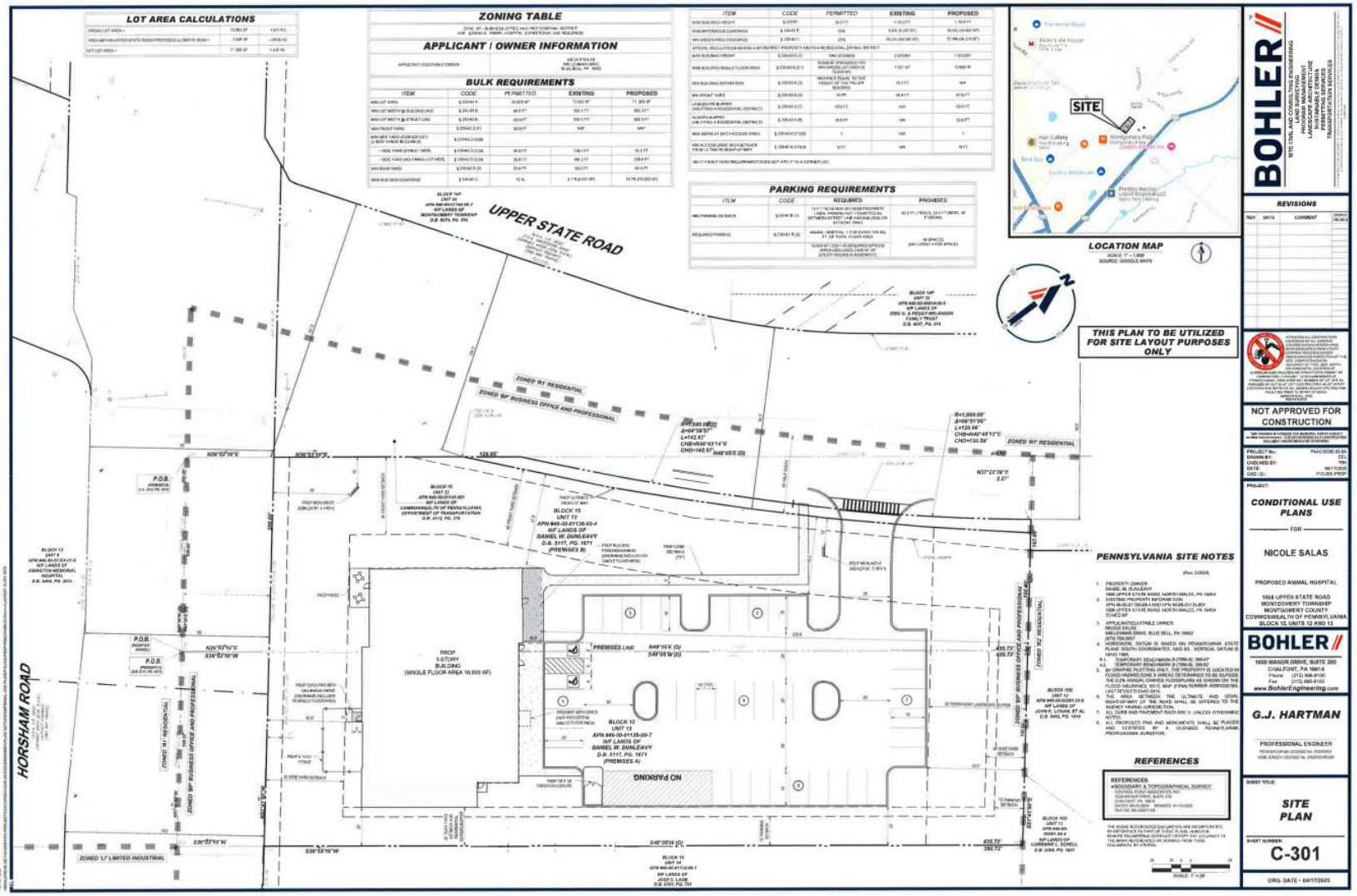
Matthew Popek

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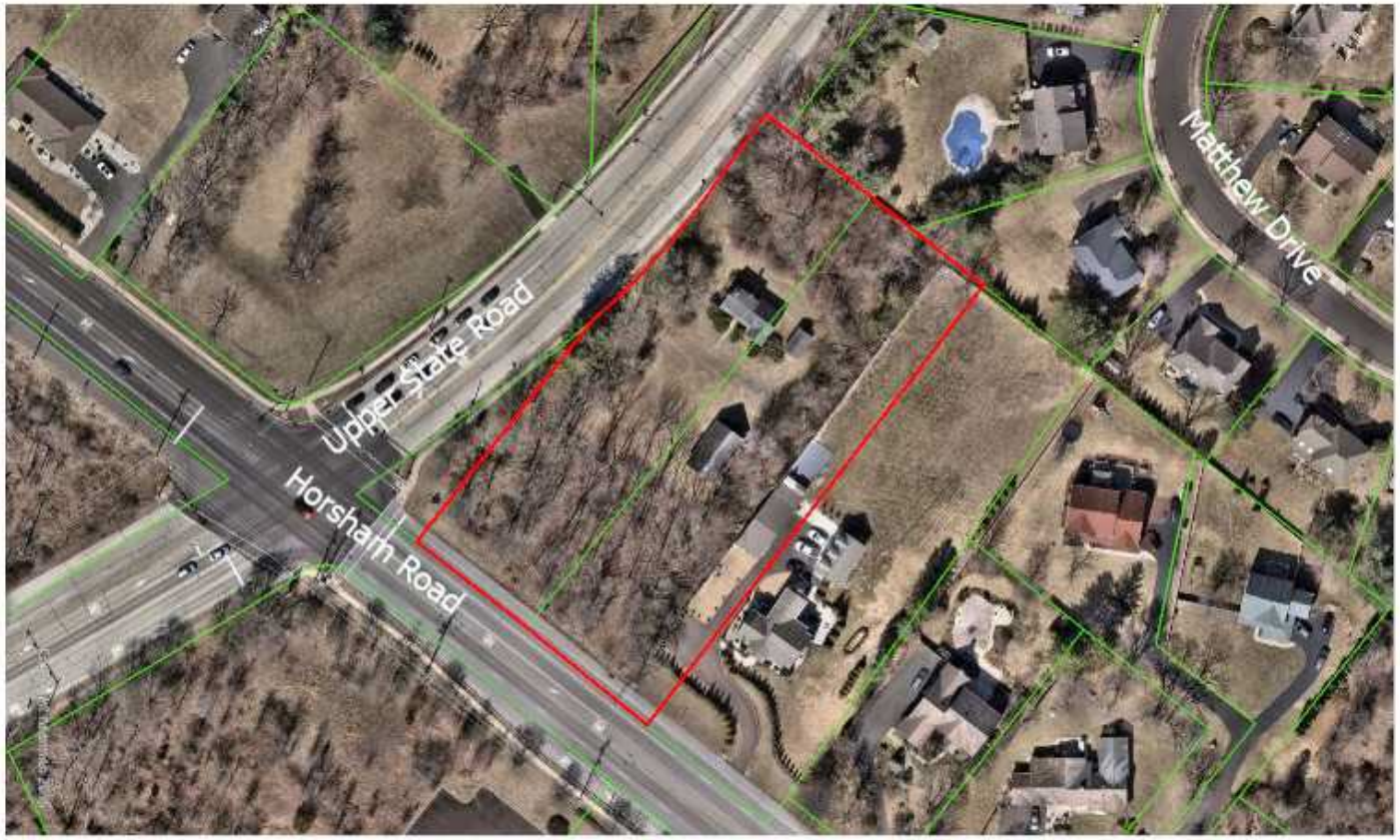
c: Carolyn McCreary, Twp. Manager
Jim Rall, Chrm., Twp. Planning Commission
Christen G. Pionzio, Esq., Applicant's Representative

Attachments: (1) Site Plan
(2) Aerial

Site Plan – 1008 Upper State Road, Montgomery Township



Aerial – 1008 Upper State Road, Montgomery Township



Connect Veterinary Surgical Services
MCPC#240195003

Montgomery County Planning Commission

0 50 100 200 Feet

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