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MONTGOMERY COUNTY • PO BOX 311
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610-278-3722
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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

July 29, 2025

Ms. Sherri Griffith, Planning/Zoning Administrative Assistant
Upper Pottsgrove Township
1409 Farmington Avenue
Pottstown, Pennsylvania 19464

Re: MCPC #25-0128-001
Proposal Name: Moosa – Poplar Street
Situate: Farmington Avenue (east)/Stone Hill Drive (north)
Upper Pottsgrove Township

Dear Ms. Griffith:

We have reviewed the above-referenced subdivision and land development plan in accordance with Section 504 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on June 17, 2025. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) has received for review a set of plans showing proposed improvements on a 10.04-acre R-3 Residential District property (County Parcel IDs: 60-00-00469-00-2, 60-00-00472-01-7, 60-00-00469-01-1 and 60-00-00469-10-9) located on Farmington Avenue, north of Stone Hill Drive in Upper Pottsgrove Township. According to the submitted application, Master Ventures, LLC, the applicant, aims to subdivide the property into 30 lots ("1" through "30") and develop single-family attached homes on Lots 1-28, with single-family detached homes on Lots 29 and 30.

In accordance with township open space requirements, 0.34 acres (14,603 square feet) of the property will be set aside as open space.

A note on the plan indicates that the site will be served by public sewer and water facilities.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The plan generally aligns with the goals and objectives outlined in the County Comprehensive Plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*.

The Future Land Use Component of Montco 2040 indicates that the applicant's property is located in a Suburban Residential Area. According to the comprehensive plan, Suburban Residential Areas are defined as places that rely

on automobiles for transportation and often feature extensive landscaping on individual properties. Additionally, these areas offer a variety of housing types, with single-family detached homes being the most common.

Furthermore, this submission supports the following specific Montco 2040 goals:

Encourage development and transformative investment where infrastructure already exists.

MCPC Future Land Use Map encompasses various mixed-use and residential land use categories, identifying designated growth areas for the county. Future development and improvements should occur in suitable locations within these designated growth areas, primarily in mixed-use zones; however, undeveloped land in residential areas is often suitable for new residential growth.

REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The plan mostly aligns with the adopted Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan. According to the Upper Pottsgrove Township Future Land Use Map, the subject tract is located within a designated Secondary Growth Area, classified as an area of suburban, single-family residential development.

Regarding future land use policies outlined in the Regional Comprehensive Plan and its land use categories, it is recommended that, to preserve the rural countryside as much as possible, infill development in the Borough of Pottstown and the region's older suburbs is strongly encouraged. Additionally, new large-scale development of Medium-Density Residential projects should be directed to designated growth areas within each township, including the region's Primary Growth Areas, Secondary Growth Areas, and Regional Core, where essential infrastructure is already in place or has been designated as a sewer growth area in the municipality's sewer facilities plan.

MCPC notes that the development goals outlined in the plan promote medium-density development that is well-designed and creates a sense of place. The plan states that, "such developments may include central greens, landscaped cul-de-sacs, sidewalks, and other pedestrian-oriented design features." It appears that the applicant's plan may not fully align with these objectives. Issues related to providing centrally located open space, as well as vehicle and pedestrian access and street trees, may need to be addressed.

RECOMMENDATION

MCPC supports this proposal; however, during our review, we found the following issues that the applicant and municipality may want to consider before final plan approval.

REVIEW COMMENTS

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE

A. General Requirements for All Types of Basins. (*§301-51.A.(1)*) - According to the plan, stormwater management facilities are proposed on the site. Standards outlined in the Municipal Code require a 50-foot setback from all property lines and structures. Proposed stormwater basins ("SWM-1," "SWM-2," "SWM-3," "SWM-4," "SWM-5") delineated on the plan do not appear to meet these requirements.

B. Standards for Detention Basins. (§301-51.A.(3)) - The plan shows two proposed basins ("SWM-1," "SWM-2"), which seem to be located across multiple lots ("1-4," "9-12"). Township standards require that "privately owned basin facilities and BMPs shall be located entirely on one parcel unless otherwise permitted by the municipality."

C. Standards for Detention Basins. (*§301-51.A.(4)*) - Clarification should be provided regarding maintenance responsibilities for each basin. Township regulations specify that "maintenance of a basin facility shall be the responsibility of only one lot owner or, if the facility is located in a common area, the responsibility of the applicable homeowners' association."

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE

A. Road System. (*§310-19.A.(10)*) - It appears that access to this planned development shall be obtained from a single access point along Farmington Avenue. Our office cautions that township requirements governing subdivision layout and access specify that "all subdivisions and/or land developments containing 25 or more single-family or two-family building lots shall be served by a minimum of two separate roads, from a state or local road, each providing ingress and egress to the development."

B. Roads/Cul-de-Sac Roads. (*§310-19.D.(1).(d).[2].[e]*) - The submitted plan proposes a 1,000-foot-long cul-de-sac street that will provide access to the 30 individual lots within this subdivision. It appears that the road layout does not comply with municipal regulations for street design. As outlined in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO), "cul-de-sac roads shall not be less than 250 feet nor more than 800 feet in length and shall not serve more than 10 dwelling units...unless special conditions warrant approval by the Commissioners."

C. Roads/Road Widths in Excess of Standard. (*§310-19.D.(3).(a)*) - We note that, according to the plan, the applicant's engineer has depicted on-street parking along both sides of the proposed 30-foot-wide cul-de-sac road, which will serve lots within this planned development. This could pose issues regarding emergency vehicle access. While MCPC defers to the township engineer and township fire marshal regarding the sufficiency of such an arrangement, we nonetheless mention that the SALDO stipulates that "the Board of Commissioners may also require widths in excess of the standards, here necessary for additional lanes for traffic volume, additional street parking, public safety and convenience."

D. Parking Areas. (*§310-20.C.(2)*) - A proposed parking area for four cars, positioned perpendicular to the road, is shown on the plan along the cul-de-sac between Lot "24" and Lot "25". Our office notes that the SALDO prohibits such an arrangement. It states that "at no time shall angle or perpendicular parking along the curbs of local, public or private access roads be permitted except where permitted by Township ordinance."

E. Preservation and Protection of Existing Vegetation. (*§310-37.C.(4).(a)*) - The requirements outlined in the SALDO specify that "all trees six inches or more DBH (*Diameter at Breast Height*) should not be removed unless within the proposed right-of-way line of a road or impractical for development as specified." We note that, according to the Existing Features Plan, the submission does not clearly identify mature trees on the subject tract. If any such trees are present on the site, they should be marked or labeled on the plan.

F. Tree Replacement Planting Requirements. (*§310-37.C.(1).(b*) - The plan must comply with all relevant tree replacement planting requirements in the SALDO. As specified, "each mature tree of 8 up to 18 inches DBH (*Diameter at Breast Height*) which is designated 'to be removed,' as outlined above, shall be replaced with one tree of not less than 2½ inches in caliper at the time of planting." Additionally, "calculation and estimation of existing trees shall be performed before any clearing commences and shall be documented on the plan" and "proposed replacement tree plantings shall be listed on the plan."

G. Sidewalks and Curbs. (*§310-21.A.(1)*) - Township regulations state that "sidewalks shall be provided along all roads in residential zoning districts, except where, in the opinion of the Board of Commissioners, they are not necessary for the public safety and convenience." It appears that the proposed sidewalks depicted on the submitted plan do not extend the full length of the proposed cul-de-sac road.

H. Street Trees. (*§310-37.D.(3).(e)*) - Standards for street trees, outlined in the SALDO, require that trees be planted "along all existing streets when they abut or lie within the proposed subdivision or land development." Additionally, "trees shall be planted at a rate of at least one tree per 40 linear feet of street frontage or fraction thereof . . . and . . . shall be distributed along the entire frontage of each property, although they need not be evenly spaced." The plan does not appear to meet this requirement.

I. Buffer Area Location and Dimensions. (*§310-37.E.(1).(c)*) - It appears that the submitted plan may not fully comply with the buffer standards outlined in the SALDO. As outlined in the SALDO, "a buffer planting area of not less than 35 feet in width shall be established along all tract lines and external street boundaries of the tract proposed for subdivision or land development." Additionally, "the buffer area may not be included within the front, side, or rear yard setback." These buffer areas have not been delineated on the plan.

ZONING ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE

A. Steep Slope Conservation District/Uses Permitted by Special Exception. (*§350-41.G*) - As shown on the submitted plans, areas of steep slope, as defined in the Zoning Ordinance, are present on the applicant's property. Therefore, MCPC notes that municipal regulations require the Zoning Hearing Board to take action for a special exception to allow roads, access driveways, and parking facilities, but only when no practical alternative alignment or location is available in such delineated steep slope areas.

B. Steep Slope Conservation District/Prohibited Uses. (*§350-42.A*) - Township regulations for the Steep Slope Conservation District prohibit "freestanding structures, buildings, and retaining walls, unless no alternative alignment or location is feasible" in areas with steep slopes. It seems that the proposed townhomes on Lots 27 and 28 might encroach upon the designated steep slopes.

DESIGN ISSUES

A. Access to Adjacent Properties - According to the submitted subdivision plan, the existing driveway along Farmington Avenue will be upgraded to a cul-de-sac road, providing access to the proposed housing lots. However, it is unclear how access to the adjacent properties at 1270 Farmington Avenue (County Parcel ID 60 00 00472 00 8) (*Lands of Capps*) and 1274 Farmington Avenue (County Parcel ID 60 00 00484 00 5) (*Lands of Sheppard*) will be established. We note that the plan shows a "proposed retaining wall" along a significant portion of the frontage of the 1270 Farmington Avenue parcel. Municipal regulations prohibit creating landlocked parcels. MCPC recommends that the applicant's engineer clarify how the proposed cul-de-sac will be graded to provide access and connect with the existing driveways on these two parcels. Additionally, the plan should be revised to show any realignments of the driveways on these adjacent properties and any proposed access easements, if planned.

B. Secondary Access - As mentioned, municipal requirements in the SALDO mandate that all subdivisions and land developments with 25 or more single-family or two-family lots must be served by at least two separate roads. Accordingly, MCPC recommends considering how this planned development could connect with the adjacent Coddington View community to the south through an extension of the Sageview Drive cul-de-sac. We note that, according to the development plan, such an extension seems logical, and the feasibility of this road connection should be explored.

C. Pedestrian Access and Circulation - The plan seems to lack an effective internal pedestrian circulation system that would allow walking throughout the entire subdivision. For instance, sidewalks do not fully connect to the proposed open space area. We recommend considering a more comprehensive pedestrian circulation system on the property.

In a related matter, MCPC recommends that the applicant consider the potential needs of families with school-age children who require safe access to a school bus stop, likely located along Farmington Avenue. A continuous sidewalk could help improve pedestrian travel.

D. Pedestrian Circulation Design/Planting Strips - As shown on the plan, sidewalks directly abut the curb of the cul-de-sac road because no planting strip is proposed. Our office suggests that planting strips are essential for improving pedestrian circulation and comfort. Such planting strips should be positioned next to and run along the entire length of the street curb. These strips provide both physical and visual separation from the paved cartway, which enhances pedestrian safety.

E. Planting Design/Street Trees - MCPC recommends a full residential street treatment on the development tract, including continuous sidewalks, a planting strip, and street trees. While shade trees are planned along the cul-de-sac road, the plan may not fully meet landscape requirements in the SALDO. Although utility placements and proposed driveways might restrict tree locations, we still suggest that the applicant's engineer consider possible revisions, including narrowing the proposed driveway width, if feasible, to accommodate tree planting.

F. "Walk Score" - We inform you that, regarding the development site's Walk Score®—a public access walkability index—it has received a score of 16 out of 100. The area is considered a "car-dependent location," where most errands require a car. To improve walkability, measures should be taken to connect nearby amenities. Municipal officials may want to consider possible steps to promote greater pedestrian activity in this part of the township, such as developing new sidewalk linkages or building trails in suitable locations.

G. Open Space Area - The applicant's engineer has delineated a 0.34-acre (14,603 square feet) open space area on the submitted plan. As shown, the proposed open space lot contains areas of steep slope, as defined by the Zoning Ordinance. It is unclear how this area will function and be utilized by future residents and the broader community. MCPC recommends that the open space be fully integrated into the development, rather than being "leftover space." Additionally, given the proposed size of the open space lot (14,603 square feet, or 4% of the total tract area), we question how this area could serve as a potential recreation space for residents.

The project should include open space areas that can be considered "usable" and feature amenity areas for both active and passive recreation. Additionally, such open space should be centrally located on the site, if feasible, and easily accessible via sidewalks or paved trails.

The applicant should also specify how the proposed common open space will be used. If active recreation features (such as ball fields or courts) or passive recreation areas (such as sitting areas) are planned, details about where these activities will occur should be reviewed with the township.

H. Proposed Parking Area - The plan shows a parking area that can fit four cars along a proposed cul-de-sac road between Lots 24 and 25. In addition to issues related to compliance with SALDO requirements, we note that the parking area appears to be located within a paper street, which may require action to vacate part of that street.

I. Visitor Parking - As the applicant's engineer indicated, a total of 60 off-street parking spaces will be provided as part of this development, along with 30 "on-street" spaces. Our office observes that 26 of the 30 on-street parking spaces are shown on the plan within the 30-foot-wide cartway area of the planned cul-de-sac road. The remaining four spaces are located within a proposed parking area between Lots 24 and 25. We defer to the township engineer to determine whether the proposed plan provides adequate parking for both residents and visitors to this residential subdivision.

MCPC informs the municipality that, based on American Planning Association (APA) recommended parking standards, a parking ratio of 0.5 spaces per unit is adequate for visitor parking in a townhouse development. Therefore, 14 parking spaces would be necessary.

J. Design Standards for Townhouse Development/Building Articulation - The plan shows townhomes along a proposed cul-de-sac. While acceptable, we recommend that municipal officials focus on the architectural design of these units and their visual impact on the street.

The overall design of a development plays a crucial role in creating an attractive and desirable townhouse community. Townhouse buildings, typically large structures with extensive façades and substantial massing, usually consist of three to six linked units in a row. Without careful attention to design, these buildings can appear overwhelming or monotonous. However, by incorporating well-articulated façades, engaging visual interest, and thoughtful architectural details, developers can transform these structures into inviting, eye-catching, and highly desirable residences.

Well-articulated buildings enhance visual interest and create rhythm in the streetscape. A common issue is that many townhouse developments feature buildings with relatively flat façades, with only slight variations between units to distinguish each home, such as a staggered building façade. Articulation, which refers to the variation in appearance and structure within a building's façade, is often achieved through features such as porches, porticos, balconies, bay windows, rooflines, and the use of different building materials. This is especially important in townhouse designs, given the broad width of the façade.

K. Design Standards for Townhouse Development/Garages - Additionally, consideration should be given to the design of garages, which are another element of the façade. Our office recommends pairing front-loaded garages and incorporating architectural features, such as windows or other decorative elements. Finally, garage doors should be recessed from the rest of the front façade unless the front door has a covered patio or portico structure or is accessed by a stairway.

MISCELLANEOUS

A. Assignment of MCPC Number - When an application is submitted to the county for review, a staff member must assign a unique nine-digit identifier to the plan, known as an MCPC number. Therefore, we inform you that "25-0128-001" has been reserved for this submission. To streamline the plan recording process, any plans brought to this office for recording should always include the MCPC number on the relevant sheets in the area designated for the agency's seal.

B. MCPC Design Guidelines Publication, Building Better Townhouse Communities - MCPC has released a report titled *Building Better Townhouse Communities*, which provides suggestions, recommendations, and best practices related to townhouse developments. We encourage municipal officials and applicants to download this document from our website (https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/1459/Publications) to understand the county's land development policies for this type of development.

Important sections include Townhouse Design Elements and Best Practices, open space (page 11), garage design standards (page 29), parking standards (page 30), and garage design options (page 33).

CONCLUSION

We reiterate that MCPC generally supports this application; however, it is recommended that township officials consider the issues raised in this letter.

Please note that the review comments and recommendations in this report are advisory to the municipality, which will make the final disposition regarding the approval of any proposal.

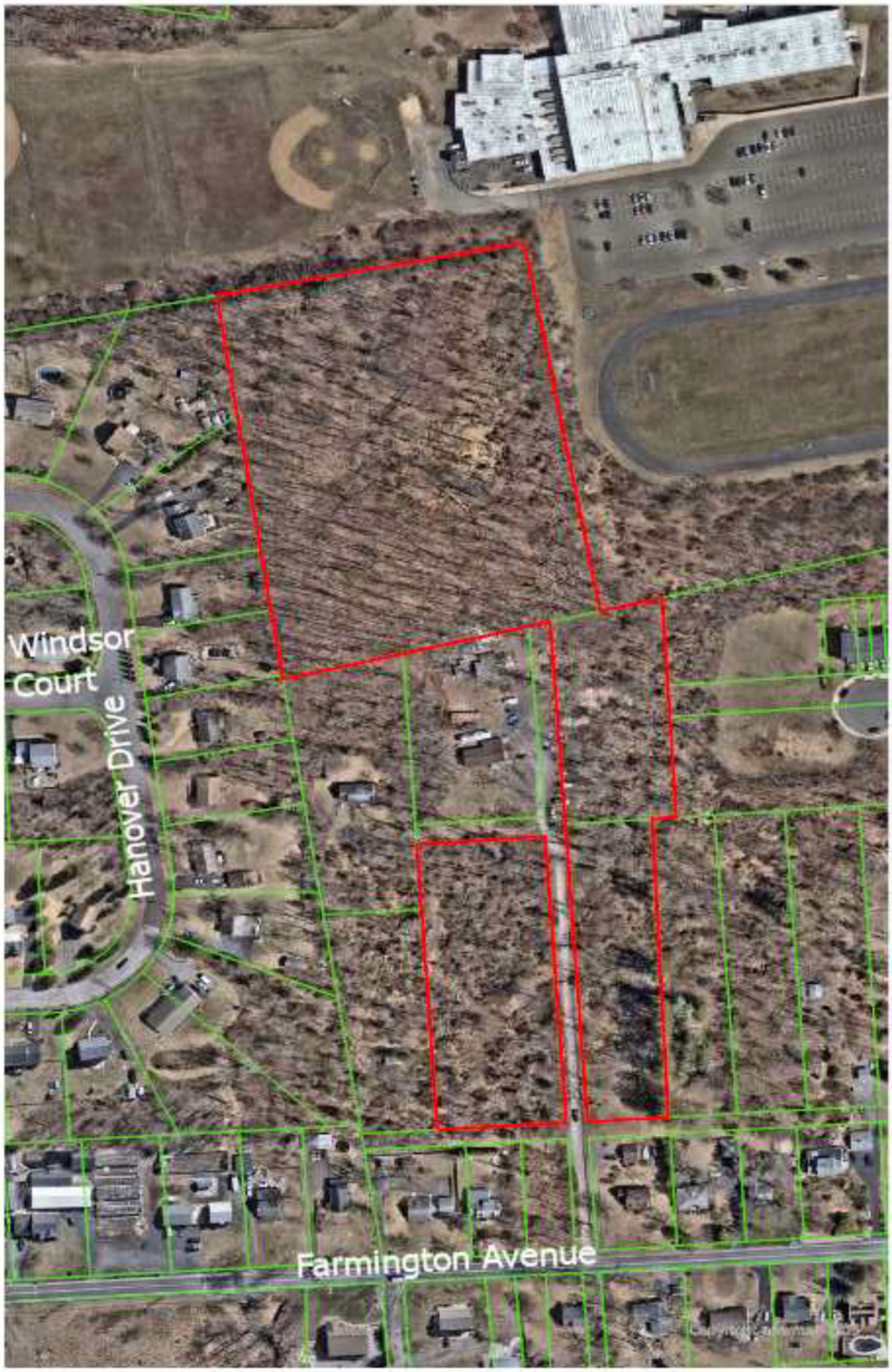
Should the governing body approve a final plat of this proposal, the applicant must present the plan to our office for seal and signature before recording with the Recorder of Deeds office. A paper copy bearing the municipal seal and signature of approval must be supplied for our files.

Sincerely,

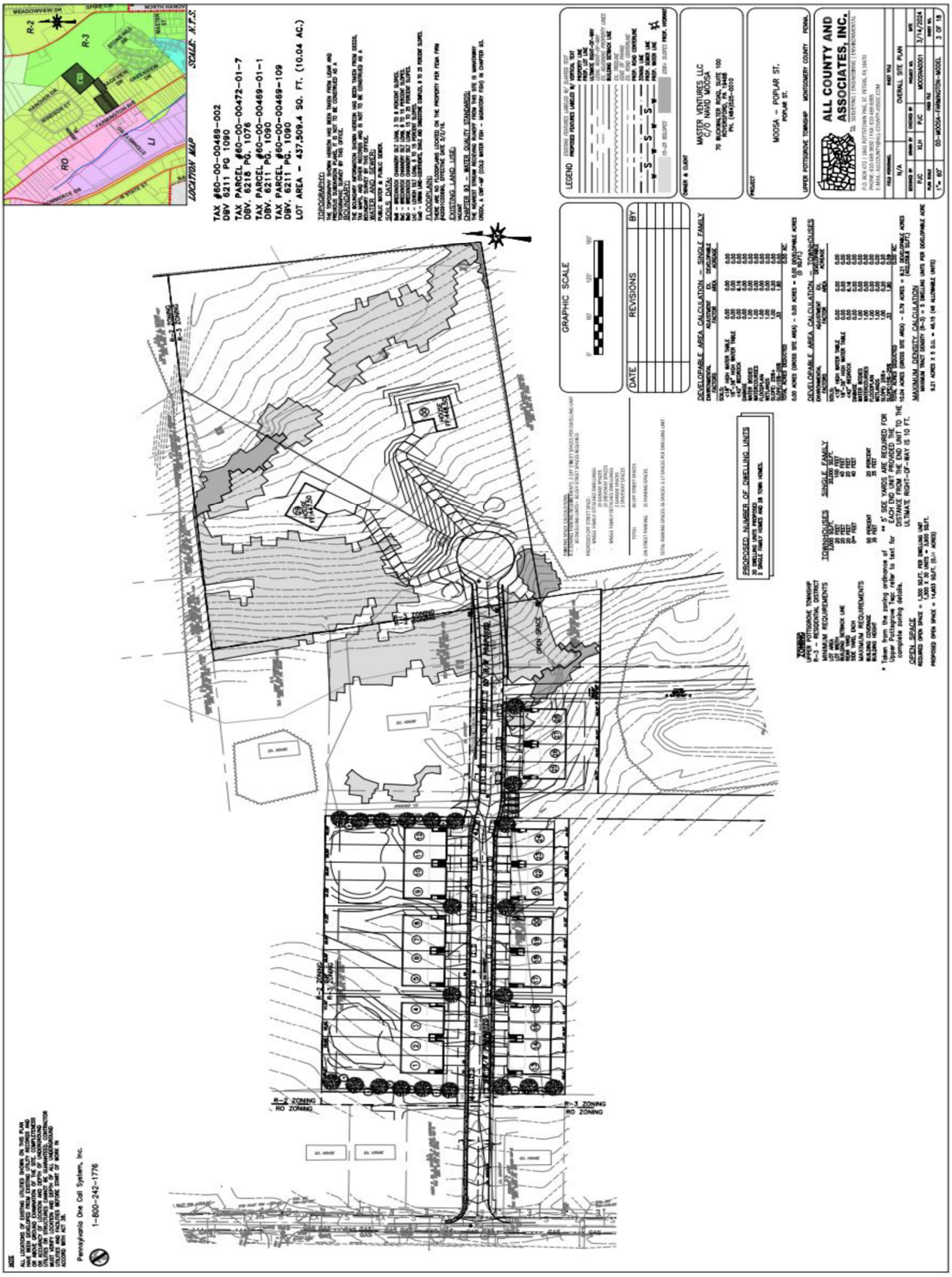
Kevin Chavous, ASLA, SITES AP, LEED AP, WELL AP, CNU-A, AICP CUD
Design Planner
610.278.3731 e mail kevin.chavous@montgomerycountypa.gov

c: All County and Associates, Inc., Applicant's Engineer
Michelle L. Reddick, Township Manager
Pete Eisenbrown, Township Engineer
Eric C. Frey, Township Solicitor

Attachments: Aerial View of Site
Reduced Copy of Applicant's Plan



Moosa - Poplar Street
MCPC#250072002


LOCATION MAP
SCALE: N.T.S.
TAX #80-00-00489-002
DBV 6211 PG 1090
TAX PARCEL #80-00-00472-01-7
DBV. 6218 PG. 1076
TAX PARCEL #80-00-00469-01-1
DBV. 6211 PG. 1090
TAX PARCEL #80-00-00469-109
DBV. 6211 PG. 1090
LOT AREA = 437,509.4 SQ. FT. (10.04 AC.)
TOPOGRAPHY:
SOILS DATA:
CHAPTER 93 — WATER QUALITY STANDARDS
FLOODPLAIN:
LEGEND
OWNER & CLIENT
MASTER VENTURES, LLC
C/O NAVID MOOSA
70 BUCKWALTER ROAD, SUITE 100
ROYERSFORD, PA 19468
PH. (484)580-6010
PROJECT
MOOSA - POPLAR ST.
POPLAR ST.
UPPER POTTSGROVE TOWNSHIP MONTGOMERY COUNTY PENNA.
ALL COUNTY AND ASSOCIATES, INC.
GRAPHIC SCALE
DATE
REVISIONS
BY
DEVELOPABLE AREA CALCULATION — SINGLE FAMILY
DEVELOPABLE AREA CALCULATION — TOWNHOUSES
PROPOSED NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS
ZONING
OPEN SPACE
MAXIMUM DENSITY CALCULATION
R-2 ZONING
RO ZONING
R-3 ZONING
RO ZONING
OVERALL SITE PLAN
3/14/2024
3 OF 18
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