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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

August 18, 2025

Ms. Lisa Hiltz, Administrative Manager
Borough of Pennsburg
76 West 6th Street
Pennsburg, Pennsylvania 19468

Re: MCPC #25-0157-001
Plan Name: Perkiomen School- New Student Center- Amended Plans
(4.53-acre development within the 75.5-acre campus)
Situate: 200 Seminary Street
Borough of Pennsburg

Dear Ms. Hiltz:

We have reviewed the above-referenced subdivision and land development proposal in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on July 30, 2025. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Mark Devy, Head of School, The Perkiomen School, has submitted for review an amendment to a previously reviewed subdivision and land development plan. The planning commission reviewed the initial development of the 20,690-square foot Student Center in a letter to the borough dated January 21, 2020. The submitted plans propose the construction of three pickleball courts, a hardscape/play area, and associated stormwater management facilities. Additionally, various greening improvements are proposed to the campus with the planting of over 40+ trees and shrubs along the walkways connecting the center to other campus destinations. The plan shows the removal of existing impervious surfaces and the realignment of walkways. The amended plans do not show any changes to the footprint of the new Student Center which appears from aerial photography to be well into construction.

The development tract is Tax Parcel #15-00-02095-00-5 and is situated in the INST-District (Borough-Institutional). The development of these recreational areas is situated immediately southeast of the Hollenbach Middle School building and west of the school's new Student Center that appears from aerial photography to be under construction. The 4.53-acre development site is situated in the southeast portion of the school's 75.50-acre campus and is located at the Pennsburg Borough and Upper Hanover Township boundary. The Perkiomen School received a 2017 Montgomery Award from the county for it's creative planning vision and the school's sustained commitment to growth and sustainability.

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) has reviewed the 'Amended Plans' – Hardscape for the Student Center. We generally support the submission; however, we have identified several site design and landscape plan concerns in our review that we recommend the borough consider. These are discussed below.

REVIEW COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATION

1. Arrangement of the Pickleball Courts: The three proposed pickleball courts are shown with only an approximate 7- to 8-foot setback from the school building immediately to the north. Pickleball play can be a noisy activity, and the applicant should consider whether this will disrupt classrooms or school activities next to the courts. There does appear to be adequate room to shift the footprint of the courts 25 feet to the south, along the borough's boundary with Upper Hanover Township.

2. Landscape Plan Comments:

   a. Larger Native Shade Tree Species are Needed to Replace the Columnar European Hornbeam - We recommend that the applicant use large canopy, eastern-North American shade tree species in the large open areas of the campus and along the walkways rather than the proposed 13 Columnar European Hornbeam trees. Using this number of the columnar tree in a campus setting along the pathways is a missed opportunity to benefit from the shade and the natural diversity that large canopy trees provide. We recommend the applicant remove the columnar European Hornbeam to use the larger canopy trees, as recommended. Suggestions include the following: Swamp White Oak, (Quercus bicolor); Willow Oak (Quercus phellos); White Oak (Quercus alba); 'Princeton' American Elm. (Ulmus americana 'Princeton').

   b. Landscape Plan and Schedule Omissions - We note there are several inconsistencies and omissions in the Landscape Plan and Plant Schedule that should be addressed during Preliminary Plan review. For example, there is a plant labeled 'CO' on the Landscape Plan but it is not listed in the Plant Schedule. Additionally, the 'Halka' Tilia cordata is in the Plant Schedule but does not appear to be labeled in the Landscape Plan. The applicant should address these issues and ensure the submitted plans are presented correctly for the borough's review.

3. Site Plan Details Sheet: There are several details that are missing and needed to understand the materials and profile of what is proposed the 'Hardscape/Play Area". The material and construction section details are needed to evaluate their appropriateness for the proposed activities in the play area. Several other elements do not have labels; however, it appears that a seat wall surrounds the 'Hardscape/Play' area and if it does, then a section detail is needed.

4. Arrangement of the Play Area adjacent to the 'High-Voltage' Area: We are concerned with what appears to be the repositioning of a +/- 25-foot x 25-foot play area adjacent to what is called out as a 'High-Voltage' Area as shown on the Site Plan (Sheet #05/14). There appears to be adequate open areas well away from this concern for the relocation of play activities. We recommend that the applicant consider another location for the play area.

5. Proposed Stormwater Management Facilities: We note that the proposed stormwater management will be addressed by underground detention. We view this as a missed educational and landscape design

opportunity in which students could witness the benefits of using native shrubs and appropriate grasses and perennials in an above-ground, bioretention swale or similar facility. This facility could be used in both biology and other studies as an outdoor laboratory for relevant classroom work and serve as a landscape amenities for the campus.

CONCLUSION

We generally support the proposed the 'Amended Plans' for the new Student Center and recommend the borough address the above review comments to your satisfaction.

Please note that any comments and recommendations contained in this report are advisory to the municipality and final disposition and 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 be aware that the MCPC number #25-0157-001 has been set aside for the applicant's plan. If any subsequent plans are submitted for final recording, this MCPC number should appear on the applicant sheets within the plans in the box reserved for the seal of this agency.

Sincerely,

Barry W. Jeffries

Barry W Jeffries, ASLA, Senior Design Planner
610-278-3444 - bjeffrie@montgomerycountypa.gov

c: Mark Devey, Perkiomen School, Applicant
Zachary Ranstead. Applicant's Representative
Kim Squiccimara, Chrp., Boro. Planning Commission
Mark A. Hosterman, Esq., Boro. Solicitor
John Secherman, Boro. Engineer
Anne Klepfer, Mgr., Upper Hanover Township

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

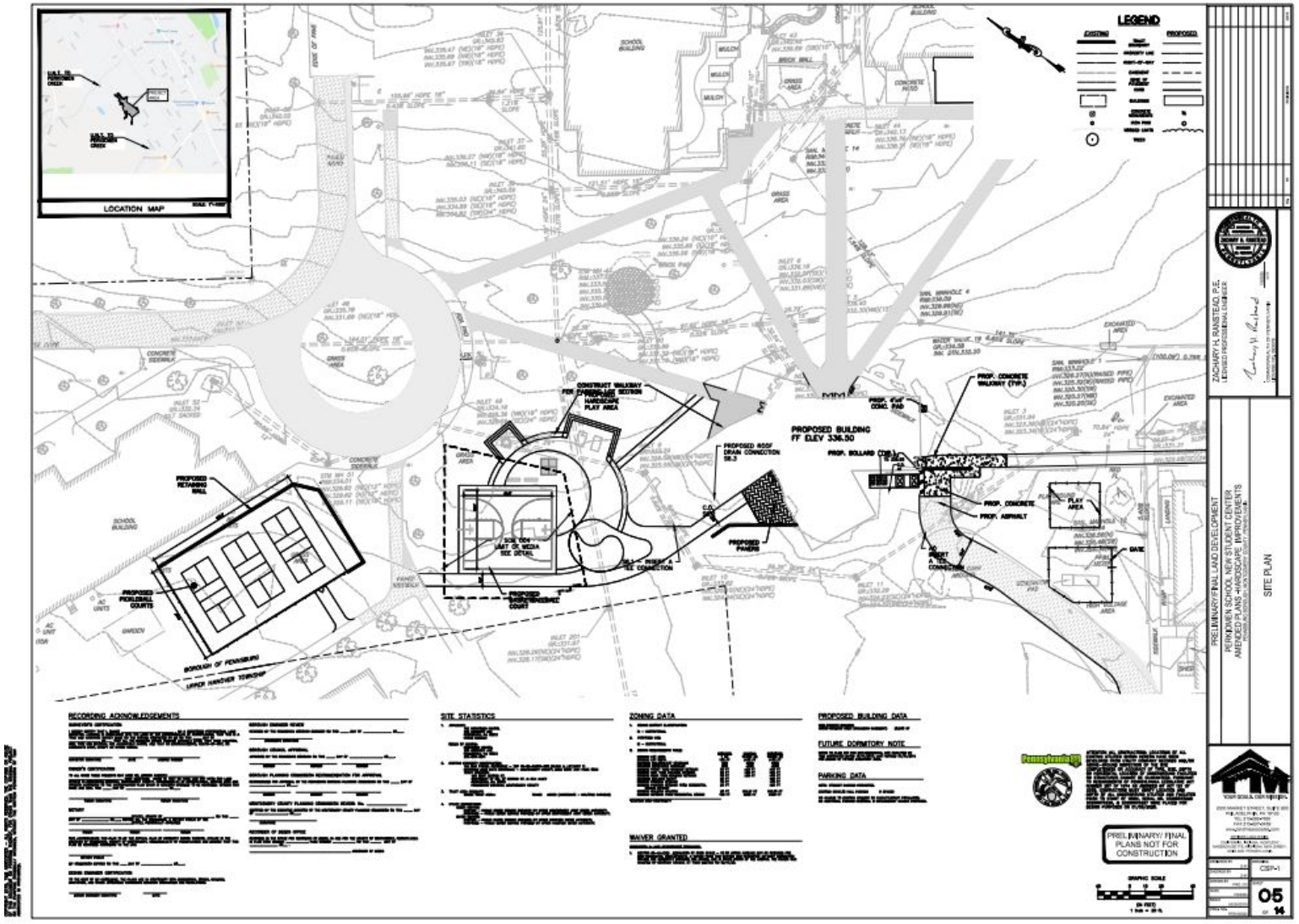


The Perkiomen School
MCPC#250157001

Montgomery County Planning Commission

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LEGEND
LOCATION MAP
PROPOSED BUILDING
FF ELEV 336.50
PROP. CONCRETE WALKWAY (TYP.)
PROPOSED RETAINING WALL
PROPOSED PICKLEBALL COURTS
PROPOSED BASKETBALL COURT
PROP. CONCRETE
PROP. ASPHALT
PLAY AREA
GATE
BOROUGH OF PENNSBURG
UPPER HANFORD TOWNSHIP
RECORDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
SITE STATISTICS
ZONING DATA
PROPOSED BUILDING DATA
FUTURE DORMITORY NOTE
PARKING DATA
WAIVER GRANTED
PRELIMINARY/ FINAL PLANS NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION
ZACHARY H. RAMSTEAD, P.E.
PRELIMINARY/FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT
PENNSBORO SCHOOL NEW STUDENT CENTER
AMENDED PLANS + ACCESSORY IMPROVEMENTS
SITE PLAN
05