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Planning Commission

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Scott France, AICP
Executive Director

August 11, 2026

Ms. Jaime Snyder, Borough Manager
Hatfield Borough
401 South Main Street
Hatfield, Pennsylvania 19440

Re: MCPC #26-0190-001
Plan Name: Laudenslager Senior Apartments Phase I
(114 dus/2 lots comprising 4.69 acres total)
Situate: North Main Street between Fairgrounds Road and West School Street
Hatfield Borough and Hatfield Township

Dear Ms. Snyder:

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 July 10, 2026. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Elon Affordable Housing, LLC, has submitted a Preliminary/Final land development plan for the redevelopment of the former Biblical Theological Seminary School to an age-restricted senior multifamily residential use and the construction of two additional age-restricted senior multifamily buildings on the site. The subject tract is bisected by the municipal boundary between Hatfield Borough, with 1.46 acres comprising County Parcel ID 09000122805, and Hatfield Township, with 3.23 acres comprising County Parcel ID 350002215009. The land development plan proposes 114 rental apartment units for seniors 55+ across 3 multifamily buildings, 127 off-street vehicle parking spaces, internal access drives, sidewalks, landscaping, utilities, and stormwater management facilities. The site is served by public water and sewer. The Hatfield Borough parcel is located within the R-1 zoning district.

The land development plan proposes an age-restricted senior multifamily residential use that is not permitted in Hatfield Borough's R-1 zoning district. The developer previously received a special exception from the Zoning Hearing Board on July 13, 2022 to change the use from one nonconforming use (a seminary) to another nonconforming use (age-restricted senior multifamily residential housing). The special exception was granted with specific conditions and has since expired. Hatfield Borough's

Zoning Hearing Board is set to review the developer's request to renew and extend the zoning relief an additional year on September 24, 2026.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) credits Hatfield Borough and Hatfield Township for working together to move forward with this affordable housing project which supports additional housing choices for qualifying individuals ages 55 and older. Our plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*, recognizes housing affordability as a significant countywide issue and encourages municipalities to expand the range of housing choices available to residents of different ages, incomes, and household types.

The proposed plan is generally consistent with the County's Plan, and, in particular, its objectives to support growth and development in appropriate areas with existing infrastructure. The proposed land development is located within a "designated growth area" per the Growth and Preservation component of the county comprehensive plan. Our Future Land Use Map categorizes the proposed development site as a "Suburban Residential Area". The plan recommends that denser and more compact development should occur in Suburban Residential Areas that are next centers with significant non-residential development, as is the case with the applicant's proposed multifamily development which is in close proximity to Hatfield Borough's Core Commercial area.

The proposed land development is also consistent with Hatfield Borough's draft 2045 Comprehensive Plan, which recommends locating larger multifamily developments near major roads and commercial areas in the "Residential Conservation" future land use category.

RECOMMENDATION

MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal; however, in the course of our review we have identified the following issues that the applicant and Hatfield Borough may wish to consider prior to final plan approval. Our comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

ZONING ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE

A. Age-Restricted Senior Multifamily Residential Housing. Hatfield Borough's R-1 zoning district does not permit multifamily residential housing. The plan indicates that a variance has been requested to permit a multifamily use in the R-1 zoning district. As the site currently contained a previously nonconforming use, the former Biblical Theological Seminary School, in 2022 the developer requested a special exception to change from one nonconforming use (the seminary) to another nonconforming use (age-restricted senior multifamily residential housing). The special exception was granted pursuant to § 27-703.B(2) by the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) on June 13, 2022 with nine specific conditions. The special exception for the new nonconforming use has since expired and the applicant should clarify on the plan whether they have requested a variance to the use requirement or to renew and extend the special exception previously approved, as is my understanding from

Hatfield Borough staff that renewing and extending the special exception is set to be reviewed by the ZHB on September 24, 2026.

B. Off-Street Parking Requirements. One of the ZHB's conditions for granting the special exception to permit a nonconforming use change in 2022 was that the parking must meet the requirements set forth in Hatfield Borough's zoning code. § 27-1002 outlines the required off-street parking capacity for each use. The applicant's proposed development could be considered a multifamily use where one parking space is required for studio apartments and two spaces are required for every unit, or a retirement community where one parking space is required per dwelling unit. Given that the proposed development is age-restricted multifamily residential housing for Seniors 55 and over, the lesser requirement of one parking space per dwelling unit would be appropriate. Senior housing tends to have one vehicle per household, as is proposed for this development.

PARKING ISSUES

A. Vehicle Encroachment. Parking spaces adjacent to the sidewalk do not include concrete wheel stops or other measures to prevent vehicle overhang. Without such measures, parked vehicles may extend onto the sidewalk, partially obstructing it, reducing the available pedestrian clear width, and potentially affecting ADA-compliant access. The applicant should demonstrate how the required sidewalk width will be maintained free of vehicle encroachment.

B. Parking Allocation and Designation. The plan should clearly identify and designate parking spaces intended for residents, visitors, and on-site staff or property management personnel. Differentiating these parking areas helps ensure that adequate parking remains available for each user group and reduces the potential for conflicts between residents, guests, maintenance personnel, and management staff. Designated visitor parking can improve convenience for guests and service providers while helping to prevent visitor vehicles from occupying spaces needed by residents. Similarly, reserving spaces for management and maintenance staff can support efficient site operations and ensure that personnel have reliable access to the property when responding to resident needs, performing routine maintenance, or addressing emergencies. Clearly identifying these spaces on the plan can also assist property management with parking enforcement and long-term parking management.

C. Building Access "Proposed Building #2" / ADA Parking Spaces. The plans indicate that the accessible parking spaces are separated from the "Proposed Building #2" building entrance by an access drive. While a marked pedestrian crosswalk is proposed, additional measures should be considered to enhance visibility and pedestrian safety at the crossing location. Given that the route will be used by individuals with mobility impairments, the crossing should be clearly delineated and designed to maximize driver awareness through appropriate signage, pavement markings, and other traffic-calming measures as warranted. The applicant should demonstrate that the accessible route provides a safe, direct, and convenient connection between the accessible parking spaces and the building entrance while minimizing pedestrian-vehicle conflicts.

D. Proposed Electric Vehicle (EV) Parking Spaces. The plan designates four proposed electric vehicle spaces and three parking spots as potential EV-convertible spaces near "Proposed Building #1." We identify two issues: how these EV-reserved spaces will function and whether EV charging infrastructure will be added in the future.

If EV charging spaces are reserved exclusively for electric vehicles, those spaces may remain vacant during periods when few EVs are present while conventional vehicles are searching for parking. This can reduce the functional efficiency of a parking lot, particularly at apartment complexes, where parking demand may be high.

The plans should clarify the intended operation and management of the proposed electric vehicle parking spaces. Specifically, the applicant should indicate whether the spaces are reserved exclusively for electric vehicles, or available for general parking if not occupied by an EV. Consideration should also be given to "EV parking" signage, enforcement, user access, and future demand to ensure that the spaces function as intended and do not create parking inefficiencies or conflicts among residents, employees, or visitors.

Although charging stations are not currently planned, the applicant should also discuss with municipal officials the possibility of installing EV charging facilities in the future. If such facilities are planned, the applicant should demonstrate that there is sufficient space and infrastructure to install charging equipment, including charger placement, electrical connections, equipment protection, and pedestrian pathways. Future charging stations should be positioned and designed to avoid conflicts with sidewalks, accessible routes, parking operations, and landscape features. Addressing these considerations early in land development can help prevent future site modifications and ensure that EV charging facilities, if added later, are integrated safely and efficiently.

E. Parking Lot Greening. Several parking rows contain long uninterrupted runs of parking spaces without interior landscape islands. The applicant should evaluate opportunities to introduce additional planting islands throughout the parking lot, even if doing so reduces the overall parking supply. Interior landscape islands provide important aesthetic, environmental, and functional benefits by reducing the visual impact of expansive paved areas, creating locations for shade trees, mitigating heat buildup, improving stormwater management, and enhancing the pedestrian experience. Additional landscape islands would contribute to a greener parking lot design and help balance vehicular accommodation with site sustainability and overall development quality.

CIRCULATION ISSUES

A. The use special exception granted by the ZHB in 2022 provided a condition that the site's proposed driveway providing access to Main Street be limited to one-way access into the Subject Property or for Emergency Access Only. The proposed plan shows a two-way driveway at this location and throughout the entire site.

B. Loading/Unloading/Delivery Functions. The plans lack designated loading/unloading areas for deliveries, service vehicles, or short-term drop-offs. It is recommended to provide adequate on-site facilities to avoid blocking access drives, parking, or pedestrian routes. Without dedicated spaces, routine activities such as package and food deliveries may occur in parking areas or along drives, causing conflicts with vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The applicant should revise plans to include clearly marked off-street loading areas that allow safe vehicle access without obstructing parking or pedestrian routes.

C. Pedestrian Safety. The proposed stormwater detention basin includes proposed 3:1 side slopes that directly abut a sidewalk and pedestrian circulation area adjacent to "existing Building #1."

While 3:1 slopes may be acceptable from an engineering standpoint, their proximity to a pedestrian route raises safety concerns. The relatively steep embankment may increase the risk of slips, trips, and falls, particularly during wet weather, winter conditions, maintenance activities, or when the basin temporarily conveys or stores stormwater. The applicant should consider additional safety measures, such as fencing, guardrails, a landscaped buffer, a widened separation area, or flatter side slopes adjacent to pedestrian facilities, to enhance user safety and create a more comfortable and forgiving environment.

D. Proposed Access to Adjacent Properties. The submitted plan depicts an existing vehicular connection from the subject tract to an access driveway that traverses across adjacent properties (County Parcel ID 09-00-01630-00-8, Lands of Morasco, and County Parcel ID 09-00-01225-00-8, Lands of Pletscher). While interconnected access can improve circulation and enhance emergency access, the borough should confirm that adequate legal mechanisms are in place to ensure continued long-term use of the connection. The applicant should provide documentation demonstrating that a recorded cross-access easement exists or propose a cross-access agreement that establishes perpetual access rights and identifies maintenance responsibilities. The applicant should also evaluate whether the connection can safely accommodate anticipated traffic volumes and whether future development of either adjacent property could adversely affect the continued operation of the shared access arrangement.

E. Highway Occupancy Permit. Because the property fronts Main Street (PA Route 463), a roadway under PennDOT jurisdiction, the applicant should contact PennDOT District 6 to determine whether a Highway Occupancy Permit, an amended permit, or other access approval is required for the proposed redevelopment and change in use. The existing driveway locations alone across the frontage of the subject tract do not necessarily exempt the project from PennDOT access permitting requirements.

OPEN SPACE ISSUES

A. Outdoor Amenity Area. The proposed residential development does not appear to include any designated common outdoor open space, gathering areas, or resident amenities such as seating areas, courtyards, plazas, pocket parks, or similar features. Outdoor amenity areas provide opportunities for passive recreation, social interaction, and community building, while enhancing the overall livability of residential development. The absence of such spaces may limit residents' opportunities to gather, recreate, and enjoy usable outdoor areas on the site. The applicant should consider incorporating a centrally located, readily accessible amenity area designed for active and/or passive recreation, which may include features such as benches, landscaping, walking paths, lawns, plazas, or other improvements that serve future residents. This recommendation is consistent with planning best practices that encourage the use of common open spaces as focal points for community interaction and resident enjoyment.

CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant’s zoning changes, but we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve Hatfield Borough’s planning objectives.

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 (26-0190-001) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,



Adam Schantz, Community Planner
adam.schantz@montgomerycountypa.gov – 610-278-3722

c: Elon Affordable Housing, LLC, Applicant
T & M Associates, Applicant's Engineer
Katie Vlahos, Assistant to the Manager, Hatfield Borough
Ryan Giatto, Code Enforcement Officer, Hatfield Borough
Scott Hutt, Assistant Township Manager, Hatfield Township
Eric Jarrell, MCPC Community Planning Manager

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

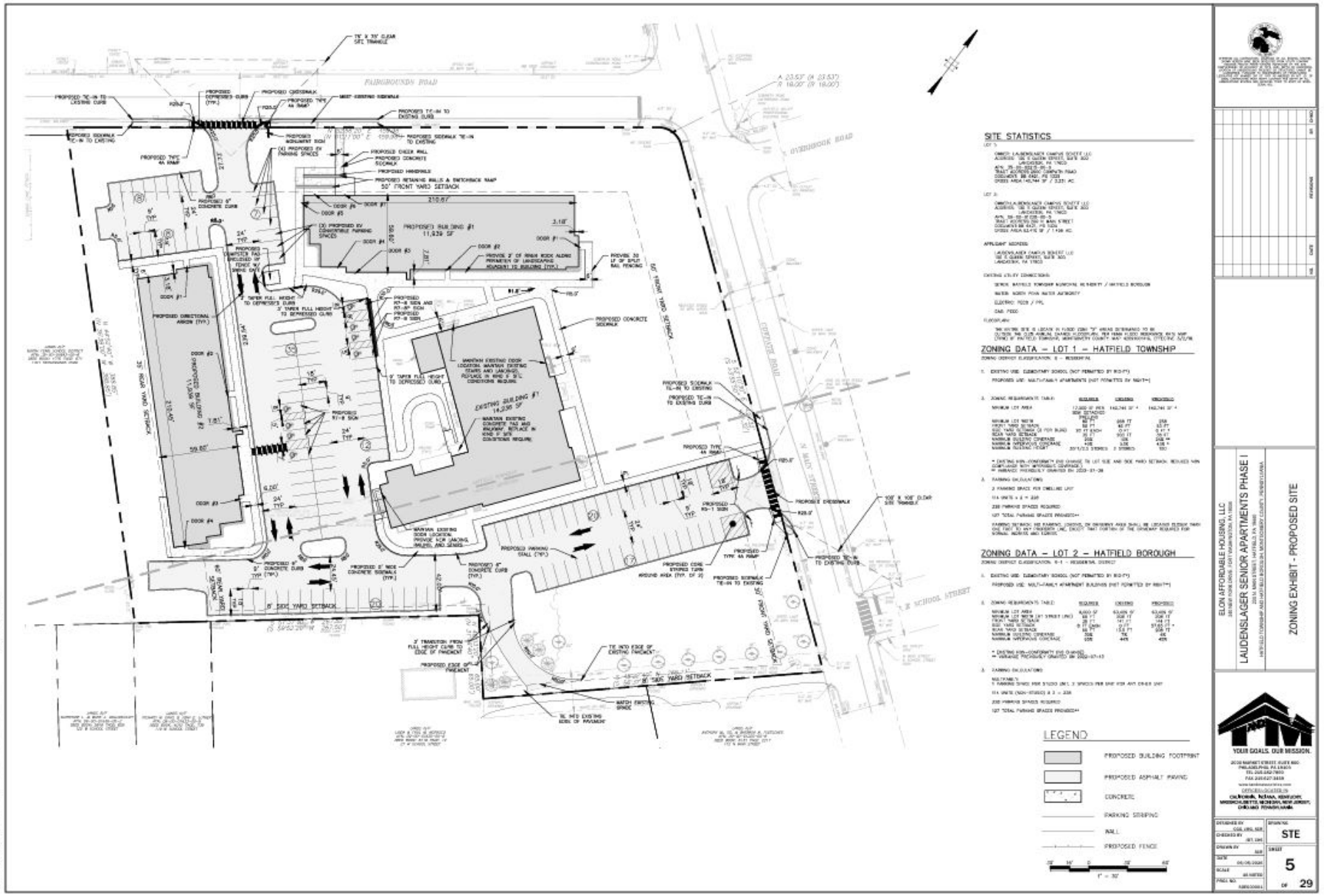


Laudenslager Senior Apartments
MCPC#260190001

Montgomery County Planning Commission

0 50 100 200 Feet

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FAIRGROUNDS ROAD
OLDBROOK ROAD
CENTER SCHOOL ROAD
SCHOOL STREET
PROPOSED BUILDING #1
11,939 SF
EXISTING BUILDING #1
14,295 SF
50' FRONT YARD SETBACK
8' SIDE YARD SETBACK
SITE STATISTICS
ZONING DATA – LOT 1 – HATFIELD TOWNSHIP
ZONING DATA – LOT 2 – HATFIELD BOROUGH
LEGEND
PROPOSED BUILDING FOOTPRINT
PROPOSED ASPHALT PAVING
CONCRETE
PARKING STRIPING
WALL
PROPOSED FENCE
1" = 30'
ELON AFFORDABLE HOUSING, LLC
LAUDENSLAGER SENIOR APARTMENTS PHASE I
ZONING EXHIBIT - PROPOSED SITE
YOUR GOALS. OUR MISSION.
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OF 29