

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
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**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION**

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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Wednesday, October 13, 2021

SUBJECT: Springfield Review of Completed Land Developments for SALDO Design Standards

**TO: Springfield Township Planning Commission
Mark Penecale, Planning Director;**

FROM: Aaron Holly, Community Planner

Planning Commissioners,

In advance of our meeting next week I have prepared another review of selected land developments for our discussion prior to working on updating the design standards article in the SALDO. The purpose of this review is to examine recently completed land developments in the township to discuss potential improvements to design elements regulated in the ordinance. For our meeting next week we will review the following developments and I have attached a document that contains some notes and suggestions to be utilized during our discussion.

Selected Land Developments to Review

Springfield Elementary (Early Learning Center)
Springfield High School Improvements
Springfield Manor Development
1300 Bethlehem Pike

As an appendix to the document I have also included some example SALDO design standards language based on some of the conversation topics from our previous meeting including, alternative parking lot landscaping standards, standards for trails and pathways within land developments, and standards for landscaping of stormwater management areas. I will also be preparing a power point presentation to help facilitate the meeting with images of the developments and notes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Holly', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Aaron Holly, Community Planner
aholly@montcopa.org
610-278-3748

Springfield Township School District Early Learning Center (Paper Mill Rd/Montgomery Ave)

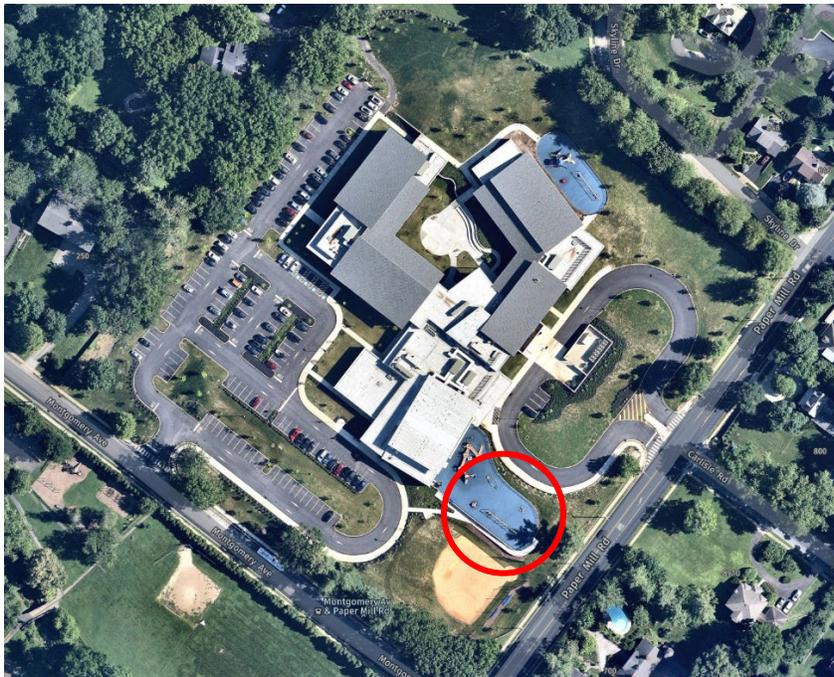
Plan: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=16nxl5HJoAijnZyqZ6yIDm-1d3aXxeWuU>

Review Letter: https://drive.google.com/open?id=17S6fSsJVP99Feq7_DF704Qyy7rJ_8Yw

Background: The existing structure on the site was demolished and replaced with the new building housing a new early learning center (k-2) for the Springfield Township School District.

Pedestrian Amenities

- Sidewalks: Maintained existing sidewalks around site and improved crosswalks across access drives.
- This project also generally has good internal sidewalks and connections around the school site and parking lot. This is something that is not currently mentioned/required in the current SALDO, but could be added. Possible language includes: “Provisions for pedestrian safety within a parking lot shall be required by providing sidewalks, delineated crosswalks, traffic calming devices, and other measures.”
- County review letter requests the sidewalk to continue from play area to bus loop to further improve internal pedestrian circulation. This suggestion does not appear to have been implemented based on current aerials of the site.
- Development maintained easement and trail connection at the rear of the school to Yeakel Avenue



Suggested sidewalk connection not implemented in final design

Landscaping

- This site received a number of partial waivers from SALDO landscaping requirements including street trees, parking lot landscaping, and parking lot and property screening.

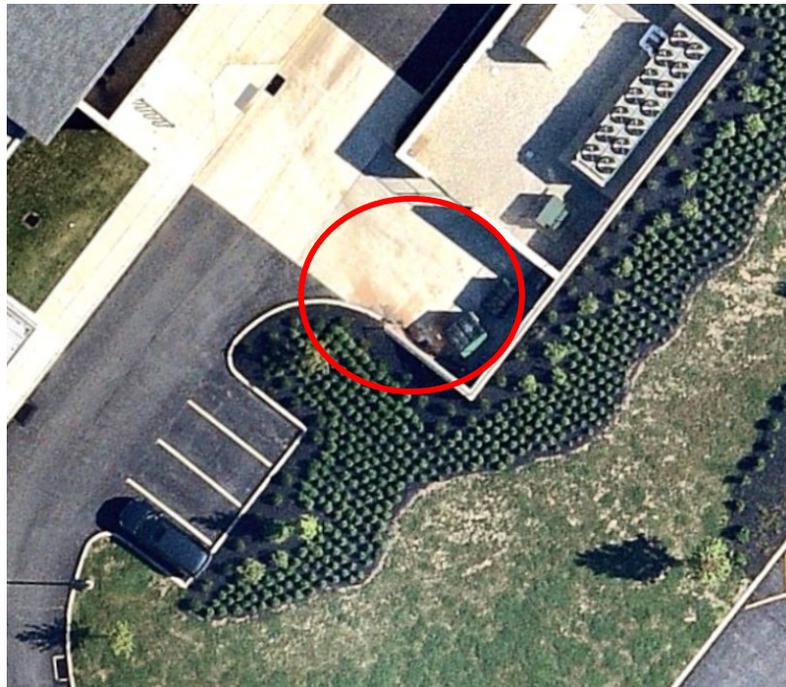
Other

- While visually screened from the road, the dumpsters on site within the bus loop do not appear to be fully enclosed. This is something we could consider adding to ensure that the entire perimeter is screened from view.
- Example language for this includes:
 1. *“Landscape and screening buffers shall be required in the following locations:

 - a. *Around the entire perimeter of the following land uses and site elements, in order to mitigate their visual impacts:

 - i. *Site- or ground-mounted elements:

 1. *Dumpsters, trash collection or disposal, recycling areas, and mechanical equipment”****



Dumpster area not screened from building

Waivers Granted	
SALDO Section	Description
95-11.1.1	Partial waiver from property line screening buffer
95-11.1.2.b	Partial request from number of required street trees
95-11.1.3.b.1	Partial waiver request from internal parking area landscaping
95-11.1.3.a	Partial waiver request from parking lot screening requirement

Springfield Township School District High School Renovations (Paper Mill Rd)

Plan: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EGgmQjVO6sce1U1IUGvgbFWVqih1QEpf/view?usp=sharing>

Review Letter: https://drive.google.com/open?id=17Z_2cR4TmHYio0AfFcZIGIplN6P8uomH

Background: A gym was added to the existing school and the development also included updates/additions to playing field surfaces on campus as well as a relocation of the main parking area and entrance driveway.

Pedestrian Amenities

- Sidewalks: Maintained existing sidewalks around site and improved crosswalks across access drives.
- County review letter suggests extending curb island into the crosswalk in the new access road. This suggestion was not implemented into the final plan, but the image below shows an example of this from the Early Learning Center.



Opportunity to extend island into crosswalk to enhance pedestrian safety not done as recommended in County Review letter. Example of this provided on the right from the new Early Learning Center



Crosswalks improved at pedestrian path connecting to middle school

Landscaping

- Similar to the comment from the Early Learning Center, this site also received waivers for parking lot landscaping. As discussed at our meeting on October 5th, this is not unusual for redevelopment sites in more developed municipalities like Springfield. We also discussed alternative parking lot landscape requirements which could be implemented into the SALDO update to increase flexibility and move away from more prescribed requirements. Example language for parking lot landscaping to consider is provided in the Appendix at the end of the document.

Waivers Granted	
SALDO Section	Description
95-11.1.3	Partial request from parking landscaping requirement

Springfield Manor (Pennsylvania Avenue)

Plan: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=17qNEQ4yie39e264eYwzpVGEvaWiiYVbi>

Background: A 50 unit townhome development with access off of Pennsylvania Avenue. A new road, Hawkswell Circle, provides internal circulation off Oreland Mill Road.



Aerial View of Site

Pedestrian Amenities/Circulation

- The developer received a waiver from providing sidewalks on both sides of the new street although they do provide a sidewalk connection to the trail through Piszek Preserve.
- Was there any consideration for a crosswalk or pedestrian crossing linking the trail on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue with the trail on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue? A two formalized pedestrian crossings would create a safe pedestrian access from this development to the Oreland Train Station via the trail network and existing sidewalks.
- The development contains two private cul-de-sacs although there were no opportunities for additional street network connections at this site.
- This land development also incorporates a trail similar to the Penn Manor subdivision reviewed at the October 5th meeting. Example language for trail connections within land developments is provided in the Appendix at the end of this document.

Landscaping, Open Space, and Stormwater Management

- **Open Space:** This land development included the preservation of open space along Sandy Run Creek. The SALDO currently does not contain any provisions for the maintenance/ownership of open space. There are currently provisions for this within the zoning ordinance, but I recommend incorporating these provisions by reference in an “open space” section in the updated SALDO or potentially moving these fully into the SALDO.

- This development has better landscaping features around some of its stormwater management facilities. The images below show examples of the landscaping around the facilities at the front of the property off of Pennsylvania Avenue and at the rear of the property adjacent to the rail line.



View of existing stormwater management facilities. This development features better vegetation around stormwater management features and should be codified in the SALDO

Waivers Granted	
SALDO Section	Description
<u>95-10.I</u>	Partial waiver for sidewalks. Sidewalks were only provided on one side of the street to connect to the proposed trail system
<u>95-10.A</u>	Waiver to allow existing cartway width of 23'-24' to remain
<u>95-11.I.1.c</u>	Partial waiver for screening and softening buffer required quantities
<u>95-11.I.1.b</u>	Partial waiver for street tree requirement quantities for Orleand Mill Rd., Sandy Run Court, and Valley Court
<u>95-11.I.11.c</u>	Waiver for tree replacement requirement. Reforestation plan was provided as supplement.

1300 Bethlehem Pike

Plan: https://drive.google.com/file/d/19bPLUGyK3JI5FaNUie8qhmp_OluTtoag/view?usp=sharing

Review Letter: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/19XTZtPdDU38wXiZLIHSdwPIsjoMGytxy/view?usp=sharing>

Background: This land development demolished the existing one story commercial structure and constructed a 3 story, 3,200 square foot mixed use building containing office space and apartments on the third floor. This site received variances for providing less than the required parking and for permitting a multi-use building in the B-2 Business District.

Pedestrian Amenities

- Development greatly improved pedestrian safety through removing large curb cut from existing auto-repair business and adding sidewalks and landscaping.
- Sidewalks were improved along the street at front of property. A small grass verge was created around the utility poles. This was mentioned at the October 5th meeting but we could add in standards for sidewalks and verge areas to create consistency in new land developments, particularly along commercial corridors such as Bethlehem Pike.

Building/Site Layout

- New building brought up to the minimum front yard setback line creating a more pedestrian friendly/less auto oriented development. Parking was also moved to the side and rear of the new structure.

Landscaping

- In the image below there appears to be minimal screening from the front yard of the neighboring single family lot. Were additional screening features such as a fence or more landscaping considered here?



Should there have been additional screening between the parking area and adjacent home?

Before and After Images of 1300 Bethlehem Pike Development



Waivers Granted	
SALDO Section	Description
95-11.1.11.a	Tree removal restrictions (permitted to remove trees that did not meet standards in the SALDO)
95-10	Curb radius less than 5 feet for a one-way egress onto McCloskey Road

Appendix

Example SALDO Language for Trails and Pathways

- A. When a subdivision or land development includes an existing or a proposed trail with public access customarily used by pedestrians, bicyclists, and/or equestrians as delineated in the municipality's adopted open space or recreation plans, the applicant shall make provision for the continued recreational use of the trail subject to alterations of the course of the trail within the boundaries of the development under the following conditions:
 - 1. The points at which the trail enters and exits the tract shall remain unchanged.
 - 2. The proposed alteration will not diminish the trail design and function.
 - 3. Where an existing trail runs coincidentally with the paved road intended for use by motorized vehicles, landscaping and other physical structures shall be used to increase the separation between the trail and the road.
- B. Trail widths shall be as follows:
 - 1. Multi-use trails shall be twelve (12') feet wide with a cleared area of five (5') feet in width on either side.
 - 2. A pathway for walking or bicycling shall be a minimum of six (6') feet wide with a cleared area of two (2') feet on either side.
- C. The Township may require, as a condition of Final Plan approval, the guarantee of public access and improvement of trails when the site is traversed by or abuts an existing trail or a trail proposed in an adopted open space or trail plan of the county, municipality, or adjacent municipality.
- D. When existing developed parcels adjacent to a proposed subdivision or land development allow for dedicated public access through a defined area for the purpose of connecting to a county or municipal trail, this connection should be continued through a dedicated public access way to serve the proposed development.
- E. When a subdivision or land development lies adjacent to a park, school, or other pedestrian destination, pedestrian connections should be made to that destination.
- F. All trails and pathways shall be constructed before occupancy of residences and other buildings adjoining the trail.
- G. When trails are intended for public use, they shall be protected by a permanent access easement on the properties on which they are located. The width of the protected area in which the trail is located shall be a minimum of twenty (20') feet. The language of the easement shall be to the satisfaction of the Board of Commissioners upon recommendation of the Township Solicitor.
- H. Any of the methods cited under Section 406 concerning open space ownership may be used either individually or in combination, to own and perpetually preserve trail easements provided in fulfillment of this Article.
- I. Trails and pathways shall have adequate access for use by all residents of the development or, preferably, the general public.
- J. Trails shall be landscaped in accordance with the specifications described in Section 434. Landscaping shall help delineate the route of the trail and screen surrounding properties from trail users.
- K. The land area permanently designated for trails for public use may be credited toward any open space requirement as described in the Zoning Ordinance.
- L. No trail shall be designed with the intent to accommodate motorized vehicles except for emergency or maintenance access.

Example Language for Stormwater Basin and Natural Areas Planting Requirements.

Landscaping shall be required in and around all stormwater management basins and natural areas according to the following:

- A. All areas of stormwater management basins, including basin floors, side slopes, berms, impoundment structures, or other earth structures, shall be planted with suitable vegetation such as naturalized meadow plantings or lawn grass specifically suited for stormwater basins.
 - 1. Trees and shrubs shall be planted in and around stormwater basins if they do not interfere in the proper function of the basin and no trees are planted within thirty (30') feet of an outlet/drain structure, emergency spillway, or dam. A minimum of two (2) trees and ten (10) shrubs per 100' linear feet of basin perimeter shall be planted in and around the basin.
 - 2. Naturalized ground cover plant species, such as wildflowers, meadows, and nonaggressive grasses specifically designed for the permanently wet, intermittently wet, and usually dry areas of stormwater basins, shall be seeded in the floors and slopes of the basin and meet the following requirements:
 - a. The plantings provide a satisfactory continuous cover for all areas of the basin.
 - b. The plantings do not interfere with the safe and efficient function of the basin as determined by the [municipality] Engineer.
 - 3. Lawn grass areas may be sodded or hydro-seeded to minimize erosion during the establishment period. Once established, these turfgrass areas shall be maintained at a height of not more than six (6") inches.
 - 4. Stormwater basins shall be screened from adjacent properties using the buffer plantings standards according to Section 434.
- B. Additional vegetation shall be planted in natural resource protection areas including riparian corridors wherever existing trees do not meet the minimum tree planting requirements.
 - 1. Existing trees within natural resource areas shall be preserved and retained. Existing tree cover should be surveyed and inventoried to assess the need for any new plantings. Existing tree species included on the noxious/invasive plant species list, Appendix B, should be removed where conditions warrant.
 - 2. Planting Requirements.
 - a. New trees shall be planted at a minimum rate of fifteen (15') feet on center or one tree per 225 square feet in staggered rows or an equivalent informal arrangement within the riparian area.
 - b. New trees shall be a variety of sizes ranging from a minimum four (4') to five (5') foot branched whip to an approximate one and a half inch (1 ½") balled and burlapped planting stock.
 - c. New tree plantings shall be composed of native riparian tree species.
 - d. Tree plantings in riparian areas shall be located along the streambank to provide shade for the stream, soil erosion control and stormwater benefits, according to accepted stream bank restoration practices.
 - e. Trees planted in natural areas inventory sites should conform to the management requirements the Montgomery County Natural Areas Inventory.

Example Language for Flexible Parking Lot Landscaping Standards

- A. Interior parking lot landscaping standards. The following landscaping requirements are intended to promote shading and healthy vigorous growth of larger shade trees, shrubs, and ground covers, as well as to create generous physical space to accommodate rain gardens, or depressed absorbent areas for stormwater infiltration and detention within the parking lot. The internal parking lot landscaping shall be provided according to the following standards:
1. Minimum interior landscaping area requirements. The minimum required interior landscaping area of parking areas shall be a percentage of the total vehicle use area (VUA) on a lot, as indicated in the graduated requirements of Table X below. By way of example only, and not limitation, a proposed VUA of 20,000 square feet requires a minimum interior landscaping area equivalent to 8% of the VUA, which is 1,600 square feet.
 2. Interior landscaping areas shall be composed of planting islands and planting strips, within which are planting areas. The sum of the surface areas which are pervious and composed of planting soil with the required depth and composition as required in this chapter shall constitute the interior landscaping area.
 3. The minimum ground coverage and canopy coverage of planting material, as determined by the design canopy/ground coverage of the plant species proposed, shall be 85% of the designated interior landscaping area.
 4. The applicant shall provide the number and locations of planting areas, planting islands and planting strips, to satisfy the above requirements.
 5. The applicant shall also propose the number and species of plant materials to satisfy the requirements above, provided that a minimum of one shade or canopy tree is provided in a planting island or planting strip for each 300 square feet of interior landscape areas provided or fraction thereof. Such shade or canopy trees shall be distributed throughout the parking lot to ensure well-distributed canopy coverage of the vehicular use areas.

Table X: Interior Landscaping Requirements as Percentage of Vehicular Use Area	
Vehicular Use Area (VUA) (square feet)	% of VUA required as interior landscaping area
0 to 4,999	-0-
5,000 to 14,999	6%
15,000 to 49,999	8%
50,000 to 99,999	10%
100,000 to 149,999	13%
≥ 150,000	15%

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JODY L. HOLTON, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

August 24, 2017

Robert S. Dunlop, Zoning/Code Officer
Springfield Township
1510 Paper Mill Road
Wyndmoor, PA 19038

Re: 17-0170-001
Plan Name: Early Learning Center/School District of Springfield Township
72,000 sq. ft./11.5 acres
Situate: Paper Mill Road (W)/Montgomery Avenue (N)
Springfield Township

Dear Mr. Dunlop:

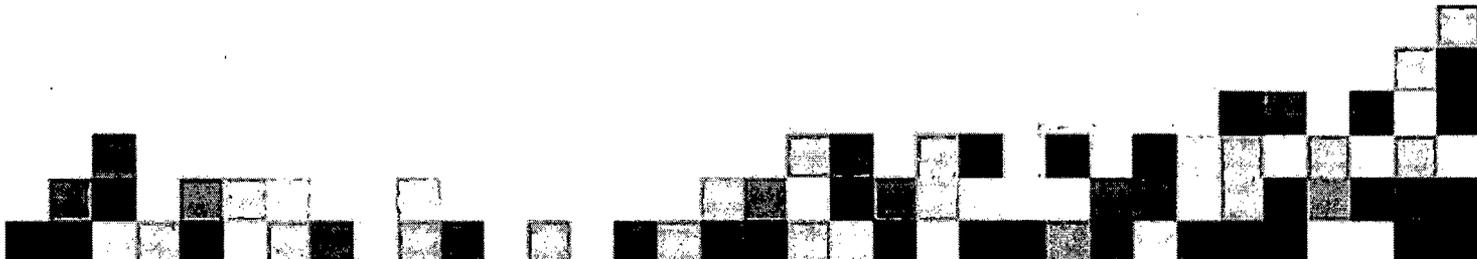
We have reviewed the above-referenced land development in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on July 21, 2017. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, the School District of Springfield Township (School District), proposes to demolish an existing two-story structure and build an Early Learning Center that will house students in Kindergarten through Grade 2. The proposed two-story structure is located within the Township's A and AA Residential zoning districts on the same site as the existing structure to be removed. Additional existing features to be removed include an asphalt driveway and three connected parking areas, two baseball fields, and approximately 60 mature trees.

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

PARKING LOT CIRCULATION

According to the plan, the Montgomery Avenue accessway permits vehicles to enter and exit the internal parking areas from either direction. Such a circulation pattern could create congestion, as vehicles stack from both directions. To remedy this, we recommend that traffic flow be limited to one direction around the parking island closest to the entrance/exit.

If one-way traffic is implemented in the lower portion of this lot, there may be additional opportunity to remove the drive lane on the western side of the circle, and consolidate the parking island with the vegetated area inside the traffic circle. Combining these two features would create an opportunity to extend the row of parking along the island while increasing the amount of green space in the parking lot.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

The plan identifies a path leading from the parking lot on the southern side of the building to the play area next to the baseball field. We suggest continuing this path to connect with the sidewalk adjacent to the bus loop for improved overall circulation for pedestrians.

LANDSCAPING

A. Parking Lot Buffers

Section 114-134.F. of the Township's Zoning Ordinance provides design requirements for parking lot buffers located along a property boundary to soften the visual and other impacts of non-similar adjacent uses. It appears that the landscape buffer proposed along the western boundary, adjacent to the Knox property, does not meet the required mix of vegetation defined for a perimeter screening buffer in Section 95-11.I. of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). We ask the Township to review the proposed landscape plan and confirm whether the proposed landscaping meets the screening buffer design standards of Section 95-11.I.

B. Parking Area Landscaped Islands

Section 95-11.I(3)(b)[1] requires 500 square feet of planting area in landscaped islands for every 10 parking spaces, "which shall contain at least two canopy trees, one understory tree, six shrubs and groundcover or mulch." The landscaped islands proposed include groundcover, trees and shrubs, but do not appear to distinguish between canopy and understory trees. We suggest that the Township consider whether the proposed landscaping in the parking islands meets the intent of the SALDO provision cited above, especially in regards to environmental benefits and site aesthetics. The Township may also want the applicant to confirm that the large island near the Montgomery Avenue accessway is sized appropriately to account for the 34 spaces in the northwest section of this parking lot.

PARKING SPACE SIZE

Section 114-134.C. of the Zoning Ordinance, Off-street parking and loading provisions, requires parking spaces to be "a minimum of 10 feet in width and 20 feet in length and designed to permit ingress and egress from the parking space without moving other vehicles." The proposed parking spaces are 9 feet in width and 20 feet in length. The Township should require the applicant to obtain a waiver in regards to this provision.

Additionally, the Township may want the applicant to clarify whether buses will be stored in this parking lot when not in use and the parking options for bus drivers' personal vehicles.

LAND FOR PARK OR RECREATION USE

Section 95-11.E. of the SALDO requires the applicant to dedicate land suitable for park or recreational use. As the property is owned by the School District, there may be an opportunity to allow the public to use the proposed playing field and walking paths. We ask the Township to consider whether such an agreement is desirable or feasible.

Alternatively, if public access for recreational purposes is not possible at this site, the Township may want to consider whether it would be appropriate to require a fee-in-lieu of providing public recreation space at this location, in accordance with Section 95-11.E(8).

DUMPSTER SCREENING

Two eight-yard capacity dumpsters are proposed to be located in the bus loop island next to the high enclosure wall surrounding the chiller and generator, however, it does not appear that the wall extends to enclose the dumpsters. Seven trees are proposed to aid with screening the enclosure wall and dumpsters. In order to more completely screen the dumpsters from being visible from the Paper Mill Road entrance, the Township may wish to request that the applicant further enhance this buffer, or enclose the dumpsters within a fenced or walled enclosure.

ZONING

The subject parcel is currently split-zoned as A and AA Residential. With the parcel's use being formalized as the site for a public school, and to be consistent with the other School District-owned properties, the Township may wish to consider rezoning this parcel to Institutional. This action is separate from the proposed land development, and may be considered in the future.

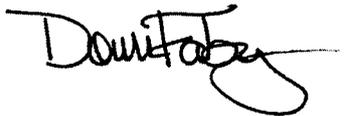
CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal, but we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve Springfield Township's planning objectives for institutional development along the Paper Mill Road corridor.

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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donna Fabry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Donna Fabry, Planner II
dfabry@montcopa.org
610-278-3638

c: School District of Springfield Township, Applicant
Kenneth Bissinger, Renew Design Group, Applicant's Representative
Donald E. Berger, Jr., Township Manager
Robert Gutowski, Chair, Township Planning Commission

Attachments: Site Aerial
 Site Plan



**Early Learning Center
School District of Springfield
170170001**

Montgomery County
Planning Commission
Montgomery County Courthouse - Planning Commission
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www.montcopa.org/planning
Year 1, 2016 aerial photography provided by the
Deane Valley Regional Planning Commission



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JODY L. HOLTON, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



August 30, 2017

Robert S. Dunlop, Zoning/Code Officer
Springfield Township
1510 Paper Mill Road
Wyndmoor, PA 19038

Re: 17-0171-001
Plan Name: Springfield Township High School
(18,621 sq. ft./43.58 acres)
Situate: Paper Mill Road (W) and Fraser Road (N)
Springfield Township

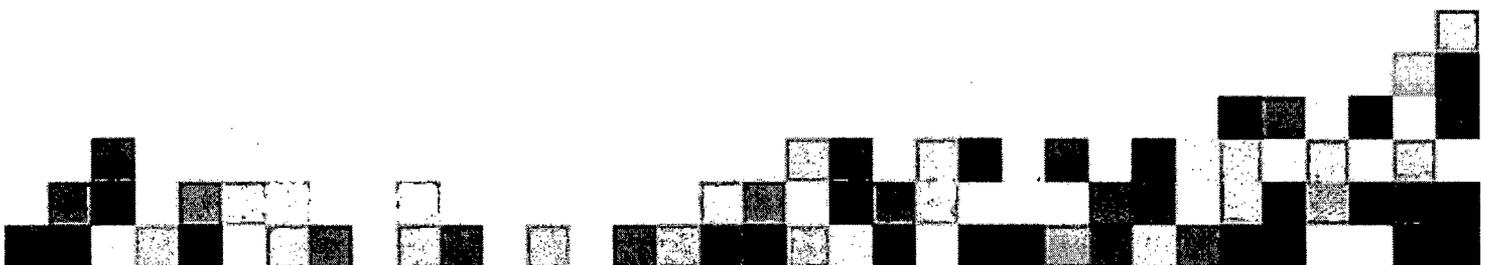
Dear Mr. Dunlop:

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 21, 2017. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, the School District of Springfield Township (School District), proposes an addition to the southeast corner of the existing building, which will be used as the gym. The facility is located within the Township's Institutional zoning district. Except for the football stadium/turf field located in the southern corner of the property, the entire site is being redesigned to accommodate additional playing and practice fields. The site currently features four baseball/softball fields, and four tennis courts. After the proposed improvements, the site will feature two baseball fields, two softball fields, five tennis courts, and a soccer/field hockey field, as well as the existing football field.

The entrance to the school and the main parking lot are proposed to be relocated to allow more direct access from the parking lot to the building. The existing driveway around the school building will be extended to allow circulation around the entire building. Two smaller parking areas will be reconfigured, including an extension of the existing drop-off circle to add two rows of parking and a vegetated island. In



addition to the fields to be relocated, additional existing features to be removed include the asphalt driveway and the main parking area, two baseball fields, and approximately 120 mature trees.

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

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING AT ENTRANCE

The crosswalk at the site entrance spans approximately 50 feet from curb to curb, as the proposed accessway features three lanes, including one entrance lane and two exit lanes. The design proposes an island between the right-turn and left-turn exit lanes. For the safety of pedestrians, including students, we recommend extending this feature into the crosswalk area to serve as a refuge island.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

A. Symbology

It is unclear from the existing Post-Construction Stormwater Management plan sheets (C8.0 through C8.3) whether the features symbolized with dots are infiltration areas. We encourage the Township to request that the applicant includes this symbology in the legend for these sheets.

- B. It appears that an island located at the rear of the building will serve as a stormwater management feature. We ask the applicant to clarify the specific type of stormwater management that will be at this location, and to confirm whether the existing tree will be able to remain without interfering with the functioning of the proposed system.

LAND FOR PARK OR RECREATION USE

Section 95-11.E. of the SALDO requires the applicant to dedicate land suitable for park or recreational use. As the property is owned by the School District, there may be an opportunity to allow the public to use the proposed playing field and walking paths. We ask the Township to consider whether such an agreement is desirable or feasible.

Alternatively, if public access for recreational purposes is not possible at this site, the Township may want to consider whether it would be appropriate to require a fee-in-lieu of providing public recreation space at this location, in accordance with Section 95-11.E(8).

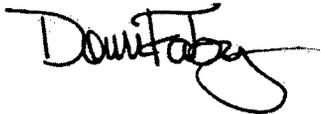
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c: School District of Springfield Township, Applicant
ReNew Design Group, Applicant's Representative
Robert Gutowski, Chair, Township Planning Commission

Attachments: Site Aerial
 Site Plan



Springfield Township High School
170171001

Montgomery County
Planning Commission
Corrinnston
Montgomery County Courthouse - Planning Commission
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JODY L. HOLTON, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

October 3, 2016

Robert Dunlop, Code/Zoning Officer
Springfield Township
1510 Paper Mill Road
Wyndmoor, PA 19038

Re: 16-180-001
Plan Name: 1300 Bethlehem Pike
(6,400 sq. ft./3 units, .6 acres, 1 lot)
Situate: Bethlehem Pike (E)/McCloskey Road (N)
Springfield Township

Dear Mr. Dunlop:

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 September 9, 2016. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Blake Development Corporation, proposes to demolish an existing 2,478 square foot, 1-story building and construct a 3,200 square foot, 3-story structure on a 25,905-square-foot lot in the B-1 Business District. The proposed structure will feature a mix of office space, totaling 6,200 square feet, and three apartments, located on the third floor. Other site features proposed for removal are: 2 concrete pads and existing asphalt parking lot, 1 storage shed, a light pole, and 4 trees and the arbor cluster located at the rear corner of the property along McCloskey Road. One variance has been requested in regards to Section 114-134A, the amount of parking required. Two waivers have been requested in regards to Section 95-11.1.11.a, Tree Removal Instructions, and the Land Development Checklist item for fire hydrants within 500 feet of the property.



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

REVIEW COMMENTS

PARKING

A. Parking Calculations

The Township should confirm whether the calculations identified on plan sheet 4 that reference the amount of residential parking required (3 spaces) are accurate. Section 114-134.A.1 of the Zoning Code requires two parking spaces for each housekeeping unit. We recommend that the numbers be updated to reflect an accurate count of the number of spaces for which relief is sought in regards to the pending variance request for Section 114-134.A.

B. Reserve Parking

The applicant and the Township should consider whether the option to implement reserve parking, as outlined in Zoning Code Section 114-134, may be suitable for this proposal. If the parking requirement seems excessive for the proposed uses, implementing a reserve parking area could provide an adequate amount of spaces needed at the present time, while also provide for a greater amount of stormwater runoff infiltration and groundwater recharge, with flexibility to expand based on future needs.

C. Handicapped-Accessible Parking Spaces

The 2010 update to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) increased the number of accessible parking spaces required for any parking lot alterations that take effect after March 15, 2012. This change in the law applies to state and local governments, as well as commercial facilities.

Based on the 2010 standards, this proposal is required to provide a minimum of two accessible parking spaces and a five-foot access aisle. Accessible spaces must connect to the shortest possible accessible route to the accessible building entrance or facility they serve. These requirements and other information regarding this law are available online at www.ada.gov. We strongly recommend that the applicant redesign the parking lot to include the parking spaces and aisles required by the ADA, including appropriate symbology to identify which parking spaces are to be designated as handicapped-accessible.

D. Parking Requirements

Based on the existing requirements for off-street parking identified in Section 114-134.A, this proposal is required to provide 35 spaces. The combination of the building footprint, internal

sidewalks, and parking spaces and lanes results in a significant amount of impervious cover on the site. We encourage the Township to consider the following two options that would help minimize the creation of excess impervious cover for development proposals, which aligns with the Township’s stormwater management goals.

Option 1 – The Township may wish to consider revising the number of parking spaces required for all use types. Under current requirements, this proposal must provide 1 parking space for every 200 square feet of office space, for a total of 32 spaces. The attached handout, “Surveyed Zoning Requirements for Off-Street Parking,” identifies existing standards that range between 0.08 to 1.33 spaces per 100 square feet, with the most common being 0.25 for office buildings and banks and 0.33 for business and professional services .

The table below provides examples of how the parking requirements above would apply to this proposal.

	Parking standard for office parking per 100 square feet	# of Spaces required for 6,400 square feet of office space
existing Township requirement	0.08	5.12
	0.25	16
	0.33	22
	0.50	32
	1.33	85

An alternative to parking requirements for office-related uses that are based on square footage is to establish standards that are calculated using the number of employees for the proposed use. However, as the number of employees may change with use, we recommend developing a standard based on the use type.

Option 2 – The Township could adopt a maximum impervious cover standard for all districts. Such a standard would apply to all impervious surface proposed for a given site, including the building footprint, driveways, parking lots, internal walkways, sidewalks and structural canopies.

The maximum building coverage requirements currently in effect are adequate for addressing the intensity of the building on the site. However, the addition of parking, sidewalks and other required amenities contribute to significant additions to the site’s impervious surface coverage. A maximum impervious cover standard would address the intensity of the entire development proposal.

FEE IN LIEU OF RECREATIONAL SPACE

Due to the lack of available space remaining on-site for recreational amenities, as required under Section 95-11E of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO), the Township may wish to consider that the applicant pay a fee in lieu of provision of recreational space, as provided for in Section 95-11E.8.

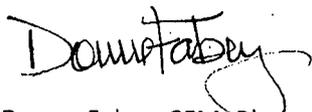
CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the applicant's proposal, but we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve Springfield Township's planning objectives for development along the Bethlehem Pike corridor.

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.

Sincerely,



Donna Fabry, CFM, Planner 2
dfabry@montcopa.org
610-278-3638

c: Blake Development Corp., Applicant
Ruggiero Plante Land Design, Applicant's Engineer
Robert Gutowski, Chairman, Township Planning Commission
Donald E. Berger, Jr., Township Manager

Attachments: Site Aerial
 Site Plan
 Surveyed Zoning Requirements for Off-Street Parking handout



1300 Bethlehem Pike
MCPC #160180001

Montgomery County Planning Commission

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This map was prepared by the
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission



