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Open Space & Stewardship
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MEMORANDUM

To: Zoning Board
From: Lauren A. Wasilauski, Open Space & Stewardship Director
Date: March 13, 2024
Re: BA-06-23: Stellar Land Assets
Block 35001 Lot 15 (316 Wall Street, Princeton)
Major Preliminary & Final Site Plan with Use Variance

This office has reviewed the following materials and offers the comments below:

- Plan set, prepared by D.S. Engineering, P.C., last revised 12/21/2023 (3 sheets) including:
 - Existing Features Plan
 - Site Plan
 - Existing Lighting Plan and Construction Details
- Topographic survey, prepared by EKA Associates, P.A., dated 8/9/2023 (1 sheet)
- Environmental Impact Statement, prepared by DuBois Associates, dated December 11, 2023
- Architectural Plans, prepared Ralph Finelli, last revised 8/21/2023 (6 sheets)
- Application package, date stamped 3/1/2024

A. Application overview

1. The Applicant proposes to develop the following:
 - a. Reuse of existing 2-story office building into automobile sales
 - b. Proposed 6' high aluminum fence
2. The property totals approximately 1.9974 acres, located in the Highway Commercial (HC) zoning district.
3. The Applicant proposes a new driveway to connect the subject property to the adjoining property to the south (lot 16).
4. No additional impervious areas are proposed.

B. Sidewalks and Pedestrian Circulation

1. Sidewalks are required on all public streets per Code Section 16-5.14C, with the exception of properties located in the MR zoning district:

“Except for all local, rural collector and scenic collector roads in the MR District, sidewalks shall be provided along all existing streets upon which all residential and nonresidential developments abut, unless specifically waived in certain locations by the reviewing municipal agency based upon good cause shown by the applicant, such as, but not limited to, the existence or proposal of alternate linkages for pedestrian movement and/or where other improvements are proposed to better facilitate the movement of people between the development and adjacent lands;”

2. No proposed sidewalks are depicted on the site plan and should be added.

C. Tree Planting and Landscaping

1. Tree Removal: It appears that no existing trees are proposed for removal. The Applicant should confirm this in their testimony.
2. Shade Trees: 14 trees per acre are required for residential and non-residential development per Township Code Section 16-5.6d.3. Any trees proposed to meet the buffering and street tree requirements (described below) do not count toward meeting the shade tree requirement.
 - a. Based on the total area of 1.9974 acres, the Applicant is required to plant 28 trees.
 - b. The application package does not list a requested waiver from this Section.
 - c. The Site Plan depicts three (3) proposed Pin oaks (*Quercus palustris*) along the property frontage of Route 206.
 - i. Pin oaks are susceptible to bacterial leaf scorch and another native species should be selected.
3. Street trees are required along all streets at 50' intervals (Township Code Section 16-5.6.d.15). The subject property has 200' of frontage and appear to meet this requirement. This office defers to the Board Landscape Architect to confirm this determination.
4. Landscape buffer screening is required by Code Section 16-5.6d.13.
5. Native plant species are required by Township Code Section 16-5.6d.5. This office defers species review to the Board Landscape Architect.

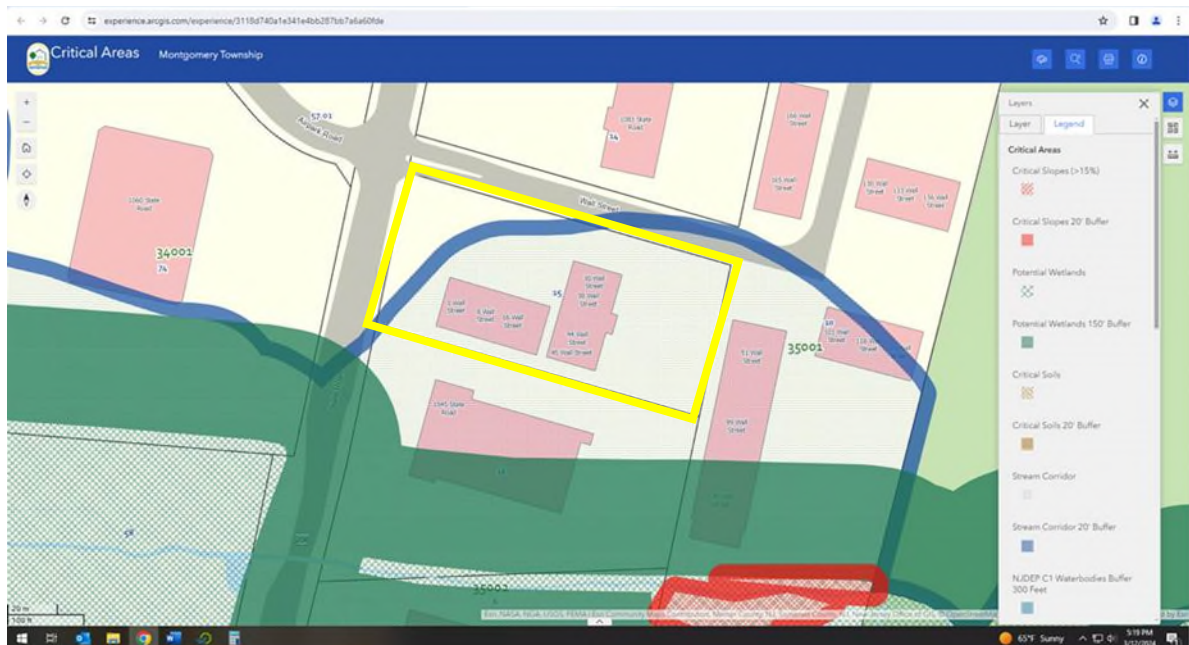
6. All plant materials must include a two (2) year guarantee as required by Township Code Section 16-5.6d.10:

“All plant material shall be guaranteed for at least two (2) years from the date of landscape inspection for approval and any plant material that does not survive within that time period or is in poor condition based upon the opinion of the Township Landscape Architect shall be replaced by plant material of the same size and species at the expense of the developer.”

7. The Applicant should add deer protection to the tree and shrub protection. The Open Space Committee and Shade Tree Committee have the best outcomes when using 4' high weld wire fencing and wooden stakes around each plant.

D. Critical Areas

1. The Applicant's plans indicate an area of Township stream corridor at the rear of the property (southeast portion). However, Township mapping indicates the majority of the lot is encumbered with stream corridor (see screen grab below). It is the understanding of this office that the Applicant's engineer utilized field elevations to determine the extent of the stream corridor, as opposed to using the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The Applicant's engineer should provide testimony for the record regarding this matter.



Subject property outlined in yellow. The blue line indicates the 20' buffer beyond the stream corridor, which is denoted with blue stipple (difficult to see at this scale). According to this mapping, a majority of the lot is impacted by the Township stream corridor.

2. This office encourages the Applicant to reduce lot coverage from the existing 88.89% or to provide on-site stormwater mitigation measures such as rain gardens, porous pavement, underground detention, additional tree planting, etc.
 - a. Montgomery increasingly faces flooding during storm events, and the Applicant's lot coverage of 88.89% is a contributor to stormwater runoff.

E. Lighting

1. Sheet 3 indicates that some of the proposed lighting fixtures, specifically the wall-mounted "W2" fixture will be 5000K in color temperature.
2. The Applicant should switch this fixture, and any others, to utilize fixtures with a color temperature no greater than 3000 kelvins, preferable 2700K or less.
3. All lighting should be directed in a downward fashion and use shields to minimize glare and spillover into surrounding properties, and to direct the light to where it's most needed.



4. The impacts of too much light at night (particularly “blue” or short wavelength lighting) have been documented to negatively impact human health, as well as wildlife and insects.
 - a. Princeton University’s Office of Sustainability recently released a short documentary detailing these negative impacts:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FW0WZX75Nmo>

F. Electric Vehicles

1. The Applicant’s plans do not appear to include electric vehicle charging stations which are required by Township Code Section 16-5.21.