



Berks County Services Center | 633 Court Street, 14th Floor Reading, PA 19601- 4309
Phone: 610.478.6300 | Fax: 610.478.6316 | Email: planning@countyofberks.com

*Jodi L. Gauker, Chairwoman | Christopher J. Spohn, Vice-Chair | Lisa Weaver, Secretary
Miguel Herrera | Glenn R. Knoblauch | James C. McCarthy, P.E.
Thomas C. McKeon, AICP, CEcD | Lee C. Olsen, AIA, NCARB | David H. Turner
David N. Hunter, Sr., AICP, Executive Director | David N. Peris, Assistant County Solicitor*

August 30, 2023

New Morgan Borough
Ashlynn Whittingham
200 Bethlehem Drive, Suite 102
Morgantown, PA 19543

Re: Southern Berks Industrial Park
File #: 77-10579
Plan #: 21006308A (42 Sheets of 42)
Dated: 7/12/23
Prop ID #: 56 5321-01-26-0269,
56 5311-02-66-2348, 56 5311-02-75-6895,
56 5321-02-65-7926, 56 5321-04-53-9257,
56 5321-01-267-6861, 56 5322-00-50-9426,
56 5321-02-69-5876 and 56 5321-02-88-1071

Dear Ms. Whittingham,

The Berks County Planning Commission staff has reviewed the Tentative Plan for Planned Residential Development (PRD) as submitted for the above captioned land development/subdivision. The tract is located along the east and west sides of Morgantown Road (S.R.0010), north of Harmony Road.

This plan is reviewed by the Berks County Planning Commission pursuant to Section 502 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The Commission staff has not evaluated the plan for compliance with local ordinances, unless so noted. The municipality must ensure that the plan meets local zoning, subdivision and land development requirements, and any other regulations. The following comments are added for consideration:

A. Conformity of the plan with the Berks County Comprehensive Plan:

The site is in Future Growth area, and an Environmental Hazard area. The Environmental Hazard area is identified within the area of the 100-year floodplain associated with Hay Creek and the Conestoga River within the site, as identified on the 2012 FEMA FIRM panels, and the Grace Mines Tailing Reservoir. No development is proposed within this area. The proposal for the Industrial Park and 10 single-family dwellings is consistent with the Berks County Comprehensive Plan 2030, however the Berks County Planning Commission does not agree with the proposal being developed as a Planned Residential Development (PRD) as it does not meet the intended use of a mixed-use development as described in Article VII of the PA Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247. Because the proposed development contains only ten (10) single-family dwellings along with nine (9) warehouses, in Staff's view, this is not a viable planned "residential" development.

Additional dwellings should be incorporated into this plan if it is to be a planned residential development.

B. Planning Comments:

1. The Berks County Planning Commission recommends that you call ahead for subdivision/land development plan endorsements. Please review the Plan Endorsement Checklist at <https://www.countyofberks.com/getmedia/a8b10557-c6c8-465d-9f28-cdaff56820ec/Checklist-for-Recording-asd.pdf> under the Planning Topics and the Subdivision/Land Development tiles prior to coming to the office. If you have any questions, please contact the Planning office at (610) 478-6300.

2. The site is adjacent to Caernarvon Township and Robeson Township. Both Townships should receive copies of all plans, related correspondence and reviews for its information and consideration and as a matter of courtesy.

Environmental Comments:

3. PennDEP and the US Army Corp of Engineers should review the proposal for applicable regulations and permit requirements for any wetlands and stream/creek encroachments.

4. The Hay Creek stream segments that cross the northern portion of the site have a designation of Exceptional Value Waters. The Pennsylvania Code Chapter 93 requires the Special Protection waters, those classified as High Quality (HQ) and Exceptional Value (EV) waters, to be maintained at their existing quality. We recommend that special protection be taken to avoid degradation of the stream quality if the lots are developed.

5. Drainage easements should be provided for streams or creeks, springs and watercourses within the site. Drainage easements should be based on the centerline of a moving body of water since its course can change slowly over a long period of time. Staff recommends PennDEP be contacted for appropriate size drainage easements for watercourses and wetland areas identified on the plan.

6. Preservation of a thirty-five (35) foot riparian buffer on either side of the stream within the proposed site is recommended. Maintaining this area as undisturbed is preferred and in the cases where areas are disturbed, replanting with native flora is recommended.

7. An Environmental Covenant that subjects the property to the activity and/or use limitations is located on the project site. The recorded Environmental Covenant document (recorded instrument #2008059786) is attached for review.

8. The site is in a core habitat area of the East Branch Conestoga River Headwaters NHA as identified in the County Natural Heritage Inventory (refer to attachment) and a portion of the site is in the Hay Creek Slope NHA core habitat area. We recommend that a Natural Heritage Inventory search be performed to ensure the proposal will not have an impact on the NHA sites.

9. Berks County is a federally designated non-attainment area for Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5) and is designated to attainment for Ground Level Ozone (O3). Stringent regulations are in place for maintaining and improving air quality. Staff strongly urges limitations on unnecessary (>5 minutes) truck idling and, if possible or applicable, locations for trucks with Auxiliary Power Units (APU's) to plug into grid-based power.

Transportation Comments:

10. The Plan must be reviewed by PennDOT under their current regulations and standards relative to access onto S.R.0010, staff is aware of the discussions between the

developer and PennDOT. Highway occupancy permit number(s) should be included on the plan for recording.

11. The borough should ensure that the proper procedure(s) are followed for any dedicated street vacation(s) associated with the project.
12. Staff has concerns that the string of buildings 5-8, buildings 7 and 9, and building 4 do not have a secondary access. Staff recommends that secondary accesses be provided.
13. By linking multiple sites with one main drive, the design effectively becomes a collector street. Staff recommends the main driveways accessing the string of buildings be designed to meet collector street design standards.
14. Proper internal traffic controls (i.e.- signage, line striping, etc.) should be provided with the final plan.
15. Ownership and maintenance responsibility should be addressed for the proposed access drives.

Stormwater Comments:

16. A portion of the site is in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The developer should take the appropriate measures with the proposed stormwater management system(s) to help with the Watershed's water quality requirements.
17. The borough should be satisfied with the proposed stormwater management design prior to plan approval. The proposal should meet applicable regulations of the borough's Stormwater Management Ordinance.
18. Consideration should be given to providing small BMPs (bio-retention areas, raingardens, green roof, etc.) to the final construction design of the site and water quality protection devices on inlets to protect groundwater and surface water from contamination from the facilities operations.

General Comments:

19. Erosion and sediment control measures where required under Title 25, Pennsylvania Code, Chapter 102, Rules and Regulations of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, shall meet standards and specifications of the Berks County Conservation District. The Berks County Conservation District should approve the erosion and sediment control plan prior to final plan approval.
20. The local fire official(s) and EMS should review the plan relative to fire protection/emergency issues.
21. The developer should ensure that applicable Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements are met.
22. The local sewer authority and water authority/company should review the proposal relative to public sewer and water supply needs.
23. Final plans should provide a complete Source of Title with grantor/grantee information accompanied by corresponding date, deed book volume and page number or instrument number is preferred for recording purposes.
24. Consideration should be given to providing the current tract information for the parcels (example – Lot 23 listed on the plan is identified as Lot B on the most recent recorded subdivision plan for the tract; instrument # 2023007536).
25. If a subdivision is a part of the project, as it appears with lines provided on Sheet 2 of 42, the final plan should ensure all lines are delineated with bearings and distances and if residue lands exist with the new lot configurations, the entire tract should be delineated.

26. If the proposed warehouses are on individual parcels, consideration should be given to providing cross access easements along the main access drives.
27. The plan indicates that the access drive for buildings 1 and 4 cross a pipeline. The developer should ensure that the project is coordinated with the Sunoco Pipeline L.P.
28. Ensure adequate buffer screenings are provided between the warehouse sites and adjacent residential parcels.
29. The specifications for all proposed lighting should be shown on the final plan including the footcandle dispersion throughout the site as well as onto neighboring properties/dwellings and roadways. Proper lighting fixtures should be selected and shielded in such a way that maximizes the lighting effectiveness and minimizes nuisance factors for neighboring establishments and/or residences.
30. Landscaping and tree plantings are recommended where possible to reduce stormwater runoff, promote groundwater recharge and add aesthetics to the site.
31. With the number of proposed warehouses on the site, consideration should be given to providing for a safe truck rest/lounge, amenity, and service area(s), so drivers do not have to find an offsite area to park that can create a health and safety nuisance for drivers, property owners, municipalities, and the public.
32. A portion of the project site is in the Birdsboro Municipal Authority's surface water source water protection area. The developer should contact the Birdsboro Municipal Authority for additional information and/or further direction.
33. A portion of the project site is in the Caernarvon Township Authority's ground water source water protection area. The developer should contact Caernarvon Township Authority for additional information and/or further direction.
34. We recommend coordinating the project with the Berks Area Regional Transportation Authority (BARTA) with regards to service/vehicle routing service and bus stops/shelters.
35. Consideration should be given to providing bicycle racks in the parking areas at each of the proposed buildings.
36. The site is adjacent to the 'Joanna Furnace Complex' as identified in the Berks County Planning Commission's *Historical Resources Inventory*. The Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission has record of the site and it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Consideration should be given to how future development of the site will affect the viewshed of the historic site.

The Berks County Planning Commission will review any additional submission of this plan at the request of the municipality. After municipal approval of the plan for recording, **a minimum of one print should be delivered to the Berks County Planning Commission for signature.** Any additional copies for the municipality and the Subdivider or Developer will be stamped. The Berks County Recorder of Deeds Office should be contacted at (610) 478-3380 relative to any questions regarding recording requirements. The applicant has 90 days to record the plan after the governing body approves the plan at a public meeting.

PennDEP should consider this review as the Berks County Planning Commission's review of the Planning Module required under Act 537. Those persons responsible for preparing the Planning Module submission for PennDEP should include a copy of this review with the module submission. Municipalities are advised that subdivision and/or land development plans must be consistent with a DEP-approved planning module or official plan revisions or have been granted an exemption from planning by DEP prior to plan recording.

If there are any questions regarding this review, please contact me at (610) 478-6300 ext. 6305.

Sincerely,



Michelle D. Franklin
Planner III
Berks County Planning Commission

Attachments

cc: New Morgan Borough Planning Commission
New Morgan Borough Engineer
Morgantown Properties
Southern Berks Land Company, L.P
SBLC GP, LLC
PDC Northeast LPIV, LLC
Colliers Engineering and Design
PennDEP
Caernarvon Township
Robeson Township
PennDOT
Birdsboro Municipal Authority
Caernarvon Township Authority
Berks Area Regional Transportation Authority

