

August 5, 2019

David Boelker, Zoning Officer
Borough of Phoenixville
351 Bridge Street, 2nd FL
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Re: French Creek West, Preliminary/Final
Subdivision and Land Development Plan – 3rd Review

Project Scope: 551 Dwelling units, public parking lot
Applicant/Owner: French Creek TH, LP
Property Address: French Creek West
Parcel Numbers:

PLAN PARCELS (County Parcel Map)		
Parcel	Acres	Owner
15-8-5	1.50	Phoenix French Creek Manor
15-8-7	4.20	Phoenix French Creek Manor
15-9-77	36.40	Phoenix French Creek Manor
15-9-80	3.00	Phoenix French Creek Manor
15-9-79	0.06	Phoenix French Creek Manor
Total	45.16	acres
PARCELS WEST/SOUTH OF FRENCH CREEK		
15-8-10	7.20	Phoenix French Creek Manor
15-8-20	3.34	Phoenix French Creek Manor
15-8-30.2	2.14	Phoenix French Creek Manor
15-9-98	1.00	Phoenix French Creek Manor
Total	13.68	
TOTAL	58.84	acres

Tract Area: 58.84 acres (County parcel map) / 63.59 acres (Plan)
Zoning District: MG – Mixed Use Growth
CN: 1042.01.193A

Dear David:

We have reviewed the above-referenced plan composed of the following:

- Review Response Letter dated 7-25-2019
- French Creek West Preliminary/Final Plan Set, 81 sheets (revision date 7-25-2019)

We last reviewed this project in our letter of July 12, 2019.

Zoning Dimensional Standards

The project is in the MG-Mixed Use Growth zoning district which includes specific standards for Attached, Detached and Mid-Rise (60') building types. Residential building types are also permitted in the MG district, according to standards listed for the RI-Residential Infill zoning

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district. As stated in the MG district zoning chart (§27-307), the RI standards may be modified by up to 25% for application in the MG district.

Proposal

This submission includes

- 164 alley-loaded townhouses.
- 146 dwelling units within 7 clusters of “stacked” townhouses.
- The 240-apartment unit component of this plan has been removed from consideration with this submission.

Comments

Our comments below include those from our first – 09-06-2018 – review and our 07-12-2019 review. **New comments are shown in bold face.**

1. Public Open Space. As stated above, virtually all of the Public Open Space consists of lands adjacent to the Schuylkill River Trail. The plans need to show how these areas will be designed “for the use or enjoyment of the public.”

07-12-2019 review: The area designated for Public Open Space still only includes the Schuylkill River Trail and adjacent lands. The applicant’s response letter states that this area has now been improved with “additional benches, planting and lighting to enhance the area for the use and enjoyment of the public.”

This issue is resolved. The additional landscaping, seating, dog park and other site amenities work to better improve this area as “Public Open Space.” Who will maintain these amenities?

2. Landscape Plan. The plan includes some trees and shrubs in the alleys, which will help improve the character of these frequently neglected areas. But these plantings generally include only one or two trees within each group of townhouses. We encourage the applicant to provide additional trees and shrubs where feasible.

07-12-2019 review: We commend the applicant for revising the plan to include a much more aggressive and detailed landscape plan. We offer the following additional comments on this plan:

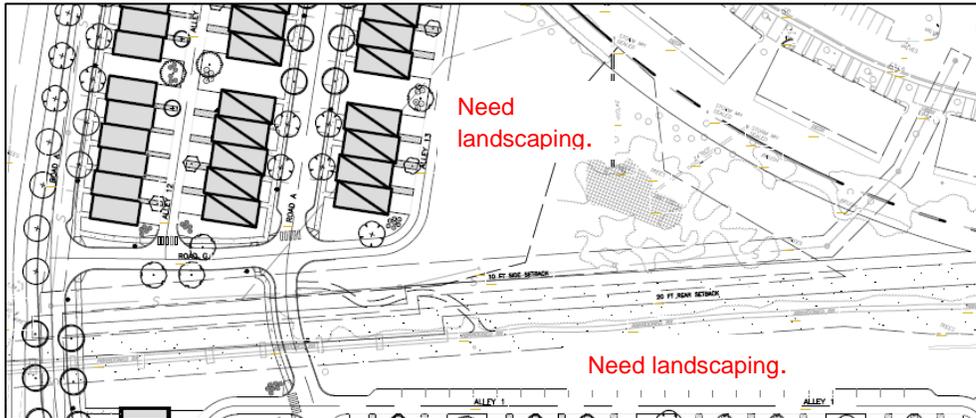
- a) Alleys. Additional landscaping could be provided along some of the single loaded, most notably Alley 1 and Alley 13. These areas are shown below.

This issue is resolved. Additional landscaping has been provided in these areas and the existing tree line/vegetation to be maintained is now shown.

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- b) Tot Lots. There are two tot lots shown on the plan in the SW and NE corners of the townhouse area. No landscaping, lighting or plan details are shown for these lots. At the SW tot lot, the walkway interface with the sidewalk along the main boulevard is not clear.

This issue is resolved. Additional landscaping and amenities (benches) have been added and fencing has been added where needed for safety. Lighting is not proposed to discourage night time use.

- c) Central Open Space. This area, which is shown in the image to the right, does not appear to have been fully designed at this point. Is additional landscaping and lighting proposed?

Resolved. This area is now fully designed.

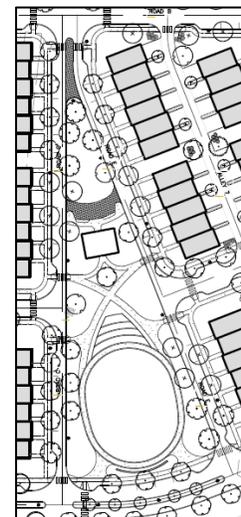
- d) East Open Space. How is this area proposed to be used? While there some landscaping shown at the east end of this park, we recommend that a plan for the rest of the area be prepared that includes some lighting.

Resolved. Additional landscaping has been provided and a lighting scheme is proposed to include photocell-controlled lights on the townhouses supplemented with "small-scale post mounted lights."

- e) Mail Station. There is one mail station shown in this "central park." Is this intended to service the entire townhouse area?

Resolved. Three mail stations are now provided.

- f) Dog Park. A dog park is shown along the SRT at the west end of the project. An access is shown from the SRT, but it is not clear how this park will be accessed from the development. Is the intent for this to be a dog park for the general public? There is no landscaping, benches or fencing shown for this park. What is the function of the "wood fence" shown along the SRT in this area?



Central Park

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Resolved. The existing wood fence will be removed, and new fencing proposed around the dog park. It is intended to be only accessed from the SRT.

g) Lighting Plan. There is not lighting shown in Tot Lots, the two parks or along the alleys.

Resolved. Lighting is not being proposed in the park areas to discourage nighttime use. Alley's will be lit with photocell-controlled lights on the townhouses.

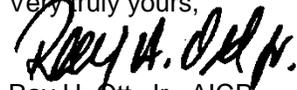
3. Apartment Area. While we acknowledge that this area is still being designed, we encourage the applicant to better integrate this area with the rest of the plan.

As indicated in the response letter, an open space area in the east end of the townhouse development has been reconfigured as a better transition to the apartment area. We encourage the applicant to pursue providing a vehicular connection between the townhouse and apartment areas.

The apartment area has been omitted and will be planned/developed in a future phase. We still encourage the applicant to pursue providing a vehicular connection between the townhouse and apartment areas.

Please feel free to call or email with questions or to discuss this review.

Very truly yours,



Ray H. Ott, Jr., AICP
Borough Planner

cc: Christy Flynn, Rockwell Development Group (christy@RockwellDevelopmentGroup.com)
Christopher W. Jensen, P.E., T and M Associates (cjensen@tandmassociates.com)