

May 21, 2020

**TO:** Planning Commission Members

**FROM:** Planning Staff, Building and Planning Department

**SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY SUBDIVISION PLAN – 255, Fairhill Road, Wynnewood, SD# 3855, Ward 5.**

**This application was submitted under the zoning in place prior to February 27<sup>th</sup> and is not subject to the new zoning code requirements.**

### Proposal

The applicant, Michael Freedman, is seeking Preliminary Subdivision Plan approval for the following:

- Subdivision of the existing property into two lots and demolition of the existing single-family detached dwelling. The plans show:
  - Lot 1 is proposed to be 17,179 sq. ft./0.4-acres and includes the construction of a new single family detached dwelling with a three-car attached garage and a 2,676 sq. ft. footprint. Additional improvements include a front porch, back porch, patio, an underground stormwater management system and a driveway extending from the existing driveway serving the dwelling at 255 Fairhill Rd.
  - Lot 2 is proposed to be 20,375 sq. ft./0.5-acres and includes the construction of a new single family detached dwelling with a three-car attached garage and a 2,676 sq. ft. footprint. Additional improvements include a front porch, back porch, patio, an underground stormwater management system and a driveway extending from the proposed dwelling to Fairhill Road.

The proposal is illustrated on the attached eight sheet plan set prepared by Momenee, Inc. dated January 17, 2020, last revised April 17, 2020. Also submitted were architectural renderings prepared by McIntyre, Capron & Associates, dated March 12, 2020 and a landscape plan prepared by Glackin, Thomas, Panzak dated January 17, 2020, last revised March 11, 2020.

### Property Description

This proposal was submitted under the former Zoning Code prior to the adoption of the new Zoning Code on February 26, 2020. As such, the subdivision plan is being reviewed for compliance under the former Zoning Code.

The 36,600 sq. ft. lot is located in the Township's R2, R3, and R4 Residence zoning districts across the street from the Lower Merion High School's outdoor athletic facility, Arnold Field. The property is currently improved with a one and a half story stone house that was constructed in 1950. The site is accessed by a driveway off Fairhill Road.



## Montgomery County Planning Commission Review

The County review letter is attached. The County indicated support for the applicant's proposed subdivision and recommended the construction of pedestrian sidewalks along the Fairhill Road frontage due to the site's proximity to destinations such as the Suburban Square shopping center and the Lower Merion High School, as well as the presence of sidewalks on nearby Kent Road. Staff has included a condition requiring the construction of a pedestrian sidewalk along the Fairhill Road frontage.

## Environmental Advisory Council

The EAC was provided the plan for their review. Staff has included a condition requiring the applicant to consider incorporating green technology into the project including but not limited to a green roof, solar panels, geothermal heat and air conditioning and an electric vehicle charging station. The applicant shall also consider having no natural gas connections.

## Zoning

This property is split zoned. The R4 zoning district extends along the westerly property line. The R3 zoning district extends through the center of the property and a small strip of R2 zoning is located in the southeasterly corner of the property.

The boundary tolerance provisions of the Zoning Code allows the less restrictive district to extend 50 beyond the zoning district boundary. As such, proposed Lot 1 which is located on the westerly portion of the property will adhere to the R3 & R4 zoning district standards which result in a blended bulk requirement. Proposed Lot 2, which is located on the easterly side of the property will adhere to the R3 zoning district standards.

While it is not applicable in this application, the current zoning of the property is LDR3.

The following table details the bulk, area and setback requirements for the existing and proposed conditions.

	<b>R4 Zoning District</b>	<b>R3 Zoning District</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Proposed Lot 1</b>	<b>Proposed Lot 2</b>
<b>Minimum Net Lot Area (sq. ft.)</b>	6,000	10,000	36,600	17,179	20,375
<b>Minimum Lot Width</b>	65'	75'	405.49'	93.33'	312.16'
<b>Maximum Building Area</b>	30%*	20%	12.3%	18.46% 3,127 sq. ft.	15.56% 3,172 sq. ft.
<b>Minimum Front Yard</b>	30'	40'	49.05' & 50.39'	49'	42'
<b>Minimum Side Yard</b>	8'	10'	32.25'	10'	10'
<b>Minimum Rear Yard</b>	25'	25'	60.75'	55'	42'
<b>Maximum Impervious Surface</b>	39%**	28%	21.5%	35.32% 6,068 sq. ft.	26.95% 5,492 sq. ft.
<b>Maximum Building Height</b>	35'	35'	<35'	35'	<35'
<b>Parking</b>	2 spaces	2 spaces	>2 spaces	2 spaces	>2 spaces

\*Blended maximum building coverage for Lot 1 is 28.85%

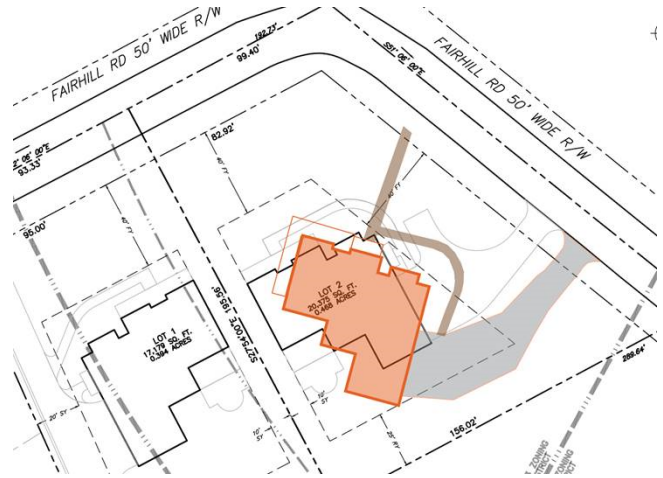
\*\*Blended maximum impervious surface for Lot 1 is 37.7%

## Issues

### 1. Siting & Orientation

#### House Placement on Lot 2:

Following the submission of the application staff recommended that the applicant consider reorienting the home and driveway on Lot 2, as shown in the below graphic, so that the garage would not be front loaded. The applicant stated that the applicant does not desire to reorient the house and related improvements. Staff has recommended a condition that requires the applicant to investigate revising the plan so that the garage is side loading garage and consistent with existing neighborhood pattern or providing a street screen, such as a low wall or hedgerow along Fairhill Road to screen the view of the front loaded garage from the street.



Walkways: Staff has included a condition that the proposed walkways extend from the home's entrance on the primary front façade to a sidewalk or public right of way, rather than to the driveway.

### 2. Sidewalks

The applicant has requested a waiver from [Section 135-28.A. of the Subdivision & Land Development Code](#) specifying that sidewalks shall be provided at any location where the Board of Commissioners shall determine that sidewalks are necessary for public safety or convenience.

The [Circulation Element of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan](#) establishes the planning framework to guide and ensure that future land development is consistent with the established community vision. The document establishes locations for prioritized pedestrian improvements based on the proximity to local destinations. The subject property falls within a **Priority 1 Area**, which means the property is located in easy walking distance of four major destinations.

Recommendation C8 is to “Implement the prioritized plan for bicycle and pedestrian improvements to create a complete network around schools, community facilities, public transportation nodes and commercial centers.”

This Google Street View image captured in October 2018 in front of 255 Fairhill Road illustrates the importance of providing sidewalks in this location. The person in the wheelchair must navigate between parked cars on the street as they approach the curve on Fairhill Road. While Fairhill Road is a minor street that was historically developed without sidewalks, it connects to other destinations and roadways with sidewalks. It is located across the street from the Lower Merion High School's outdoor athletic facility, Arnold Field, which is comprised of many athletic fields and tennis courts.



The properties on either side of 255 Fairhill Road do not have sidewalks; however, there is only one property between this lot and the sidewalks on Kent Road, which connect to other sidewalk networks.

For all the aforementioned reasons, staff does not support the applicant's waiver request.

### **3. Action**

The Planning Commission must take the following actions for this application:

1. Provide a recommendation on Preliminary Subdivision Plan.
2. Provide a recommendation on the relief from Subdivision and Land Development Code Section [135-28.A.](#) to not provide sidewalks along Fairhill Road.
  - a. Staff does not support this relief.