



**TOWNSHIP
OF
LOWER MERION**
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

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LOWM 260.57

July 22, 2025

Christopher Leswing, Director of Building and Planning
Township of Lower Merion
75 East Lancaster Avenue
Ardmore, PA 19003

**Re: 382 Bala Avenue & 327 Levering Mill Road, Gratz College
Preliminary Plan Review**

Dear Mr. Leswing:

In accordance with your request for the referenced submission, we have reviewed a set of nineteen (19) plans dated 05-30-25, last revised 07-11-25, and a stormwater management report dated 07-11-25 prepared by Meliora Design. The plans show the renovation and link addition to Gratz College for community gathering and college office spaces. We offer the following comments for your consideration:

A. MAJOR ENGINEERING ISSUES

- ❖ **Transportation** – Improvements to the Bala Avenue intersection with Levering Mill Road are included to support the proposed development. An analysis shall be provided to determine if stop signs are warranted on Levering Mill Road at this intersection. The elimination of the site driveway on Bala Avenue permits additional on-street parking, however the plan should include tabulation of the required and provided parking to support the expanded use.

With resolution of the preceding major engineering issue and remaining items in this letter, we recommend approval of the Preliminary Plan.

B. ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Section 135-8.2(A)2—Maneuverability diagrams must be provided for emergency vehicles, delivery trucks, and oversize vehicles to access loading and/or trash disposal areas. The proposed dumpster location shall be shown.
2. Section 135-8.2(A)3—An analysis shall be provided to determine if stop signs are warranted on Levering Mill Road at the intersection with Bala Avenue.
3. Section 135-4.10(B)—A Planning Module or Exemption must be approved by the City of Philadelphia and the DEP prior to recording the Final Plan.
4. Section 135-4.9(E.2)—All proposed curb ramps must meet ADA requirements. The Final Plan shall include detailed design in accordance with PennDOT standards for all proposed ramp locations.
5. Section 135-4.9(G)—The existing crosswalk on Levering Mill Rd shall be refreshed and STOP bars provided at all approaches to the crosswalks.

6. Section 121-4E(4)—A description of how the permanent stormwater control facility will be operated and maintained shall be submitted by the design engineer. The frequency of inspection shall be listed on the plan. The contact information for the party responsible for the operation and maintenance of the facility shall be listed. The plan shall be presented in recordable form as a covenant running with the land and must be approved by the Township Solicitor prior to recording the Final Plan.
7. Section 121-4A(2)—Additional information/clarification is required for the stormwater report. A summary table and stormwater narrative shall be provided. Although exfiltration cannot be included in the basin analysis, the requirements for peak runoff rate reduction and groundwater recharge are sufficiently met with the proposed design.
8. Section 121-10—No grading changes shall be shown within 3 feet of the property line in order to ensure transition to the grading on the adjoining property.
9. Section 121-4E(1b)—The proposed basin outflow is not permitted to discharge to the curblin. Overflow discharge from the stormwater basin shall be converted from a concentrated flow to a sheet flow condition within the property boundary. A level spreader shall be provided.
10. Section 121-15—Capacity calculations shall be provided for all proposed stormwater conveyance piping.
11. Section 133-3.9— The Traffic Safety Unit must approve the condition of the existing driveway to remain.
12. Section 101-6A(1)—All trees and vegetation to be retained within 25 feet of a building site, parking area, or other proposed improvement shall be protected from equipment damage by chain link or wire mesh fence. Tree protection fencing shall be 4 to 6 feet in height and anchored 2 feet in the ground. Fencing shall have clear signage stating that area is in the Tree Protection Zone and no disturbance can occur without authorization from the Township. Fencing around trees shall be placed at the dripline. A detail meeting these requirements shall be provided.
13. Section 101-6A(5)—No impervious cover shall be permitted within the driplines of trees to remain without approval from the Township Arborist.
14. Section 101-6A(6)—Grade changes around the driplines of trees to be retained shall be minimized. Treatment of any impacted trees prior to construction to protect the root system shall be performed if/as directed by the Township Arborist. The Township Arborist must also approve the procedure.
15. Section 101-6A(8)— Should any trees not scheduled or permitted to be removed be irreparably damaged during construction and die within eighteen (18) months of the conclusion of construction activities, those trees will be required to be replaced in accordance with the provision of Section 101- 9A(2). The Township shall be contacted for the inspection of impacted trees prior to permit closeout.
16. Section 101-6B(2)—If trenches for utilities and storm facilities are proposed within the driplines of trees, all disturbed roots must be cut as cleanly as possible. The trench must be backfilled as quickly as possible, avoiding compaction. Tree limbs must be cut back in proportion to the root area loss. This shall be made a condition of permit issuance.
17. Section 155-7.5—Compensatory tree calculations shall be added to the plan and must be compatible with the current code. An exact tree count for the lot shall be provided on the plan. Upon removal of twenty-five (25%) percent of existing trees having a caliper of six inches or greater, appropriate replacement trees

will be required. The Township Arborist must approve the size, species, and location of any required replacement trees.

C. ENGINEERING COMMENTS

1. The Director of Building and Planning must approve the Lighting Plan.
2. The Landscape Plan must be approved by the Planning Department and the Township Arborist.
3. The proposed site parking shall be approved by the Zoning Officer. It shall be confirmed that no additional parking is required to support the proposed building expansion.
4. Permits are required from the Public Works Department for the proposed driveway and work within the Township right-of-way.
5. A permit from the Public Works Department is required for the proposed sanitary sewer lateral modifications. If the existing lateral is to be reused, a video inspection is required to verify acceptable conditions are maintained.
6. Additional information shall be provided detailing how the existing roof drainage system will be integrated with the proposed stormwater collection for the expanded building.
7. The stair tread, riser and railings final design must comply with the applicable building code.
8. The sidewalk and curb shall be repaired/replaced at the direction of the Township.
9. Temporary pedestrian circulation routes shall be provided for the duration of construction.
10. The existing and proposed mean grade of the structure shall be calculated and shown on the plan. The architectural plans must be coordinated with and must comply with the grading proposed with this application.
11. An as-built plan must be submitted certifying the amount of impervious surface on the lot prior to finalization of the permit.

A copy of the revised plan shall be submitted with any changes highlighted. A letter shall also be provided with the revised plan indicating how each requested revision has been addressed in the re-submission.

Please advise if we may be of further assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,



Joseph A. Mastronardo, P.E.

PENNONI ASSOCIATES

Township Engineer

cc: Colleen Hall, Senior Planner
Meliora Design, 259 Morgan St, Phoenixville PA 19460