

**CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION NARRATIVE  
ZENITH CONSTRUCTION, INC.**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Zenith Construction, Inc. (the “Applicant”) is the equitable owner of certain lots that were created as part of the previously approved ‘Smith Farm’ Community Campus Development master plan (“2020 Master Plan”) depicting a coordinated and integrated mixture of institutional, commercial and residential uses on land located along the eastern side of South Spring Garden Street, Carlisle, and identified as Tax Parcel Identification , in South Middleton Township (the “Township”), Cumberland County (“County”), Pennsylvania. The ‘Smith Farm’ is located in the Township’s Suburban Commercial District (the “SC District”).

In a written decision dated November 12, 2020 (“2020 Written Decision”), pursuant to Section 1102.(12.) of the Township’s Zoning Ordinance in effect at that time (the “Zoning Ordinance”), the Board of Supervisors approved Conditional Use Application No. 20200023 permitting the ‘Smith Farm’ Community Campus Development as depicted on the approved 2020 Master Plan that was included as Exhibit B of the 2020 Written Decision.<sup>1</sup> The 2020 Master Plan depicted Lot #1 that was to be developed with a medical clinical facility (e.g., office building) and Lot #5 that was to be developed with a professional office building. For various reasons, including the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, rather than developing Lot #1 and Lot #5, respectively with the previously approved office buildings, the Applicant envisions developing these lots with needed and permitted housing. Pursuant to Section 1102.(12.)(c)(iv.) of the Zoning Ordinance, apartment buildings are permitted to be constructed in a community campus development in the SC District. Therefore, the Application requests modification of the 2020 Master Plan referenced as Exhibit B in the 2020 Written Decision to permit Lot #1 and Lot #5 to respectively be developed with apartment buildings as described in this Narrative and depicted on the enclosed plan, prepared by Elliot Shibley, RLA<sup>2</sup>, dated May 2023 and consisting of four (4) sheets (“Revised Master Plan”).

As compared to the previously approved office buildings, the proposed apartment buildings will be less intensive, especially relating to certain infrastructure, utilities and services. First, it is anticipated that the proposed apartment buildings will generate less daily and peak hour traffic than the medical clinical facility and professional office building. Accordingly, it is anticipated that the proposed apartment buildings will generate less demand for parking. Finally, the building coverage associated with the apartment buildings is anticipated to be less than the previously approved medical clinical facility and professional office building.

The purpose of the Application is to demonstrate compliance with the applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and entitlement to approval of the requested modification. First, as proposed and if granted, the requested modification allows for apartment buildings, a specific housing type that expressly is permitted in a community campus development in the SC District. Next, the requested modification, if granted, allows for apartment buildings, a specific housing type that already was approved for the ‘Smith Farm’ Community Campus Development as part of the 2020 Master Plan. Also, the requested modification helps to provide additional housing

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<sup>1</sup> The applicant was Smith Farm Partners, LLC.

<sup>2</sup> Elliot Shibley, RLA is registered landscape architect licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and is employed by Integrated Consulting.

opportunities in an area of the Township that is planned for, zoned and able to accommodate such housing, including being served by public water and sewer and a full range of infrastructure and utilities. Finally, the requested modification is generally consistent with, and implements certain purposes and elements of a community campus development, the SC District, the Zoning Ordinance and the Township's Comprehensive Plan.

The purpose of the Revised Master Plan is to depict the proposed development of Lot #1 and Lot #5, as well as demonstrate compliance with the applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. The Revised Master Plan is intended to revise the 2020 Master Plan that was included as Exhibit B as part of the 2020 Written Decision. Further, the purpose of this Narrative is to describe the proposed changes between the 2020 Master Plan and the Revised Master Plan as they relate to Lot #1 and Lot #5, as well as demonstrate compliance with the with applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. This Narrative is intended to supplement the narrative that was included as Exhibit A as part of the 2020 Written Decision.

## **II. BACKGROUND AND STATUS OF 2020 MASTER PLAN**

The 'Smith Farm' Community Campus Development is in the process of being developed and built out by a few different entities. In fact, a subdivision plan and several land development plans for various lots, including Lots #2, #3A, #3B, #6 and #7 have been approved or are pending approval by the Township. The Preliminary/Final Master Subdivision Plan for Smith Farm Partners, LLC creating the eight (8) lots that are part of the Community Campus Development was conditionally approved by the Board of Supervisors on June 9, 2022 and recorded as PL #202230054 on November 3, 2022.<sup>3</sup> The Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for Harbor Village that includes a mix of eight (8) townhouse and 32 apartment units (total 40 units) on Lot #2 was conditionally approved by the Board of Supervisors on October 13, 2022 and recorded as PL #202302070 on February 2, 2023. The Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan Smith Farm Townhomes for Smith Farm Partners, LLC that includes 84 townhouse units on Lot #6 was submitted to the Township in 2022 and is pending approval (expected circa June 2023). The Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan Zenith Apartments for Zenith Construction Inc. (i.e., Applicant) that includes 250 apartment units on Lot #7 was conditionally approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 23, 2023. The Revised Master Plan depicts the approved or pending layout and development concepts for Lots #2, #6 and #7 as of May 2023.

## **III. SUPPORT AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REQUESTED MODIFICATION**

The 2020 Master Plan was approved in November 2020 during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic; but the vision for developing the 'Smith Farm' as part of a community campus development including a mix of residential and nonresidential uses and prospective and expected tenants began several years prior. Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors, the demand for office space has fallen. Most businesses began reexamining and pivoting their traditional business operations and needs to address government mandates, advances in technology and employee preferences. Rather than being required to come in person to work in the office, technology permits employees to work remotely from home (i.e., telecommuting). Additionally,

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<sup>3</sup> Includes Lots #3A and #3B proposed to be developed with park/recreation/trail facilities as part of the required open space.

rather than being required to come in person to appointments or attend meetings in an office, technology permits customers and patients to virtually attend appointments and meetings (e.g., telehealth, telemedicine).

While some expect that the office market may not ever fully recover to pre-COVID-19 levels, the demand for housing, especially multi-family apartment units, continues booming in order to house the County’s ever-growing population. First, due to its proximity to the State Capitol and several other factors, the County is once again identified as Pennsylvania’s fastest growing county (i.e., percentage)<sup>4</sup>, a title held for more than a decade. Next, the Harrisburg apartment rental market that includes the County and several nearby counties, was identified as the most competitive in Pennsylvania, and the third most competitive in the United States.<sup>5</sup> These trends and rankings certainly indicate a high demand for housing, including rental apartments, in the County. Unfortunately, the high demand for such housing significantly outstrips the limited supply. For these reasons, the Applicant seeks to modify the 2020 Master Plan referenced as Exhibit B in the 2020 Written Decision to reflect the proposed apartment buildings on Lot #1 and Lot #5.

**IV. OVERALL COMMUNITY CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT TRACT**

Table IV below is a comparison of the Overall Community Campus Development Tract for ‘Smith Farm’ as depicted on the 2020 Master Plan and Revised Master Plan. While the 2020 Master Plan depicted 435 units with an overall density of 6.8 dwelling units per acre, the Revised Master Plan depicts 470 units with an overall density of 7.4 dwelling units per acre. Although the Revised Master Plan depicts 35 units more than depicted on the 2020 Master Plan, the proposed overall density is less than the maximum permitted figure of 10 dwelling units per acre set forth in Section 1102.(12).(g).(i).(b.) of the Zoning Ordinance.

While the 2020 Master Plan depicted an overall building coverage of approximately 11.1%, the Revised Master Plan depicts an overall reduction to approximately 9.4%. The proposed overall building coverage is less than the maximum permitted figure of 40% set forth in Section 1102.(12).(g).(i).(d.) of the Zoning Ordinance. The remainder of the Overall Community Campus Development Tract zoning features set forth in the table generally remain unchanged between the 2020 Master Plan and Revised Master Plan. See Sheet 1 The Overall Community Campus Development Tract complies with all applicable requirements for a community campus development in the SC District as set forth in Section 1102.(12.) of the Zoning Ordinance.

**TABLE IV**

Requirements/Features	Overall Community Campus Development Tract	
	2020 Master Plan	Revised Master Plan
Min. Gross Tract Area: 50 acres (§ 1102.(12).(f).(i.))	63.76 acres	63.76 acres

<sup>4</sup> Gruver, ED. “Cumberland remains Pa.’s fastest growing county” Central Penn Business Journal, 12 Apr. 2023, <https://www.cpbj.com/cumberland-remains-pa-s-fastest-growing-county/>. Accessed 13 Apr. 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Wolf, Paula. “Vacant Apartments Hard to Come by in Central Pa.” Central Penn Business Journal, 21 Mar. 2023, <https://www.cpbj.com/vacant-apartments-hard-to-come-by-in-central-pa/>. Accessed 13 Apr. 2023.

Requirements/Features	Overall Community Campus Development Tract	
	2020 Master Plan	Revised Master Plan
Required Frontage and Min. Two Points of Access along Arterial or Collector Street (§ 1102.(12.)(f.)(ii.))	Yes - Spring Garden Street (i.e., urban collector)	Yes - Spring Garden Street (i.e., urban collector)
Required Public Water and Public Sewer Connections (§§ 1102.(12.)(f.)(iii.)(a.) and 1102.(12.)(g.)(i.)(a.))	Yes	Yes
Max. Gross Density: 10 DUs/Acre (§ 1102.(12.)(g.)(i.)(b.))	435 units / 63.76 acres = 6.82 DUs/Acre	470 units / 63.76 acres = 7.4 DUs/Acre
Max. Building Height: 45' (§ 1102.(12.)(g.)(i.)(c.))	=/< 45'	=/< 45'
Max. Building Coverage: 40% (§ 1102.(12.)(g.)(i.)(d.))	Appx. 7.09 acres / 63.76 acres = 11.1%	Appx. 6.0 acres / 63.76 acres = 9.4%
Max. Impervious Coverage: 60% (§ 1102.(12.)(g.)(i.)(e.))	Appx. 25.69 acres / 63.76 acres = 40.3%	Appx. 25.65 acres / 63.76 acres = 40.3%
Min. Open Space: 10% and Min. Contiguous Acres: 5 (§1102.(12.)(g.)(i.)(g.))	Appx. 6.44 acres / 63.76 acres = 10.1% Lot #3A = 5.01 acres Lot #3B = 1.43 acres	Appx. 6.44 acres / 63.76 acres = 10.1% Lot #3A = 5.01 acres Lot #3B = 1.43 acres

**V. LOT #1**

**A. 2020 MASTER PLAN**

As depicted on the 2020 Master Plan and set forth in Table V below, Lot #1 was approved as an approximately 4.52-acre through lot with two frontages proposed along the loop street. Pursuant to Section 1102.(12.)(c.)(xiv.) of the Zoning Ordinance, Lot #1 was proposed to be developed as part of a medical clinical facility including a single, 2-story building totaling approximately 30,000 square feet of gross floor area. Additionally, 229 parking spaces, two access drives, one loading space, screening treatments, stormwater management facilities and other appurtenant site improvements were proposed.

**B. REVISED MASTER PLAN**

As depicted on the Revised Master Plan and set forth in Table V below, Lot #1 continues to be proposed as an approximately 4.52-acre through lot with two frontages along the loop street. Pursuant to Section 1102.(12.)(c.)(iv.) of the Zoning Ordinance, Lot #1 is proposed to be developed with a series of four, 3-story apartment buildings totaling 48 units. Each apartment building is

proposed to have approximately 5,708 square feet of gross floor area and include 12 units. Each unit is designed to have a habitable floor area greater than 400 square feet, as each unit is designed with either two bedrooms or three bedrooms. Although the apartment buildings are designed in compliance with the applicable yard setback and height requirements, as compared to the medical clinical facility, the apartment buildings are designed to be taller and set back lesser distances from certain lot lines.

Also, 96 parking spaces are required, and 106 spaces are proposed. This figure represents a 123-space reduction from the total number of parking spaces (229) proposed on the 2020 Master Plan. Further, two access drives, screening treatments, stormwater management facilities, lighting and other appurtenant site improvements are proposed and designed in compliance with all applicable Township provisions. No loading space is required or proposed. Finally, Lot #1 complies with all applicable requirements for apartment buildings in a community campus development in the SC District as set forth in Section 1102.(12.) of the Zoning Ordinance.

**TABLE V**

Requirements/Features	Lot #1	
	2020 Master Plan	Revised Master Plan
Use (§ 1102.(12.)(c.))	Medical Clinical Facility (§ 1102.(12.)(c.)(xiv.))	Apartment Buildings (48 units in 4 buildings) (§ 1102.(12.)(c.)(iv.))
Min. Lot Size: 10,000 SF (§1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(a.ii.))	196,744 SF (4.52 acres)	196,744 SF (4.52 acres)
Min. Lot Width: 50' (§1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(b.ii.))	398'	398'
Min. Front Yard: 30' (§1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(c.))	158'	30'
Min. Rear Yard: 20' (§1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(d.))	N/A	N/A
Min. Side Yard: 15' (§1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(e.))	87'	62'
Max. Building Height: 45' (§§ 1102.(12.)(g.)(i.)(c.) and 1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(f.))	=/< 45'	=/< 45'
Required Screening (§§1607.(1.) or 1607.(2.))	Required along western lot line abutting an existing residential use (§ 1607.(1.))	Required along western lot line abutting an existing single family detached (§ 1607.(2.))

Requirements/Features	Lot #1	
	2020 Master Plan	Revised Master Plan
Min. Habitable Floor Area (§1616.(2.))	N/A	400 SF required for apartments designed for two or more occupants and $\geq$ 400 SF proposed
Min. Parking Spaces (§1801.(3.))	6 spaces / 1 physician: 228 required for 38 physicians and 229 proposed	1 space / 0.5 DU (i.e., 2 spaces / 1 DU): 96 required for 48 DUs and 106 proposed

**VI. LOT #5**

**A. 2020 MASTER PLAN**

As depicted on the 2020 Master Plan and set forth in Table VI below, Lot #5 was approved as an approximately 3.39-acre lot with frontage proposed along the loop street. Pursuant to Section 1102.(12).(c).(xv.) of the Zoning Ordinance, Lot #5 was proposed to be developed with a single, 1-story professional office building totaling approximately 15,000 square feet of gross floor area. Additionally, 84 parking spaces, one access drive, screening treatments, stormwater management facilities and other appurtenant site improvements were proposed.

**B. REVISED MASTER PLAN**

As depicted on the Revised Master Plan and set forth in Table VI below, Lot #5 continues to be proposed as an approximately 3.93-acre lot with frontage along the loop street. Pursuant to Section 1102.(12).(c).(iv.) of the Zoning Ordinance, Lot #5 is proposed to be developed with a series of four, 3-story apartment buildings, totaling 48 units. Each apartment building is proposed to have approximately 5,708 square feet of gross floor area and include 12 units. Each unit is designed to have a habitable floor area greater than 400 square feet, as each unit is designed with either two bedrooms or three bedrooms. Although the apartment buildings are designed in compliance with the applicable yard setback and height requirements, as compared to the professional office building, the apartment buildings are designed to be taller and set back lesser distances from certain lot lines.

Also, 96 parking spaces are required, and 117 spaces are proposed. This figure represents a 33-space increase from the total number of parking spaces (84) proposed on the 2020 Master Plan. Further, one access drive, screening treatments, stormwater management facilities, lighting and other appurtenant site improvements are proposed and designed in compliance with all applicable Township provisions. No loading space is required or proposed. Finally, Lot #5 complies with all applicable requirements for apartment buildings in a community campus development in the SC District as set forth in Section 1102.(12.) of the Zoning Ordinance.

**TABLE VI**

Requirements/Features	Lot #5	
	2020 Master Plan	Revised Master Plan
Use (§ 1102.(12.)(c.))	Professional Office (§ 1102.(12.)(c.)(xv.))	Apartment Buildings (48 units in 4 buildings) (§ 1102.(12.)(c.)(iv.))
Min. Lot Size: 10,000 SF (§1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(a.ii.))	171,271 SF (3.93 acres)	171,271 SF (3.93 acres)
Min. Lot Width: 50’ (§1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(b.ii.))	560’	560’
Min. Front Yard: 30’ (§1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(c.))	103’	60’
Min. Rear Yard: 20’ (§1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(d.))	101’	58’
Min. Side Yard: 15’ (§1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(e.))	148’	74’
Max. Building Height: 45’ (§§ 1102.(12.)(g.)(i.)(c.) and 1102.(12.)(g.)(ii.)(f.))	30’	=/< 45’
Required Screening (§§ 1607.(1.) or 1607.(2.))	Required along southern lot line abutting an existing residential use (§ 1607.(1.))	Required along southern lot line abutting an existing single family detached (§ 1607.(2.))
Min. Habitable Floor Area (§1616.(2.))	N/A	400 SF required for apartments designed for two or more occupants and >= 400 SF proposed
Min. Parking Spaces (§1801.(3.))	1 space / 300 SF GFA: 50 required for 15,000 SF GFA building and 84 proposed	1 space / 0.5 DU (i.e., 2 spaces / 1 DU): 96 required for 48 DUs and 100 proposed

**VII. CONCLUSION**

For the foregoing reasons, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Board of Supervisors grant the requested modification.