

March 18, 2022

THLSC21003

Mr. Keith Place, Licensing and Inspections Director
Code Enforcement Department
The Borough of Pottstown Zoning Department
100 East High Street
Pottstown, PA 19464

**RE: MODIFICATION REQUEST LETTER
 THE HILL SCHOOL TURF FIELD
 860 BEECH STREET
 POTTSTOWN, PA 19464**

Dear Mr. Place:

This Modification Request Letter is being submitted to Pottstown Borough by Pennoni Associates Inc., engineer of the above referenced project and on behalf of The Hill School (“**Applicant**”). The following are the formal written modification requests of the Applicant from the requirements of the Pottstown Borough Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (“**SALDO**”). This letter details each specific modification request along with the justification for each request. I ask that you forward this modification request to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Ordinance Section 600 allows Borough Council to grant a modification to the SALDO if the following purpose is served:

Pottstown Borough Council may modify the requirements of one or more provisions of this Chapter if they will create an undue hardship on the applicant, using the standards set forth by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

The Applicant’s modification requests meet one, if not more than one, of the above listed standards.

SALDO Modification Requests:

Applicant requests the following modifications (i.e. waivers) from the SALDO in accordance with the Pottstown Borough Codified Ordinance (“**Ordinance**”). The modifications are warranted because there exists peculiar circumstances or conditions relating to the property which create undue hardships with respect to the reasonable development of the property. The hardships have not been created by the Applicant. The requested modifications are the minimum relief necessary to afford the Applicant relief and will not be adverse to the public interest. The granting of the requested modifications will preserve the purpose and intent of the SALDO.

1. **§202** – *Any applicant who seeks to subdivide or develop land must begin the process by submitting a preliminary plat to the Borough Zoning Officer.*

A waiver from this section to submit a preliminary plat is respectfully requested. The application is for a Minor Land Development submission and the plans have been prepared to meet the preliminary and final SALDO requirements.

2. **§400.2.C.** – *Show all existing underground features on the parcel, including but not limited to:*

1. *Sanitary sewer lines and water lines.*

(a) If any existing lines are to be abandoned, plans shall clearly note the following: "Any existing sewer or water lines to be abandoned, or any services which may have been previously abandoned not in accordance with the Authority standards, shall be cut and capped at the mains as per Pottstown Borough Authority specifications."

(b) Existing sewer and water lines to existing buildings that are to remain shall be verified as single and separate services with the appropriate Authority and the results noted on the plan.

2. *Stormwater drainage.*

A waiver from this section to show all existing underground features on the parcel is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. Utilities in the vicinity of the development have been shown for design and coordination purposes.

3. **§400.3.A.** – *Show physical features and topography on the property surrounding the subject parcel for a distance of 100 feet, unless a greater distance is deemed necessary by the Zoning Officer because of unconventional topographic conditions.*

A waiver from this section to show physical features and topography 100' beyond the parcel is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. Physical features and topography in the vicinity of the development have been shown for design and coordination purposes. An overall site plan has been included with the submission and shows topography, buildings, and roads within and directly adjacent to the parcel.

4. **§400.5.A** – *Certification of a "Phase One" Environmental Site Assessment shall be attached in accordance with ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) standards.*

A waiver from this section to require a "Phase One" Environmental Site Assessment is respectfully requested. Phase One Environmental Site Assessments are meant to identify the potential for contamination of a site by hazardous or toxic materials and to identify other possible environmental constraints on the site. The Hill School was founded in 1851 and the need for a phase one for this property is not warranted.

5. **§A400.** – *The plan shall be submitted as directed herein and shall show or be supplemented by the following information.*

A waiver from this section to submit a Preliminary Plan for review is requested. The applicant is requesting to submit a Preliminary/Final Minor Land Development Plan in lieu of a Preliminary Land Development Plan, and in accordance with the requirements set forth in the SALDO and relevant Appendices.

6. **§A401.8.** – *The names of all abutting subdivisions, developments, or landowners, with deed book, volume, and page numbers where recorded.*

A waiver from this section to provide abutting property information is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. The proposed development is located within an existing sports complex in an area of the school campus that is not adjacent to abutting parcels.

7. **§A402.1.** – *Within 100 feet of any part of the land being subdivided or developed: the location, names, width, radii, curbs, sidewalks, and surface conditions of existing streets and alleys; the location and dimensions of existing rights-of-way and easements; the location of watercourses, floodplains, floodways, sanitary sewers, storm drains and catchments, utilities above and below ground; the location and width of existing curb cuts and/or driveways; the location of any zoning district boundary, municipal or county boundary, or recreational area; and other similar features.*

A waiver from this section to show these features within 100' of the proposed development is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. Physical features in the vicinity of the development have been shown for design and coordination purposes.

8. **§A402.2.** – *Within 100 feet of any part of the land being subdivided or developed: contour lines and elevation data; the location of existing structures and their use; parking areas; and, significant landscape features.*

A waiver from this section to show these features within 100' of the proposed development is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. Physical features in the vicinity of the development have been shown for design and coordination purposes.

9. **§A403.6.** – *Existing and proposed sewer lines, water lines, fire hydrants, utility transmission lines (above or below ground), culverts, bridges, railroads, watercourses, and other significant man-made or natural features. Any existing services to be abandoned or which may have been previously abandoned not in accordance with the Authority standards shall be clearly indicated on the plan. The plan shall be noted as required in §400, Subsection 2C1.*

A waiver from this section to show existing underground features on the parcel is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. Utilities in the vicinity of the development have been shown for design and coordination purposes.

- 10. §A403.8.** – *Streets, including streets recorded but not constructed, on or abutting the tract, including names, right-of-way widths, cartway or pavement widths, radii, curb lines, sidewalks, and approximate grades.*

A waiver from this section to provide abutting street information is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. The proposed development is located within an existing sports complex in an area of the school campus that is not adjacent to abutting streets.

- 11. §A403.12.** – *Existence and location of identified "recognized environmental conditions" per the standards of the American Society of Testing and Materials E 1527-00. If a Phase One Environmental Site Assessment has not been performed, such an assessment will be included with the application. (This requirement may be waived in the case of an application for a single-family dwelling.)*

A waiver from this section to require a "Phase One" Environmental Site Assessment is respectfully requested. Phase One Environmental Site Assessments are meant to identify the potential for contamination of a site by hazardous or toxic materials and to identify other possible environmental constraints on the site. The Hill School was founded in 1851 and the need for a phase one for this property is not warranted.

- 12. §A404.1.** – *The total tract boundary lines of the area being subdivided or developed with accurate distances to hundredths of a foot and bearings to nearest 15 seconds. These boundaries shall be determined by accurate survey in the field, which shall be balanced and shall close with an error of closure not to exceed one foot per 10,000 feet; provided, however, the boundary(s) adjoining additional un-platted land of the sub-divider, for example, between separately submitted final plan sections, are not required to be based upon field survey, and may be calculated. These closure computations shall accompany the final plan. The location and elevation of all boundary lines or perimeter monuments shall be indicated, along with a statement of the total area of the property being subdivided or developed.*

A waiver from this section to provide abutting property boundary information is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. The development does not propose a subdivision and is located within an existing sports complex in an area of the school campus that is not adjacent to abutting parcels. Changes or impacts to the existing property boundary are not proposed with this development.

- 13. §A404.2.** – *The layout of streets, alleys, crosswalks, sidewalks, and public trails, including the names and widths of cartways and ultimate rights-of-way. The following data for the cartway centerlines and right-of-way lines of all recorded, except those that are to be vacated, and/or proposed streets, and for the right-of-way lines of all existing streets within the property*
- *The length, in feet and hundredths of a foot, of all straight lines; and the length of arc and radius in feet and hundredths of a foot, and the delta angle in degrees, minutes and seconds. Where the line extended from the end of a curve is not tangent to the curve the chord, bearing and distance shall be indicated.*
 - *The width of the cartway, right-of-way and, if required, ultimate right-of-way, in feet and tenths of a foot.*

A waiver from this section to provide layout of streets, alleys, etc. is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. The proposed improvements are in an area of the school campus that is not adjacent to streets. Changes or impacts to the existing streets are not proposed with this development.

- 14. §A404.21.** –*Stormwater runoff calculations for the entire site and the location, layout and elevations for any detention facilities or collection and conveyance facilities. See the Borough of Pottstown Stormwater Management Ordinance for additional criteria.*

A waiver from this section to require stormwater calculations for the entire site is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. Stormwater calculations are being provided for the areas impacted by the project.

- 15. §A405.1.** –*The plan scale shall be no smaller than one inch equals 100 feet. The plan shall be prepared with a standard engineer's scale suitable to the size of the parcel and the required plan details.*

A waiver from this section to provide drawing scales no smaller than one-inch equals 100 feet is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. Overall site plans have been included in the plan set to clearly show the location of the proposed development in reference to the overall property.

- 16. §503.1.** – *Total Number. The total number of trees required by this chapter shall be determined by computing the number of trees needed for street frontage, parking lots, and open space, and adding the results. When the sum results in a fraction, the fraction shall be rounded up to the next higher whole number. Existing trees more than three inches in caliper may be counted toward the total.*

A waiver from this section to provide the total number of trees required is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. The project is proposing a new turf field at the location of an existing field and associated improvements. The area to the south and west has existing vegetation onsite.

- 17. §A503.4.E.** – *Steep slopes in excess of 20 percent as measured at 2 foot intervals for a cumulative grade change of 6 feet.*

A waiver from this section to protect slopes in excess of 20 percent is respectfully requested. Man-made slopes along the southern corner of the property were constructed with previous site improvements and will be disturbed for the construction of the proposed development.

18. §504. – *In areas of any developed lot where there are no buildings, one shade tree shall be provided for every 8,000 square feet of total lot area. This shall be in addition to trees required for street frontage and parking lots.*

A waiver from this section to provide shade trees is respectfully requested. The overall parcel area is 80.33 acres and the area of development for the proposed project is approximately 4 acres. The Hill School provides landscaping and trees throughout the campus as well as preserves wooded areas that are not used by the school. The area beyond the limits of the project has not been studied because The Hill School does not intend to plant trees in these open areas at this time. These areas have an existing purpose and use on campus (athletic fields, gathering areas, existing landscaping, etc.) and planting shade trees in these locations would detract from the function they provide the school.

Shade trees are not proposed within the project limits because they contain a surface basin, sidewalk, bleachers, and a turf field. Planting shades trees within this area is not feasible. Based on the project limits, this section would require approximately twenty-two (22) shade trees. Additional trees beyond the limits of the project are not proposed to minimize the limit of disturbance of the project. Landscaping is proposed within select area of the proposed improvements where feasible. Existing vegetation is located along the south and west side of the development.

19. §A504 – *Open space and recreational facilities.*

A waiver from this section to provide open space is respectfully requested. The development is located on a private campus that is secure and not intended to be readily accessed by the general public.

20. §505. – Street Trees

1. *Except as modified by Chapter 25, Trees, of the Code of Ordinances of the Borough of Pottstown, as amended, shade trees shall be provided along street frontage as follows:*

<u>Street Frontage(feet)</u>	<u>Number of Trees</u>
<i>Less than 40</i>	<i>1 tree minimum</i>
<i>40 to 59</i>	<i>2 trees minimum</i>
<i>60 or more</i>	<i>At least 3 trees, with a minimum of 1 tree every 30 feet with an average spacing of at least 1 tree every 30 feet</i>

2. *Wherever possible, there shall be a planting strip in accordance with § 202, Specifications for Sidewalks and Curbs, of Subpart 2A, Construction and Maintenance Standards of Sidewalks and Curbs, Part 2, Sidewalks, Chapter 21, Streets and Sidewalks. If the construction and installation of a planting strip in accordance herewith is not possible, then individual tree wells shall be created in accordance with § 206, Street Tree Wells, of said Chapter 21.*

A waiver from this section to provide street trees is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. The proposed development is located within an existing sports complex in an area of the school campus that is not adjacent to abutting streets.

21. §510. – Screening

1. *Just as individuals have goods and chattel that we put out of sight in closets and storage rooms, outdoor storage areas should also be removed as much as possible from public view. Therefore the following uses must be screened with a fence or wall:*
 - A. *Storage areas, including trash storage.*
 - B. *Utility substations.*
 - C. *Mechanical equipment.*
 - D. *Loading areas and parking area adjacent to streets.*
2. *Fences or walls shall be constructed of the following materials:*
 - A. *Brick.*
 - B. *Stone.*
 - C. *Wood.*
 - D. *Concrete-based stucco.*
 - E. *Wrought iron.*
 - F. *Vinyl designed to look like wood.*
3. *Fences shall be higher than the materials being screened, other than buildings. Fences shall have a minimum height of four feet. Although trees, shrubs and other landscaping are encouraged, they may not be used to substitute for fences.*

A waiver from this section to include screening is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is over 80 acres. The proposed improvements are in an area of the school campus that is not adjacent to neighbors.

22. §511. – Buffering

1. *To protect residential areas, buffering shall be provided where any nonresidential use abuts a residential use or where the following districts abut any other district:*
 - A. *Heavy Manufacturing.*
 - B. *Gateway.*
 - C. *Business Campus.*
 - D. *Highway Business.*
 - E. *Office Industrial.*
2. *Buffering shall consist of either:*
 - A. *Fences between four feet and five feet in height and constructed of the following materials:*
 1. *Brick.*
 2. *Stone.*
 3. *Wood.*
 4. *Concrete-based stucco.*
 5. *Wrought iron.*
 6. *Vinyl designed to look like wood.*
 - B. *A landscaped strip at least 15 feet wide planted with deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs. At the time of installation, shrubs will have a minimum height of three feet and an expected height at maturity of at least six feet. There should be sufficient planting so there are no unobstructed openings wider than four feet. At least 50% of the trees and 75% of the shrubs shall be evergreen species.*

A waiver from this section to include buffers is respectfully requested. The area of proposed development is approximately 4 acres and the lot area in which the development is occurring is

over 80 acres. The project is proposing a new turf field at the location of an existing field and associated improvements. The area to the south and west has existing vegetation onsite. The proposed improvements are in an area of the school campus that is not adjacent to residential areas.

Sincerely,

PENNONI ASSOCIATES INC.

John C. Medendorp IV, PE
Project Engineer

JCM/sjm

cc: file

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