



robert e. blue consulting engineers, p.c.

March 4, 2022

Richard M. Tralies, RLA
Natural Lands
1031 Palmers Mill Road
Media, PA 19063

**Re: 222 Church Road
Land Development Plans
Cheltenham Township
Montgomery Co., PA
REBPC #2154-10**

Dear Mr. Tralies:

On behalf of our client, 222 Church Road, LLC, the following information is being submitted in support of the Land Development Plan for the proposed project located at 222 Church Road in Cheltenham Township. The revisions incorporated comments from the following review letter:

- Natural Lands review letter for 222 Church Road: prepared by Richard M. Tralies, PLA, dated January 7, 2022.

This letter shall serve as the response letter and includes how the concerns are addressed. The comments from the review letter are indicated in *italics* with the response in **bold**. The plans have been updated as follows:

1. Replacement Trees

The landscape plan does not include a calculation for required replacement trees, as noted by both the Cheltenham Township and Montgomery County staff review letters. Due to the important role that trees play in protecting, cleaning and recharging ground, surface and subsurface waters, we strongly recommend that the applicants provide all required replacement trees. Additionally, we recommend these trees be planted near the wetlands to provide additional buffering and filtering to protect this important habitat.

RESPONSE: The Landscape Plan, Sheet 11, has been revised to include tree replacement calculations and replacement plantings. Replacement plantings have been placed near the wetlands, as requested.

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2. Landscape Details

- a. *Landscape architects, arborists, and nursery professionals generally agree that tree wraps should not be left on trunks for long periods of time. They may be used to protect trees during transportation but should be removed immediately upon planting. We recommend the landscape details be revised to indicate that wraps must be removed.*

RESPONSE: References to “tree wrap” have been removed from sheet 12.

- b. *The applicant proposes mostly native plant species, which better support our native ecosystems, including wetland and aquatic ecosystems. However, a few non-native species have been proposed. We recommend the following substitutions:*
- i. *Littleleaf Linden (*Tilia cordata*) can be replaced with American Linden (*Tilia americana*)*
- ii. *Southern Bayberry (*Myrica cerifera*) can be replaced with Northern Bayberry (*Myrica pennsylvanica*)*

RESPONSE: The requested tree species have been replaced with the previously specified landscape plantings. Refer to the Landscape Plan, Sheet 11.

- c. *The applicant proposes soil amendments for every plant. However, native plants are typically well suited to native soils. Amendments can cause the plants to girdle themselves, as roots tend to stay in the amended, nutrient rich soil, rather than spreading outwards as they should. We recommend that the soil amendments be removed from the plans to protect the trees long term health.*

RESPONSE: Proposed Soil Amendments for plants have been removed.

3. Paving

The plans propose a fully paved cul-de-sac with a radius of 50'. We believe the cul-de-sac could be reduced in size, down to a 45' or even a 40' radius. This would eliminate some impervious surface. A cul-de-sac with a radius of 50' has an area of 7,853 sf. A cul-de-sac with a radius of 40' has an area of 5,026 sf. Reducing the radius could eliminate approximately 2,800 square feet of impervious surface. For reference, that's the equivalent of 14 typical parking spaces.

RESPONSE: Per Cheltenham Township Ordinance Section §260-56, a cul-de-sac radius for a paved curbed street shall be 50 ft. The impervious surface of the proposed cul-de-sac cannot be reduced.

4. Stormwater Management

The post construction stormwater management report refers to construction of a forebay and multiple BMP's. We would support a plan with BMP's spread throughout the site, as the BMP's would infiltrate stormwater throughout the site. However, the post construction stormwater management plan (PDF Sheet 17, Record Plan 3 of 3) appears to show stormwater being captured from the roofs and roads and piped across the site to a single large detention basin. The plans do not appear to show multiple BMPs. We would strongly suggest redirecting roof drains and patio runoff into individual, on-lot rain gardens, seepage pits, vegetated swales or other BMP's.

RESPONSE: Noted.

5. Maintenance

*The plans state that the basin maintenance will be the responsibility of the lot owners/permittees. The notes state that the basin should be mowed twice annually. However, this oversimplifies the requirements. For instance, in its first growing season, the basin vegetation should only be mowed to a height of 8", and this is only after it reaches 18-24". Therefore, we strongly recommend that the plans be revised to clarify the maintenance suggestions per Ernst Seeds' Stormwater Management Planting Guide, found on their website here:
<https://www.ernstseed.com/resources/planting-guides/stormwater-management-planting-guide/>. Additionally, the guide, and other resources should be provided to the homeowners, or whoever is responsible for maintenance, to ensure that the basin is properly maintained and the planted wet meadow does not fail.*

RESPONSE: The Ernst Seed web address has been included in the maintenance notes on sheet 11.

Please accept the above materials on behalf our client, 222 Church Road, LLC, for Preliminary and Final Subdivision and Land Development for the proposed project located at 222 Church Road in Cheltenham Township, PA. Should you require any additional information, please contact us at (610) 277-9441 or rblue@robertblue.com.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Blue, Consulting Engineers, P.C.

By: _____


Robert E. Blue, President

Cc: Henry Sekawungu, Cheltenham Township
222 Church Road LLC, Applicant