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**FREDERICK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**January 9, 2019**

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**TITLE:** **Sheetz Store #161 Rebuild, Spectrum Drive**

**FILE NUMBER:** **SP-81-29, AP#18837, APFO 18838, FRO 18839**

**REQUEST:** **Site Development Plan Approval**

The Applicant is requesting Site Plan approval to demolish the existing Sheetz and the adjacent Bob Evans and build a new 6,077 square foot Sheetz store and associated gas island on a newly combined lot of 2.45 acres.

**PROJECT INFORMATION:**

ADDRESS/LOCATION: 5601 Buckeystown Pike  
TAX MAP/PARCEL: Tax Map 77, Parcels 140 & 187  
COMP. PLAN: General Commercial (GC)  
ZONING: General Commercial (GC)  
PLANNING REGION: Frederick  
WATER/SEWER: W-1/S-1

**APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVES:**

APPLICANT: REP Property LLC  
OWNER: Sheetz, Inc.  
ENGINEER: Fox and Assoc.  
ARCHITECT: N/A  
ATTORNEY: N/A

**STAFF:** Jerry Muir, Principal Planner I

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Conditional Approval

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Exhibit 1 – Rendered Site Plan  
Exhibit 2 – Modification Letter  
Exhibit 3 – APFO Letter of Understanding (LOU)

## STAFF REPORT

### ISSUE

The Applicant is requesting Site Plan approval to demolish the existing Sheetz store and the adjacent former Bob Evans restaurant and build a new 6,077 SF convenience store and associated gas island. A consolidation plat for the two lots is currently under review by Development Review staff. The development plan for the rebuild is in phases: Phase 1 being the demolition of the current restaurant building (Bob Evans); Phase II is preparing a pad and construction of the new store, which will open without gas pumps; Phase III is the demolition of the existing Sheetz and gas pumps and construction of the new gas island. The proposed uses are being reviewed as a “convenience store” land use under the heading of *Commercial Uses-Retail* and “Automobile Filling Station” land use under the heading *Automobile and Related Services* per §1-19-5.310 Use Table in the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed uses are principal permitted uses in the General Commercial (GC) Zoning District subject to site development plan approval.

The Site will retain existing three entrances; one on Route 85, one on Spectrum Drive, and the Bob Evans entrance off the common drive with the hotel and restaurants. The Bob Evans entrance on Spectrum Drive will be closed.

**Figure 1: Site Vicinity Map – Aerial Image**



## **BACKGROUND**

**Development History:** The site was developed as a Sheetz store in 1982. The Bob Evans was approved in 1987. Both uses have continued since their openings until the recent closure of the restaurant.

**Existing Site Characteristics:** The Site is currently completely developed by the commercial uses.

**Surrounding Land Uses:** The Site is surrounded by existing general commercial uses in a very heavily developed section of the Buckeystown Pike corridor. Lowes is located to the north, a hotel to the east, and a gas station to the south.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Summary of Development Standards Findings and Conclusions**

The Site is well suited for the proposed use and the addition of the acreage from Bob Evans will allow a more convenient and accessible operation of the business.

The site plan meets all dimensional and bulk standards, parking, lighting, and landscape requirements and has requested three modifications discussed later in this report.

### **Detailed Analysis of Findings and Conclusions**

Site Development Plan Approval shall be granted based upon the criteria found in §1-19-3.300.4 Site Plan Review Approval Criteria of the Frederick County Zoning Ordinance.

**Site Development §1-19-3.300.4 (A):** *Existing and anticipated surrounding land uses have been adequately considered in the design of the development and negative impacts have been minimized through such means as building placement or scale, landscaping, or screening, and an evaluation of lighting. Anticipated surrounding uses shall be determined based upon existing zoning and land use designations.*

### **Findings/Conclusions**

- 1. Dimensional Requirements/Bulk Standards §1-19-6.100:** The proposed Site Development Plan adheres to the lot dimensions required for both a commercial use and an automobile related service in the General Commercial zone as established in Section 1-19-6.100.

The proposed setbacks for the facility are the following:

	<b><u>Required</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed</u></b>
Minimum Lot Area	12, 000 sf	44,041 sf
Minimum Lot Width	100'	160+' Buckeystown Pike
Front Yard	25'	110' to canopy west side 40' to canopy south side
Side Yard	8'	40' to store north side 115' to store east side
Rear Yard	NA-corner lot	
Max Building Height	60'	24.7'

- 2. Signage §1-19-6.300:** Per the Zoning Ordinance the maximum signage allowed for business identification in the GC zoning district is calculated based upon the following formula:

10 x the square root of the building frontage. The plan shows 104 feet of frontage on Spectrum Drive and 61 feet of frontage on Buckeystown Pike totaling 129 square feet of signage allowed. The Applicant proposes one free standing sign of approximately 27.63 SF and additional signage on the building and the canopy for a total of 120.28 SF. The free standing sign is allowed a maximum height of 25' and a minimum setback of 12.5 feet. Applicant proposes a height of 24.4' and a setback of 12.5', which are in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance. Per the Ordinance, gas pricing signage is not included in the signage total.

### 3. Landscaping & Screening §1-19-6.400

The proposed on-site landscaping is in conformance with the zoning requirements. The planting area is adequate and in conformance with the Zoning Ordinance, consisting largely of native species. Parking area canopy coverage of 24% is in conformance with the Zoning Ordinance. **Staff suggests a condition of approval that the use of Hedge Maples as street trees and the Andorra Juniper noted as native be adjusted prior to final site plan approval. Hedge Maple is not an ideal street tree and neither Hedge Maple nor Andorra Juniper is native to Frederick County.**

A total of twenty street trees are required for the 690 linear feet of frontage on Route 85 and Spectrum Drive. Due to the existing entrances and a waterline easement along Spectrum Drive the Applicant is proposing ten street trees on the public road frontage and an additional ten planted along its northern and eastern property lines. **This will require the approval of a modification to the street tree requirements. A letter has been submitted regarding this modification request. Staff has no objection to the request.**

4. **Lighting §1-19-6.500:** The Applicant proposes to light the Site with a combination of building and canopy mounted lights (16 feet in height) and pole lights (18" in height). Both are in conformance with the Zoning Ordinance. There is some light spill over at the commercial entrances on both Route 85 and Spectrum Drive. **A modification request to the Planning Commission has been submitted by the Applicant for this excess illumination. Staff has no objection to this additional lighting at these commercial entrances.**

*Transportation and Parking §1-19-3.300.4 (B): The transportation system and parking areas are adequate to serve the proposed use in addition to existing uses by providing safe and efficient circulation, and design consideration that maximizes connections with surrounding land uses and accommodates public transit facilities. Evaluation factors include: on-street parking impacts, off-street parking and loading design, access location and design, vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation and safety, and existing or planned transit facilities.*

### Findings/Conclusions

1. **Access/Circulation & Pedestrian Circulation and Safety §1-19-6.220 (G):** Site frontage will be reconstructed no sooner than 2021 by the MDOT as part of the MD 85 Phase 1 Improvements now under construction. County Transportation Engineering has facilitated the coordination of those future improvements with the proposed improvements being constructed by Sheetz between the Applicant and the SHA. The agreed upon improvements are reflected on this plan, with one exception. MDOT SHA is requiring the Applicant to remove the right out movement from the site to westbound Spectrum Drive to eliminate the very short weave approaching MD 85. Condition #4 address this matter.

Pedestrian access will be facilitated by the construction of new sidewalk along Spectrum Drive, as well as a future Transit pad and bus shelter as discussed below. The handicapped access from Spectrum Drive to the building has been adjusted at staff request to provide a safer, more visible route.

To assure adequate site access operation, the Applicant shall lengthen, or cause to be lengthened, the left turn lane on the eastbound approach of Spectrum Drive at Holiday Drive. This improvement shall be limited to the available space in the existing median, as determined by the County, and be guaranteed prior to issuance of a building permit and open to traffic prior to Certificate of Occupancy.

**Connectivity §1-19-6.220 (F):** The redesigned Sheetz provides interconnectivity with the common access lane that serves a hotel, fast food restaurant, a bank, and the FSK Gateway shopping center. A reservation for a possible future connection to the adjoining Lowes property is shown on the site plan.

- 2. Public Transit:** The Site has excellent accessibility to the #10 Mall to Mall Connector and the #20 FSK Mall Connector, both operating along Spectrum Drive and running 6 days a week. As noted on the site plan, the Applicant will construct a pad for a future County Transit bus shelter once the MDOT SHA has completed its intersection improvements. The final location of the pad may require some minor site plan adjustment in the future.
- 3. Vehicle Parking §1-19-6.220:** Parking standards are established for Commercial Uses in the Zoning Ordinance with the requirements as follows:

Parking spaces required: 1 space per 300 SF of store floor area. This would require 20 parking spaces be provided for this building's 6,077 SF. The Applicant believes this number is far too low for this type of use and has requested that 53 parking spaces be approved for this site plan. They note that the nine spaces retained along the Bob Evans access drive will be designated as employee spaces; freeing parking around the building for customers. **A modification request for Planning Commission approval of the additional 33 spaces has been included in this submittal. Staff has no objection to the modification.**

The proposed 53 spaces will require three handicapped spaces and three are provided. Staff feels that having one space in proximity to each of the three entrances is an adequate design.

- 4. Loading §1-19-6.210.B:** One 12 X 50 loading space is required and one is provided in the vicinity of the fuel tanks.
- 5. Bicycle Parking §1-19-6.220 (H):** In accordance with Z.O. § 1-19-6.220, two bike racks are required and two are provided at the southeast corner of the building.

**Public Utilities §1-19-3.300.4 (C):** *Where the proposed development will be served by publicly owned community water and sewer, the facilities shall be adequate to serve the proposed development. Where proposed development will be served by facilities other than publicly owned community water and sewer, the facilities shall meet the requirements of and receive approval from the Maryland Department of the Environment/Frederick County Health Department.*

### **Findings/Conclusions**

- 1. Public Water and Sewer:** The Site is classified as W-1, S-1 with existing service for public water and sewer provided to each of the current lots. During this rebuild, Sheetz will remove the existing utility services to both lots and rebuild new connections off the service lines that previously served Bob Evans.

**Natural features §1-19-3.300.4 (D):** *Natural features of the site have been evaluated and to the greatest extent practical maintained in a natural state and incorporated into the design of the development. Evaluation factors include topography, vegetation, sensitive resources, and natural hazards.*

### **Findings/Conclusions**

- 1. Topography:** The Site is currently completely developed for commercial use.
- 2. Vegetation:** No vegetation of note currently exists on-site
- 3. Sensitive Resources:** No constrained soils, floodplains, or wetlands are present on the Site.
- 4. Natural Hazards:** No FEMA floodplain is identified on the Site.

### **Other Applicable Regulations**

**Stormwater Management – Chapter 1-15.2:** A Concept Stormwater Plan has been submitted and is Conditionally Approved for this Application.

**APFO – Chapter 1-20:** Per 1-20-8 (D)(5)

Schools: Schools are not impacted because this is a commercial development

Water and Sewer: The Site has water and sewer classifications W-1, S-1. While the public sewer and water facilities are currently adequate to serve the project, the Applicant recognizes that capacity is not guaranteed until purchased.

Road Improvements: When considering the reduction of site trips from the elimination of the Bob Evans restaurant and no increase in the number of fueling positions, this project would generate up to 12 new evening and 12 new midday weekday, and 6 new Saturday midday peak hour trips during the peak hours of the adjacent streets, which is under the 50 trips per hour APFO testing threshold per Section 1-20-30.

In satisfaction of APFO requirements to provide fair share contributions to existing escrow accounts per Section 1-20-12(H), the Applicant has agreed to pay into County-held escrow accounts, prior to building permit issuance, \$51,902 as described in the attached LOU.

Validity Period: The APFO will remain active until three years after Planning Commission approval of this site plan.

**Forest Resource – Chapter 1-21:** Project is exempt from FRO per Section 1-21-7(N) because it is within a previously developed area covered by impervious surface and located in a priority funding area.

**Summary of Agency Comments**

<b><i>Other Agency or Ordinance Requirements</i></b>	<b><i>Comment</i></b>
<b><i>Public Works Development Review (PWDR):</i></b>	Conditional Approval
<b><i>Development Review Planning:</i></b>	Conditional Approval
<b><i>DUSWM:</i></b>	Approval
<b><i>Street Name Review</i></b>	Approved
<b><i>Health Dept.</i></b>	Approved
<b><i>Office of Life Safety</i></b>	Approval
<b><i>Traffic Engineering</i></b>	Approved
<b><i>APFO</i></b>	Approval
<b><i>FRO</i></b>	Approval

## Recommendation

Staff has no objection to conditional approval of this site development plan. If the Planning Commission conditionally approves the site development plan, the plan is valid for a period of three (3) years from the date of Planning Commission approval (valid through January 9, 2022). The APFO approval is also valid for a period of three (3) years from the date of Planning Commission approval (valid through January 9, 2022)

Based upon the findings, conclusions, and modifications as presented in the staff report, Staff finds that the application meets or will meet all applicable Zoning, APFO, and FRO requirements once the following modifications are granted and conditions met:

### Modifications requested by the Applicant for approval:

Section 1-19-6.220A: Applicant request for a modification to allow the number of parking spaces to be increased from the required 20 to a total of 53.

Section 1-19-6.400A: Applicant requests a modification of the street tree requirements to be allowed to plant ten of the required 20 street trees along interior property lines.

Section 1-19-6.500D: Applicant request a modification to be allowed to exceed the .5 foot candles of lighting at the property line in the areas of the commercial entrances at Spectrum Drive and Route 85.

### Staff-proposed conditions of approval:

1. Address all agency comments as the plan proceeds through to completion.
2. The addition plat for these lots must be recorded prior to site plan approval and the recording reference noted on the plan.
3. Replace Hedge Maple with a native deciduous tree and revise landscape chart to remove Andorra Juniper as a native species. Landscape plantings must be predominantly native species.
4. Revise the site plan to eliminate the right-out movement onto Spectrum Drive.

## PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

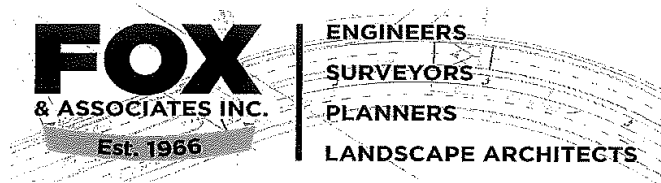
### MOTION TO APPROVE

I move that the Planning Commission **APPROVE** SP-89-21 (AP #18837, APFO #18838, FRO #18839), based upon the modifications and conditions as listed in the staff recommendations for the proposed Sheetz rebuild, as based on the findings and conclusions of the staff report and the testimony, exhibits, and documentary evidence produced at the public meeting.





# EXHIBIT 2 Modification Letter



82 Worman's Mill Ct  
Suite G  
Frederick, MD 21701  
Phone: 301-695-0880  
Fax: 301-293-6009

Frederick County Division of Permitting  
and Development Review  
Office of Development Review  
30 North Market Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Frederick, MD 21701

November 28, 2018

Attn.: Jerry Muir  
Principal Planner

Re: Sheetz Rebuild #161  
Spectrum Drive Site Plan  
File #SP8129, AP #18837  
Modification Request Letter  
Fox Project #18-31419

Dear Jerry:

As part of the agency comments dated November 22, 2018 for the Sheetz #161 Rebuild Spectrum Drive Site Plan ("Sheetz Site Plan") it was mentioned that three (3) modification requests are needed for the Sheetz Site Plan under Chapter 1-19, Article VI, Division I "Design Requirements and Modifications", Division 2 "Parking and Loading" and Division 4, "Landscaping and Screening" of the Frederick County Zoning Ordinance ("Zoning Ordinance"). On behalf of the applicant, Sheetz, Inc. ("Sheetz"), the following three (3) modifications under the referenced sections of the Zoning Ordinance are hereby requested from the Frederick County Planning Commission for the reasons and justification set forth below:

**Modification Request # 1: Increase the number of required parking spaces under Section 1-19-6.220 A:**

Under Section 1-19-6.220 A, one (1) parking space is required for each 300 square feet of floor area. The proposed Sheetz convenience store is 6,077 square feet which when divided by 300 square feet equals 20 required parking spaces. The Sheetz Site Plan proposes 53 parking spaces which is 33 parking spaces more than the required amount. Based on Sheetz's experience with hundreds of stores in the mid-Atlantic region, the 33 additional spaces are necessary for the optimal safe, convenient and functional operation of the Sheetz convenience store and gas pumps. Sheetz maintains that the number of parking spaces proposed on the Sheetz Site Plan will be fully utilized by its customers and by its employees.

The maximum number of Sheetz employees on site for any working shift will be eight (8). The employees will occupy eight (8) parking spaces. The proposed parking spaces #44 through #53 on the Sheetz Site Plan, located the furthest from the Sheetz store, will be used by their employees. If eight (8) employee spaces are subtracted from the twenty (20) required parking spaces allowed for the Sheetz store, that leaves only twelve (12) parking spaces available for customers, a very low and inadequate amount for Sheetz customers.

Additionally, as part of its typical operations for convenience and gas, Sheetz has a high turnover of customers particularly during the peak morning and evening commute times. Customer visits to Sheetz stores are typically brief (in the 5-15 minute range). Sheetz customers need and expect convenient and adequate parking to promptly transact their business. It is very inconvenient for a customer to search for the last space on the site when they are pressed for time on the commute.

It is also important to emphasize that even with the additional parking requested the total impervious area for the proposed Sheetz store as shown on the Sheetz Site Plan is less than the combined impervious area for the existing Sheetz store and Bob Evans restaurant upon which Sheetz proposes to expand.

**Modification Request # 2: Street tree landscape modification under Section 1-19-6.400(A):**

Section 1-19-6.400 (A) (1) requires that one (1) street tree be provided per thirty five feet (35') of roadway frontage. The Sheetz site has six hundred ninety feet (690') of roadway frontage on Route 85 and Spectrum Drive. 690' of roadway frontage requires twenty (20) street trees.

All 20 street trees cannot be provided along the street frontage due to the location of the driveway entrances on both Spectrum Drive and Route 85, and the waterline easement along Spectrum Drive.

Sheetz is instead proposing an alternate street tree location for approval by the Planning Commission under Section 1-19-6.400 (A) (2) of the Zoning Ordinance. As shown on the Sheetz Site Plan, ten (10) street trees are proposed along the site's roadway frontage, five (5) trees are proposed along the northern property line (common boundary line with the Lowe's store property) and five (5) trees are proposed along the existing Bob Evans' entrance on the east where they will provide added screening from the adjoining properties.

**Modification Request # 3: Increase in photometric requirement under Section 1-19-6.500(D)**

Section 1-19-6.500 (D) states that lighting shall not exceed 0.50 foot-candles as measured from the property line. Section 1-19-6.500 (G) allows the Planning Commission to modify this requirement.

The only areas shown on the Sheetz Site Plan for which this foot-candle increase modification is requested are the driveway entrance on Route 85 and the driveway entrance on Spectrum Drive. These are commercial driveway entrances where it is beneficial to have adequate light for the safety and security of the site. The highest foot-candle measurement is 6.7 at the Route 85 entrance. The request at this location is for 6.2 foot-candle above the 0.50 foot-candle required. The highest foot-candle reading near the Spectrum Drive entrance is 2.7. The request at this location is for 2.2 foot-candle above the 0.50 requirement.

These areas are both adjacent to heavily travelled commercial areas and no residences will be impacted by this increase in foot-candles.

Thank you for your consideration of these modification requests. Please call if you need additional information.

Sincerely,  
Fox & Associates, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Battern". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "M".

Mike Battern, P.E., Project Manager

Cc: David Severn, Attorney

EXHIBIT 3  
Letter of Understanding

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**FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

Jan H. Gardner  
*County Executive*

**DIVISION OF PLANNING & PERMITTING** *Steven C. Horn, Division Director*

**ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING**

**Sheetz #161 Rebuild, Spectrum Drive**

*Site Plan SP-81-29, APFO AP #18838*

**In General:** The following Letter of Understanding ("**Letter**") between the Frederick County Planning Commission ("**Commission**") and REP Property, LLC (the "**Developer**"), together with its/their successors and assigns, sets forth the conditions and terms which the Commission deems to be the minimum necessary improvements dealing with school, water, sewer, and road improvements that must be in place for the property identified below to be developed, as proposed under the Sheetz #161 Rebuild, Spectrum Drive (the "**Project**"), in compliance with the Frederick County Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance ("**APFO**").

The Developer, its successors and assigns, hereby agrees and understands that unless the required improvements (or contributions to road escrow accounts, as specified below) are provided in accordance with this Letter, APFO requirements will not be satisfied and development will not be permitted to proceed.

This Letter concerns itself with the 2.451 +/- acre parcel of land, which is zoned General Commercial (GC) and located in the northeast quadrant of MD 85 and Spectrum Drive, with right-in/right-out access on both roads. This APFO approval will be for a reconstructed convenience store and filling station as shown in the site plan, and was conditionally approved by the Commission on January 9, 2019.

**Schools:** Schools are not impacted because this is a commercial development

**Water and Sewer:** The site has water and sewer classifications W-1, S-1. While the public sewer and water facilities are currently adequate to serve the project, the Developer recognizes that capacity is not guaranteed until purchased. APFO approval for sewer and water does not guarantee that plats will be recorded or that building permits will be issued. Plat recordation and building permit issuance are subject to compliance with the Annotated Code of Maryland, Environment Article Section 9-512, et seq. and all applicable County regulations, including but not limited to Sec. 1-16-106 of the Frederick County Subdivision Regulations .

**Road Improvements:** The Project will generate up to 12 new evening and 12 new midday weekday, and 6 new Saturday midday peak hour trips during the peak hours of the adjacent streets, which is under the 50 trips per hour APFO testing threshold per Section 1-20-30. In satisfaction of APFO requirements to provide fair share contributions to existing escrow accounts per Section 1-20-12(H), the Developer shall pay into County-held escrow accounts the following pro rata contributions:

1. Escrow Account No. 3976 for the construction of second northbound left turn lane and westbound receiving lanes at the intersection of MD 85 and Guilford Road. The estimated cost of the improvement is \$549,491. The Developer's proportionate share of this Road Improvement is 0.18%. Therefore the Developer hereby agrees to pay \$989 to the escrow account for this Road Improvement.
2. Escrow Account No. 4292 for pedestrian improvements at intersection of MD 85 and Grove Road. The estimated cost of the improvement is \$121,200. The Developer's proportionate share of this Road Improvement is 0.48%. Therefore the Developer hereby agrees to pay \$582 to the escrow account for this Road Improvement.
3. Escrow Account No. 4025 for a southbound triple through lane at intersection of MD 85 and Spectrum Drive. The estimated cost of the improvement is \$1,830,228. The Developer's proportionate share of this Road Improvement is 2.75%. Therefore the Developer hereby agrees to pay \$50,331 to the escrow account for this Road Improvement.

**Therefore, prior to building permit issuance, the Developer hereby agrees to pay \$51,902** to the escrow accounts described above for these Road Improvements. Should these payments not be made within one year of the execution of this Letter, the County reserves the right to adjust this amount, based on an engineering cost index.

To assure adequate site access operation, the developer shall lengthen, or cause to be lengthened, the left turn lane on the eastbound approach of Spectrum Drive at Holiday Drive. This improvement shall be limited to the available space in the existing median, as determined by the County, and be guaranteed prior to issuance of a building permit and open to traffic prior to Certificate of Occupancy.

**Period of Validity:** The APFO approval is valid for three (3) years from the date of Commission approval; therefore, the APFO approval expires on January 9, 2022.

**Disclaimer:** This Letter pertains to APFO approval only, and shall not be construed to provide any express or implied rights to continue the development process. The Project remains subject to all applicable rules and regulations, including but not limited to those related to zoning, water and sewer, and subdivision. The Planning Commission's jurisdiction and authority is limited by State and County law, and approvals may be required from other local or state governmental agencies before the proposed development can proceed.

**[Signatures Next Page]**


REP PROPERTY, L.L.C.:

  
G. Robert Sheetz – Managing Member

By LO-6 - Date **J?/:/d.f-**

FREDERICK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION:

By:

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ \_ Bob White,  
Chair or Sharon Suarez, Secretary

ATTEST:

By:

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ \_ Gary  
Hessong, Director, Permits & Inspections

*Plmuier's Initials/ Onte* \_\_ \_

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*(Approved for technical content)*

*County; Attorney's Office Initials/ Dnte* \_\_ \_ *(Approved ns to legal form)*