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March 15, 2016

Paul Leonard, Township Manager
The Township of Upper Dublin
801 Loch Alsh Avenue,
Fort Washington, PA 19034

Re: BET Investments Prudential Site

Dear Mr. Leonard:

There are numerous advantages to supporting mixed use development for the Prudential site. From a regional planning perspective, the newly adopted county comprehensive plan, "Montco 2040: A Shared Vision," identifies the site as a business area and immediately across Welsh Road is a county-designated "Community Mixed Use (CMU) area in Horsham. While this CMU is located in another township, the county plan encourages concentrated nodes of mixed use development along major transportation corridors. The Prudential site also has the road and utility infrastructure in place to support the kind of development the county recommends.

At the township level, the 2010 Upper Dublin Township (UDT) Comprehensive Plan targets mixed use to redevelopment opportunities in the township, including older existing shopping centers and the Fort Washington Office Park. At the time the UDT plan was drafted, the Prudential site was approved for office development consistent with the existing OC District zoning. Since then, however, demand for traditional office uses has declined and current market trends favor mixed use development. In addition, the redevelopment of the Fort Washington Office Park has been hampered by environmental and other issues. The Prudential site is unencumbered with direct access to a major transportation route.

Moreover, the Land Use Element of the UDT Comprehensive Plan has three main priorities: preserving open space; leveraging economic opportunities and enhancing community character. A mixed-use development on the Prudential site would help implement these goals by:

- Preserving the significant economic potential offered by the Prudential campus.
- Providing community-serving businesses and small to medium-scale retail uses along with residential development.
- Creating pedestrian links between shopping areas and surrounding neighborhoods.

- Improving streetscapes and community character with design standards for architecture, landscaping, lighting, signage and other enhancements.
- Incorporating public green spaces and plazas in an area of the township that is lacking such amenities.

The mixed use development proposed for the Prudential site in particular would provide a number of community benefits.

- The development would be an economic generator for the township, the school district and local businesses. The project will create tax revenues and attract residents with disposable income. A fiscal analysis with greater detail has been provided.
- The project would establish a higher-quality architecture and help create a more cohesive community character.
- The mixed use project would increase pedestrian traffic and reduce local vehicle trips. A detailed traffic study has been provided.
- The development includes a significant new trail system with links to surrounding neighborhoods, creating a recreational amenity for existing and future residents. The proposed linkages would implement the trail master plan for this area of the township.
- Mixed use projects are able to share parking, which helps decrease stormwater run-off by reducing overall impervious coverage. A shared parking analysis with greater detail has been provided.

The enclosed ordinance amendment creates a mixed-use development option as a permitted use in the OC Office Center District. In my opinion, the proposed ordinance and development for the Prudential site are consistent with Montgomery County and Upper Dublin comprehensive plans, as well as current market trends. I look forward to working with the Township on this exciting project.

Respectfully,



John H. Kennedy, AICP
President