

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

BUILDING & PLANNING COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15,
2025
6:00 PM (Approximately)

Chairperson: Joshua Grimes

Vice Chairperson: Sean Whalen, Jeremiah Woodring

AGENDA

1. AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE ORDINANCE - CHAPTER A180, HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY - Addition of 17 Elliott Avenue, Bryn Mawr
2. AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE ORDINANCE - CHAPTER 105, NOISE & EXTERIOR LIGHTING - Noise Enforcement Amendments
3. TENTATIVE SKETCH PLAN - 1400 Waverly Road, (Waverly Heights - Life Plan Community) Gladwyne, Ward 6, LD# 3929TS
4. PETITION TO AMEND THE LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP ZONING CODE AND ZONING MAP - Institutional Nature Preserve District, Environmental Use Regulations and Zoning Map Amendments - 1835 County Line Road, 330 Spring Mill Road, 1800 West Montgomery Avenue & 1829 County Line Road, Villanova, Ward 6, Z-25-005
5. AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE ORDINANCE - CHAPTER 155, ZONING - Tobacco Retailer & Lot Occupation Zoning Amendments - Z-25-004
6. APPROVAL OF HISTORICAL COMMISSION APPLICATIONS
7. APPROVAL OF CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS
8. AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE ORDINANCE - CHAPTER 155, ZONING - Freestanding Ground & Monument Signs Zoning Amendment - Z-25-006



Township of Lower Merion
A FIRST CLASS TOWNSHIP

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Building & Planning

ITEM: **AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE ORDINANCE - CHAPTER A180, HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY - ADDITION OF 17 ELLIOTT AVENUE, BRYN MAWR**

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners authorizing the Township Secretary to advertise notice of a Public Hearing and intent to adopt an ordinance to amend the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter A180, Historic Resource Inventory, to add 17 Elliott Avenue, Bryn Mawr, to the Historic Resource Inventory as a Class I Resource.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENT(S):

[17 Elliott - May 2025 BP Memo.pdf](#)

[Ordinance - HRI Amendment - 17 Elliott Avenue](#)

[17 Elliott Slides.pdf](#)

May 6, 2025

Staff Memo

Historic Resource Nomination for 17 Elliott Avenue

To: Building & Planning Committee

By: Greg Prichard, Historic Preservation Planner

On Wednesday, March 12, 2025, the Building & Planning Committee reviewed a recommendation from the Historical Commission to add the residential property at 17 Elliott Avenue, Bryn Mawr, to the Historic Resource Inventory as a Class I resource. At their October 28, 2024 meeting, the Historical Commission found that the nomination, which was submitted by a third party, met the necessary criteria for Class I designation. After a thorough discussion and hearing multiple public comments, the Building & Planning Committee tabled the discussion until May 14 in order to give staff time to compile additional information.

Clarifications

This nomination has resulted in an unusual amount of public comment and press coverage. Given that details of this discussion are complex and this property contains a number of unique qualities, some clarifications and corrections are necessary for the benefit of the public and the Board.

- It has been said that Class I Historic Resource designation will provide “permanent protection” for a property to which it is applied. Permanent protection (i.e. prevention of the destruction of elements by intentional means rather than accidental or natural events) can only be achieved through a façade easement, such as the easement required when property owners seek Conditional Use approval for incentives available only to Historic Resources. Class I designation only requires that property owners go through a review process for exterior alterations. While the Historical Commission has the ability to recommend denial of an application that they feel is inappropriate, the Board has the ability to approve an application counter to that recommendation should it feel that other factors outweigh the inappropriateness of the application on a historic preservation basis.
- The Township has no role in the enforcement of deed restrictions. This property’s 1983 deed does contain a set of historic preservation-related restrictions, the wording of which in some ways resemble the regulations placed on Historic Resources by the Township. However, deeds are legal agreements between two private parties (Grantor and Grantee), recorded by the County, and are not subject to enforcement by the Township. The Township has no role in interpreting the legality or enforcing these covenants and the

Township is not obligated to impose local historic preservation protections on a property due to deed covenants.

- The Board of Commissioners is not compelled to act on the Historical Commission’s recommendation or to vote in favor of designation based simply on adherence to the designation criteria. The Board may decide not to act or to deny the request to designate based on a multitude of factors, which could include the objection of the property owner, whether the owner is unable to afford repairs that sustain the historic integrity of the building (so long as those needed repairs do not endanger the physical integrity of the building), and the loss of historic context by inappropriate adjacent construction.
- The Township is obligated to ensure that all properties comply with property maintenance codes, whether designated as Historic Resources or not. Building and Property Maintenance Code enforcement is separate from the “demolition by neglect” provisions found in the historic preservation ordinance. If the Township believes that a structure is severely compromised, it can initiate a process to enforce these standards by legal means. In 2018, before any possibility of historic designation was proposed, such an action was taken to compel the owner of 17 Elliott to repair a partially collapsed stone wall on the front façade of the home. As a result of this action, the wall was repaired in a way that appears to appropriately replicate the quality and materiality of the original construction.

Overview of Class I Historic Resources

The number of Class I resources included in the Inventory at the time of its initial adoption was limited by the fact that eligibility or listing on the National Register of Historic Places was required. In response to Certified Local Government requirements from the State Historic Preservation Office, the criteria for Class I eligibility were amended in 2018 to allow for local control to determine which properties are worthy of this level of designation. This amendment allows the Township to designate Class I resources without confirmation of historic significance from the state or federal governments.

For the forthcoming Historic Preservation Plan, statistics have been compiled showing the number of Historic Resources per zoning classification and level of historic designation. They show that residential properties comprise a majority of individually designated Class I and Class II Historic Resources, as well as properties within Historic Districts. Residentially zoned properties account for about 60% of individually designated Class I resources and properties within Historic

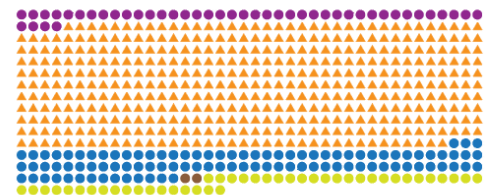
Historic Resources by Type



Class I (123)



Class II (618)



Historic Districts (360)



Districts (which are regulated similarly to standalone Class I resources). Residential properties account for about 68% of Class II resources. The other zoning classifications include institutional and commercial properties. Railroad stations and Historic Objects, including 14 historic milestones that account for about 11% of all Class I resources, are counted separately.

Background: Historic Resource Inventory

The Historic Resource Inventory was the result of many years of surveys, all of which were conducted on foot and from windshields without the benefit of satellite photos or other electronic resources. Various criteria were used to evaluate potential resources, including age (using the 1913 Main Line atlas as a general cutoff), architectural significance, and documented historical significance. Many historic properties had been thoroughly documented thanks to the efforts of the Lower Merion Historical Society and books like “Lower Merion: A Portrait” (1976), which celebrated 35 significant buildings or complexes in the Township. While there are a number of well-known and widely recognized historic places in Lower Merion, many more have stories that are not as well documented.

Surveys of the Township were conducted in the 1970s through 1990s in preparation for a potential historic preservation ordinance. All overlooked 17 Elliott Avenue, the provenance of which was not known at that time. One of the surveyors involved in that effort has stated that had the home’s design been conclusively linked to William L. Price, it would have made the “first pass” for inclusion in the survey. Without the benefit of searchable historic newspapers, online databases such as the Philadelphia Architects & Buildings project, or knowledge of the original Price-signed blueprints, the home’s history could not have been known and thus it was excluded from the survey. A number of other residential properties in the Township designed by William L. Price were surveyed and eventually included in the Inventory as Class II Historic Resources. The only Price-designed Class I resource, Woodmont, is zoned as an institutional property.

These street-level surveys and extensive supplementary research led to the creation of a list of properties found to be eligible for inclusion in the Inventory. Prior to the Inventory’s adoption in 2000 (via the same ordinance that formed the Historical Commission), property owners were afforded the one-time opportunity to opt-out from inclusion. As a result, at least 90 properties were excluded from the Inventory at the request of their owners, or about 12% of the current number of Class I and II resources outside of Historic Districts. The majority of these “opt-out” properties were residentially zoned. Multiple resources have been added to the Inventory since, many of them residential properties for which their owners sought Conditional Use approvals. The largest of these was Maybrook, a complex containing ten Class I and II resources which were added to the Inventory in 2002 after a Conditional Use approval process.

The Board has been reluctant to designate residential properties where owners have voiced objections to designation. An effort to identify potential new resources in 2018 initially contained several residences, but the final ordinance adopted by the Board included only institutional properties and historic objects.

Current Incentives for Class I Historic Resources

When the Historic Resource Inventory was adopted in 2000, the Township recognized that an effective local historic preservation strategy cannot succeed unless protections are balanced with opportunities for owners of Historic Resources to benefit from designation. A series of incentives were included in the ordinance, which have since been updated periodically (including in the Zoning Code rewrite of 2020).

By definition, not all incentives will be equally applicable to every property in the Township. Each property has its own unique qualities, including lot dimensions, opportunities for expansion, and eligibility for special uses. For example, a historic farmhouse set within a rolling landscape would not benefit from setback relief incentives, and a small residence without a freestanding outbuilding may not have adequate interior space for the creation of an Accessory Dwelling Unit.

Form Relief Standards

Without the ability to review an engineered site plan, it is not possible to determine if 17 Elliott Avenue could benefit from setback or impervious coverage relief. However, given the apparent constraints of the property, it is possible that a modification or expansion of the home could benefit from such relief assuming that, as the Code states, the applicant “demonstrate(s) to the satisfaction of the Board of Commissioners that the degree of relief is required to accommodate the reasonable development, use or enhancement of the historic resource.”¹

Historic Resource Uses

The constraints of the site likely make most uses unavailable. Accessory dwelling unit and single-family to multifamily conversions require compliance with minimum parking requirements, which often present a challenge for properties with smaller proportions.

Though no formal evaluation has been conducted, the following uses may be available to 17 Elliott:

- Historic home occupation
- Bed-and-breakfast (assuming compliance with parking requirements)

¹ § [155-7.1H\(3\)](#)

- Cultural studio, gallery, museum (with resident manager residing on premises)
- Office
- Specialized Retail (food preparation/catering, repair services)
- Craft and production (artist studio/workshop)
- Place of assembly (community center)

Aside from the historic home occupation use, which only requires a zoning permit, an application to establish one of these uses on the property would require several stages of public review, including a meeting of the Historical Commission, a Conditional Use hearing, and final consideration by the Building & Planning Committee and Board of Commissioners. In addition, the applicant must provide a means to guarantee the permanent protection of the historic integrity of the resource, such as the establishment of conservation easements or appropriate covenants.

There are little in the way of financial benefits for owners of properties that are designated Historic Resources. Designation does not provide property tax relief, for example. It is also unlikely that grants to fund the preservation and upkeep of single-family homes are available from any source, despite their potential historical significance. Some historic preservation grants are available to income-producing properties, which could potentially include residences converted for bed-and-breakfast use.

Historic Preservation-Related Opportunities in Other Communities

Lower Merion's current incentives encourage adaptive reuse by offering relief to allow property owners to modernize (rather than replace) existing buildings. Under Pennsylvania law, the Township has no legal right to offer any tax incentives. The financial burden of upkeep that meets historic standards and guidelines is most often cited as a concern when designation is proposed. Offering financial relief to individual homeowners of non-income-producing properties is rare. However, some municipalities and local nonprofit organizations operate programs to support homeowners, similar to the way the Ardmore Initiative provides support to commercial entities in downtown Ardmore. Despite the overall goals of community preservation that these programs espouse, not all require work to meet historic preservation standards and guidelines. Below are some examples of these local programs.

- The Lancaster City (PA) Alliance operates a Façade Improvement Grant Program providing funding opportunities on an application basis so that homeowners and business owners can make improvements to the front facades of their properties. The program is funded by foundations and the Commonwealth and has benefitted over 100 property owners. Projects

must adhere to historic preservation guidelines in order to receive funding.²

- The nonprofit Cleveland (OH) Restoration Society provides various kinds of assistance to owners of historic homes through its Heritage Home Program. The program offers technical assistance and fixed low-interest financing and is funded through local foundations and federal grants.³
- The City of Philadelphia offers a “Restore, Repair, Renew” Program (R.R.R.) to offer low-interest loans to help homeowners make improvements. This program is administered by the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC). Mayor Cherelle Parker has committed to increasing support to the program through the Housing Opportunities Made Easy (H.O.M.E.) housing plan, which aims to preserve 16,500 existing residential units, in part by funding repairs that allow for homeowners to maintain existing housing stock. While historic preservation is not noted as a specific goal of the program, the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia is advising on the H.O.M.E. program in support of the general goal of preserving Philadelphia’s historic built environment.⁴
- The City of Bismarck, North Dakota created a Neighborhood Reinvestment Initiative (NRI), in partnership with two banks, offering reduced-interest loans to homeowners for eligible home improvement projects. This program aims to revitalize older and potentially disinvested areas of the city through reinvestment in Bismarck’s existing housing stock. The program is only open to those who occupy the homes receiving the benefit, be of a certain age, and valued below \$300,000.⁵
- Architectural assistance grants are sometimes made available via means such as Certified Local Government (CLG) grants to communities for work within historic districts. The borough of Haddon Heights, NJ started a 75-25 match program for this assistance but dissolved due to lack of paid local staff to administer the program.

Implementation of these programs depends on the availability of funding or partnerships with funding entities and the ability to devote staff resources. The Ardmore Initiative (AI) is an example of an entity that has had a positive impact on its designated area through grants and other activities thanks to dedicated staff and local government support. Similarly, Lower Merion Township’s owner-occupied residential rehabilitation program provides upkeep opportunities for low-income residential property owners with support from a dedicated staff position.

² <https://lancastercityalliance.org/facade-improvements/>

³ <https://www.clevelandrestoration.org/for-homeowners>

⁴ <https://www.phdcphila.org/rrr/>

⁵ <https://www.bismarcknd.gov/2208/Neighborhood-Reinvestment-Initiative>

Applicability of Designation Criteria

The Historical Commission's review of the nomination for 17 Elliott Avenue found that the property meets five of the ten criteria found in the Code.⁶ Eligibility for Class I designation requires a property to meet at least three of the criteria, including at least one in category "B" (numbers 5 through 10). The HC found that the property meets five criteria, including three in category "B." Below are explanations of how each of the criteria are met, as evaluated by Township Historic Preservation Consultant Carol Quigley.

A.1. Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the Township, county, region, commonwealth or nation;

This criterion is explained and defended by a thorough history of the development of the Elliott Tract as it transitioned into the suburban neighborhood of Bryn Mawr, its expansion supported by the development of the nearby railroad.

A.3. Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community;

This criterion is supported by the analysis and history of the modern day attached garage and suggests that the inclusion of the "automobile stable" within the original drawings for the residence at 17 Elliott Avenue was one of the first such inclusions in the Philadelphia area. Attached garages are commonly known to have become a part of residential construction in the 1920s, so this inclusion in 1900 is well before its time. While the inclusion of the automobile stall appears to be quite prescient, the anticipation of the necessary spatial requirements for such storage was less so – the original stall appears to be approximately 10 feet deep, which might not have accommodated any of the motor vehicles designed later in the same decade.

B.6. Is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;

This criterion is supported by submitted histories of Helen Pearson and Helen King, two professional women working in unique fields and participating in the cultural development of the area by commissioning this residence, including the automobile stable, all before they even had a right to vote. While not alone in the Philadelphia area as women in the professional world, Ms. Pearson's link to the architectural development of the residence and the community compounds the significance of the other criteria.

B.7. Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, engineering technology, construction or building method, or material fabrication technique;

⁶ § [88-18A](#)

The nomination provides a visual and written narration of the unique characteristics of the house, almost all of which retain their original character, despite currently being in rather poor condition in some areas. The exterior envelope of the dwelling appears to not have had a single change to its massing, volumes, fenestration patterns – even its roofing or most of its windows – since it was constructed in 1900, which is a remarkable feat for a dwelling in any location.

B.8. Is the noteworthy work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social or cultural development of the Township, county, region, commonwealth or nation.

This criterion is supported by an abbreviated history of the building's architect – William L. Price – and his influence on and presence in the residential development of the Philadelphia suburbs, specifically the historic neighborhoods of Lower Merion Township.

Ms. Quigley's comments concluded, "As per LMT code requirements, the applicant has within its nomination provided ample support for the inclusion of this property on the HRI as a Class I resource."

In summary, the decision whether to list 17 Elliott Avenue, Bryn Mawr Pa. rests with the Board of Commissioners, who may consider all factors ranging from the historic designation criteria to the wishes of the property owner.

AN ORDINANCE

NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE To Amend The Code Of The Township Of Lower Merion, Chapter A180, Historic Resource Inventory, To Add 17 Elliott Avenue To The Historic Resource Inventory As A Class I Resource.

The Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion hereby ordains:

Section 1. The Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter A180, Historic Resource Inventory, shall be amended to add the following:

ID Number	Address	Class
BM171	17 Elliott Avenue	Class 1

Section 2. Nothing in this Ordinance or in Chapter A180 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, as hereby amended, shall be construed to affect any suit or proceedings in any Court, any rights acquired or liability incurred, any permit issued, or any cause or causes of action existing under the said Chapter A180 prior to the adoption of this amendment.

Section 3. The provisions of this Ordinance are severable, and if any section, sentence, clause, part, or provision thereof shall be held illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such decision of this court shall not affect or impair the remaining sections, sentences, clauses, parts or provisions of this ordinance. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Board that this ordinance would have been adopted if such illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional section, sentence, clause, part, or provision had not been included herein.

Section 4. This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its approval as required by law.

Approved by the Board this day of , 2025.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

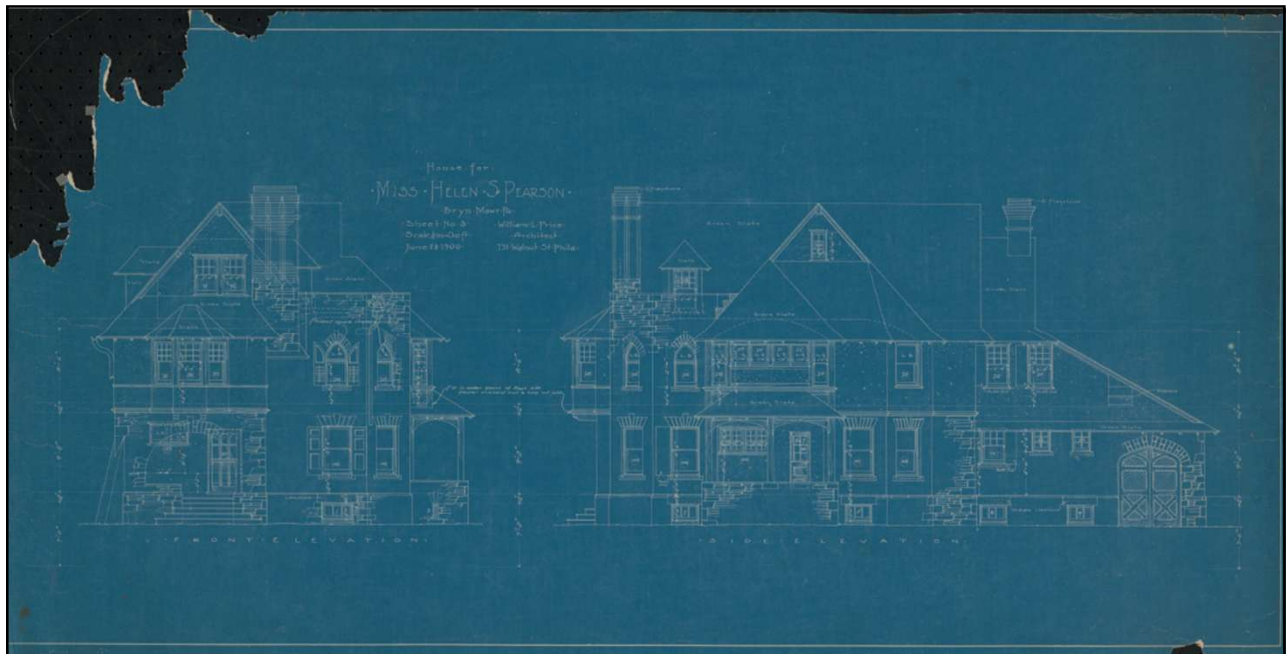
Todd M. Sinai, President

ATTEST:

Jody L. Kelley, Secretary



1



Designed in 1900 by William L. Price

2

	“Woodmont” Gladwyne Class I	
	“Kelty” Merion Station Class II	
Lewis Clarke House Haverford Class II “Eltrickwood” Merion Station Class II Current Historic Resources Designed by William L. Price		

3

Class I Historic Resources

Class I designation does not provide permanent protection of a Resource.

Permanent protection is only possible through the application of façade easements, which are required when a property owner seeks Conditional Use approval.

Class I designation only requires exterior alterations to be reviewed by the Historical Commission and approved by the Board of Commissioners.

The Board has the ability to deny an application that it feels is inappropriate, but can also approve an application against the recommendation of the Historical Commission.

4

Class I Historic Resources

Historic Resources by Type

- Commercial
- ▲ Residential
- Institutional
- Transportation
- Object

Residential properties account for:

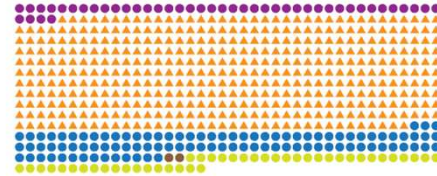
- 60% of Class I Resources
- 68% of Class II Resources
- 60% of properties in Historic Districts

(prior to Sept. 2025 HRI Updates)

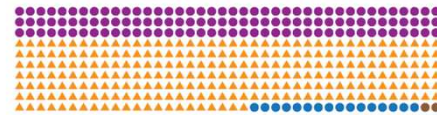
Class I (123)



Class II (618)



Historic Districts (360)



5

Historic Resource Incentives

Though no formal evaluation has been conducted, the following uses may be available to 17 Elliott:

- Historic home occupation
- Bed-and-breakfast (assuming compliance with parking requirements)
- Cultural studio, gallery, museum (with resident manager residing on premises)
- Office
- Specialized Retail (food preparation/catering, repair services)
- Craft and production (artist studio/workshop)
- Place of assembly (community center)

6

Deed Restrictions

There are several historic preservation-related restrictions in the 1983 deed on this property.

The Township has no role in the enforcement of deed restrictions.

Deeds are legal agreements between two private parties (Grantor and Grantee), recorded by the County, and are not subject to enforcement by the Township.

The Township also has no role in interpreting the legality or enforcing these restrictions and is not obligated to impose local historic preservation protections on a property because of deed restrictions.

7

HC Recommendation: Applicable Designation Criteria

A.1. Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the Township, county, region, commonwealth or nation;

A.3. Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community;

B.6. Is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;

B.7. Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, engineering technology, construction or building method, or material fabrication technique;

B.8. Is the noteworthy work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social or cultural development of the Township, county, region, commonwealth or nation.

8



Township of Lower Merion
A FIRST CLASS TOWNSHIP

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Building & Planning

ITEM: **AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE ORDINANCE - CHAPTER 105, NOISE & EXTERIOR LIGHTING - NOISE ENFORCEMENT AMENDMENTS**

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners authorizing the Township Secretary to advertise notice of intent to adopt an Ordinance to amend the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 105, Noise And Exterior Lighting, by adding definitions for Continuous Sound and Impulsive Sound and to apply those definitions to the chart providing maximum a-weighted sound pressure levels in residential and nonresidential zoning districts.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Issues Briefing - Noise Enforcement Amendments](#)
[Ordinance - Noise Enforcement Amendments](#)

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Building & Planning Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Proposed Ordinance to Amend Chapter 105, Article II, Noise

Prepared by: Ernest Pendleton, Assistant Director, Building and Planning
Christopher Leswing, Director, Building and Planning

Date: September 5, 2025

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

Authorize advertisement of an Ordinance to amend the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 105, Noise And Exterior Lighting, by adding definitions for Continuous Sound and Impulsive Sound and to apply those definitions to the chart providing maximum a-weighted sound pressure levels in residential and nonresidential zoning districts.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

An amendment to the Township Code is subject to the approval of the Board of Commissioners.

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable): N/A

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

Sections of the code related to noise were last updated in April 2024. In the year since the regulations were adopted, staff has continued to evaluate the effectiveness of the provisions. The proposed amendments will enhance enforcement capabilities, refine sound level metrics, and update maximum permissible sound levels. These changes aim to provide clearer guidelines to improve enforcement effectiveness and better protect the community from excessive noise.

As part of an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of the Township's noise regulations, staff consulted with the Rutgers University Noise Technical Assistance Center. Members of staff completed a course and received the Community Noise Enforcement certification. The Center's director Eric M. Zwering reviewed the Township's code in partnership with Township staff. Which resulted in the following changes aimed to better align Township noise regulations with best practices and recognized standards:

Proposed Amendments to Chapter 105:

- Background Noise Level (5 dBA Metric). This proposed amendment maintains the neighborhood residual sound (background noise) as the baseline, while permitting a maximum increase of 5 dBA above this background level provided it does not exceed the newly proposed maximum A-Weighted Sound Pressure Levels (SPL). This metric provides a flexible yet controlled approach to noise limits, allowing for minor fluctuations above ambient sound while preventing significant disturbances.
- Maximum A-Weighted Sound Pressure Levels (SPL). The proposed amendment slightly lowers maximum sound levels and clarifies wording for limits, categorized by zoning district and time of day.

The proposed amendments also include the addition of the following definitions:

- **Impulsive Sound:** Sound lasting less than 1 second.
- **Continuous Sound:** Sound lasting 1 second or longer, or an impulsive sound that occurs 5 or more times an hour.

The redlined chart below from Township Code §105.3 reflects the proposed changes detailed above.

Maximum A-Weighted Sound Pressure Levels (SPL) 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m., Daytime/8:00 p.m. - 8:00 a.m., Nighttime			
Zoning District of Receiving Property	Time of Day	Maximum Impulsive SPL (dBA)	LEQ Average Continuous SPL (dBA)
Residential (R)	Daytime	75	70 65
	Nighttime	60	50
Nonresidential (C)	Daytime	75	70
	Nighttime	65	55

These adjustments aim to reduce overall noise pollution, particularly during sensitive nighttime hours, and provide clearer, more enforceable thresholds for different types of sound. The specific rules for frequent impulsive sounds address a common source of disturbance. In addition, clarified wording and specific definitions for continuous and impulsive sounds will reduce ambiguity, making the Code easier to interpret and enforce.

In addition to the proposed amendments, specific training for staff will enhance enforcement. The Assistant Director for the Building Division and a Building Regulations Inspector have successfully completed the Community Noise Enforcement Certification through Rutgers University. This certification equips enforcement staff with a thorough understanding of applicable Code, proper enforcement techniques, and strategies for real-world situations. The certification of enforcement staff ensures they possess the necessary expertise and legal

understanding to effectively apply and enforce the Code. This certification is recognized nationwide, ensuring professional and consistent enforcement of noise regulations. The certification will be recommended for the Township's Code Enforcement Officers moving forward.

Anticipated benefits for residents include a quieter environment, particularly at night, and more effective resolution of noise complaints. Nonresidential entities will need to be aware of the slightly reduced nighttime continuous and impulsive sound limits. Compliance may require adjustments to operations or equipment in some cases.

These proposed amendments and enhanced training represent a significant step towards more effective noise regulations. By investing in enforcement training, refining measurement metrics, and adjusting sound level limits, the community can expect a more peaceful environment and a more robust framework for addressing noise concerns.

V. Impact on Township Finances:

The cost of the recommended changes as well as the intent of Township staff to receive enhanced training would result in a training cost of \$750 per certified individual.

VI. Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends authorizing the ordinance for advertisement.

AN ORDINANCE

NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE To Amend The Code Of The Township Of Lower Merion, Chapter 105, Noise And Exterior Lighting, By Adding Definitions For Continuous Sound And Impulsive Sound And To Apply Those Definitions To The Chart Providing Maximum A-Weighted Sound Pressure Levels In Residential And Nonresidential Zoning Districts.

The Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion hereby ordains:

Section 1. The Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 105, Noise and Exterior Lighting, Article I, Definitions, shall be amended by the addition in alphabetical order of the following:

Article I. Definitions

§ 105-1 Definitions

* * * * *

Continuous Sound

Sound lasting 1 second or longer, or an impulsive sound that occurs 5 or more times an hour.

* * * * *

Impulsive Sound

Sound lasting less than 1 second.

Section 2. The Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 105, Noise and Exterior Lighting, Article II, Noise, §105-3 Maximum permissible sound pressure levels, subsection C thereof, shall be amended to provide as follows:

Article II. Noise

§ 105-3 Maximum permissible sound pressure levels

* * * * *

C. Notwithstanding the provisions in Subsections A and B above, during daytime (8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.) or nighttime (8:00 p.m. - 8:00 a.m.) hours, the maximum permissible sound pressure levels and average levels shall not exceed those set forth in the following chart:

Maximum A-Weighted Sound Pressure Levels (SPL) 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m., Daytime/8:00 p.m. - 8:00 a.m., Nighttime			
Zoning District of Receiving Property	Time of Day	Maximum Impulsive SPL (dBA)	LEQ Average Continuous SPL (dBA)
Residential (R)	Daytime	75	70 65
	Nighttime	60	50
Nonresidential (C)	Daytime	75	70
	Nighttime	65	55

Section 3. Nothing in this Ordinance or in Chapter 105 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, as hereby amended, shall be construed to affect any suit or proceeding in any Court, any rights acquired or liability incurred, any permit issued, or any cause or causes of action existing under the said Chapter 105 prior to the adoption of this amendment.

Section 4. The provisions of this Ordinance are severable, and if any section, sentence, clause, part, or provision thereof shall be held illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such decision of the court shall not affect or impair the remaining sections, sentences, clauses, parts, or provisions of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Board that this Ordinance would have been adopted as if such illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional section, sentence, clause, part, or provision had not been included herein.

Section 5 This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its approval as required by law.

Approved by the Board this day of , 2025.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Todd M. Sinai, President

ATTEST:

Jody L. Kelley, Secretary



Township of Lower Merion
A FIRST CLASS TOWNSHIP

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Building & Planning

ITEM: **TENTATIVE SKETCH PLAN - 1400 WAVERLY ROAD, (WAVERLY HEIGHTS - LIFE PLAN COMMUNITY) GLADWYNE, WARD 6, LD# 3929TS**

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners approval of a Tentative Sketch Land Development Application. The Plan, prepared by Bohler Engineering, is dated February 12, 2025, with a last revision on September 19, 2025. The proposal involves the demolition of seven existing semi-attached, single-family, one-story villas and the construction of three new buildings along with associated site improvements. Buildings 1 and 2 are identical three-story structures, each with a footprint of 13,430 square feet and containing 12 independent living units. A total of 51 parking spaces will serve these buildings, including 37 subsurface spaces and 14 at-grade spaces. Building 3 consists of a three-story, 11,130 sq. ft. footprint addition to the existing Blair Apartment Building, providing 12 independent living units, 13 garage spaces, and 7 surface parking spaces. The development includes approximately 7,230 square feet of new outdoor amenity space.

On October 6, 2025, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the application subject to the conditions shown on the following pages.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Staff Memo](#)

[Township Engineer's Review](#)

[MCPC Review 9.29.2025](#)

[Slides - Waverly Heights](#)

[1400_Waverly_Rd_-_Conditions_of_Approval.docx](#)

Meeting Date: October 6, 2025

TO: Lower Merion Township Planning Commission Members

FROM: Department of Building and Planning – Holly Colello, Planner & Chris Leswing, Director of Building & Planning

SUBJECT: Tentative Sketch Land Development Plan – 1400 Waverly Road, (Waverly Heights – A Life Plan Community) Gladwyne, Ward 2, LD# 3929TS

PROPOSAL:

Waverly Heights LTD is the equitable owner and Marc Heil, the applicant, are seeking Tentative Sketch Land Development Plan approval for the demolition of seven (7) existing semi-attached, single-family, one-story villas and the construction of 36 Independent living units. The plans show:

Buildings 1 & 2:

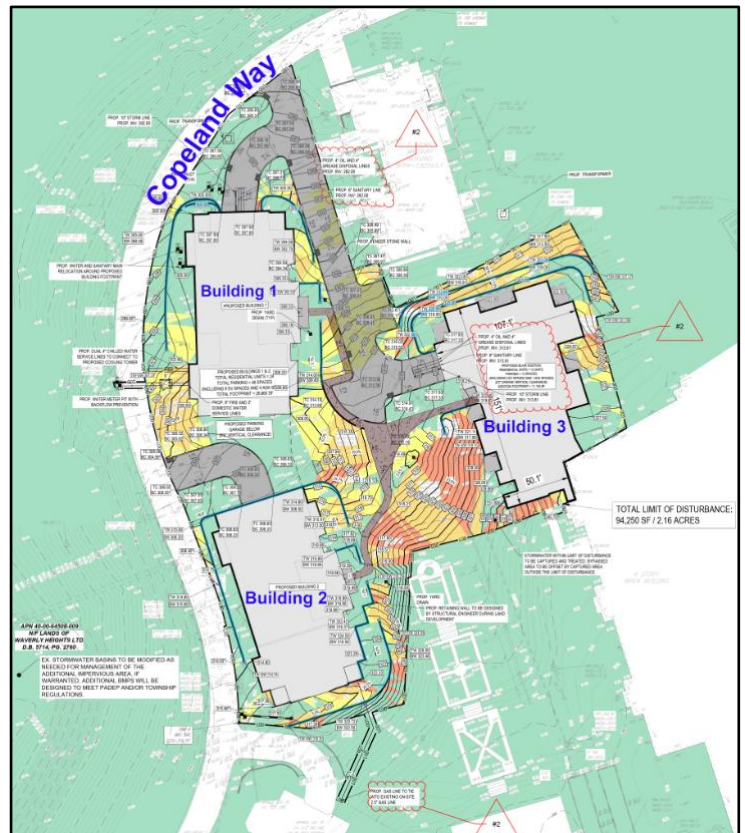
- Are two identical 3-story buildings, each with a 13,430 sq. ft. footprint and 12 residential units; and a total of 51 parking spaces with 37 subsurface parking spaces, and 14 at-grade level parking spaces to service both buildings.

Building 3:

- A 3-story, 11,130 sq. ft. footprint addition to the existing Blair Apartment Building. This new addition will contain 12 Independent Living Units (ILU)s, 7 surface parking spaces, and 13 garage spaces.
 - The plans also show modifications to the existing stormwater infrastructure, which is proposed to accommodate the additional impervious surface generated by the project.

New Outdoor Amenity Space:

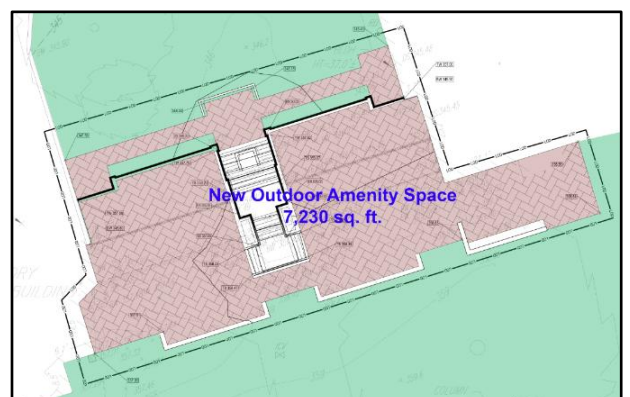
- An approximately 7,230 sq. ft. footprint, outdoor amenity space located within the existing grass courtyards of the Carlton-Commons Community Building and the Andrews Apartment Building.



SUBMISSION MATERIALS:

The proposal is illustrated on the attached set of plans that include:

- Civil Plans:** Eight (8) sheets prepared by Bohler Engineering, dated February 12, 2025, last revised September 19, 2025.



PROPERTY HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS:

Property History - Waverly Heights and the Samuel L. Rea Estate

Waverly Heights is a nationally accredited, nonprofit Life Plan Community, that offers independent living, personal care, memory support, and skilled nursing on a picturesque 63-acre estate in Philadelphia's Main Line. The large parcel was adaptively reused and now occupies the former estate of Samuel L. Rea, president of the Pennsylvania Railroad from 1913 to 1925. Rea acquired the 100-acre property in 1913 from Charles Halberstadt. At the time of purchase, the estate already included several structures: a stone house, a barn, a springhouse, and an outbuilding—some possibly dating to the early 19th century. Halberstadt had gradually assembled the estate, purchasing half of the land (including early buildings) in the 1850s or 1860s and the remainder from a neighboring property in the 1880s or 1890s. By 1896, he had amassed 103 acres and named the estate "Waverly Heights." Following his purchase, Rea commissioned the noted Philadelphia architectural firm of Furness, Evans & Co. to design a new stone mansion and carriage house on the northeastern portion of the property. The house, completed in 1913, was characteristic of the firm's distinguished residential work. In the 1940s, the property was subdivided, and the northeastern portion—containing the Furness-designed mansion and carriage house was sold to Ruth Rea Junkin. In 1986, the site was redeveloped into the Waverly Heights Retirement Home which provides health services such as personal care, memory care, skilled nursing, and rehabilitation on site. The project retained and incorporated the original mansion and carriage house into the campus plan, with new construction designed to complement the historic architecture.

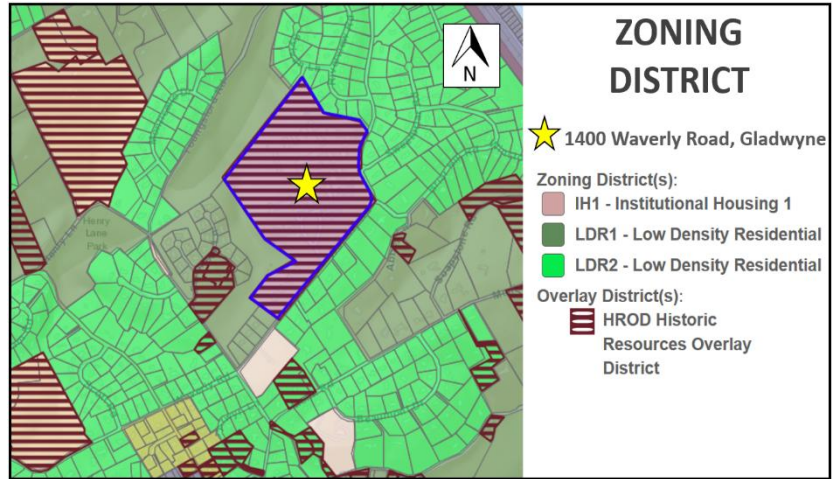


Existing Conditions:



ZONING DISTRICT – INSTITUTIONAL HOUSING (IH1):

The property is located in the one of the four Institutional Zoning District, which are intended to accommodate institutional uses, civic uses, and large open space preserves. The Institutional Housing (IH1) district is intended to accommodate housing and supportive care for the elderly and persons with disabilities in a manner that is compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods. Permitted uses include institutional housing, continuing-care facilities, and related accessory uses. Key development standards include a minimum lot width of 150 feet, a minimum lot area of 45,000 square feet, a maximum impervious surface of 21 percent, and a maximum building height of five stories or 65 feet, with additional setbacks for taller structures. Overall, the IH1 district is designed to integrate institutional uses into residential areas while maintaining neighborhood character and minimizing impacts.



FORM STANDARDS:

The proposal is subject to the standards contained within Table 4.4.4.A. Institutional Housing (IH) - IH1 Dimensional Standards Dimensional Standards. Institutional Housing (IH1, IH2, IH3) is intended to collectively define sites or buildings operated for the provision of housing and health and long-term care for the elderly and people with disabilities. The following table details the applicable standards and proposed conditions:

TABLE 4.4.4.A. INSTITUTIONAL HOUSING (IH) - IH1 DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS (*1)				
REQUIRED			EXISTING 1400 Waverly Road	PROPOSED 1400 Waverly Road
<u>Lot Occupation (See § 155-3.4, Lot occupation.)</u>				
A	Lot area (Min.)	25 acres (*1)	62 acres	No Change
	Lot width (Minimum)	150 feet	1,418 ft.	
	Impervious Surface (Max)	32.3% (See below note #5)	27.3% 734,333 sq. ft.	28.3% 762,458 sq. ft.
	Gross Density (Max)	4 Dwellings Per Acre	3.53 (218 Independent Living Units / 61.81 acres)	4.00 (247 Independent Living Units / 61.81 acres)
Nursing Facilities				
	Assisted Living Units	25% Minimum, 45% Maximum of Residential Living Units	99 units (45%)	100 units (40%)
<u>Continuing Care Facilities Setbacks (See § 155-4.4.F, Frontage.) (feet)</u>				
B	Front yard (Min.)	150 ft. (*6)	150 ft.	No Change
C	Side yard (Min.)	150 ft. (*6)	156.6 ft.	
D	Rear yard (Min.)	150 ft. (*6)	247.3 ft.	225.4 ft.

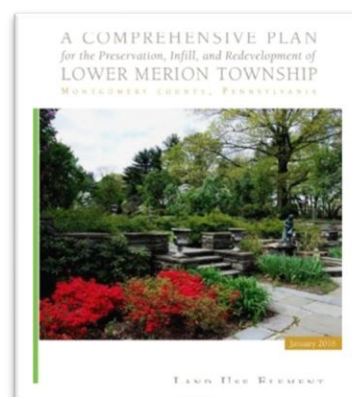
<u>Building Height (maximum) (See § 155-3.3, Building height.)</u>				
E	Principal	3 stories up to 40 feet (*4)	58.5 ft. ENC	Buildings 1 & 2 = 40 ft. Building Addition = Existing to remain nonconformity of 58.5 ft.

Notes:

1. For continuing-care facility standards refer to § 155-4.4F(3).
2. Setbacks may be subject to an increase based on building height.
3. Minimum twenty-foot buffer is required.
4. Maximum five stories, up to 65 feet where setbacks are increased by an additional 50 feet for each 10 feet above the 3-story or 45-foot height limit. This increased setback requirement is not required along any primary road.
5. Per code section 155-4.4f(3)(e), a lot legally in existence on the effective date of this code which became nonconforming or within 5% of the maximum impervious surface permitted, to such impervious surface provisions may expand the impervious surface on such lot by up to 5%. Therefore, the site is permitted $27.3\% + 5\% = 32.3\%$
6. 155-4.4(f)[1] All structures on the lot shall comply with the following setbacks from all property lines:
[1] One hundred fifty feet minimum where the perimeter of the lot at any point abuts a LDR, MDR1 or MDR2 Zoning District.

REGIONAL & TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE: “Institutional Land Use”

Development in the Institutional Housing (IH1) district is consistent with the Township’s Comprehensive Plan, which promotes the integration of institutional and supportive housing into residential neighborhoods while maintaining community character and open space. Proposed uses, such as continuing-care facilities and institutional housing, support the Township’s objectives for providing diverse, accessible housing for seniors and persons with special needs. Compliance with IH1 district standards—including lot size, setbacks, building height, impervious coverage, and site design—ensures that development is compatible in scale and intensity with surrounding areas. Site planning measures, including grading, retaining wall placement, and pedestrian and vehicular circulation, further advance the Comprehensive Plan’s goals for safe, functional, and visually appropriate institutional development.



- **“How does this application meet the Comprehensive Plan Requirements?”** The expansion of Wavery Heights will continue this pattern outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed expansion does not conflict with the Township Comprehensive Plan.

MEETING SCHEDULE & PROCESS:

The *tentative* schedule for the Tentative Sketch Land Development plan request is as follows:

Upcoming	→	Monday, October 6, 2025	Planning Commission	Review of the Tentative Sketch Land Development Plan
		Wednesday, October 15, 2025	Building & Planning Committee	Review of the Tentative Sketch Land Development Plan
		Wednesday, October 22, 2025	Board of Commissioners	

Additional information about the Township’s Land Development approval process is illustrated in the [Subdivision & Land Development Flowchart](#). This application is currently in the *Stage 4: Public Meetings* portion of the process.

ADDITIONAL REVIEWS:

- **Township Engineer's Review dated September 29, 2025 (Attached):** The Township Engineer's review spoke to Stormwater and the controlled peak discharges as well as evaluation of parking lot layouts. The review comments have been incorporated into the staff's recommended conditions of approval.
- **Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) Review dated August 8, 2025, last revised September 29, 2025 (Attached):** The MCPC generally supports the proposed application. They recommended that the applicant provide additional information regarding the proposed grading, retaining wall placement, vehicular circulation, and pedestrian walkways, with this submission.
- **Gladwyne Civic Association meeting September 16, 2025.** The applicant presented the project highlights, including campus location, timelines, and purpose, and provided a FAQs sheet to address local misconceptions. The presentation was generally well received, with positive feedback and questions, and a suggestion about improving the entrance stop sign, which Waverly Heights staff promptly addressed the next day, earning community appreciation.

CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Stormwater Management Districts - Lower Merion Act 167 Drainage Area:

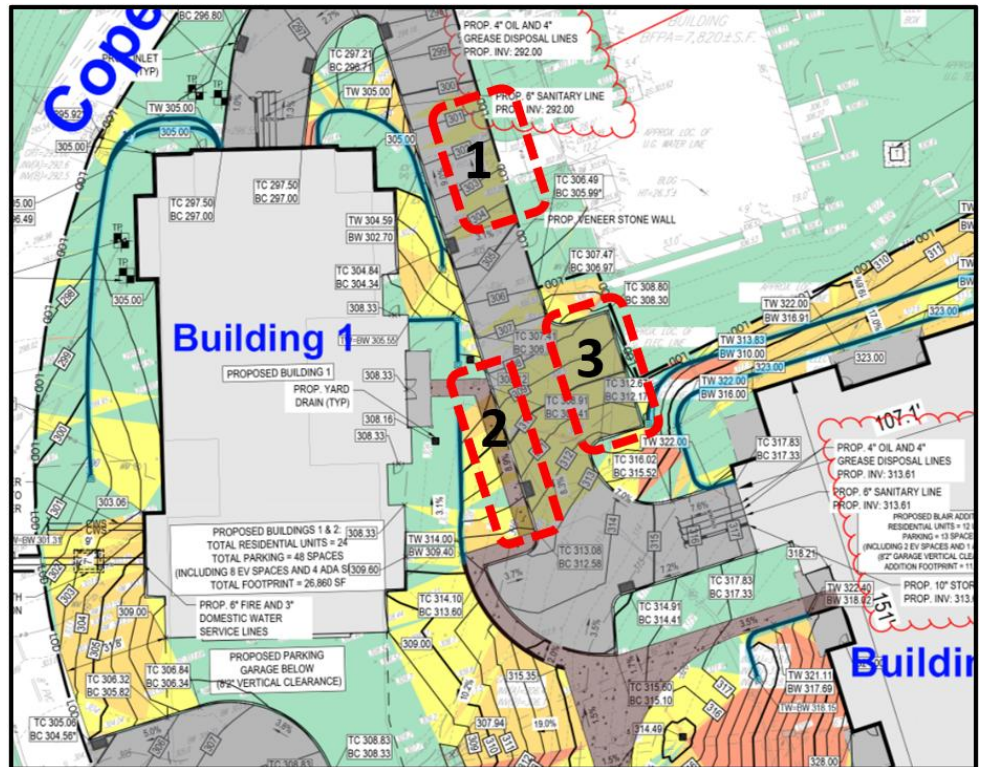
Lower Merion Township Code concerning stormwater management within the Rock Creek Drainage Area 2-8 is found in Chapter 121, Stormwater Management and Erosion Control. Specifically, [Section 121-4.B\(2\)\(b\)](#) outlines the requirements for controlling post-development peak runoff rates to match or be less than pre-development rates, as detailed in Appendix B of the ordinance. As the property is located within the Lower Merion Rock Creek Drainage Area 2-8 it will need to adhere to the two-year post-development peak rate of runoff and it shall be controlled to the one-year pre-development peak rate of runoff. Storms up to the five-year frequency must be controlled to the lesser of the two-year pre-development rate or the percentage of the pre-development rate as listed in Appendix B (80%) for the particular subwatershed area. For the 10 and 25 year storm, the post-development rate shall be controlled to the percentage of the respective pre-development rate as listed in Appendix B. The 50 and 100 year storms shall be controlled to the peak discharges which occurred prior to development in the respective storm frequencies.

- Staff has included a condition of approval which states: **"The applicant shall control the two-year post-development peak rate of runoff to the one-year pre-development peak rate, consistent with requirements for the Lower Merion Rock Creek Drainage Area 2-8. Storm events up to the 100-year frequency shall comply with the control percentages in Appendix B or be limited to the respective pre-development peak discharges. Documentation shall be provided with the Preliminary Land Development submission."**

2. Parking Layout and Pedestrian Circulation:

The applicant has proposed three new parking garages with pedestrian connections via new sidewalks and a new unnamed road. [SADLO Code Section 135-4.9.P.\(8\) – Complete streets and context sensitive design](#) establishes a maximum permitted grades for driveways, roads and sidewalks in the Township. Staff has color rendered the applicant's grading plans to help illustrate concerns with the proposed locations of the parking layout and pedestrian circulation in the Senior Living Community.

- The proposed driveway to the Blair Apartment Building addition has a proposed slope in excess of 9% for much of its length (**graphic item #1**).
- The proposed pedestrian access from proposed Building #1 going south has a slope of over 8.9% (**graphic item #2**).
- The four proposed parking spaces which include electric vehicle parking charging along with the new unnamed drive into the site are located on a slope of 8.9% (**graphic item #3**).



- Staff has included a condition of approval which states: **“The applicant shall provide additional details for the proposed garage(s) and parking layout. Driveway profiles extending into the garage entrances shall be provided to ensure a smooth and functional transition for all vehicle types, facilitating proper access. Parking garage floor plans, dimensioning parking aisles, standard and ADA accessible parking spaces shall be provided. The finished floor elevation of the garage(s) must be specified to verify compatibility with the proposed grading and driveway design.”**

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIONS & STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Planning Commission must take the following action with respect to this application:

1. Provide a recommendation on the requested Tentative Sketch Land Development Plan application.



**TOWNSHIP
OF
LOWER MERION**
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

75 E. Lancaster Avenue
Ardmore, PA 19003 2376
Telephone: (610) 645-6200
www.lowermerion.org

LOWM 260.54

September 29, 2025

Christopher Leswing, Director of Building and Planning
Township of Lower Merion
75 East Lancaster Avenue
Ardmore, PA 19003

**Re: 1400 Waverly Ave – Waverly Heights
Tentative Sketch Plan Review**

Dear Mr. Leswing:

In accordance with your request for the referenced submission, we have reviewed a set of nine (9) plans dated 02-12-25, last revised 09-19-25, prepared by Bohler Engineering LLC. We have also reviewed a Trip Generation Evaluation dated 02-06-25, prepared by Bowman. The plans show the replacement of existing villas with new apartment buildings, the expansion of an existing apartment building, and associated site improvements. We offer the following comments for your consideration:

A. MAJOR ENGINEERING ISSUES

- ❖ **Stormwater**—As the property is located within the Lower Merion Rock Creek Drainage Area 2-8, the two-year post-development peak rate of runoff shall be controlled to the one-year pre-development peak rate of runoff. Storms up to the five-year frequency must be controlled to the lesser of the two-year pre-development rate or the percentage of the pre-development rate as listed in Appendix B (80%) for the particular subwatershed area. For the ten- and twenty-five-year storm, the post-development rate shall be controlled to the percentage of the respective pre-development rate as listed in Appendix B. The fifty- and one-hundred-year storms shall be controlled to the peak discharges which occurred prior to development in the respective storm frequencies.
- ❖ **Parking**- Additional details are required for the proposed garage(s) and parking layout. Driveway profiles extending into the garage entrances shall be provided to ensure a smooth and functional transition for all vehicle types, facilitating proper access. Parking garage floor plans, dimensioning parking aisles, standard and ADA accessible parking spaces shall be provided. The finished floor elevation of the garage(s) must be specified to verify compatibility with the proposed grading and driveway design.

With the resolution of the preceding major engineering issues and the remaining comments in this letter incorporated, we recommend that the Tentative Sketch Plan be approved.

B. ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Section 101-5C(2b)—Grading and other improvements are shown in slopes exceeding twenty-five (25%) percent. A waiver of this code section is required for the proposed development. Additional stabilization methods may be required. This shall be evaluated with the Preliminary Plan.

2. Section 121-4A(1b)2— As the property is located within the Lower Merion Rock Creek Drainage Area 2-8, the two-year post-development peak rate of runoff shall be controlled to the one-year pre-development peak rate of runoff. Storms up to the five-year frequency must be controlled to the lesser of the two-year pre-development rate or the percentage of the pre-development rate as listed in Appendix B (80%) for the particular subwatershed area. For the ten- and twenty-five-year storm, the post-development rate shall be controlled to the percentage of the respective pre-development rate as listed in Appendix B. The fifty- and one-hundred-year storms shall be controlled to the peak discharges which occurred prior to development in the respective storm frequencies.
3. Section 121-4B(2a)1, 121-15—At a minimum, the increased volume of stormwater generated by the proposed development for the twenty-five (25) year storm shall be recharged. Calculations documenting this shall be submitted with the Preliminary Plans.
4. Section 121-4E(2c)—Seepage beds installed for rate control shall be designed to empty the total design storm volume in twenty-four (24) hours or less. Calculations verifying this shall be submitted with the Preliminary Plans.
5. Section 121-4E(2f)—The requested seepage beds must contain a sediment trap accessible for maintenance. Details shall be submitted with the Preliminary Plans.
6. Section 121-4E(2i)—For any proposed seepage beds, soil permeability tests shall be performed to a depth adequate to demonstrate the functioning of the system. The location of the percolation tests shall be indicated on the plan the complete test report must be submitted for review.
7. Section 121-15—The runoff crossing to the adjacent properties during the construction phase of the project shall be managed so that the water quality/quantity does not adversely impact the adjacent properties. Diversion berms, stoned construction staging areas, and inlets/piping shall be noted to be provided as required and/or as directed by the township so as to ensure acceptable conditions during the construction phase.
8. Section 101-6A(1)—All woody vegetation to be retained within twenty-five (25') feet of a building site or disturbed area shall be protected from equipment damage by fencing placed at the driplines. The location of the fence shall be provided. A detail shall be included on the plans that complies with township standards. The Township Arborist must approve the location of the tree protection fence if it is not indicated at the driplines.
9. Section 121-6H—The location, size, and species of trees on the property within twenty-five (25') feet of disturbance shall be included on the plan.
10. Section 121-4E(4)—A description of how the permanent stormwater control facility will be operated and maintained shall be submitted by the design engineer. The frequency of inspection shall be listed on the plan. The contact information for the party responsible for the operation and maintenance of the facility shall be listed. The plan shall be presented in recordable form as a covenant running with the land and must be approved by the Township Solicitor prior to recording the Final Plan.
11. Section 121-6J—A sequence of construction activities shall be submitted.
12. Section 121-12—For disturbance of over one acre, an NPDES Permit must be obtained from the Montgomery County Soil Conservation District prior to issuance of any permits.

13. Section 135-4.9(Q)—The Fire Marshal must approve the site design for access and maneuverability.
14. Section 135-8.2C(1.a) – A Transportation Impact Study is required for the proposed development. Given the minor scope of the proposed development, an abbreviated study shall be provided and fully evaluated with the Preliminary Plan.
15. Section 135-4.9(M)—The sight distance and clear sight triangles for the proposed driveways shall be provided.
16. Section 135-4.10(B)—A Sewage Facilities Planning Module or Exemption must be approved by the City of Philadelphia and the DEP prior to recording the Final Plan.
17. Section 135-4.10(A)—Adequate water supply must be documented for the development. A letter from Aqua Pennsylvania must be submitted certifying adequate supply for the additional demand. This shall be submitted with the Preliminary Plan.
18. Section 135-4.10—All new electric services must be provided with underground cables. The location of the underground service line shall be shown from the proposed structure to the main.
19. Section 155-7.5—Compensatory tree calculations shall be added to the plan and must be compatible with the current code. An exact tree count for the lot shall be provided on the plan. Upon removal of twenty-five (25%) percent of existing trees having a caliper of six inches or greater, appropriate replacement trees will be required. The Township Arborist must approve the size, species, and location of any required replacement trees.
20. Section 155-3.7(E)— The height of retaining walls shall not exceed six (6') feet within the setback and shall not exceed eight (8') feet beyond the setback.

C. ENGINEERING COMMENTS

1. Erosion control measures shall be provided with the preliminary plans. The proposed construction access location shall be indicated. Details that conform to township standards shall be shown.
2. Additional details are required for the proposed garage(s) and parking layout. Driveway profiles extending into the garage entrances shall be provided to ensure a smooth and functional transition for all vehicle types, facilitating proper access. Parking garage floor plans, dimensioning parking aisles, standard and ADA accessible parking spaces shall be provided. The finished floor elevation of the garage(s) must be specified to verify compatibility with the proposed grading and driveway design.
3. The location, size, material, and slope of proposed sanitary laterals shall be shown. The sanitary sewer connection to the existing building shall be provided.
4. The mean grade of the structure shall be calculated and shown on the plan. The architectural plans must be coordinated with and must comply with the grading proposed with this application. This shall be fully evaluated with the Preliminary Plans.
5. Additional information is required for the connectivity of the existing internal pathways. The continuation and/or new building connection for the existing path east of Building Three shall be provided.
6. The Zoning Officer must agree with the number and tabulation of the final parking demand schedule.

7. A Planting Plan shall be submitted with the Preliminary Plan and must be approved by the Planning Department and the Township Arborist.
8. A Lighting Plan shall be submitted with the Preliminary Plan. The Director of Building and Planning must approve the lighting plan.

A copy of the revised plan shall be submitted with any changes highlighted. A letter shall also be provided with the revised plan indicating how each requested revision has been addressed in the re-submission.

Please advise if we may be of further assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,



Joseph A. Mastronardo, P.E.

PENNONI ASSOCIATES

Township Engineer

cc: Colleen Hall, Senior Planner
Angela Forney, Planning Technician
Bohler Engineering LLC

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION**

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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 29, 2025

TO: Mr. Christopher Leswing, Director of Building & Planning
Building & Planning Department
Township of Lower Merion

FROM: Marley Bice, AICP, Community Planning Assistant Manager
marley.bice@montgomerycountypa.gov | 610-278-3740

SUBJECT: MCPC #25-0150-002 - Waverly Heights

We have received and reviewed a “SOPI” submission for the above-referenced subdivision and land development application as you requested on September 18, 2025. The comments in this memo are based on the most recent submission. We have attached our most recent full review letter (for submission MCPC #25-0150-001) for reference; however, some comments in our previous review letter(s) may have been addressed.

UPDATED BACKGROUND

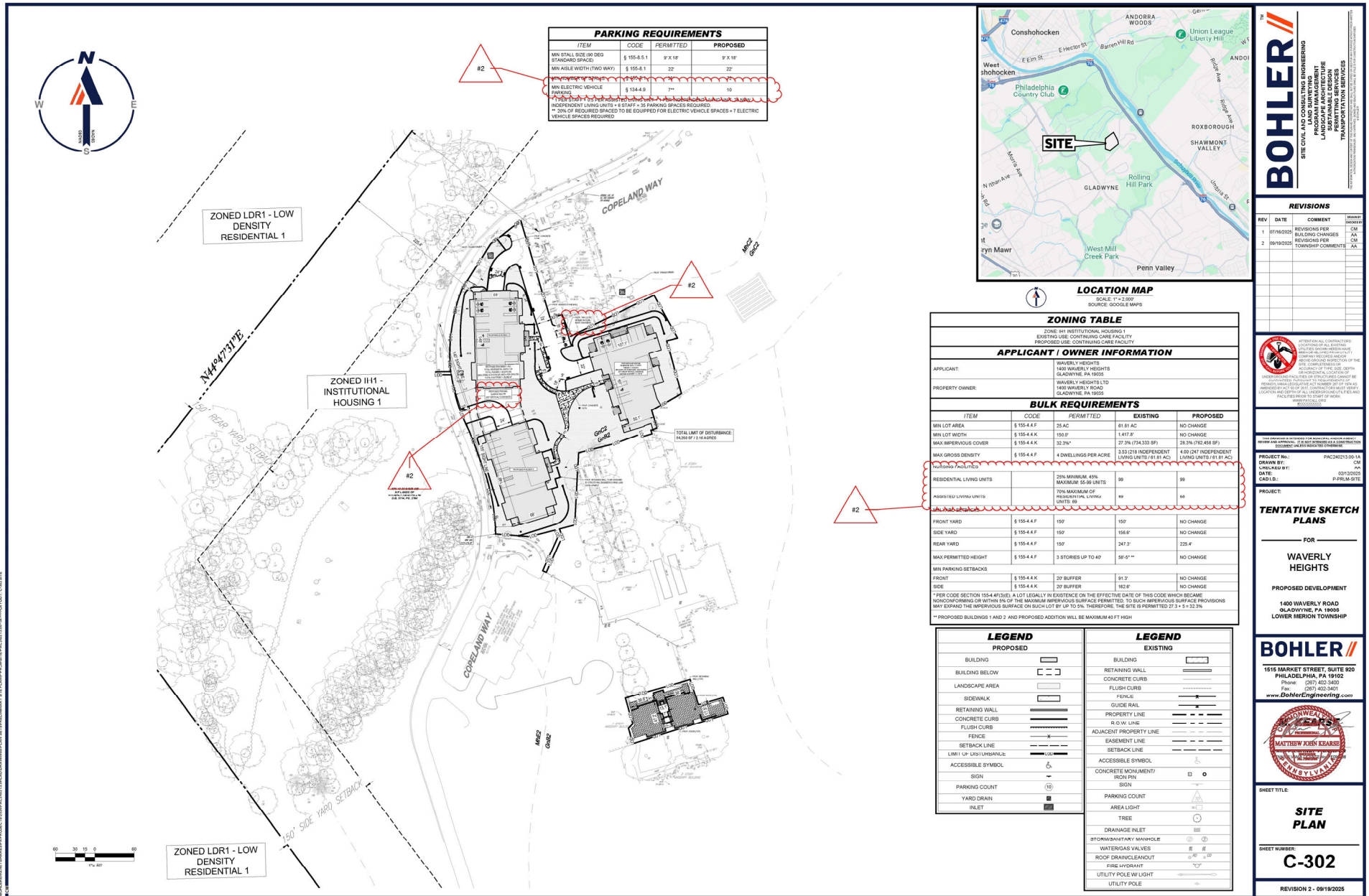
We have reviewed the most recent “SOPI” submission for changes and did not identify any significant changes with regards to the type of development and location of improvements proposed. However, additional information regarding the proposed grading, retaining wall placement, vehicular circulation, and pedestrian walkways was provided with this submission.

ADDITIONAL REVIEW COMMENTS

We have reviewed the most recent “SOPI” submission and feel that several comments from our August 8, 2025 review letter (please see Attachment B) may still be worthy of discussion and should be addressed as part of future submissions regarding this application.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Reduced Copy of Applicant’s Proposed Site Plan
Attachment B: MCPC #25-0150-001 Review Letter Dated August 8, 2025



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SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

August 8, 2025

Mr. Christopher Leswing, Director of Building & Planning
Building & Planning Department
Township of Lower Merion
75 East Lancaster Avenue
Ardmore, Pennsylvania 19003

Re: MCPC #25-0150-001
Plan Name: Waverly Heights
(36 dus on approximately 61.8 acres)
Situate: Waverly Road (north)/east of Youngs Ford Road
Lower Merion Township

Dear Mr. Leswing:

We have reviewed the above-referenced tentative sketch plan as you requested on July 22, 2025. We forward this letter as a report of our review.

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Waverly Heights LTD, proposes to demolish 7 existing villa units within the Waverly Heights retirement community and construct 2, four-story apartment buildings with a total of 24 units in their place. Additionally, an addition to the Blair Apartment Building containing 12 additional units is also proposed. Parking is proposed to be located primarily within the new buildings; however, seven surface parking spaces are also shown along the driveway to the Blair building addition. Additional improvements shown at this time include an expanded amenity space between the Andrews Apartment Building and Carlton Commons. The property is located in the township's IH-1 Institutional Housing 1 zoning district.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

The Land Use Element of the 2016 Lower Merion Township Comprehensive Plan identifies this property as Institutional. The township comprehensive plan recognized that the need for expansion of existing elderly housing facilities was likely to be high in the next 25 years.

In addition, this area of the township is identified as a Suburban Residential Area in the Future Land Use Plan of the Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*. Primary uses in Suburban Residential Areas include less dense multifamily and single-family attached uses. Residential development in Suburban Residential Areas should match the character and type of housing found in the immediate neighborhood and recreation facilities and central open space should be provided.



RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the applicant's proposal. However, in the course of our review we have identified the following issues that the applicant and Lower Merion Township may wish to consider prior to final plan approval. Our review comments are as follows:

REVIEW COMMENTS

ZONING ORDINANCE COMMENTS

Future land development submissions associated with this property may need to provide additional information in order to determine compliance with standards contained in §155-4.4 related to institutional districts, including:

- §155-4.4.E.(3) refers to the fence and wall standards in §155-3.7 of the zoning ordinance. Additional information may be needed regarding the height and material of the proposed retaining walls, if applicable.
- §155-4.4.F.(3)(c)[2] permits assisted-living units and memory care/nursing units in addition to the maximum gross density for dwelling units, provided the number of such units shall not comprise more than 45% and not less than 25% of the residential living units in a continuing-care facility
- §155-4.4.G.(1) refers to the access and parking standards in Article VIII of the zoning ordinance. Additional information may be needed regarding electric vehicle parking spaces, the minimum vertical clearance of the parking garages, loading areas, and bike parking, if applicable.
- §155-4.4.G.(6) states that "safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and access shall be provided, including a sidewalk or path along all frontages, unless alternative interior routes are approved." It appears that there is not a pedestrian connection between Proposed Building 1 and the rest of the proposed pedestrian pathways.
- §155-4.4.H.(1) refers to the architectural standards in §155-3.9 of the zoning ordinance. Additional information may be needed regarding proposed building materials.
- §155-4.4.H.(2) states that "buildings shall be designed for construction and long-term operational efficiency that: conserves use of natural and energy resources; minimizes impact on township infrastructure services; and minimizes the amount of stormwater runoff."

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE COMMENTS

Based on the information provided, we have identified the following items related to the township's subdivision and land development ordinance that we feel should be addressed as part of any future land development submissions associated with this property:

- A. Maximum Grade of Driveways. Section 135-4.9.P.(8) establishes a maximum permitted grade for driveways. The proposed driveway to the Blair Apartment Building addition has a proposed slope in excess of 9% for much of its length. We defer to the township engineer regarding the feasibility of this driveway slope and compliance with §135-4.9.P.(8) depending on how the proposed use is classified.
- B. Sight Distance. Section 135-4.9.P.(9) requires that sight distance be determined where new driveways intersect with existing roads.

- C. Driveways Longer than 200 feet. Section 135-4.9.P.(10) contains additional standards for driveways which exceed 200 feet in length.
- D. Landscape Plan. In general, future submissions should include a landscape plan demonstrating compliance with the landscaping requirements in the township's subdivision and land development ordinance, including the shade tree and large canopy tree requirements (§135-5.1), the buffer planting requirements (§135-5.2), parking lot greening standards (§135-5.3), and stormwater basin planting standards (§135-5.6), as applicable.

SITE GRADING

Areas of steep grading are shown on the proposed grading and drainage plan. A slope in excess of 31% is proposed to the north of the Blair Apartment Building addition. This grading appears as if it may cause stormwater runoff to be directed towards the existing villa units to the north, therefore additional drainage improvements may need to be considered in this area.

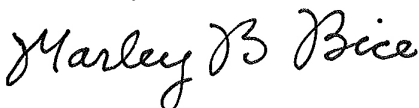
CONCLUSION

We wish to reiterate that MCPC generally supports the proposed development; however, we believe that our suggested revisions will better achieve Lower Merion Township's planning objectives for elderly housing development.

Please note that the review comments and recommendations contained in this report are advisory to the municipality and final disposition for the approval of any proposal will be made by the municipality.

Should the governing body approve a final plat of this proposal, the applicant must present the plan to our office for seal and signature prior to recording with the Recorder of Deeds office. A paper copy bearing the municipal seal and signature of approval must be supplied for our files. Please print the assigned MCPC number (#25-0150-001) on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,



Marley Bice, AICP, Community Planning Assistant Manager
610-278-3740 – marley.bice@montgomerycountypa.gov

- c: Waverly Heights LTD, Applicant
Gilbert P. High, Jr., Esq., Twp. Solicitor
Ernie B. McNeely, Twp. Manager
Jody Kelley, Twp. Secretary
Joseph Mastronardo, P.E., Twp. Engineer
Charlie Doyle, Twp. Asst. Dir. of Planning
Colleen Hall, Twp. Senior Planner
Greg Prichard, Twp. Historic Preservation Planner
Holly Colello, Twp. Planner
Sarah Carley, Twp. Planner
Hope Viviani, Twp. Planning Technician

- Attachments: A. Reduced Copy of Applicant's Proposed Site Plan
B. Aerial Image of Site





Waverly Heights
MCPC#250150001

Montgomery
County
Planning
Commission

Montgomery County Courthouse - Planning Commission
PO Box 311 Northtown PA 19054-0311
(301) 610-3773 (T) (301) 278-3841
www.montcopa.org/planning
Aerial photography provided by Noamap

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

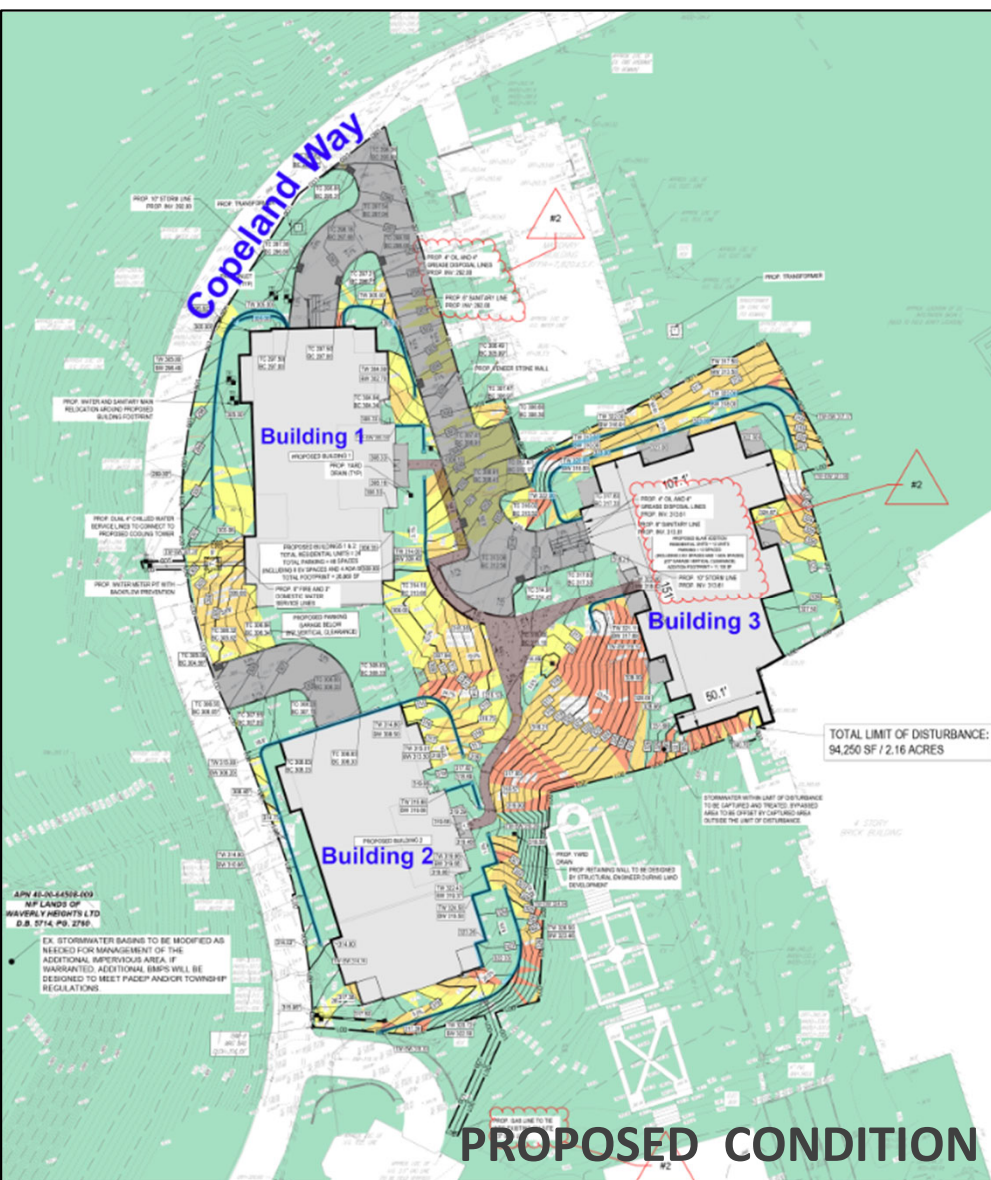


1400 Waverly Road (Waverly Heights), Gladwyne, Ward 2

Application #3929TS

Tentative Sketch Land Development Plan





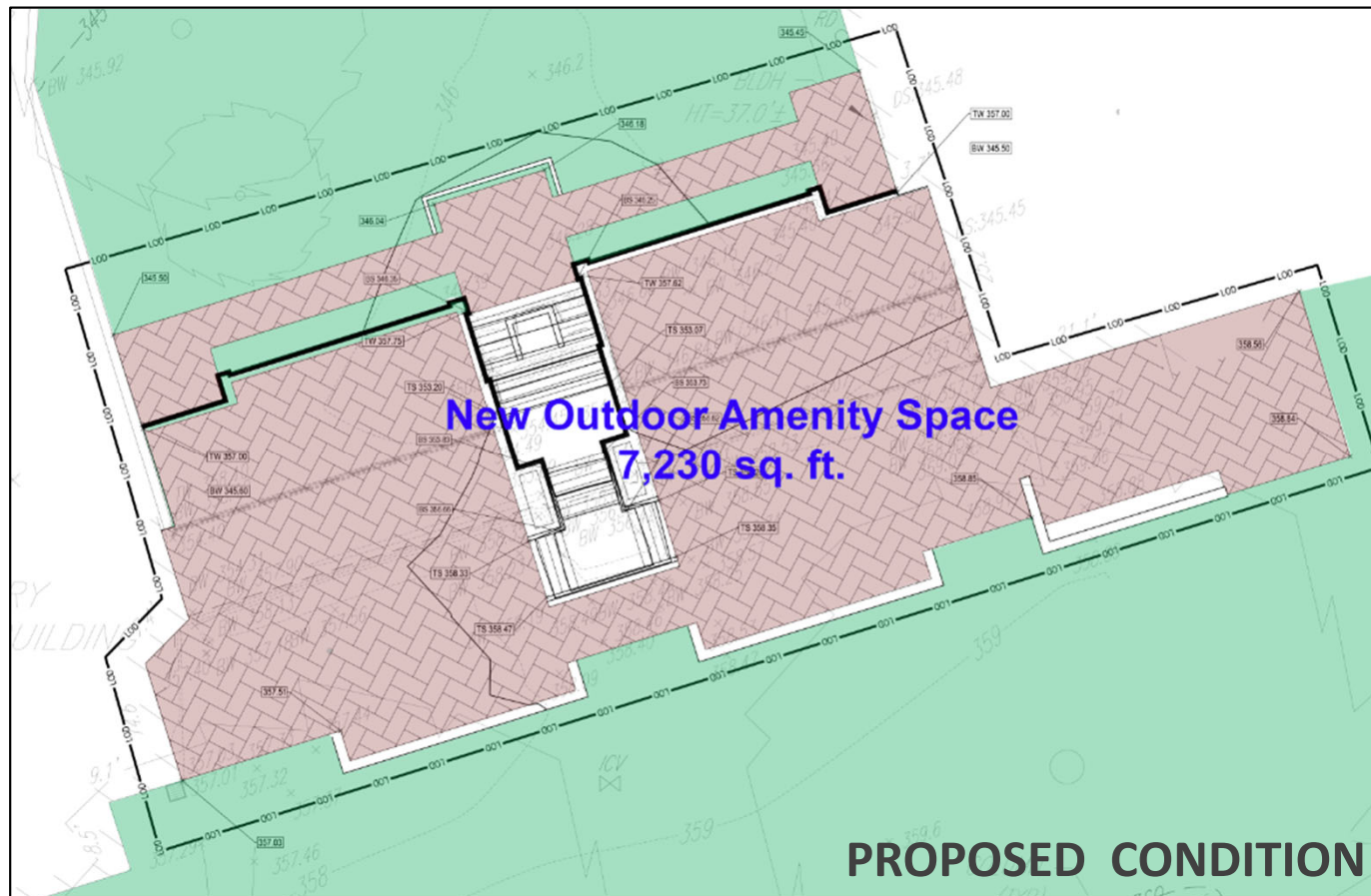
Waverly Height LTD the equitable owner and Marc Heil, the applicant, are seeking Tentative Sketch Land Development Plan approval for the demolition of seven (7) existing semi-attached, single-family, one-story villas and the construction of 36 Independent living units.

Buildings 1 & 2:

- Are identical 3-story buildings, each with a 13,430 sq. ft. footprint containing 12 residential units; and a total of 51 parking spaces with 37 subsurface parking spaces, and 14 at-grade level parking spaces to service both buildings.

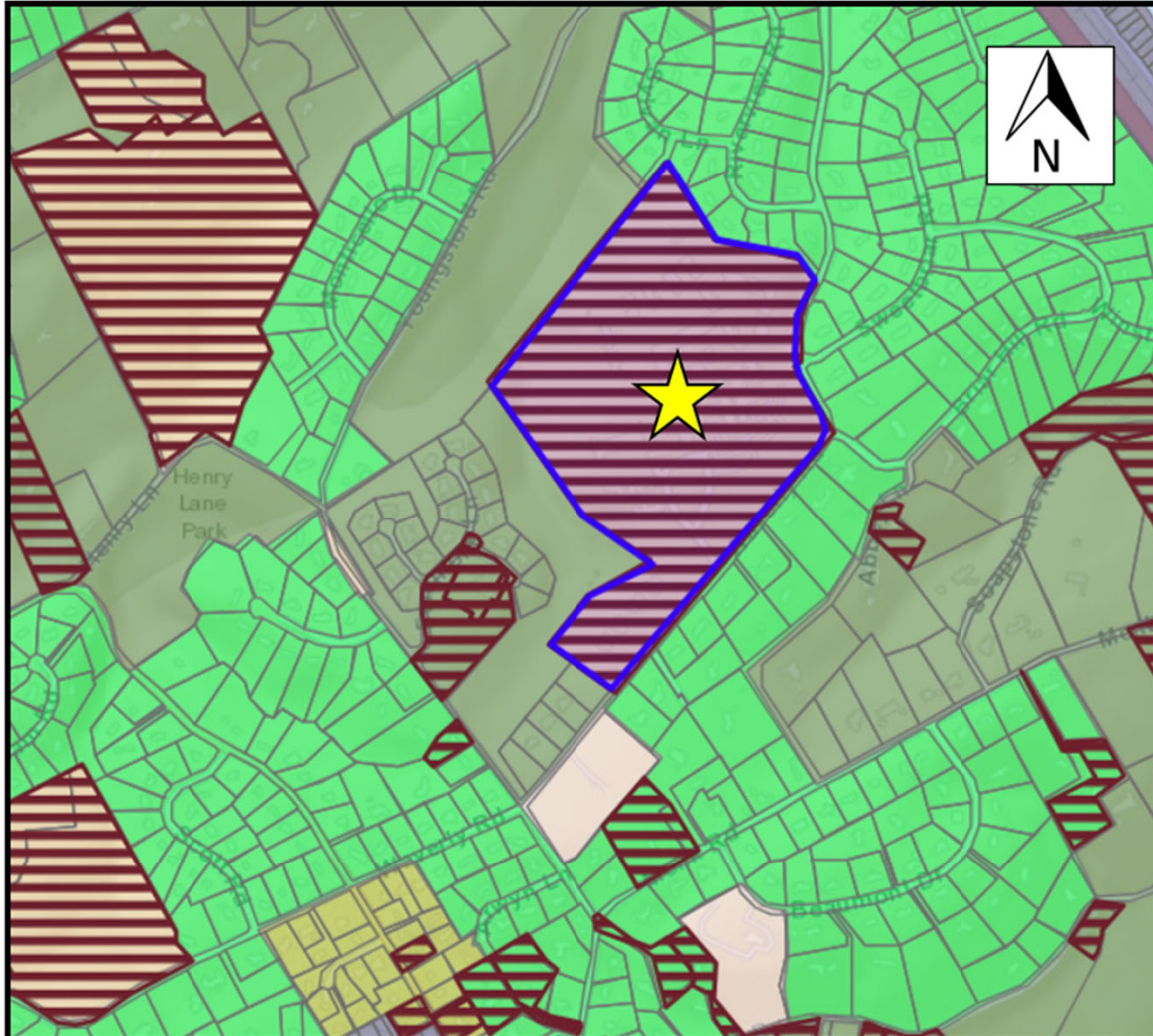
Building 3:

- A 3-story, 10,340 sq. ft. building addition to the existing Blair Apartment Building. This new addition will contain 12 ILUs, 7 surface parking spaces, and 15 garage spaces.



New Outdoor Amenity Space:

- An approximately 7,230 sq. ft., outdoor amenity space located within the existing grass courtyards of the Carlton-Commons Community Building and the Andrews Apartment Building.



ZONING DISTRICT

★ 1400 Waverly Road, Gladwyne

Zoning District(s):

- IH1 - Institutional Housing 1
- LDR1 - Low Density Residential
- LDR2 - Low Density Residential

Overlay District(s):

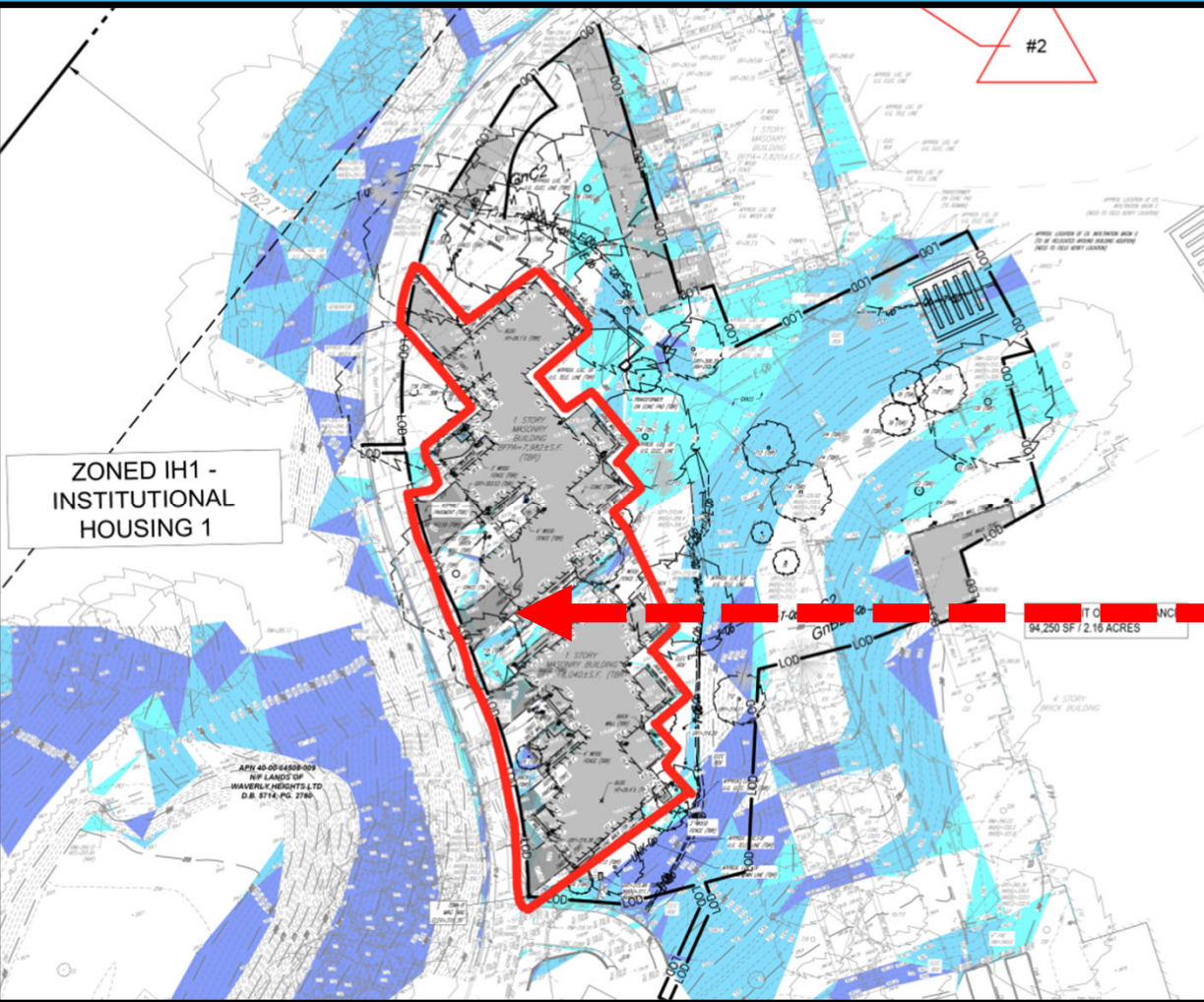
- HROD Historic Resources Overlay District

Existing Conditions



Demolition

- Demolition of seven (7) existing semi-attached, single-family, one-story villas.



Consideration 1 - Stormwater Management Districts – **Lower Merion Act 167 Drainage Area**

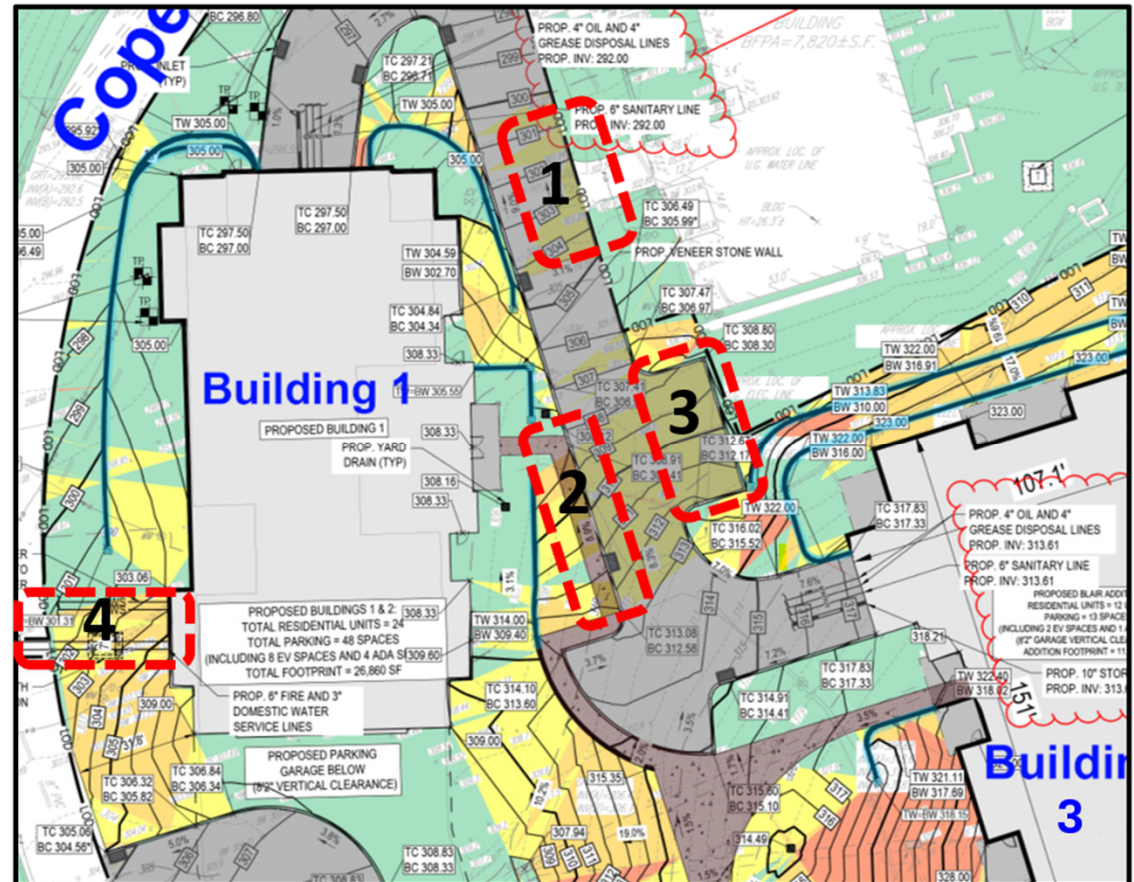
- Staff has included a condition of approval #3 which states:

“The applicant shall control the two-year post-development peak rate of runoff to the one-year pre-development peak rate, consistent with requirements for the Lower Merion Rock Creek Drainage Area 2-8. Storm events up to the 100-year frequency shall comply with the control percentages in Appendix B or be limited to the respective pre-development peak discharges. Documentation shall be provided with the Preliminary Land Development submission.”

Consideration 2 - Parking Layout & Pedestrian Circulation

- Staff has included a condition of approval #21 which states:

"The applicant shall provide additional details for the proposed garage(s) and parking layout. Driveway profiles extending into the garage entrances shall be provided to ensure a smooth and functional transition for all vehicle types, facilitating proper access. Parking garage floor plans, dimensioning parking aisles, standard and ADA accessible parking spaces shall be provided. The finished floor elevation of the garage(s) must be specified to verify compatibility with the proposed grading and driveway design."



BUILDING & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING – OCTOBER 15, 2025

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

LD# 3929TS 1400 Waverly Road, (Waverly Heights – Life Plan Community) Gladwyne, Ward 6.

**Block & Unit:
5B-723, 5B-722**

Expiration Date: October 26, 2025.....Zoning District – IH

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners approval of a Tentative Sketch Land Development Application. The Plan, prepared by Bohler Engineering, is dated February 12, 2025, with a last revision on September 19, 2025. The proposal involves the demolition of seven existing semi-attached, single-family, one-story villas and the construction of three new buildings along with associated site improvements. Buildings 1 and 2 are identical three-story structures, each with a footprint of 13,430 square feet and containing 12 independent living units. A total of 51 parking spaces will serve these buildings, including 37 subsurface spaces and 14 at-grade spaces. Building 3 consists of a three-story, 11,130 sq. ft. footprint addition to the existing Blair Apartment Building, providing 12 independent living units, 13 garage spaces, and 7 surface parking spaces. The development includes approximately 7,230 square feet of new outdoor amenity space.

On October 6, 2025, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the application subject to the following conditions:

Township Engineer's Review:

1. The Township Engineer's review letter dated September 29, 2025, shall be incorporated by reference into these conditions of approval to the extent the same is not consistent with these conditions of approval.

Stormwater and Utilities:

2. The location, size, material, and slope of proposed sanitary laterals shall be shown. The sanitary sewer connection to the existing building shall be provided.
3. The applicant shall control the two-year post-development peak rate of runoff to the one-year pre-development peak rate, consistent with requirements for the Lower Merion Rock Creek Drainage Area 2-8. Storm events up to the 100-year frequency shall comply with the control percentages in Appendix B or be limited to the respective pre-development peak discharges. Documentation shall be provided with the Preliminary Land Development submission.
4. The applicant shall coordinate with Public Works department on anticipated volume (EDUs) and available capacity at the existing Waverly pump station.
5. The applicant shall obtain seals for the laterals of the seven existing semi-attached single-family villas before demolition.
6. Erosion control measures shall be provided with the Preliminary Land Development Plan. The Proposed construction access location shall be indicated. Details that conform to Township Standards shall be shown. Certification attesting to the completeness shall be provided on the Erosion Control Plan.

BUILDING & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING – OCTOBER 15, 2025

Studies & Reports:

7. The applicant shall provide a Transportation Impact Study. The applicant shall contact the Township Engineer's office for the scope of the required analysis to be submitted with the Preliminary Plan per SALDO Code §135-8.2.
8. The applicant shall provide a Transportation Demand Plan per SALDO code §135-8.5.

Landscape Plan and Streetscape:

9. The applicant shall consider incorporation canopy trees with tree grates in the new amenity space for shade.
10. The proposed location of any trash dumpster(s) shall be screened on the Preliminary Land Development Plan.
11. Wooded lot calculations including all viable trees to be removed and impacted by the proposed construction shall be submitted with the Preliminary Land Development Plan submission.
12. A maintenance and operations plan shall be submitted for all proposed landscaping, including the street trees and other amenities installed along the street frontages. The maintenance plan shall include the requirement to evaluate the street trees a minimum of every five years. It shall be submitted with the Preliminary Land Development Plan submission.
13. A landscape plan complying with applicable sections of the Township's Natural Features code (§101 Article III), Landscape standards (§155-3.10), buffer planting requirements (§155-6.8(C)(5) and §135-5.2), parking lot greening standards (§135-5.3), and greening standards (§135-5.5) shall be prepared and sealed by a Registered Landscape Architect and submitted with the Preliminary Plan.
14. The applicant shall explore opportunities to improve the common space between the 3 new proposed buildings in order to enhance the pedestrian experience, facilitate convenient resident/guest drop off and ensure safe vehicular circulation/access.

Architectural elevations:

15. The preliminary plan submission shall include architectural plans, elevations and renderings of all sides of the proposed building including proposed materials and glazing charts demonstrating compliance with Zoning §155-3.9 (Architectural Standards.)
16. The mean grade of the structure shall be calculated and shown on the plan. The architectural plans must be coordinated with and must comply with the grading proposed with this application. This shall be fully evaluated with the Preliminary Plans.
17. The applicant shall provide additional details for the proposed garage(s) and parking layout. Driveway profiles extending into the garage entrances shall be provided to ensure a smooth and functional transition for all vehicle types, facilitating proper access. Parking garage floor plans, dimensioning parking aisles, standard and ADA accessible parking spaces shall be provided. The finished floor elevation of the garage(s) must be specified to verify compatibility with the proposed grading and driveway design.

BUILDING & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING – OCTOBER 15, 2025

Retaining walls:

18. Retaining walls exceeding four feet (4') in height shall require the submission of structural calculations verifying the design. Fencing or other fall protection shall be provided. The top and bottom elevations of the wall, as well as the limits of its location, shall be clearly shown on the plan.

Pedestrian & Bicycle Connectivity:

19. The applicant shall add a pedestrian connection between Proposed Building 1 and the rest of the pedestrian network, or provide justification for an alternative route per code (§155-4.4.G.(6))
20. Additional information is required for the connectivity of the existing internal pathways. The continuation and/or new building connection for the existing path east of Building Three shall be provided.
21. There appears to be an informal pathway from the northern building units to the southern amenities. New connections shall be provided where the new development is proposed.
22. The applicant shall provide additional details for the proposed garage(s) and parking layout. Driveway profiles extending into the garage entrances shall be provided to ensure a smooth and functional transition for all vehicle types, facilitating proper access. Parking garage floor plans, dimensioning parking aisles, standard and ADA accessible parking spaces shall be provided. The finished floor elevation of the garage(s) must be specified to verify compatibility with the proposed grading and driveway design.

Sustainability:

23. The applicant shall describe how the project will conserve natural and energy resources, minimize township infrastructure impacts and reduce stormwater runoff per code (§155-4.4.H.(2)).

Driveway:

24. The Zoning Officer shall agree with the number and tabulation of the final parking demand schedule.
25. The applicant shall provide sight distance and sight triangles for the proposed driveways on the civil and landscape submission of the preliminary plans.
26. The applicant shall note that the proposed driveway location is subject to the approval of the Lower Merion Police Traffic Safety Unit.
27. The applicant shall show an ADA compliant crossings at all proposed driveway locations.

Building and Site Safety:

28. The proposed buildings and garages shall be sprinklered.
29. The applicant shall work with the Township's Fire Marshal to ensure and approve the site design for access and maneuverability.

BUILDING & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING – OCTOBER 15, 2025

Signage:

30. All signage shall be subject to a separate review for compliance with the Zoning Code by the Zoning Officer.

Noise & Exterior Lighting - General Requirements for all Outdoor Lighting:

31. An outdoor lighting plan, sealed by a responsible design professional that adheres to Township Code and includes illuminance patterns shall be submitted with the Preliminary plan. The location, luminaire type, wattage, means of control and pole height shall be indicated. Lighting shall be designed to minimize the off-site transmission of light, to shield the source of illumination and to prevent glare on adjacent properties. Exterior luminaires shall be full cut-off unless it can be demonstrated that cut-off luminaires are more appropriate and will result in less off-site light trespass.
32. The lighting plan shall be designed to comply with the applicable provisions of the IECC or the ANSI/ASHRAE/IES Standard 90.1 that is in effect at the time of the application.

Standard Conditions of Approval:

33. The preliminary plan submission shall include a copy with any changes highlighted. A letter shall also be provided with the revised plan indicating how each condition of tentative sketch approval has been addressed.
34. The Preliminary Plan, complying with all applicable conditions of approval, shall be filed with the Department of Building and Planning within twelve (12) months from the date of the Tentative Sketch Plan approval by the Board of Commissioners.
35. Approval of this Tentative Sketch Plan does not ensure that the developer or the owner can ultimately develop the property as shown on the plan. The proposed development's compliance with various Township ordinances, including but not limited to the Natural Features Conservation Code shall not be determined until the applicant submits a Preliminary Plan for Township approval.
36. The owner shall make payment of fees and expenses of the Township's professional consultants who perform services on behalf of the Township with respect to these plans and the work contemplated thereunder and will establish and maintain with the Township those escrows for the payment of such fees required by Township Code. Owner agrees that any statement from the Township for such fees which remain unpaid for a period of 30 days may be recorded against the property as a municipal lien.
37. The owner shall make payment of the Township Engineer's inspection fees within 30 days of presentation. A penalty of 1.5% per month will be due for late payments from the date of presentation. If any shares are not paid within 60 days of presentation, the Township may elect to suspend any outstanding permits until all pending charges are settled.
38. The property owner(s) shall comply with all applicable federal, state, county, local and Lower Merion Township ordinances and laws regardless of specific mention herein.



Township of Lower Merion
A FIRST CLASS TOWNSHIP

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Building & Planning

ITEM: **PETITION TO AMEND THE LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP ZONING CODE AND ZONING MAP - INSTITUTIONAL NATURE PRESERVE DISTRICT, ENVIRONMENTAL USE REGULATIONS AND ZONING MAP AMENDMENTS - 1835 COUNTY LINE ROAD, 330 SPRING MILL ROAD, 1800 WEST MONTGOMERY AVENUE & 1829 COUNTY LINE ROAD, VILLANOVA, WARD 6, Z-25-005**

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners authorizing the Township Secretary to advertise a public hearing and notice of intent to amend Chapter 155 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, entitled Zoning, to amend Article V, Uses, Table 5.3, Use Regulations, IN Institutional Nature Preserve, Environmental Use Regulations, and to amend the Lower Merion Township Zoning Map ("Zoning Map") to rezone properties at 1835 County Line Road and 1800 West Montgomery Avenue, from LDR1 Lower Density Residential to IN Institutional Nature Preserve.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Issues Briefing - Stoneleigh](#)
[Stoneleigh_Background](#)
[Petition to Amend Zoning Code & Map.pdf](#)
[ORD_Petition to Amend Zoning Code & Map.pdf](#)
[Slides - NLT Stoneleigh and Oakwell Zoning Petition](#)
[County Review](#)

Meeting Date: October 6, 2025

TO: Planning Commission Members

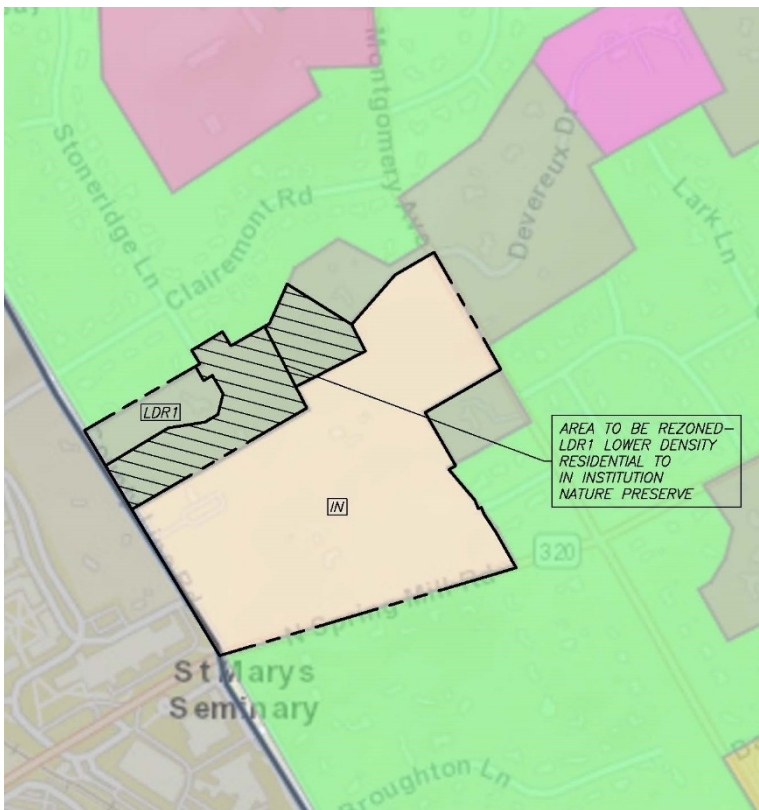
FROM: Department of Building and Planning – Colleen Hall, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Petition to Amend Zoning Code & Rezoning Petition - 330 Spring Mill Road & 1829 County Line Road, 1835 County Line Road, 1800 West Montgomery Avenue, (Natural Lands Trust), Villanova, Ward 6, Z-25-005

PROPOSAL:

The Natural Lands Trust, (NLT), and Denise Yarnoff, (authorized agent and applicant) on behalf of Stoneleigh are proposing a text amendment for Article V, Uses, Table 5.3, for the Institutional Nature Preserve (IN) District and the rezoning of the Stoneleigh Expansion parcel of 7.3 acres and 1800 West Montgomery Avenue from (LDR1) Low Density Residential to (IN) Institutional Nature Preserve.

Map Amendment (Rezoning):



The proposal includes rezoning a portion of the Oakwell Estate to add to the Stoneleigh Estate and rezone the newly added Stoneleigh property from LDR1 to IN. The rezoning is consistent with a concurrently proposed Preliminary Lot Line Change. Should the Lot line change be approved, the balance of the property will be consolidated into the Stoneleigh Estate, which is currently zoning IN.

The graphic shows the proposed area for rezone, which is the 7.3 Stoneleigh Expansion parcel and the entire parcel, 3 acres, at 1800 West Montgomery Avenue. The approximately 3.3 acre remaining of 1835 County Line Road, Oakwell, will include the mansion house and will remain zoned LDR1.

Natural Lands has proposed to preserve the Property and its existing improvements for the benefit of public enjoyment. Natural Lands proposes to consolidate the Property with the existing Stoneleigh estate and utilize the property, including the existing

structures, as public gardens in accordance with the requirements of the IN District. Consistent with the current use of Stoneleigh, Natural Lands anticipates daily public use of the Property as well as events to be hosted on the property, including, but not limited to, educational, garden and cultural experiences and events.

Text Amendment:

Natural Lands Trust is also proposing a text amendment to Article V, Uses, Table 5.3, Use Regulations, IN Institutional Nature Preserve, Environmental Use Regulations of the Lower Merion Township Zoning Code. The proposed Zoning Code amendments are designed to provide greater flexibility for operations to better accommodate visitors, allow more community events without an arbitrary cap. The noted changes are highlighted below:

Article V, Uses, Table 5.3, Use Regulations, IN Institutional Nature Preserve, Environmental Use Regulations:

The Environmental (Nature Preserve) or estate Preservation Lot are permitted subject to the following:

(1) Shall be in compliance with §155-4.4, Institutional districts.

*(2) **On Lots of minimum 25 contiguous acres with frontage on Primary, Secondary and/or Tertiary streets, permitted uses are:***

- a. Preservation, management and/or enhancement of land areas for outdoor passive recreation and/or scenic enjoyment for the benefit of the general public from dawn to ~~dusk only~~ **no later than 9 pm, except as permitted in subsection 3(b) below, including, but not limited to educational, garden and cultural events,** provided that a conservation easement for the estate preservation lot is approved and recorded by the Township.*
- b. The preservation and/or enhancement of an historic structure, including the adaptive reuse of the historic resource and existing associated structures for historical, environmental, horticultural, cultural, arts, genealogical and musical purposes, provided that a guarantee for the permanent preservation of the principal historic structure is provided*

(3) Permitted uses are further regulated as follows:

- a. The adaptive reuse of principal historic structures and accessory structures may include facilities with associated offices, subject to:*
 - i. The number of employees working within the structures is limited to one person per 500 square feet of floor area dedicated to the use, not including the employees employed for the preservation, management and enhancement of the property.*
 - ii. On-site parking shall be provided as specified in Article VIII, Parking Standards*
- ~~b. Educational events for the general public, subject to:~~*
 - ~~i. A maximum of 125 daily visitors permitted.~~*
 - ~~ii. On-site parking, including visitor parking, shall be provided as specified in Article VIII, Parking Standards.~~*
- c. Outdoor events with outdoor amplified music, such as special exhibits, fairs, galas, retreats and performances subject to:*
 - i. A maximum of ~~42~~ **35** events per year.*
 - ii. The event hours are limited to between 9:00 am and 9:00 pm, Sunday through Thursday, and 9:00 am to 11:00 pm, Friday and Saturday.*
 - iii. Any amplified sound source shall be directed away from adjacent residences and comply with the Township Noise Ordinance, Chapter 105.*
 - iv. No activity, including temporary parking, associated with such events can take place within 100 feet of property lines.*
 - v. If an event requires more parking than exists at the site, temporary parking may be permitted on the lawn areas on the lot if located more than 100 feet away from any property line. If temporary parking cannot be accommodated on lawn areas on the lot, an off-site*

parking location shall be provided along with a shuttle service to shuttle attendees to and from the event.

The major change in the text amendment is the change from twelve (12) events permitted to a total of thirty-five (35) events for the Environmental Preserve use. The other two changes include the removal of the closure at dusk to no later than 9:00 PM and the removal in its entirety of the limitation on educational events for a maximum of one hundred twenty-five (125) daily visitors.

Background Research:



AreaAcres	ParcelNumber	NAME	Address	Frontage	RoadFrontType	ZngDistrict	ZngClass
Meets Requirements							
25.46	400064460003	SAUNDERS WOODS PRESERVE	1020 WAVERLY RD	1132	Tertiary	IN	Institutional
41.58	400056504003	STONELEIGH ESTATE	330 SPRING MILL RD	1509	Primary and Secondar	IN	Institutional
Meets Requirements classified as Cemetery Use.							
81.70	400005120006	WESTMINSTER CEMETERY	701 BELMONT AVE	485	Primary	IN	Institutional
132.41	400044072006	CALVERY CEMETERY	2025 OLD GULPH RD	1643	Secondary	IN	Institutional
186.15	400005068004	WEST LAUREL HILL CEMETERY	215 BELMONT AVE	300	Primary	IN	Institutional
Meets Size Requirement, but not Road Requirement.							
30.55	400056676254	RIVERBEND	1950 SPRING MILL RD	1532	Minor	IN	Institutional
42.65	400059852003	HENRY FOUNDATION	801 STONY LN	1896	Minor	IN	Institutional
306.01	400056832008	PHILADELPHIA COUNTRY CLUB	1601 SPRING MILL RD	9750	Minor	IN	Institutional

The following changes to the text amendments would apply to those Environmental Nature Preserve Use that are over 25 acres on a Primary, Secondary, or Tertiary Roadway. The following map shows the Institutional Nature

Preserve Zoning District. Several properties meet the requirements for an Environmental Nature Preserve, including Stoneleigh and Saunders Woods Preserve. Others meet the size requirements although they do not meet the road frontage requirement, since they front on a minor roadway. The cemeteries are large enough in size, however they are classified as a cemetery use and not an environmental nature preserve.

Saunders Woods Preserve does not have large events at their facilities and is much more limited in their scope of events. It is used approximately 15-20 times per year for smaller events (25 or fewer guests) for bird, wildflower and tree identification walks for the public, and approximately 15 times per year for youth educational programs (about 50 students/visit), and volunteer work. The Preserve parking is limited to about 16 cars.

In relationship to other institutions in the Township that hold events at their venues 35 events per year is reasonable. St. Sahag & St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church in Wynnewood is permitted 52 events per year, and 40 permitted on weekends. Appleford Estate holds over 150 events per year at their property in Villanova. Merion Tribute House holds about 75 events per year at their property in Merion. The Cynwyd Club is not permitted to have outdoor sound for their events. Many of these facilities are in neighborhoods and are surrounded by single family homes. They are all subject to the Township's noise ordinance requirements, which limits the time of day and the duration of noise that can project from these events.

Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan:

The proposed text amendment and rezoning request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Several sections of the Comprehensive Plan promote and protect natural and historic resources. Institutional campuses play an important role in the Township's open space and recreational system. Two of the Goals of the Comprehensive Plan for institutional land uses is to "develop strategies for the preservation and enhancement of historic, cultural, and educational resources which are a defining element of Lower Merion Township" and "explore creative techniques to allow institutions to evolve while maintaining protections of the surrounding residences. Striking a balance between land use and operational needs of institutions and their residential neighbors is of utmost importance" (Land Use Element,199). The proposed text amendments to expand the current use of the Environmental Preserve are reasonable to promote the viability of this valued cultural and environmental resource in the Township.

Standards for Text or Rezoning Amendments

Staff would like to draw the Planning Commission's attention to the standards for text or rezoning amendments, which are included in the new Zoning Code:

§ 155-11.3.E.(2) Standards for text or rezoning amendments. In deciding whether to adopt or deny any proposed amendment, or to adopt some modification of the Planning Commission's recommendation, the Board of Commissioners shall consider, among other factors, the following:

- (a) Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, as adopted and amended from time to time;*
- (b) Whether the proposed amendment is compatible with current and projected conditions and the overall character of development in the immediate vicinity of the subject property;*
- (c) Whether the proposed amendment is the most desirable use for which the land in the subject property is adapted; and*
- (d) Whether the proposed amendment will have an adverse effect on the value of properties throughout the jurisdiction.*

Staff believes the proposed amendments satisfy the standards for a zoning code amendment and recommend the adoption of the proposed ordinance. The consistency to the Comprehensive Plan is noted in the above section. The expansion of the Stoneleigh property is compatible with the current and projected conditions and character of the property, the Oakwell gardens were once part of Stoneleigh and the consolidation of the property into the main estate will bring it back to its original historic state. The Township desires more Nature Preserves in the Township and it will not have an adverse effect on property values.

RESPONSE TO MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS

- **Balance of 1835 County Line Road being left as LDR1 on its own parcel.** There are several other single parcels that are zoned LDR1 adjacent to this parcel and other instances in the Township Zoning Map. Township staff feels that the LDR1 zoning is appropriate.
- **Conditional Use for the increased events from 12 to 35 events.** Staff notes that requiring the additional events by Conditional Use is an option that could be completed to achieve the same result. Staff would like to point out that before the Zoning code update in 2020, the estate preservation lot was permitted by Conditional Use. This property has an existing Conditional Use that it continues to follow for the Estate Preservation Lot. When the zoning code was adopted, it was clear that the Environmental Preserve (Estate Preservation Lot) was made a regulated use with specific regulations and not a Conditional use. By reverting back to a Conditional Use, you are removing the regulations that were put in place with the adoption of the new Zoning code.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIONS & STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Planning Commission must take the following actions with respect to this application:

- A recommendation on the requested Application.
 - o Staff supports the request.

Meeting Date: October 6, 2025

TO: Planning Commission Members

FROM: Department of Building and Planning – Colleen Hall, Senior Planner and Holly Colello, Planner

SUBJECT: Background Information – 330 Spring Mill Road & 1829 County Line Road, 1835 County Line Road, 1800 West Montgomery Avenue, Natural Lands Trust, Villanova, Ward 6, 3932LLC, Z-25-005, and 3933TS.

PROPOSAL:

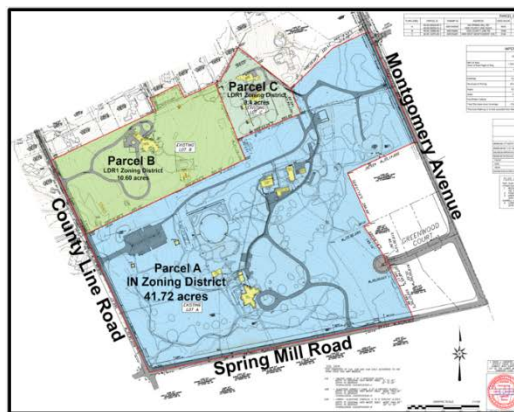
The Natural Lands Trust, (NLT), and Denise Yarnoff, (authorized agent and applicant) on behalf of Stoneleigh is seeking approval of three (3) separate, but interrelated, land development applications to:

1. Merge part of the Oakwell Estate into the Stoneleigh Nature Preserve,
2.
 - a. Rezone the merged lands from LDR1 (single-family residential) to IN (Institutional Nature Preserve),
 - b. Modify the Institutional Nature Preserve Use provisions and
3. Make Land Development improvements to integrate the merged area into Stoneleigh.

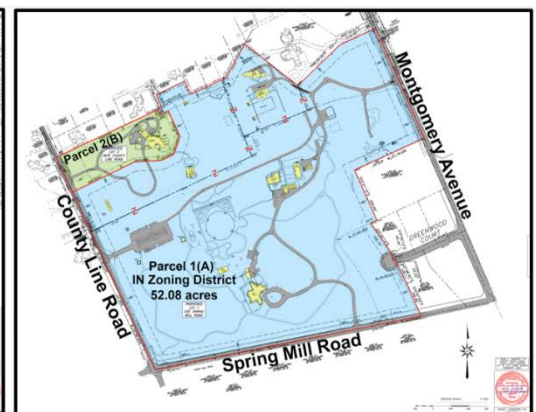
Each application involves a separate code section, and each application requires individual review and approval. This memo was prepared to explain that separate actions are part of a larger project to preserve the Oakwell Estate and to expand the Stoneleigh preserve. The Building and Planning Committee is scheduled to consider each of the items (alongside a Conditional Use request to amend existing Conditional Use conditions of approval reviewed by the Planning Commission last month) at the November meeting.

Application #1 - Preliminary Lot Line Change:

- The purpose of the proposed subdivision plan is to expand the grounds of Stoneleigh, a public garden, and to preserve the Oakwell Estate by transferring parts of Oakwell to Stoneleigh. Currently, Oakwell is comprised of two separate lots, 1835 County Line Road (A) and 1800 West Montgomery Avenue (B) acres. Stoneleigh is a single lot (C). The result of the subdivision will be two lots: a smaller Oakwell (1A) and a larger Stoneleigh (2B). No other improvements are proposed with this application.



EXISTING PARCELS			
Parcel	Address	Gross Acres	Net Acres
A	330 Spring Mill Road / 1829 County Line Road	41.72	39.96
B	1835 County Line Road	10.62	10.32
C	1800 West Montgomery Avenue	3.04	3.04
Total		55.38	53.32



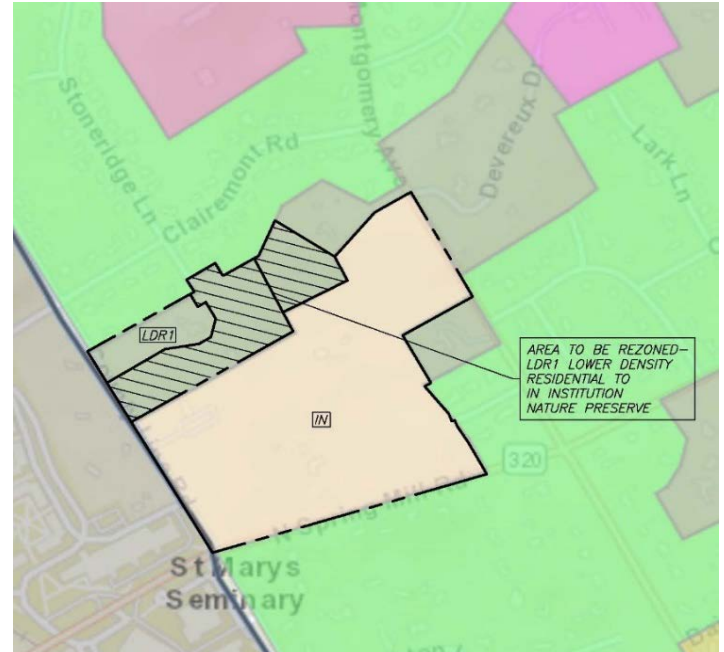
PROPOSED PARCELS			
New Combined Parcel	Address	Gross Acres	Net Acres
1 (A)	330 Spring Mill Road + 1829 County Line Road + 1800 West Montgomery Avenue	52.08	50.08
2 (B)	1835 County Line Road	3.3	3.24
Total		55.38	53.32

Application #2 - Rezoning Petition, Map Change to Rezone former Oakwell lands transferred to Stoneleigh to IN and a Text Amendment to the IN Use provisions:

- This request has two components.

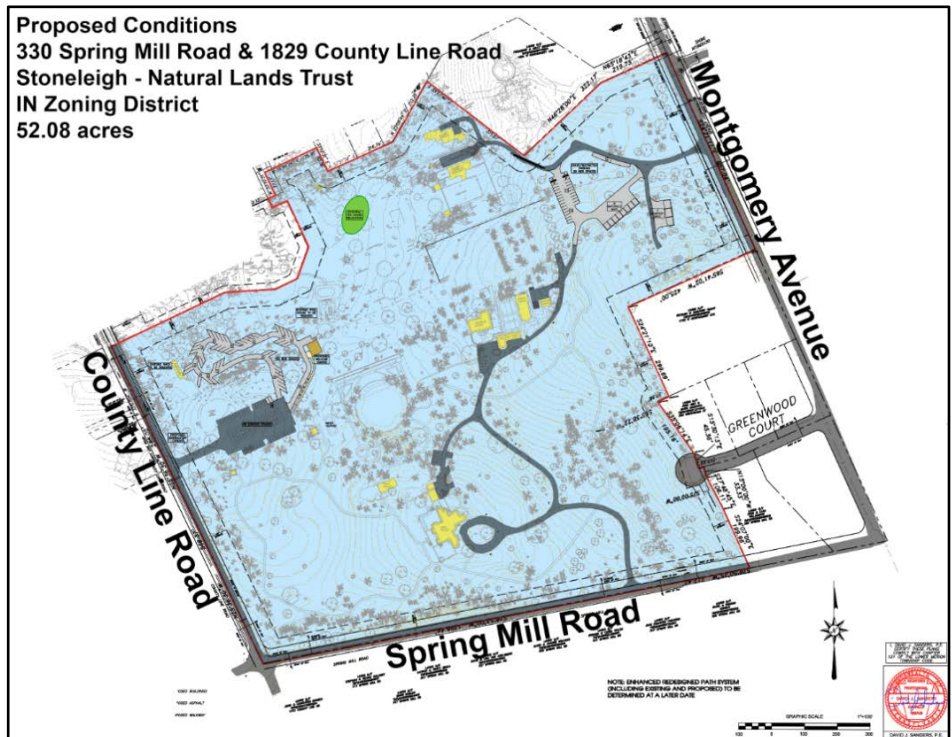
The first action involves a Zoning Map Change to rezone the land transferred from Oakwell to Stoneleigh as (IN) Institutional Nature Preserve. Oakwell is currently zoned LDR1. Stoneleigh is currently zoned IN. Lands transferred from one property to another via subdivision do not automatically absorb the zoning of their new parcel. For the transferred land to be used by Stoneleigh as a public garden the zoning map must be redrawn.

The second action involves a Text Amendment modifying Article V, Uses, Table 5.3 for the (IN) Institutional Nature Preserve District to allow greater flexibility for institutional operations, provide better accommodations for visitors, and to allow additional community/educational events.



Application #3 - Tentative Sketch Land Development:

- The applicant proposes improvements to the Stoneleigh public garden, including the removal of the pool house and pool formerly located on the Oakwell Estate, construction of small Welcome Center and garden plaza and construction of fifty (50) additional parking spaces.
- The plans also show the relocation of an existing historic Tea House, and enhancements to walkways. It should be noted that the Tea House brick wall along the property line is not proposed to be relocated.



PROPERTY DESCRIPTION & HISTORY:

Property Description

Stoneleigh occupies 41.7-acres and is zoned IN Institutional Nature Preserve. The property has frontage on Montgomery Avenue, Spring Mill Road and County Line Road. The opposite side of County Line Road is occupied by Villanova University, which is in Radnor Township, Delaware County. On the Lower Merion side of County Line Road Stoneleigh is bordered by low-density single-family homes zoned LDR1 & LDR2. Stoneleigh includes a public garden established in 2015. The gardens and grounds are maintained by Natural Lands and are utilized for passive recreation as well as educational and cultural events. The mansion is utilized by the headquarters of the Organ Historical Society.

The existing Oakwell property is comprised of two parcels, 1835 County Line Road (10.6 acres) and 1800 West Montgomery Avenue (3.0) acres. 1835 County Line Road includes the Oakwell mansion and grounds. 1800 West Montgomery Avenue includes several out buildings.

History

The Tudor revival Stoneleigh mansion was originally built between 1877-1890 by Edmund C. Smith, Vice President of the Pennsylvania Railroad Co., and was subsequently owned by Samuel T. Bodine, Vice President of United Gas Improvement Company, who named the estate Stoneleigh. The main house was designed and constructed by the Wilson Brothers firm and alterations were subsequently introduced in 1901 by architect Guy King. The property is listed on the Lower Merion Historic Resource Inventory as a Class II Historic Resource. The property contains several formal gardens for which the Olmstead Brothers served as landscape architects from 1900 until 1913. In 2016, the Haas family donated Stoneleigh to Natural Lands for public enjoyment and to nurture and enhance the natural beauty of the community resource.

- Both properties at Oakwell were originally part of the Stoneleigh estate, constructed during the ownership of Samuel T. Bodine. The Tudor mansion at **1835 County Line Road**, called “Oakwell,” was built ca. 1922 from a design by architect William Wayne, Jr. It was the home of Samuel’s son William W. Bodine. As with the rest of the Bodine family estate, the landscaping around the mansion was designed by Olmsted Brothers. One freestanding garden structure, called the “tea house” on historic landscape plans, ended up on the 1835 County Line Road property when the estate was subdivided.



1800 West Montgomery Avenue contains structures relating to Stoneleigh’s agricultural operations. The buildings, walls, and other elements were designed by Frank Miles Day & Brother to fit within the larger landscape plan designed by Olmsted Brothers. The intact elements of the property include the superintendent’s cottage, various brick walls, and a group of small buildings associated with the operations of the greenhouse. A majority of the footprint of the former greenhouse has been replaced by a tennis court, though a small portion of an original greenhouse remains. The property is a good example of the architecture of Frank Miles Day, whose work includes three Class II-designated resources on the Township’s Historic Resource Inventory and a wide variety of notable buildings in the Philadelphia area. When new, the garden complex was considered significant enough to merit a five-page article in a 1903 issue of “House and Garden” magazine. The article described the architecture glowingly: “That [utilitarian] buildings can be made objects of beauty and also an attraction of the estate is shown... Here is an ingenious grouping of not only the greenhouses themselves, but of all their accompaniments, including the horses and teams engaged upon the garden work. All of this is enclosed within distinctly defined boundaries to which are added details of a charming architectural character.”



1800 W. Montgomery Avenue: Historic photo of the greenhouse complex



1800 W. Montgomery: Current photo of the greenhouse complex

ADDITIONAL REVIEWS:

Rosemont/Villanova Civic Association: Plans were reviewed at the September 10, 2025 civic association meeting with comments, but no formal action was taken. The applicant has scheduled another meeting with the Civic Association in October, with any formal comments to accompany Planning Commission recommendations from the subject Tentative Sketch Land Development plan in November.

MEETING SCHEDULE & PROCESS:

The *tentative* schedule for the Applicant’s request are as follows:

Previous	Monday, September 8, 2025	Planning Commission	Review of the Conditional Use Application
	Thursday, September 25, 2025	Conditional Use Hearing	
➔	Monday, October 6, 2025	Planning Commission	Review of the Preliminary Lot Line Change and Petition for Rezoning Request
UPCOMING	Wednesday, October 15, 2025	Building & Planning Committee	Authorization to Advertise the Petition for Rezoning Request
	Monday, November 3, 2025	Planning Commission	Review of the Tentative Sketch Land Development
	Wednesday, November 12, 2025	Building & Planning Committee	Review of All requested Applications
	Wednesday, November 19, 2025	Board of Commissioners	

Additional information about the Township’s Land Development approval process is illustrated in the [Subdivision & Land Development Flowchart](#). This application is currently in the *Stage 4: Public Meetings* portion of the process.

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP,
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: Natural Lands Trust, Inc.
Petition to Amend the Lower Merion Township Zoning Code

PETITION TO AMEND THE LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP
ZONING CODE AND ZONING MAP

Natural Lands Trust, Inc. d/b/a Natural Lands (“Natural Lands”) hereby petitions to amend the Lower Merion Township Zoning Code, being Chapter 155 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion (“Zoning Code”), to amend Article V, Uses, Table 5.3, Use Regulations, IN Institutional Nature Preserve, Environmental Use Regulations, and to amend the Lower Merion Township Zoning Map (“Zoning Map”) to rezone properties at 1835 County Line Road and 1800 West Montgomery Avenue, from LDR1 Lower Density Residential to IN Institutional Nature Preserve, and in support thereof avers as follows:

1. The Lower Merion School District is the legal owner of property located at 1835 County Line Road, Villanova, Pennsylvania in Lower Merion Township, consisting of approximately 10.6 acres and more specifically identified as Montgomery County Tax Parcel No. 40-00-12868-00-7 and 1800 West Montgomery Avenue, Villanova Pennsylvania in Lower Merion Township, consisting of approximately 3.0 acres and more specifically identified as Montgomery County Tax Parcel No. 40-00-12872-00-3.

2. Natural Lands is the equitable owner of a portion of 1835 County Line Road (approximately 7.3 acres) and the entirety of 1800 West Montgomery Avenue (collectively the “Property”), pursuant to an agreement of sale with the Lower Merion School District.

3. A portion of 1835 County Line Road (approximately 3.3 acres) is likewise subject to an agreement of sale between Wyncote Foundation and the Lower Merion School District and is not subject to the Petition herein.

4. Petitioner, Natural Lands, has a registered business address of 1031 Palmers Mill Road, Media, Pennsylvania 19063.

5. The Property is located in the LDR1 Lower Density Residential Zoning District.

6. The Property located at 1835 County Line Road contains Class II Historic Resources.

7. Pursuant to § 155-11.3.A-B of the Zoning Code, “The Board of Commissioners may from time to time amend, supplement, change, modify or repeal [the Zoning Code], or any part thereof, including Zoning Maps” in response to a petition submitted to the Board.

8. Natural Lands, as equitable owner of the Property located in the LDR1 District of Lower Merion Township, hereby files this Petition to amend Article V, Uses, Table 5.3, Use Regulations, IN Institutional Nature Preserve, Environmental Use Regulations of the Zoning Code, and to amend the Zoning Map to rezone the Property from LDR1 Lower Density Residential to IN Institutional Nature Preserve (collectively, “Proposed Amendments”).

9. Natural Lands is submitting the Proposed Amendments in order to facilitate better use of the Property, support the public purpose, meet the needs of the community and extend the environmental nature preserve use to additional Property in the Township.

10. Natural Lands is proposing to preserve the Property and its existing improvements for the benefit of public enjoyment. Natural Lands proposes to consolidate the Property with the existing Stoneleigh estate property and utilize the Property, including the existing structures, as public gardens in accordance with the requirements of the IN Institutional Nature Preserve District. Consistent with the current use of Stoneleigh, Natural Lands anticipates daily public use of the

Property as well as events to be hosted on the Property, including, but not limited to, educational, garden and cultural experiences and events.

11. The Proposed Amendments are consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Lower Merion Township Comprehensive Plan, as amended, entitled “A Comprehensive Plan for the Preservation, Infill, and Redevelopment of Lower Merion Township” and which was adopted by the Township on January 6, 2016 (“Comprehensive Plan”), as they are enacted to promote, protect and facilitate the public health, safety and general welfare of present and future residents of Lower Merion Township through the adoption of appropriate land use restrictions. Specifically, the Proposed Amendments further the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan by:

a. Encouraging the preservation and restoration of important Township Historic Resources and related improvements, to acknowledge such resources’ historical importance and significance as community landmarks and preserve and adapt them into new uses that will continue to serve the community for many years into the future. See Comprehensive Plan, pp. 199 (One of the goals of the Comprehensive Plan for institutional land uses is to “[d]evelop strategies for the preservation and enhancement of historic, cultural, and educational resources which are defining elements of Lower Merion Township.”).

b. Promoting creative and respectful ways to encourage institutional use and public enjoyment of institutional properties, while preserving community landmarks and making them accessible to the public. See Comprehensive Plan, pp. 199 (One of the goals of the Comprehensive Plan for institutional land uses is to “explore creative techniques to allow institutions to evolve while maintaining protections of the surrounding residences. Striking a balance between the land use and operational needs of the institutions and their residential neighbors is of utmost importance.”).

c. Introducing, maintaining and preserving important public open space resources, encouraging development in harmony with the natural environment and promoting the creation of community gardens and grounds for public passive and active use. See Comprehensive Plan, pp. 196 (“Institutional campuses also play an important role in the Township’s open space and recreational system.”). See also, Comprehensive Plan, pp. 199 (One of the goals of the Comprehensive Plan for institutional land uses is to “[d]evelop polices and land use regulations that recognize the diversity of institutional land uses within Lower Merion. Future policies and regulations should address the impact of institutions upon the Township’s economic, social, transportation, housing, open space, and recreational needs.”).

12. The Proposed Amendments would provide for the preservation of existing Historical Resources and related improvements, while incorporating additional property into the IN District. The Proposed Amendments will make additional significant open space areas available to the community. The Proposed Amendments to the IN Environmental use regulations will allow for greater interface between the preserved and expanded natural and historic resources on the Property and the public. Accordingly, the Proposed Amendments will further important Township goals and are substantially related to the public health, safety and welfare of the community.

13. The Proposed Amendments are compatible with current and projected conditions and the overall character of development of the immediate vicinity of the Property, as it is immediately adjacent to and will be merged with Stoneleigh, it is the most desirable use for the Property and will not have an adverse effect on the value of properties throughout the jurisdiction.

14. All relevant standards applicable to the Proposed Amendments will be further evidenced at the hearing(s) through testimony and exhibits.

15. A copy of Petitioner’s proposed Ordinance for the Zoning Code Amendment is attached hereto as “Exhibit A”.

16. A copy of Petitioner's proposed Ordinance for the Zoning Map Amendment is attached hereto as "Exhibit B".

WHEREFORE, Petitioner hereby requests that the Board of Commissioners of Lower Merion Township amend the Lower Merion Township Zoning Code, being Chapter 155 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, as set forth in the proposed Ordinance attached hereto as "Exhibit A".

[Signatures on the following page.]

Attest/Witness:

NATURAL LANDS TRUST, INC.

By: Tiffany D Sowers
Name: Tiffany D Sowers
Title: Vice President, HR

By: [Signature]
Name: DAVID P. BASS
Title: PRESIDENT & CEO

Attest/Witness:

LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT

By: [Signature]
Name: Debbie D. Laska
Title: Board Secretary

By: [Signature]
Name: Frank Ravello
Title: Superintendent

AN ORDINANCE

NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE To Amend The Code Of The Township Of Lower Merion, Chapter 155 Thereof, Entitled Zoning, Article V, Uses, Table 5.3, Use Regulations, IN Institution Nature Preserve, Environmental Use Regulations.

The Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion hereby ordains:

Section 1. The Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 155, Zoning, Article V, Uses, Table 5.3, Use Regulations, IN Institution Nature Preserve, Environmental use regulations, is hereby amended as follows (amended text is underlined):

Table 5.3. Use Regulations		
Uses	Use Permitted	IN
Institutional		
Environmental	R	Environmental (nature preserve) or estate preservation lots are permitted subject to the following: (1) Shall be in compliance with § 155-4.4, Institutional districts. (2) On lots of minimum 25 contiguous acres with frontages on primary, secondary and/or tertiary streets, permitted uses are: (a) Preservation, management and/or enhancement of land areas for outdoor passive recreation and/or scenic enjoyment for the benefit of the general public from dawn to <u>no later than 9 PM, except as permitted in subsection (3)(b) below, including, but not limited to, educational, garden and cultural experiences and events</u>, provided that a conservation easement for the estate preservation lot is approved and recorded by the Township. (b) The preservation and/or enhancement of an historic structure, including the adaptive reuse of the historic resource and existing associated structures for historical, environmental, horticultural, cultural, arts, genealogical and musical purposes, provided that a guarantee for

		the permanent preservation of the principal historic structure is provided. (3) Permitted uses are further regulated as follows: (a) The adaptive reuse of the principal historic structures and accessory structures may include facilities with associated offices, subject to: [1] The number of employees working within the structures is limited to one person per 500 square feet of floor area dedicated to the use, not including the employees employed for the preservation, management and enhancement of the property. [2] On-site parking shall be provided as specified in Article VIII, Parking Standards. (b) Educational events for the general public, subject to: [1] A maximum of 125 daily visitors permitted. [2] On-site parking, including visitor parking, shall be provided as specified in Article VIII, Parking Standards. (b) Outdoor events with outdoor amplified music, such as special exhibits, fairs, galas, retreats and performances, subject to: [1] A maximum of <u>35</u> events per year. [2] The event hours are limited to between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., Sunday through Thursday, and 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., Friday and Saturday. [3] Any amplified sound source shall be directed away from adjacent residences and comply with the Township Noise Ordinance, Chapter 105. [4] No activity, including temporary parking, associated with such
--	--	--

		events can take place within 100 feet of property lines. [5] If an event requires more parking than exists at the site, temporary parking may be permitted on the lawn areas on the lot if located more than 100 feet away from any property line. If temporary parking cannot be accommodated on lawn areas on the lot, an off-site parking location shall be provided along with a shuttle service to shuttle attendees to and from the event. (c) A maximum of two dwelling units are permitted in each historic structure existing on the date the property was placed on the Historic Inventory. Use of the dwelling units is limited to employees, caretakers or advisors to the entity(ies) using the property for its permitted purposes.
--	--	--

Section 2. Nothing in this Ordinance or in Chapter 155 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, as hereby amended, shall be construed to affect any suit or proceedings in any Court, any rights acquired or liability incurred, any permit issued, or any cause or causes of action existing under the said Chapter 155 prior to adoption of this amendment.

Section 3. The provisions of this Ordinance are severable, and if any section, sentence, clause, part or provision thereof shall be held illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision of this court shall not affect or impair the remaining sections, sentences, clauses, parts or provisions of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Board that this Ordinance would have been adopted if such illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional section, sentence, clause, part, or provisions had not been included herein.

Section 4. This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its approval as required by law.

Approved by the Board this ____ day of _____, 2025.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Todd M. Sinai, President

ATTEST:

Jody L. Kelley, Secretary

DRAFT ORDINANCE
PROVIDED BY APPLICANT

EXHIBIT B

Ordinance for Zoning Map Amendment

DRAFT ORDINANCE
PROVIDED BY APPLICANT

AN ORDINANCE

NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE To Amend the Lower Merion Township Zoning Map To Rezone Properties At 1835 County Line Road and 1800 West Montgomery Avenue from LDR1 Lower Density Residential to IN Institutional Nature Preserve.

The Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion hereby ordains:

Section 1. The Zoning Map of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 155, is hereby amended to rezone the following identified parcels from LDRI Lower Density Residential to IN Institutional Nature Preserve:

- 1800 West Montgomery Avenue, Montgomery County Tax Parcel No. 40-00-12872-00-3
- A portion, approximately 7.3 acres in size, of property known as 1835 County Line Road, Montgomery County Tax Parcel No. 40-00-12868-00-7, with the remaining approximately 3.3 acres to remain in the LDRI Lower Density Residential Zoning District

A map depicting the rezoning is attached hereto as “**Appendix A.**”

Section 2. Nothing in this Ordinance or in Chapter 155 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, as hereby amended, shall be construed to affect any suit or proceedings in any Court, any rights acquired or liability incurred, any permit issued, or any cause or causes of action existing under the said Chapter 155 prior to adoption of this amendment.

Section 3. The provisions of this Ordinance are severable, and if any section, sentence, clause, part or provision thereof shall be held illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision of this court shall not affect or impair the remaining sections, sentences, clauses, parts or provisions of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Board that this Ordinance would have been adopted if such illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional section, sentence, clause, part, or provisions had not been included herein.

Section 4. This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its approval as required by law.

Approved by the Board this ____ day of _____, 2025.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Todd M. Sinai, President

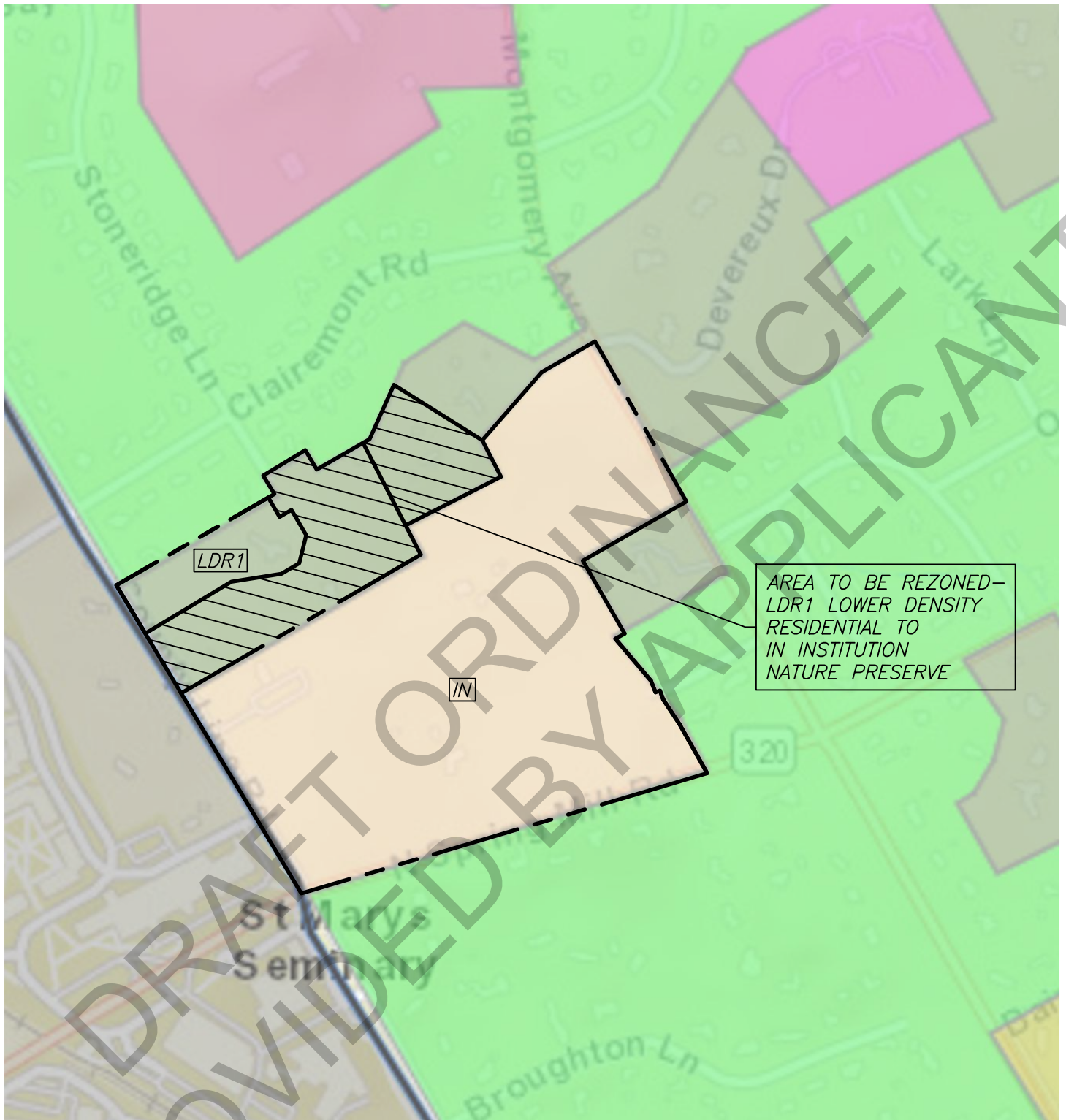
ATTEST:

Jody L. Kelley, Secretary

APPENDIX A

Zoning Map Amendment

DRAFT ORDINANCE
PROVIDED BY APPLICANT



PLAN PREPARED BY:

SITE ENGINEERING CONCEPTS, LLC

P.O. BOX 1992
SOUTHEASTERN, PA 19399

P:610-240-0450

F:610-240-0451

E:INFO@SITE-ENGINEERS.COM

PLAN PREPARED FOR:

STONELEIGH & OAKWELL
330 SPRING MILL ROAD, 1835 COUNTY LINE ROAD
1800 WEST MONTGOMERY AVENUE
VILLANOVA, PA 19085

LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

PENNSYLVANIA

NUM.	DATE	REVISION

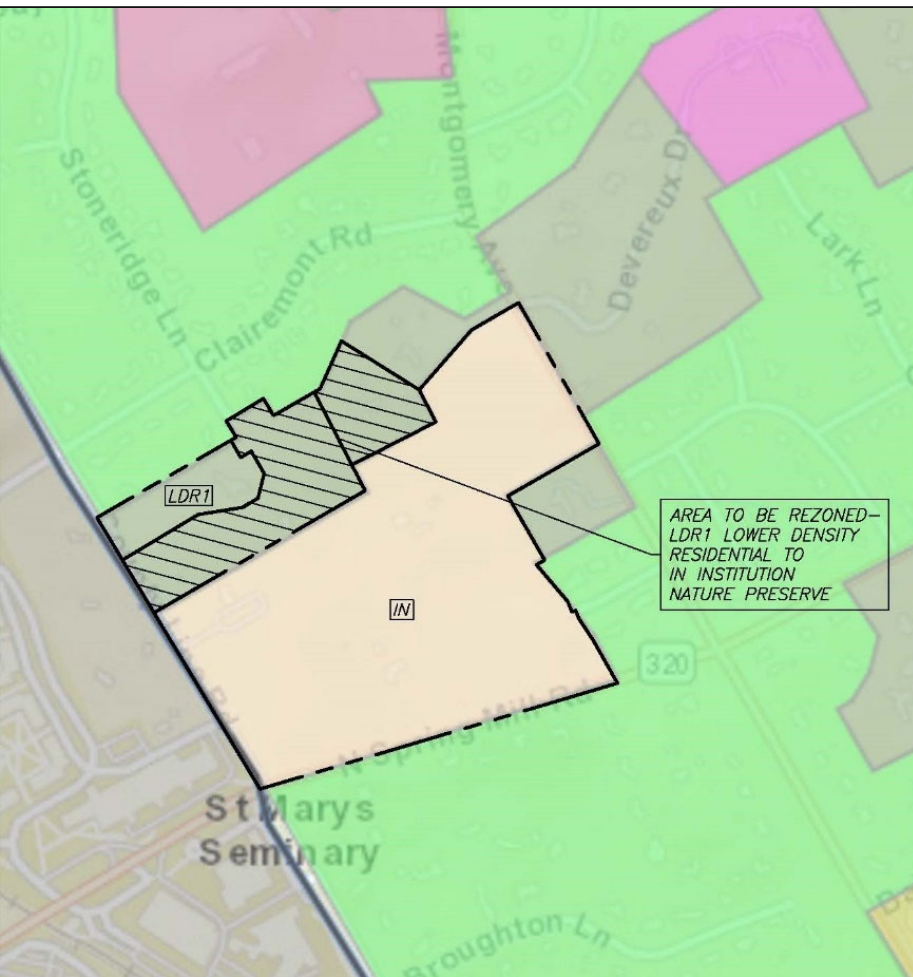
ZONING MAP AMENDMENT PLAN

DATE: AUGUST 26, 2025

1

SCALE 1" = 500'

Proposal: Map Amendment (Rezoning)



The proposal includes **rezoning a portion of the Oakwell Estate** to be added to the **Stoneleigh Estate**.

The newly added land will be **rezoned from LDR1 (Low-Density Residential 1) to IN (Institutional Nature Preserve)**.

The rezoning is **consistent with a concurrently proposed Preliminary Lot Line Change**.

If the Lot Line Change is approved:

- The rezoned parcels will be **consolidated into the Stoneleigh Estate**, which is already zoned **IN**.

Parcels proposed for rezoning:

- The **7.3-acre Stoneleigh Expansion parcel**
- The **entire 3-acre parcel at 1800 West Montgomery Avenue**

The **remaining 3.3 acres of 1835 County Line Road (Oakwell)**, which includes the **mansion house**, will **remain zoned LDR1 and will not be rezoned**.

Proposal: Text Amendment

The applicant is proposing a text amendment to Article V, Uses, Table 5.3, Use Regulations, IN Institutional Nature Preserve, Environmental Use Regulations of the Lower Merion Township Zoning Code.

- The proposed Zoning Code amendments are designed to:
 1. provide greater flexibility for operations to better accommodate visitors,
 2. allow more community events without an arbitrary cap.
- A. The major change in the text amendment is the **change from twelve (12) events permitted to a total of thirty-five (35) events** for the Environmental Preserve use.
- B. The other two changes include the **removal of the closure at dusk to no later than 9:00 PM.**
- C. The **removal in its entirety of the limitation on educational events for a maximum of one hundred twenty-five (125) daily visitors.**

Text Changes §155-4.4(2) a. Article V, Uses, Table 5.3

The Environmental (Nature Preserve) or estate Preservation Lot are permitted subject to the following:

- (1) Shall be in compliance with §155-4.4, Institutional districts.
- (2) **On Lots of minimum 25 contiguous acres with frontage on Primary, Secondary and/or Tertiary streets, permitted uses are:**
 - a. Preservation, management and/or enhancement of land areas for outdoor passive recreation and/or scenic enjoyment for the benefit of the general public from dawn to ~~dusk only~~ no later than 9 pm, except as permitted in subsection 3(b) below, including, but not limited to educational, garden and cultural events, provided that a conservation easement for the estate preservation lot is approved and recorded by the Township.
 - b. The preservation and/or enhancement of an historic structure, including the adaptive reuse of the historic resource and existing associated structures for historical, environmental, horticultural, cultural, arts, genealogical and musical purposes, provided that a guarantee for the permanent preservation of the principal historic structure is provided

Text Changes § 155-4.4(2) a. Article V, Uses, Table 5.3

(3) Permitted uses are further regulated as follows:

a. The adaptive reuse of principal historic structures and accessory structures may include facilities with associated offices, subject to:

i. The number of employees working within the structures is limited to one person per 500 square feet of floor area dedicated to the use, not including the employees employed for the preservation, management and enhancement of the property.

ii. On-site parking shall be provided as specified in Article VIII, Parking Standards

~~b. Educational events for the general public, subject to:~~

~~i. A maximum of 125 daily visitors permitted.~~

~~ii. On-site parking, including visitor parking, shall be provided as specified in Article VIII, Parking Standards.~~

Text Changes § 155-4.4(2) a. Article V, Uses, Table 5.3

- c. Outdoor events with outdoor amplified music, such as special exhibits, fairs, galas, retreats and performances subject to:*
- i. A maximum of ~~12~~ 35 events per year.*
 - ii. The event hours are limited to between 9:00 am and 9:00 pm, Sunday through Thursday, and 9:00 am to 11:00 pm, Friday and Saturday.*
 - iii. Any amplified sound source shall be directed away from adjacent residences and comply with the Township Noise Ordinance, Chapter 105.*
 - iv. No activity, including temporary parking, associated with such events can take place within 100 feet of property lines.*
 - v. If an event requires more parking than exists at the site, temporary parking may be permitted on the lawn areas on the lot if located more than 100 feet away from any property line. If temporary parking cannot be accommodated on lawn areas on the lot, an off-site parking location shall be provided along with a shuttle service to shuttle attendees to and from the event.*

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

NEIL K. MAKHIJA, CHAIR
JAMILA H. WINDER, VICE CHAIR
THOMAS DIBELLO, COMMISSIONER

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**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION**

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PLANNING@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYPA.GOV

SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 30, 2025

Mr. Christopher Leswing, Director of Building & Planning
Building & Planning Department
Township of Lower Merion
75 East Lancaster Avenue
Ardmore, Pennsylvania 19003

Re: MCPC #25-0189-001
Zoning Code/Map Amendment
Township of Lower Merion

Dear Mr. Leswing:

We have reviewed the above-referenced zoning ordinance text and map amendments in accordance with Section 609 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code" as you requested on September 18, 2025. We forward this letter as a report of review and recommendations.

BACKGROUND

Natural Lands Trust, Inc. has petitioned the township to consider a zoning map amendment and a zoning text amendment. The zoning map amendment proposal would rezone the property at 1800 West Montgomery Avenue and a portion of the property at 1835 County Line Road from LDR1 Low-Density Residential to IN Institutional Nature Preserve.

In addition, several text amendments to Table 5.3 Use Regulations related to environmental uses in the IN Institutional Nature Preserve zoning district are proposed:

- Change the permitted hours of operation from "dawn to dusk only" to "dawn to 9 pm" related to "educational, garden and cultural experiences and events"
- Remove regulations related to educational events for the general public
- Increase the maximum number of permitted outdoor events from 12 to 35 events per year

RECOMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the applicant's proposal; however, in the course of our review we have identified the following issues that the applicant and Lower Merion Township may wish to consider prior to moving forward. Our review comments are as follows:



REVIEW COMMENTS

ZONING MAP AMENDMENT

In their petition for rezoning, Natural Lands Trust, Inc. stated that they submitted the proposed amendments “in order to facilitate better use of the property, support the public purpose, meet the needs of the community and extend the environmental nature preserve use to additional property in the township.” Further, the applicant stated that they intend to consolidate the rezoned property with their existing nature preserve property (Stoneleigh) and utilize the property as public gardens. The proposed logical expansion of the Institutional Nature Preserve zoning district appears to be consistent with the intent of the institutional districts which is in part “to support the sustainability of institutions.” By rezoning the adjacent property, which is under agreement of sale to Natural Lands Trust, Inc., this will allow the applicant to expand the impact of the existing Stoneleigh property and protect the property as part of a managed garden landscape that will be preserved and made open to the public for educational and passive recreation purposes.

From a larger zoning map perspective, we noted that the proposed rezoning of 1800 West Montgomery Avenue and the majority of 1835 County Line Road will leave the remaining approximately 3-acres of land at 1835 County Line Road as LDR1 Low-Density Residential without any other contiguous areas of LDR1 zoning around it. For zoning map continuity, the township may wish to consider if the portion of 1835 County Line Road that is proposed to remain residentially-zoned could instead be zoned LDR2 Low-Density Residential so that it would be contiguous with the large area of LDR2 zoning to the north.

In addition, we noted that Table 5.3 of the township’s zoning ordinance requires a conservation easement for an estate preservation lot in order to qualify for certain environmental (nature preserve) uses in the IN Institutional Nature Preserve zoning district. It is unclear from the information provided if the conservation easement that currently applies to the Stoneleigh property would be expanded to include the adjacent lands that are proposed to be rezoned and consolidated with the existing Stoneleigh property.

ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT

The proposed zoning text amendments will increase the number of permitted outdoor events with outdoor amplified music from 12 events per year to 35 events per year. The township may wish to consider if any increase in the number of permitted events could be modified by a conditional use process instead. That way, residential neighbors directly impacted by each property subject to this regulation could have an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process in a site-specific manner.

CONCLUSION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission supports the proposed zoning ordinance and zoning map amendments; however, we feel that our suggestions will better achieve the township’s planning objectives for residential and institutional development.

Please note that the review comments and recommendations contained in this report are advisory to the municipality and final disposition for the approval of any proposed amendments will be made by the municipality.

Should the governing body adopt these proposed zoning ordinance text or zoning map amendments, Section 609 of the Municipalities Planning Code requires that we be sent an official copy within 30 days.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marley B Bice". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marley Bice, AICP, Community Planning Assistant Manager
610-278-3740 – marley.bice@montgomerycountypa.gov

c: Ernie B. McNeely, Twp. Manager
Brandon Ford, Asst. Twp. Manager
Jody Kelley, Twp. Secretary
Gilbert P. High, Jr., Esq., Twp. Solicitor
Joseph Mastronardo, P.E., Twp. Engineer
Charles Doyle, Twp. Asst. Dir. of Planning
Colleen Hall, Twp. Senior Planner
Holly Colello, Twp. Planner
Sarah Carley, Twp. Planner
Angela Forney, Twp. Planning Technician



Township of Lower Merion
A FIRST CLASS TOWNSHIP

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Building & Planning

ITEM: **AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE ORDINANCE - CHAPTER 155, ZONING - TOBACCO RETAILER & LOT OCCUPATION ZONING AMENDMENTS - Z-25-004**

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners authorizing the Township Secretary to advertise notice of a Public Hearing and intent to adopt an ordinance to amend the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 155, entitled Zoning to amend the definitions section to add new definitions for Hookah bar and Significant Tobacco Retailer; to amend Article III, Lot Occupation, to restore regulations for maximum height for accessory buildings; and to permit and regulate Significant Tobacco Retailer as a specialty retail use.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Issues Briefing - Tobacco Retailer & Lot Occupation 10-8-2025](#)
[Ordinance - Tobacco Retailer and Lot Occupation](#)

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Building and Planning Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Zoning Code Amendment – Significant Tobacco Retailer & Lot Occupation

Prepared By: Christopher Leswing, Director, Department of Building & Planning
Colleen Hall, Senior Planner

Date: October 7, 2025

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

Authorize the Township Secretary to advertise a public hearing and notice of intent to adopt an Ordinance, to amend the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 155, entitled Zoning for the following:

- Article II, Definitions, § 155-2.1, Definitions of Terms, to add the definitions for Hookah Bar, and Significant Tobacco Retailer; and
- Article V, Uses, Table 5.3, Use Regulations, to permit Significant Tobacco Retailer as a specialized retail use in the VC, TC, NC, LI, RHR, BMV, and CAD Districts subject to certain standards to be provided for therein.
- Article III, Lot Occupation, to restore regulations for maximum height for accessory building in the principal building envelope and for those built in the reduced side and rear setbacks.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

The Board of Commissioners approve all amendments to Township codes.

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):

It was anticipated that minor amendments would be required after the adoption of the new Zoning Code in 2020. Staff meets regularly with the Zoning Officer to review implementation of the Zoning Code and to address issues which require repeated variances or interpretations. The following group of Zoning Code edits are the eighth proposed set of edits from the February 26, 2020, adoption of the Zoning Code. The fifth round of edits was adopted in July of 2023, and the sixth round of edits was adopted in April of 2024. Currently, the seventh round of edits were approved in September 2025, these two additional minor edits are clean-ups from the two previous ordinances.

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

1. **Article II: Amend the Definitions** section to add the new definitions for the purpose of regulating the following: Hookah Bar, and Significant Tobacco Retailer. The definitions are noted below:

HOOKAH BAR

An establishment which is, whether as its primary use or as an accessory use, devoted to, marketed as, or designed for the on-premises use of hookah, which is a substance typically smoked through a water pipe with a smoke chamber, a bowl, a pipe, and a hose, and also known as “narghile,” “argileh,” “shisha,” “hubble-bubble,” and “goza,” or any similar substance. The term “hookah bar” includes, but is not limited to, establishments variously known as “hookah parlors,” “hookah cafes,” and “hookah lounges.”

SIGNIFICANT TOBACCO RETAILER

Any of the following establishments:

(1) Any retailer or wholesale establishment that (a) devotes 10% or more of floor area or display area to or (b) maintains 20% or more of its total merchandise, whether on display or in stock, for: tobacco products, vape products, Delta-8 THC (or Delta-8-tetrahydrocannabinol), kratom, ingestible CBD/cannabidiol products, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), and/or ENDS-related products and/or any materials that can be used in electronic nicotine delivery systems.

(2) Any retailer or wholesale establishment that holds itself out as, or otherwise promotes or markets itself as, a "tobacco store," a "smoke shop," a "vape shop," a "cigar shop" or a similar establishment selling tobacco products and/or vape products or predominantly advertises tobacco products or vape products on its storefront or website.

2. **Significant Tobacco Retailer and Hookah Bar:** Add Separation Requirements

Article V, Uses, Tables 5.1, Uses, and 5.3, Use Regulations, to permit Significant Tobacco Retailer as a specialized retail use in the VC, TC, NC, LI, RHR, BMV, and CAD Districts, with separation requirements. There are currently no regulations for these uses.

Issue

The Township is experiencing an increasing number of smoke shops and hookah bars (smoke shops) operating in commercial districts. Significant Tobacco Retailer primarily sell tobacco and drug paraphernalia but may also sell snacks and soft drinks. To purchase tobacco, customers must be over 21 years of age. Because they sell tobacco Smoke Shops must be licensed by the State. Smoke Shops are currently regulated as a retail use under the Township’s Zoning Code, like a newsstand, pharmacy or liquor store.

Because of their association with regulated substances, Smoke Shops are often perceived as having a negative impact on commercial districts. The negative perception associated with

Smoke Shops may discourage investment in commercial districts and is contrary to the Township's economic development goals of creating vibrant, diverse commercial areas.

Significant Tobacco Retailer are notorious for garish signage and lighting, which are often in conflict with Township codes. Enforcement of Smoke Shop code compliance is an ongoing challenge for staff. With that said, it is important to realize that existing uses would be grandfathered in, and these separation requirements would not apply to existing smoke shops and hookah bars, only new uses with the separation requirements.

Proposed Amendments

Defining Significant Tobacco Retailer and Hookah Bars to differentiate them from other retail uses. Designating Significant Tobacco Retailer as a regulated use (specialized retail) in the NC, VC, TC, LI, RHR, BMV, CAD districts. The significant Tobacco Retailer is subject to the following regulations:

- A Significant Tobacco Retailer shall be a minimum distance of 1,000 feet from any other Significant Tobacco Retailer, measured along a straight line between the closest walls of each establishment.
- A Significant Tobacco Retailer shall provide adequate ventilation such that the ventilation, at a minimum, must prevent smoke and vapors from migrating into adjacent buildings and/or suites and to outdoor public areas. A mechanical exhaust hood system shall be required if an establishment heats coals indoors.
- A Significant Tobacco Retailer shall comply with current Federal, Commonwealth, and local laws including, but not limited to the Clean Indoor Air Act.

From last month's meeting, staff removed the prohibition of alcoholic beverages from the regulations and modified the definition for clarity.

3. Article III: Lot Occupation;

Accessory buildings and structures are required to be erected to the rear of the principal building. Once the structures are located to the rear of the principal building, they can utilize the reduced side and rear yard setbacks established in the form table standards for each particular district. This language is being offered as a clean up to make sure it is clear that the accessory building and structures must be erected to the rear of the principal building then they are able to also project into the reduced side and rear setbacks.

The following edit was completed in April 2024. When it was completed two sections items (1) and (2) below were inadvertently removed with the code amendment. This action on this round of edits intends to reinstate the two sections relating to the height of the structure. These are important in the regulation of the lot occupation section of the code.

Edit in April 2024

§ 155-3.4. Lot Occupation.

F. Accessory buildings and structures shall comply with their underlying zoning districts and may project into the reduced side or rear yard setback as established in the form tables of the underlying district subject to compliance with the following:

(1) ~~They may~~ Accessory buildings and structures shall be erected to the rear of the principal building. ~~in the reduced side and rear setback as designated in the form tables of the underlying district in which they are located.~~

Proposed Edit:

Accessory buildings and structures shall be erected to the rear of the principal building and may project into the reduced side or rear yard setback as established in the form tables of the underlying district, subject to compliance with the following:

(1) Accessory buildings in the principal building envelope shall be limited to two stories or 20 feet in height.

(2) Accessory buildings built in the reduced side and rear setback shall be limited in height to one story or 15 feet.

(3 ~~4~~) Accessory buildings shall be designed to be similar to and compatible with the principal building.

(4 ~~2~~) Exception. If there is 45 feet or less between the rear of the principal building and the rear lot line, the minimum setback from the rear of the principal building shall be reduced to 10 feet.

Standards for Text or Rezoning Amendments

Staff believes the proposed amendments satisfy the standards for a zoning code amendment and recommend the adoption of the proposed ordinance. In anticipation of consideration for the proposed amendments, staff would like to draw attention to the standards for text or rezoning amendments, which are included in the Zoning Code:

§ 155-11.3.E.(2) Standards for text or rezoning amendments. In deciding whether to adopt or deny any proposed amendment, or to adopt some modification of the Planning Commission's recommendation, the Board of Commissioners shall consider, among other factors, the following:

(a) Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, as adopted and amended from time to time;

(b) Whether the proposed amendment is compatible with current and projected conditions and the overall character of development in the immediate vicinity of the subject property;

(c) Whether the proposed amendment is the most desirable use for which the land in the subject property is adapted; and

(d) Whether the proposed amendment will have an adverse effect on the value of properties throughout the jurisdiction.

V. Impact On Township Finances:

There is no impact on Township Finances

VI. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends advertisement of the code amendments.

AN ORDINANCE

NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE To Amend The Code Of The Township Of Lower Merion, Chapter 155, Entitled Zoning, Article II, Definitions, § 155-2.1, Definitions Of Terms, To Create New Definitions For Hookah Bar And Significant Tobacco Retailer; Table 5.3, Use Regulations, To Permit Significant Tobacco Retailer As A Specialty Retail In The NC, VC, TC, LI, RHR, BMV, And CAD Districts And Establish Regulations For The Use; And Article III, General to Districts, § 155-3.4, Lot Occupation, Subsection F, To Restore Regulations For Maximum Height For Accessory Buildings In The Principal Building Envelope And For Those Built In The Reduced Side And Rear Setbacks.

The Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion hereby ordains:

Section 1. The Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 155, entitled Zoning, Article II, Definition, § 155-2.1, Definitions, is hereby amended to create new definitions for Hookah Bar and Significant Tobacco Retailer, as follows:

HOOKAH BAR

An establishment which is, whether as its primary use or as an accessory use, devoted to, marketed as, or designed for the on-premises use of hookah, which is a substance typically smoked through a water pipe with a smoke chamber, a bowl, a pipe, and a hose, and also known as “narghile,” “argileh,” “shisha,” “hubble-bubble,” and “goza,” or any similar substance. The term “hookah bar” includes, but is not limited to, establishments variously known as “hookah parlors,” “hookah cafes,” and “hookah lounges.”

SIGNIFICANT TOBACCO RETAILER

Any of the following establishments:

- (1) Any retailer or wholesale establishment that (a) devotes 10% or more of floor area or display area to or (b) maintains 20% or more of its total merchandise, whether on display or in stock, for: tobacco products, vape products, Delta-8 THC (or Delta-8-tetrahydrocannabinol), kratom, ingestible CBD/cannabidiol products, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), and/or ENDS-related products and/or any materials that can be used in electronic nicotine delivery systems.

- (2) Any retailer or wholesale establishment that holds itself out as, or otherwise promotes or markets itself as, a "tobacco store," a "smoke shop," a "vape shop," a "cigar shop" or a similar establishment selling tobacco products and/or vape products or predominantly advertises tobacco products or vape products on its storefront or website.
- (3) A hookah bar, regardless of whether tobacco products or vape products are sold from the premises.

Section 2. The Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 155, entitled Zoning, Article V, Uses, is hereby amended, in relevant part, as follows:

1. Table 5.3, Use Regulations, is hereby amended to add Significant Tobacco Retailer as a Specialized Retail which is or is to be a regulated commercial use, in the NC, VC, TC, LI, RHR, BMV, and CAD Districts, subject to the following regulations. Where applicable, Table 5.3 shall hereafter include rows applicable to the aforementioned Districts which are consistent with the following:

USES	USE PERMITTED	LI
COMMERCIAL		
<u>Specialized Retail</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>Significant Tobacco Retailer is subject to the following regulations:</u> <u>A Significant Tobacco Retailer shall be a minimum distance of 1,000 feet from any other Significant Tobacco Retailer, measured along a straight line between the closest walls of each establishment.</u> <u>A Significant Tobacco Retailer shall provide adequate ventilation such that the ventilation, at a minimum, must prevent smoke and vapors from migrating into adjacent buildings and/or suites and to outdoor public areas. A mechanical exhaust hood system shall be required if an establishment heats coals indoors.</u> <u>A Significant Tobacco Retailer shall comply with current Federal, Commonwealth, and local laws including, but not limited to the Clean Indoor Air Act.</u>

Section 8. The Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 155, entitled Zoning, Article III, General to Districts, § 155-3.4, Lot Occupation, Subsection F, is hereby amended now and also, to the extent permitted by law, retroactive to April 17, 2024, in order to correct a drafting error in Ordinance No. 4289, to read as follows:

- F. Accessory buildings and structures shall be erected to the rear of the principal building and may project into the reduced side or rear yard setback as established in the form tables of the underlying district, subject to compliance with the following:

(1) Accessory buildings in the principal building envelope shall be limited to two stories or 20 feet in height.

(2) Accessory buildings built in the reduced side and rear setback shall be limited in height to one story or 15 feet.

(34) Accessory buildings shall be designed to be similar to and compatible with the principal building.

(42) Exception. If there is 45 feet or less between the rear of the principal building and the rear lot line, the minimum setback from the rear of the principal building shall be reduced to 10 feet.

Section 4. Nothing in this Ordinance or in Chapter 155 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, as hereby amended, shall be construed to affect any suit or proceedings in any Court, any rights acquired or liability incurred, any permit issued, or any cause or causes of action existing under the said Chapter 155 prior to the adoption of this amendment.

Section 5. Nothing in this Ordinance or in the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, as hereby amended, shall be construed to affect any suit or proceedings in any Court, any rights acquired or liability incurred, any permit issued, or any cause or causes of action existing under the said Code of the Township of Lower Merion prior to the adoption of this amendment.

Section 6. The provisions of this Ordinance are severable, and if any section, sentence, clause, part, or provision thereof shall be held illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such decision of this court shall not affect or impair the remaining sections, sentences, clauses, parts or provisions of this ordinance. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Board that this ordinance would have been adopted if such illegal, invalid or unconstitutional section, sentence, clause, part or provision had not been included herein.

Section 7. This Ordinance shall take affect and be in force from and after its approval as required by law.

Approved by the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion this _____
day of _____, 20_____.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Todd M. Sinai, President

ATTEST:

Jody L. Kelley, Secretary



Township of Lower Merion
A FIRST CLASS TOWNSHIP

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Building & Planning

ITEM:

APPROVAL OF HISTORICAL COMMISSION APPLICATIONS

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners the following application as recommended by the Historical Commission at their meetings held on September 29 and October 7, 2025:

- a) 306 Bala Avenue, Bala Cynwyd, Class 2, 2025-R-12 - approval to construct a deck and ADA ramp on side-facing elevations at the rear of the residence, with a subcommittee to review additional details, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10.
- b) 514 Spring Mill Road, Villanova, Class 2, 2025-R-05-A - amendment of an approval to construct a rear addition with exterior finishes to match those of the existing structure, with a pergola to connect the proposed addition with the existing garage to meet zoning requirements, with a subcommittee to review additional details, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10.
- c) 601 Conshohocken State Road, Penn Valley, Class 2, 2025-R-13 - approval to install a Tesla solar roof on a stone barn, with a subcommittee to review additional details, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standard 9.
- d) 10 Montgomery Avenue, Bala Cynwyd, Class 2, 2025-R-11 - approval to install bracket-mounted corner banners, hanging retail signage, and repair materials on a pent roof, with a subcommittee to review additional details, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standard 9.
- e) 46 St. James Place, Ardmore, Class 2, 2025-R-15 - approval to install signage and make other façade modifications to a historic Suburban Square storefront, with a subcommittee to review additional details, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[10-15 BP Packet.pdf](#)



306 Bala Avenue, Bala Cynwyd

Class 2

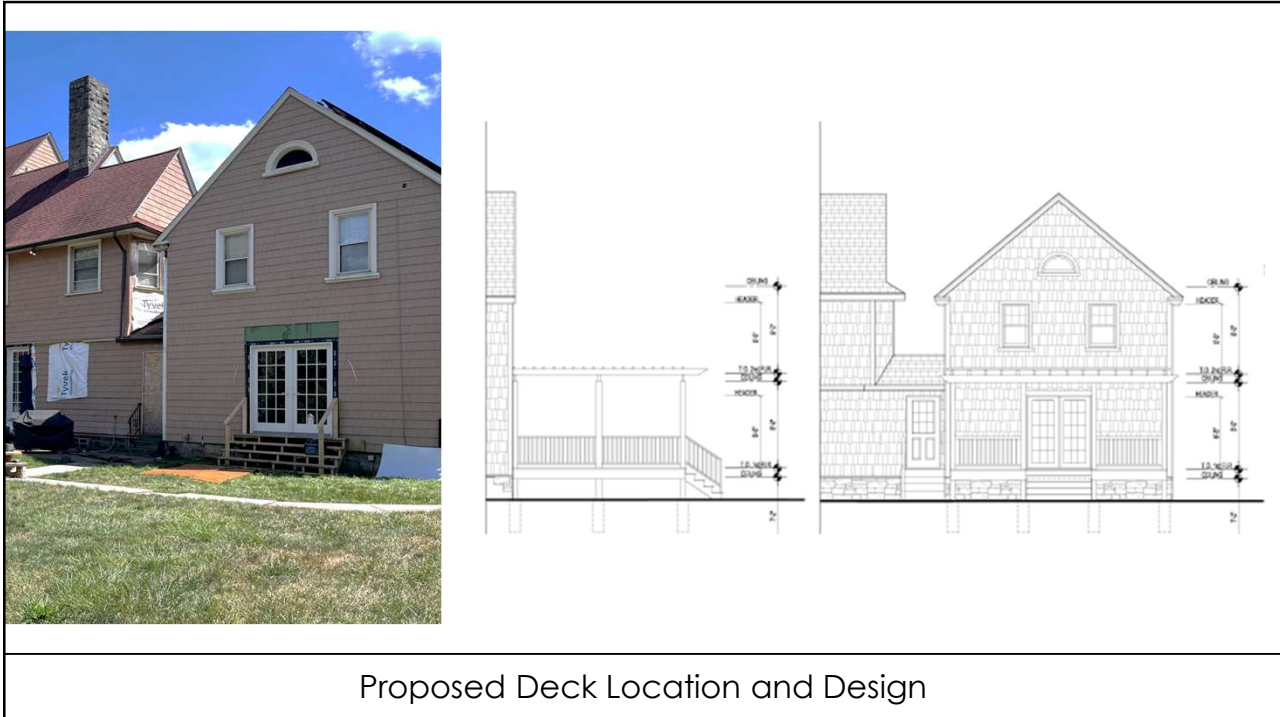
Historical Commission

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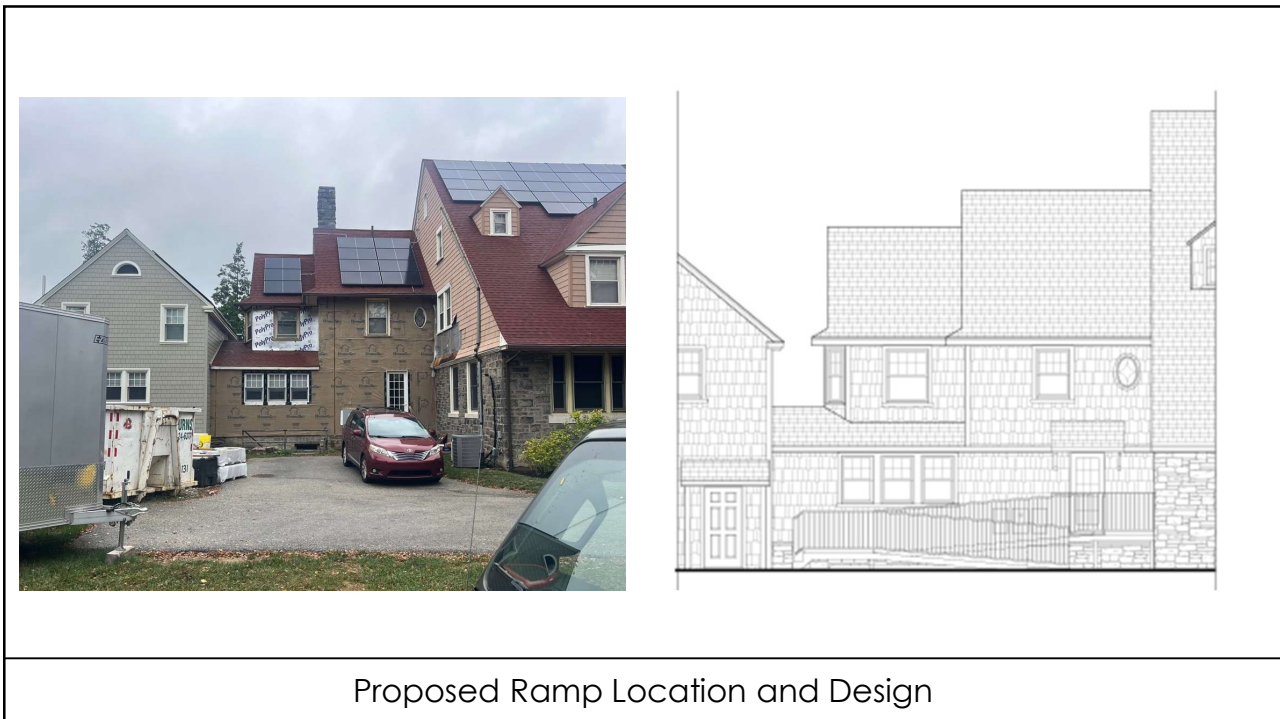
Action:

Approval to construct a deck and ADA ramp on side-facing elevations at the rear of the residence, with a subcommittee to review additional details, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10.

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LOWER MERION
TOWNSHIP
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION

STAFF ONLY	DATE RECEIVED:	REVIEWED BY:	STATUS: c ☐ IN/C ☐
	HRI SURVEY #:	HRI CLASS: 1 ☐ 2 ☐	
	DATE OF HC MEETING / AGENDA:	APP. NO.:	
	TYPE OF APPLICATION: ☐ DEMO ☐ ALTERATION ☐ ADDITION ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION		
	☐ INFORMATIONAL REVIEW ☐ OTHER [SPECIFY]:		

H
C

Historical Commission Application For Review For Work Involving a Class I or II Historic Resource

This completed application, along with all required materials, must be submitted via original printed copy, email, or other electronic means to the Department of Building & Planning a minimum of ten (10) calendar days prior to the next Historical Commission meeting for consideration.

Please send completed materials or questions to Greg Prichard, Historic Preservation Planner:
gprichard@lowermerion.org (610) 645-6176

PROPERTY ADDRESS

ADDRESS [STREET, CITY]:

306 Bala Avenue, Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME: George Danneman

PHONE:

ADDRESS: 306 Bala Avenue
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

EMAIL:

ZIP/POSTAL CODE: 19004

APPLICANT'S CAPACITY: ☒ OWNER ☐ ARCHITECT ☐ ATTORNEY ☐ CONTRACTOR ☐ OTHER:

OWNER INFORMATION [IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE]

NAME[S]:

PHONE:

ADDRESS:

EMAIL:

ZIP/POSTAL CODE:

PROPERTY INFORMATION

NAME OF BUSINESS [IF APPLICABLE]:

CURRENT USE: Residential

PROPOSED USE:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

☐ ADAPTIVE REUSE ☐ ADDITION ☒ ALTERATION ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION ☐ OTHER (DESCRIBE BELOW)

PROJECT NARRATIVE [USE ADDITIONAL PAGES AS NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE ALL OF THE WORK PROPOSED]

We plan to add a deck out back coming off the kitchen that will be mostly shielded from view by vegetation. We also plan to add a handicap ramp off the driveway to access the house.

CONTINUED

Application Checklist

The following checklist is intended to provide clarification of the requirements and procedures involved in the application process related to obtaining a building permit for the alteration/demolition of a property on the Township's Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) List, as listed in Section 62-2.D.2(b) of the Township Code. This document should in no way take the place of the Applicant's own knowledge and familiarity with Chapter 88 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion regarding "Historic Districts and Resources" or of The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties. Instead, it is provided as a tool to owners and/or their agents and representatives to ensure the completeness of their application materials prior to submission, thereby minimizing the potential for unnecessary delays in the review process.

CHECK EACH ITEM BELOW TO INDICATE INCLUSION IN THE SUBMISSION MATERIALS

1. ☐ **COMPLETED APPLICATION FOR REVIEW (AFR)**
Complete both sides of this application form for submission with the required attachments
2. ☐ **WRITTEN NARRATIVE INCLUDING:**
 - **REASON(S) FOR DEMOLITION/CONSTRUCTION**
Detail the reasons for the proposed demolition/construction
 - **PROPOSED METHOD(S) OF DEMOLITION/CONSTRUCTION**
Detail all of the changes proposed to the exterior of the subject structure(s)/property indicating the method(s) to be used in removing and constructing
 - **PROPOSED FUTURE USE OF THE SITE & MATERIALS FROM THE HISTORIC RESOURCE**
Include all information relevant to the removal, disposal, salvage, and/or recycling of materials (historic fabric) affected by the proposed change(s) to the resource
3. ☐ **SITE PLAN LOCATING ALL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES ON THE PROPERTY**
Provide a scaled site plan of the property, noting all existing and proposed structures and the names of adjacent property owners (unless otherwise exempted by the Building & Planning Department Staff)
4. ☐ **CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE HISTORIC RESOURCE(S)**
Provide high resolution digital photographs of each full exterior elevation of the subject structure(s). (Note: Include additional photographs of any relevant significant architectural feature or detail affected by the proposed alteration/demolition)
5. ☐ **SCALED DRAWINGS OF THE HISTORIC RESOURCE(S)**
Provide scaled architectural drawings (i.e., plans, elevations, etc.), 11"x17" format preferred, documenting the existing conditions of the resource (especially those affected by the proposed work), as well as all proposed changes (i.e., demolition and/or new construction, etc.)
6. ☐ **SPECIFICATIONS OF PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS**
Provide a detailed list and/or product brochure(s) of all exterior finish materials (i.e., product name, manufacturer, dimension, texture, color, etc.) proposed for use in the new construction
7. ☐ **HISTORIC RESOURCE IMPACT STUDY (HRIS)**
Provide an HRIS, as described in §155-7.1.J, unless the Building & Planning Department Staff determines that all or a portion thereof is not relevant to the current application

SIGNATURES

APPLICANT: DATE:

OWNER [IF DIFFERENT]: DATE:

Note: By filing this application, you are hereby granting permission to Township officials to visit the site for review purposes. In the event that an application is found to be incomplete as submitted, the application shall be returned to the applicant for completion as detailed in §62-2.D.2(c). The forty-five (45) day review requirement prescribed by §62-2.D.4 of the Code shall not apply to an incomplete application.

Revised 10/2023



Preliminary Consultant Review

Prepared by Carol Quigley, Senior Designer / Project Manager Frens & Frens Studio, Patterhn Ives LLC

2025-R-12

306 Bala Avenue, Bala Cynwyd, Class 2

Owner / Applicant: George Danneman

Application Type: Residential

Project Summary: The applicant proposes to construct a deck and trellis on the rear right side of the resource and a switchback accessible ramp at the rear left side of the resource, in a reentrant corner.

Comments:

- The subject historic resource was recently part of a larger parcel that was subdivided and improved with several new residences c. 2018. The historic residence is now situated in the center portion of the block and is accessed from Bala Avenue with a long drive that extends beyond a residence that was originally construction in the middle of the century and has now been completely rehabbed or reconstructed along with the neighboring lots. The rehabbed or new dwellings block that majority of the view of the resource from both Bala and Cynwyd Avenues. A cul de sac off of Cynwyd was constructed as part of the 20th c. subdivision and now provides a full view of the side of the house and back of the porte cochere (this view was completely obscured by heavy vegetation prior to 2018).
- The applicant proposes to construct a new deck and trellis off the right rear side of the house. The location of the proposed deck is on a façade that is visible only from the rear yards of the perimeter houses. The deck would be constructed up against a portion of the house that appears to be a frame addition, adjacent to an existing concrete patio, and within 30' of an existing pool. The applicant has noted that the deck will have an Intertek composite railing, which is a durable and paintable composite system with appropriate profiles and details that include completed obscured fasteners. As seen in the site plan, wide steps from the deck would lead to natural grade. Additional plans provided indicate that a pergola is planned to cover the deck as well. The applicant has plans and elevations of the proposed work, but they do not include any annotation or any other specifications beyond the data sheet for the railing system. Annotated plans and all material specifications should be provided by the applicant for complete HC review. Applicant should clearly note the proposed materials for all new components including pergola posts (are they intended to be straight posts?), pergola beams, rafters, lattice, fascia / skirtboard / porch flooring, and new door trim. Elevated decks should incorporate screening between deck and grade. plan and elevations or additional detail of the railing system location and height, along with porch decking, trim boards, and skirting is needed for the HC to fully comprehend the proposal.

- As seen in the provided images of the proposed deck location, a new terrace door has been installed in place of a former window, to provide access to the proposed deck. The multi-light French doors appear to have exterior applied muntin bars and be of a style that is sympathetic to the historic resource. The applicant should provide the specification for the new door, the intended trim, and what appears to be all new shingle siding at the full wall of the gable.
- The applicant has noted on the site plan that an accessible ramp is also planned for the reentrant corner of the rear left façade and plans and elevations have now been provided but also without any annotation. This façade is now completely visible from Concord Circle, which extends to 20th century dwellings off of Cynwyd Avenue. Despite its visibility from Concord Circle, the façade in question is a secondary façade relative to the original designs and access to the house, and this reentrant corner is the most appropriate place for the introduction of an accessible ramp. Submitted elevations indicate a new pent roof over a new door and the removal of a door at the right end of the façade. The plans and elevations should be fully annotated (to include all items noted above for the back porch) to document the intended complete scope of work in order to allow for complete HC review.

We recommend the applicant provide additional documentation to cover the full scope of work including fully annotated drawings and all material specifications to provide a complete understanding of the project to the HC.



514 Spring Mill Road, Villanova

Class 2

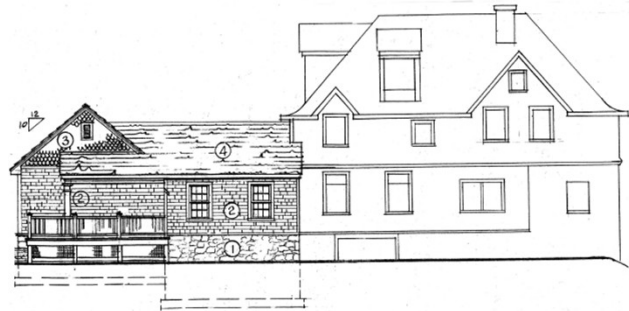
Historical Commission

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Action:

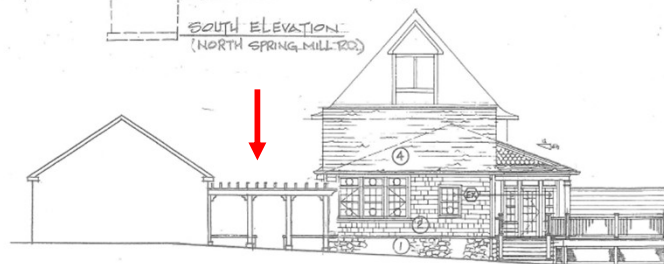
Amendment of an approval to construct a rear addition with exterior finishes to match those of the existing structure, with a pergola to connect the proposed addition with the existing garage to meet zoning requirements, with a subcommittee to review additional details, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10.

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**Existing****Proposed**

Addition design, as proposed and approved in July

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South (Front) Elevation**North (Rear) Elevation**

Revised design includes pergola "breezeway" connecting addition to garage

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LOWER MERION
TOWNSHIP
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION

STAFF ONLY	DATE RECEIVED: _____	REVIEWED BY: _____	STATUS: ☐ IN/C ☐
	HRI SURVEY #: _____	HRI CLASS: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐	
	DATE OF HC MEETING / AGENDA: _____	APP. NO.: _____	
	TYPE OF APPLICATION: ☐ DEMO ☐ ALTERATION ☐ ADDITION ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION		
	☐ INFORMATIONAL REVIEW ☐ OTHER [SPECIFY]: _____		

H
C

Historical Commission Application For Review

For Work Involving a Class I or II Historic Resource

This completed application, along with all required materials, must be submitted via original printed copy, email, or other electronic means to the Department of Building & Planning a minimum of ten (10) calendar days prior to the next Historical Commission meeting for consideration.

Please send completed materials or questions to Greg Prichard, Historic Preservation Planner:
gprichard@lowermerion.org (610) 645-6176

PROPERTY ADDRESS 514 Spring Mill Road, Villanova

ADDRESS [STREET, CITY]:

APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME: Tim and Shannon Dolan

PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: 514 Spring Mill Road, Villanova

EMAIL: _____

ZIP/POSTAL CODE: 19085

APPLICANT'S CAPACITY: ☒ OWNER ☐ ARCHITECT ☐ ATTORNEY ☐ CONTRACTOR ☐ OTHER: _____

OWNER INFORMATION [IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE]

NAME[S]: _____

PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

ZIP/POSTAL CODE: _____

PROPERTY INFORMATION

NAME OF BUSINESS [IF APPLICABLE]: _____

CURRENT USE: _____

PROPOSED USE: _____

PROJECT DESCRIPTION [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

☐ ADAPTIVE REUSE ☒ ADDITION ☐ ALTERATION ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION ☐ OTHER (DESCRIBE BELOW)

PROJECT NARRATIVE [USE ADDITIONAL PAGES AS NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE ALL OF THE WORK PROPOSED]

Construct a new family room and primary bedroom/bath to provide age-related, live-in-place accommodations.

All exterior finishes to match existing (roofing shingles, cedar scalloped siding, cedar shake siding, natural stone with flagstone cap).

All existing materials removed for construction shall be recycled and used within the project. New windows, where necessary, will be simulated divided light.

CONTINUED

Application Checklist

The following checklist is intended to provide clarification of the requirements and procedures involved in the application process related to obtaining a building permit for the alteration/demolition of a property on the Township's Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) List, as listed in Section 62-2.D.2(b) of the Township Code. This document should in no way take the place of the Applicant's own knowledge and familiarity with Chapter 88 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion regarding "Historic Districts and Resources" or of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties*. Instead, it is provided as a tool to owners and/or their agents and representatives to ensure the completeness of their application materials prior to submission, thereby minimizing the potential for unnecessary delays in the review process.

CHECK EACH ITEM BELOW TO INDICATE INCLUSION IN THE SUBMISSION MATERIALS

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Complete both sides of this application form for submission with the required attachments
2. ☒ **WRITTEN NARRATIVE INCLUDING:**
 - **REASON(S) FOR DEMOLITION/CONSTRUCTION**
Detail the reasons for the proposed demolition/construction
 - **PROPOSED METHOD(S) OF DEMOLITION/CONSTRUCTION**
Detail all of the changes proposed to the exterior of the subject structure(s)/property indicating the method(s) to be used in removing and constructing
 - **PROPOSED FUTURE USE OF THE SITE & MATERIALS FROM THE HISTORIC RESOURCE**
Include all information relevant to the removal, disposal, salvage, and/or recycling of materials (historic fabric) affected by the proposed change(s) to the resource
3. ☒ **SITE PLAN LOCATING ALL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES ON THE PROPERTY**
Provide a scaled site plan of the property, noting all existing and proposed structures and the names of adjacent property owners (unless otherwise exempted by the Building & Planning Department Staff)
4. ☒ **CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE HISTORIC RESOURCE(S)**
Provide high resolution digital photographs of each full exterior elevation of the subject structure(s). (Note: Include additional photographs of any relevant significant architectural feature or detail affected by the proposed alteration/demolition)
5. ☒ **SCALED DRAWINGS OF THE HISTORIC RESOURCE(S)**
Provide scaled architectural drawings (i.e., plans, elevations, etc.), 11"x17" format preferred, documenting the existing conditions of the resource (especially those affected by the proposed work), as well as all proposed changes (i.e., demolition and/or new construction, etc.)
6. ☒ **SPECIFICATIONS OF PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS**
Provide a detailed list and/or product brochure(s) of all exterior finish materials (i.e., product name, manufacturer, dimension, texture, color, etc.) proposed for use in the new construction
7. ☐ **HISTORIC RESOURCE IMPACT STUDY (HRIS)**
Provide an HRIS, as described in §155-7.1.J, unless the Building & Planning Department Staff determines that all or a portion thereof is not relevant to the current application

SIGNATURES

APPLICANT: _____

DATE: _____

4/17/25

OWNER [IF DIFFERENT]: _____

DATE: _____

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Revised 10/2023



Preliminary Consultant Review

Prepared by Carol Quigley, Senior Designer / Project Manager Frens & Frens Studio, Patterhn Ives LLC

2025-R-05-A

514 Spring Mill Road, Villanova, Class 2

Owner / Applicant: Tim & Shannon Dolan

Application Type: Residential

Project Summary: The applicant returns to the HC with an amendment to the recently approved proposal to construct an addition.

Comments:

- The applicant presented their proposal of additions and renovations at the April and July HC meetings and received a recommendation for approval. Following review by the Zoning officer, the applicant returns to the HC with amended drawings that propose a covered breezeway that will connect the outside corner of the new addition to the existing detached garage.
- The submitted drawings of the newly proposed breezeway itself reflect traditional forms and materials that by themselves are compatible with the existing resource and the proposed addition. The proposed placement and arrangement of the breezeway, however, creates a very awkward roofing connection to the proposed addition which would be highly visible from the primary views of the resource. While apparently satisfying the requirements of Zoning, the proposed breezeway layout as currently presented does not blend well with the proposed addition and should be tweaked to fit with the roof forms and plan arrangements of the proposed work. This may be resolved by pushing the footprint of the breezeway further to the back (north) so that the piers are not in line with the corner of the addition and extending the breezeway form further onto the rear elevation of the addition (west), to just in front of the triple window and then constructing a small cricket between the roof slope of the addition and the roof slope of the breezeway. While the placement of the breezeway may still appear tight to the addition, at least the awkward view through the two roof forms would be eliminated and the two forms joined in a more traditional manner. Alternative solutions are welcome, though it is acknowledged that several alternative solutions would require a much longer breezeway path or significantly impede the planned views from the addition windows.

Following reconsiderations of the breezeway's connection to the addition and existing garage, we recommend approval of this application amendment, under Standards 9 and 10.



601 Conshohocken State Road, Penn Valley

Class 2

Historical Commission

56

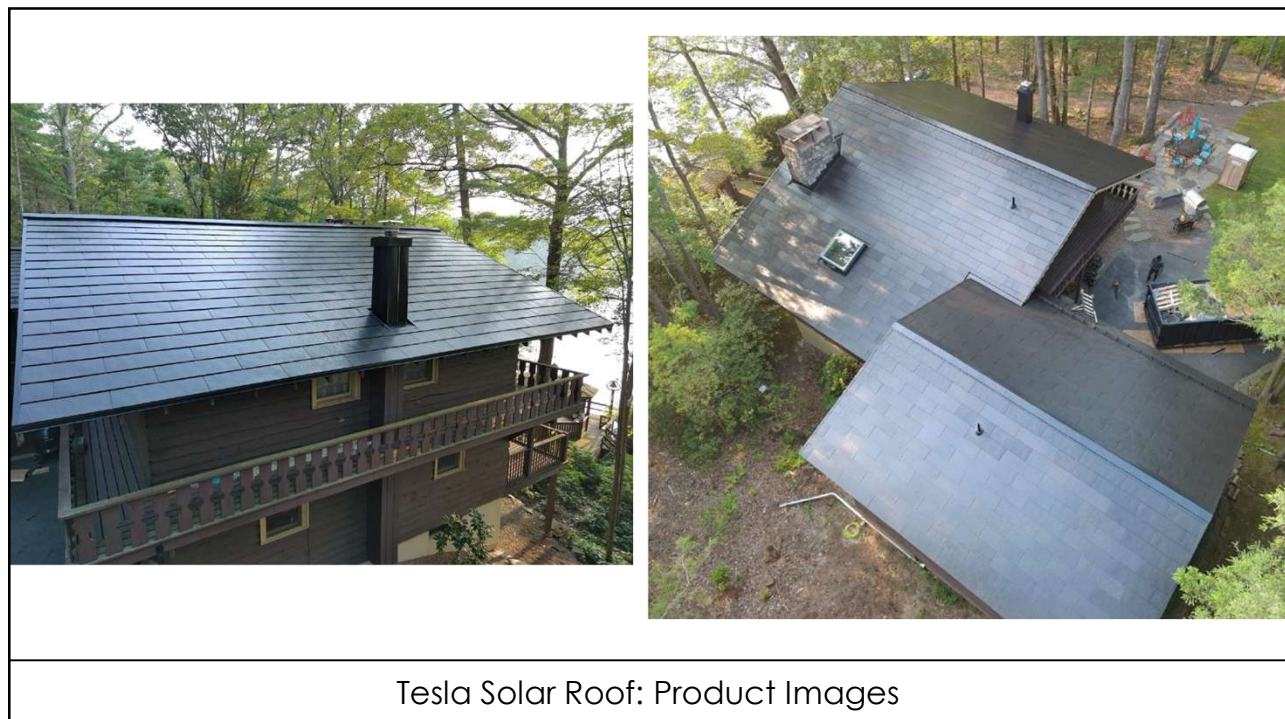
Action:

Application to install a Tesla solar roof on a stone barn, with a subcommittee to review additional details, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standard 9.

57



58

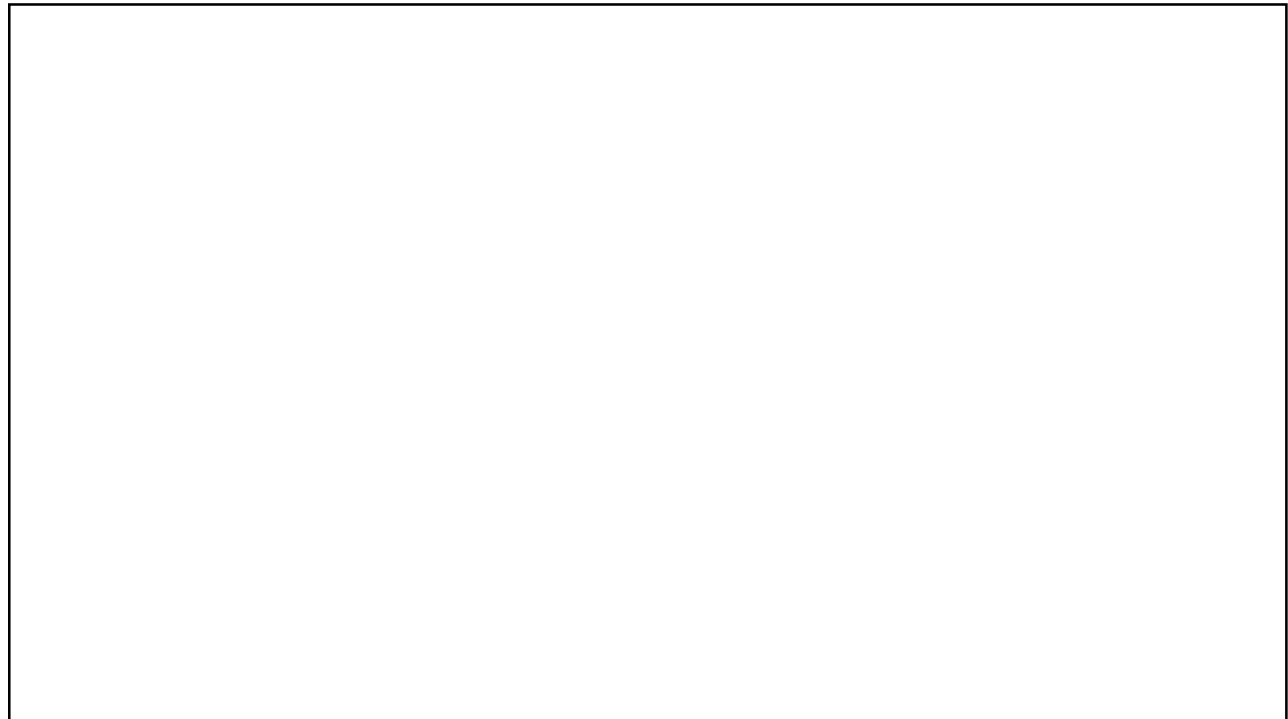


59



The Commission requests additional details on the treatment of ridges, eaves, and other details based on images like these showing potentially inappropriate treatment of historic elements with Tesla roofing.

60



61



LOWER MERION
TOWNSHIP
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION

STAFF ONLY	DATE RECEIVED: _____	REVIEWED BY: _____	STATUS: ☐ IN/C ☐
	HRI SURVEY #: _____	HRI CLASS: ☐ 1 ☐ 2	
	DATE OF HC MEETING / AGENDA: _____		APP. NO.: _____
	TYPE OF APPLICATION: ☐ DEMO ☐ ALTERATION ☐ ADDITION ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION		
	☐ INFORMATIONAL REVIEW ☐ OTHER [SPECIFY]: _____		

H
C

Historical Commission Application For Review

For Work Involving a Class I or II Historic Resource

This completed application, along with all required materials, must be submitted via original printed copy, email, or other electronic means to the Department of Building & Planning a minimum of ten (10) calendar days prior to the next Historical Commission meeting for consideration.

Please send completed materials or questions to Greg Prichard, Historic Preservation Planner:
gprichard@lowermerion.org (610) 645-6176

PROPERTY ADDRESS 601 Conshohocken State Rd, Penn Valley, PA 19072

ADDRESS [STREET, CITY]:

APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME: Jeffrey Steinberg

PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: 601 Conshohocken State Rd, Penn Valley, PA 19072

EMAIL: _____

ZIP/POSTAL CODE: 19072

APPLICANT'S CAPACITY: ☒ OWNER ☐ ARCHITECT ☐ ATTORNEY ☒ CONTRACTOR ☐ OTHER: _____

OWNER INFORMATION [IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE]

NAME[S]: _____

PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

ZIP/POSTAL CODE: _____

PROPERTY INFORMATION

NAME OF BUSINESS [IF APPLICABLE]: _____

CURRENT USE: Office Space

PROPOSED USE: Office Space

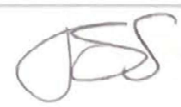
PROJECT DESCRIPTION [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

☐ ADAPTIVE REUSE ☐ ADDITION ☒ ALTERATION ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION ☐ OTHER (DESCRIBE BELOW)

PROJECT NARRATIVE [USE ADDITIONAL PAGES AS NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE ALL OF THE WORK PROPOSED]

In regard to the Barn on the property: The existing asphalt shingle roofing material is due to be replaced. This project will replace the existing asphalt shingle roof with Tesla Solar Roof. Tesla Solar Roof is designed to look like slate, but have the durability of a metal roof. All while producing solar energy. The Tesla Solar Roof is more aesthetically pleasing the traditional roof mounted solar panels.

Remove and dispose of existing asphalt shingle roofing materials down to the plywood deck in a haul away dumpster. Furnish and install Tesla Solar Roof to manufacturer's specification.

 **CONTINUED**

Application Checklist

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DATE:

9/15/25

OWNER [IF DIFFERENT]:

DATE:

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Revised 10/2023



Preliminary Consultant Review

Prepared by Carol Quigley, Senior Designer / Project Manager Frens & Frens Studio, Patterhn Ives LLC

2025-R-13

601 Conshohocken State Road, Penn Valley, Class 2

Owner / Applicant: Jeffrey Steinberg

Application Type: Residential

Project Summary: The applicant proposes to replace an existing asphalt roof on a historic barn with a Tesla solar roof.

Comments:

- The subject resource is a historic barn that has been rehabilitated in the past to provide additional living space. The barn is relatively small in size with two separate one-story shed roof additions at its gable end and rear façade. Two thirds of the barn is stone (likely an original form) and the gable end is vertical board siding with modern fenestration that was most likely introduced with the contemporary rehabilitation. The original roofing was likely slate shingle or wood shingle. The existing roofing is a grey asphalt shingle.
- When considering replacement of replacement roofing, appropriate treatment is more flexible since the historic material is already lost. The applicant proposes to install a Tesla solar shingle system, which is comprised of wide, flat, black (or dark grey) tiles. While the Tesla tiles do not match the dimensions of slate tiles, and would not be mistaken for a historic slate roof, the solar tiles resemble the form and colors of some historic slates, specifically the Peach Bottom black slates when newly installed. Further, the modern treatment employed at the fenestration of the rehabilitated barn lends itself to the more modern aesthetic of the solar tiles. In this instance, the solar tile roofing is an appropriate replacement for the existing asphalt roof.
- The applicant has also submitted information regarding the replacement of the gutters and downspouts, but has indicated in two places both the use of half round gutters and K-style gutters. K-gutters are not appropriate forms on historic resources and should be avoided. The half-round gutter is the appropriate gutter form in this location and should be combined with smooth round downspouts. While the HC does not provide comment on painted colors, the factory finish of gutters and downspouts should typically match the color of the cornice that it is installed in front of rather than matching the color of the roof that it is adjacent to, so in this case it is recommended that the gutters and downspouts not be finished in black, but rather match the fascia or the stone.

Given the conditions noted above, we recommend approval of this application, in accordance with Standard 9.



10 Montgomery Avenue, Bala Cynwyd

Class 2

Historical Commission

62

Action:

Application to install bracket-mounted corner banners, hanging retail signage, and repair materials on a pent roof, with a subcommittee to review additional details, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standard 9.

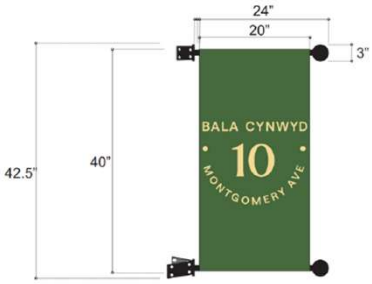
63




(Material no longer proposed)

Existing historic terra cotta roof: Applicant will explore restoration and repair after HC review. Original plan was to replace with synthetic "cedar" roofing (right).

64


3 Locations

Design

Conceptual Rendering

Proposed corner-mounted signage

65



7 Locations



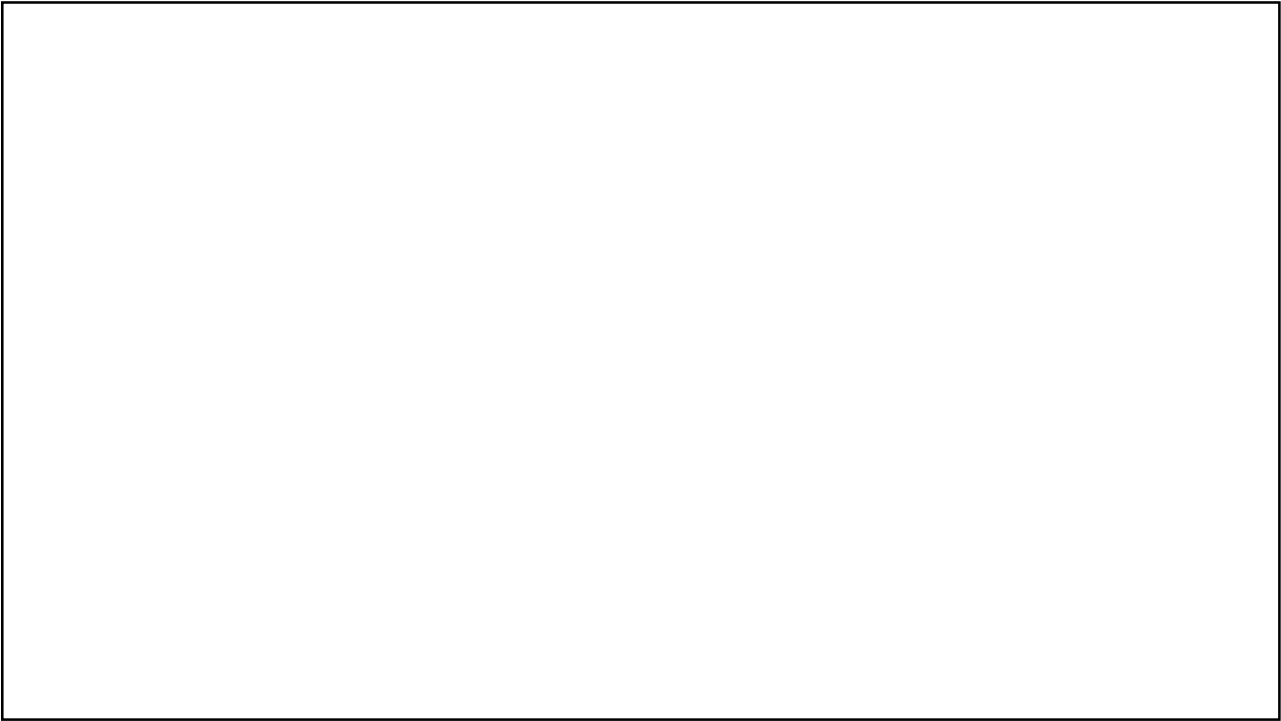
Design



Conceptual Rendering

Proposed retail signage

66



67



LOWER MERION
TOWNSHIP
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION

STAFF ONLY	DATE RECEIVED:	REVIEWED BY:	STATUS: ☐ C ☐ IN/C ☐
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	☐ INFORMATIONAL REVIEW ☐ OTHER [SPECIFY]:		

H
C

Historical Commission Application For Review

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gprichard@lowermerion.org (610) 645-6176

PROPERTY ADDRESS 10 Montgomery Avenue, Bala Cynwyd

ADDRESS [STREET, CITY]:

APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME: Ellen Giranda

PHONE:

ADDRESS: 132 S 17th Street, 3rd Floor,
Philadelphia, PA 19103

EMAIL:

ZIP/POSTAL CODE: 19103

APPLICANT'S CAPACITY: ☒ OWNER ☐ ARCHITECT ☐ ATTORNEY ☐ CONTRACTOR ☒ OTHER: Employee

OWNER INFORMATION [IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE]

NAME[S]: Beechwood

PHONE:

ADDRESS:

EMAIL:

ZIP/POSTAL CODE:

PROPERTY INFORMATION

NAME OF BUSINESS [IF APPLICABLE]: 10 Montgomery, etc

CURRENT USE: Mixed Use

PROPOSED USE:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

☐ ADAPTIVE REUSE ☐ ADDITION ☒ ALTERATION ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION ☐ OTHER (DESCRIBE BELOW)

PROJECT NARRATIVE [USE ADDITIONAL PAGES AS NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE ALL OF THE WORK PROPOSED]

Addition of monument banner signage to 3 corners of the building.
Addition of retail signage at 7 retail entrances along Bala Avenue.
Repair and replacement of roof on lower level of 228-230 Bala Avenue.

CONTINUED

Application Checklist

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SIGNATURES

APPLICANT:

DATE: 09/26/2025

OWNER [IF DIFFERENT]:

DATE: 09/26/2025

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Revised 10/2023



Preliminary Consultant Review

Prepared by Carol Quigley, Senior Designer / Project Manager Frens & Frens Studio, Patterhn Ives LLC

2025-R-11

10 Montgomery Avenue, Bala Cynwyd, Class 2

Owner / Applicant:

Application Type: Commercial

Project Summary: The applicant proposes to replacement roofing material on a pent roof, and install multiple banners and retail signs at the multi-tenant commercial building.

Comments:

- The subject resource identified herein as 10 Montgomery comprises a large structure that spans the whole block bound by Bala Avenue, Montgomery Avenue and Hardie Way. The facades on Montgomery and Hardie are part of the apartment building with the address of 10 Montgomery. But this application includes facades that are identified as 228 – 246 Bala Avenue.
- Pent Roof:
The applicant proposes changes to the roofing on a single pent roof that spans the storefront windows and entrances at 228-230 Bala Avenue. The existing roofing is comprised of terra cotta plank roofing tiles with either a greenish glaze or a field painted finish. The tiles appear to be in generally good condition with exception of a few split shingles at the ends. Clay tiles can have a service life of over 100 years and should be retained. The flashing installation is ragged and could be replaced without replacing the shingles. The applicant has proposed the used of Brava Synthetic “wood” shingles. This product is often an appropriate substitute material for wood cedar shakes or shingles but not for clary tile. If the roofing is not performing and requires replacement, the new roofing should resemble the existing material to the greatest extent possible. Terra cotta planks are still available and so the first recommendation would be an in-kind replacement of the terra cotta planks matching the original finish, but preserving the historic material is recommended if possible. Synthetic clay tiles are not readily available, but synthetic slate shingles may be a closer approximation of the historic material if replacement is needed.
- Corner banners:
The applicant proposes to install three banners at the three outside corners of the block building. The banners are proposed to hang from brackets mounted to the corner of each building in line with the third floor windows, and projecting at a 45 degree angle. The banner dimension is 20”x40”. These banners advertise the apartment building. The proposed configuration would function as a vertical blade sign, which has a history in commercial historic

districts and is not inappropriate. The small text on the banner is not likely to be legible at the proposed height, though the “10” may be. The position of the bracket at the south end of 228 Bala should be lowered to be centered on the third story windows, as is proposed at the other two corners. The position of anchors into the outside corner of the building should also be reviewed in detail to confirm that anchors are fastened into the wall at a location that will not spall the outside corner of the stone.

- Tenant retail signs:

The applicant also proposes several retail signs for installation at each of the retail businesses along Bala Avenue, totaling 7 individual signs. The applicant proposes a consistent rectangular sign hanging from a simple projecting metal bracket. It is assumed that each tenant would provide their own graphics, but the applicant should confirm that detail.

Given the conditions noted above, we recommend approval of this application, in accordance with Standard 9.



46 St. James Place, Ardmore

Class 2

Historical Commission

68

Action:

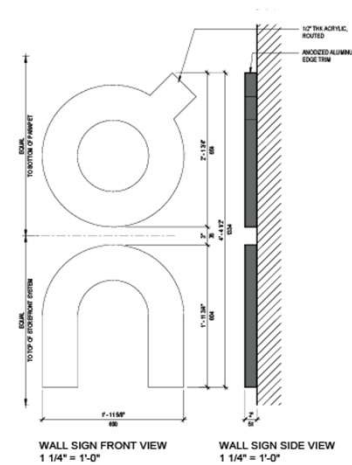
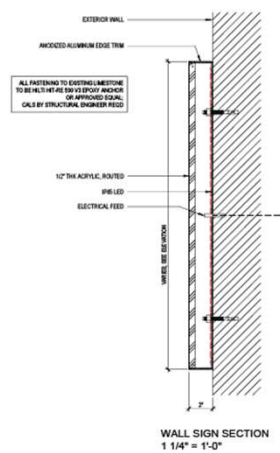
Application to install signage and make other façade modifications to a historic Suburban Square storefront, with a subcommittee to review additional details, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10.

69



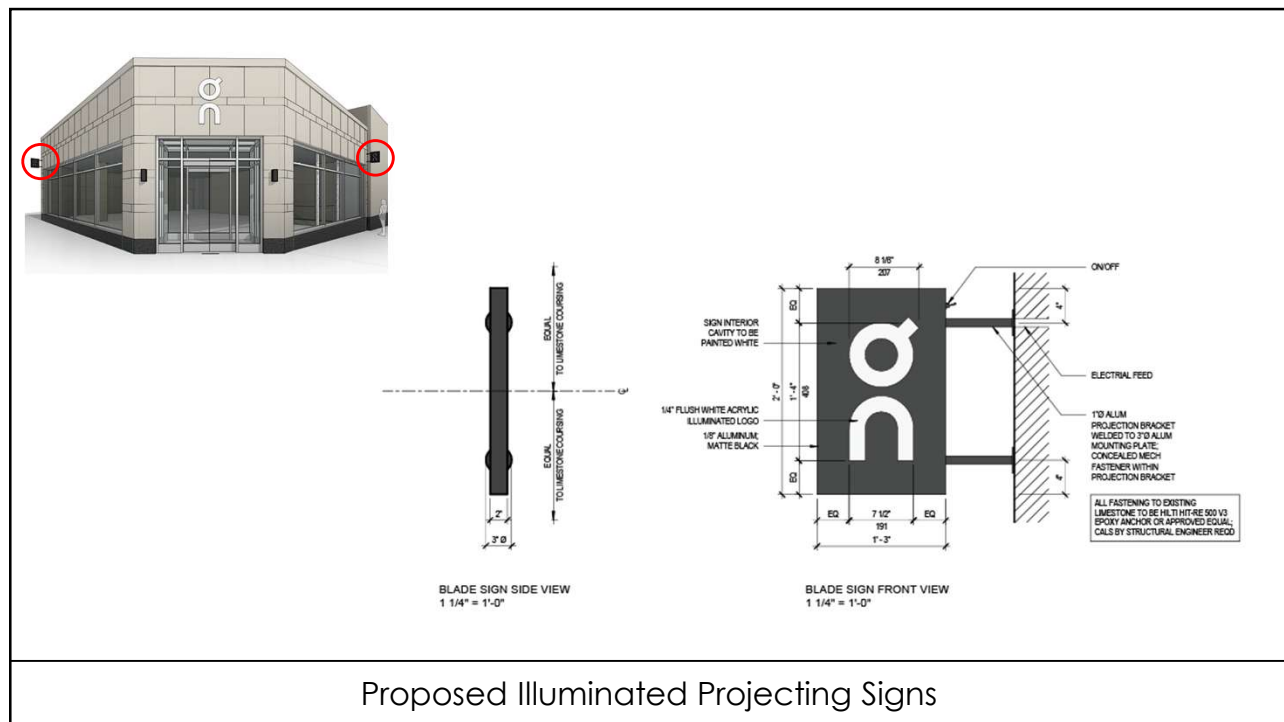
Rendering: Proposed Facade

70

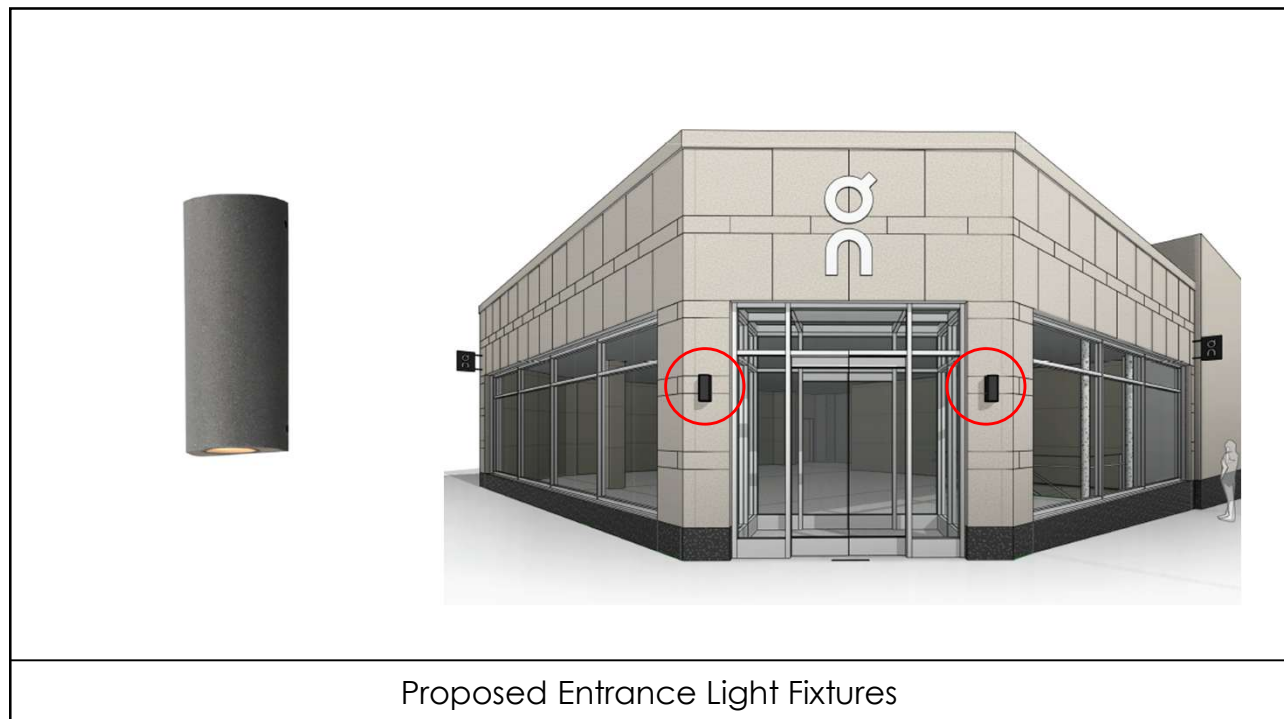


Proposed Illuminated Storefront Entry Sign

71



72

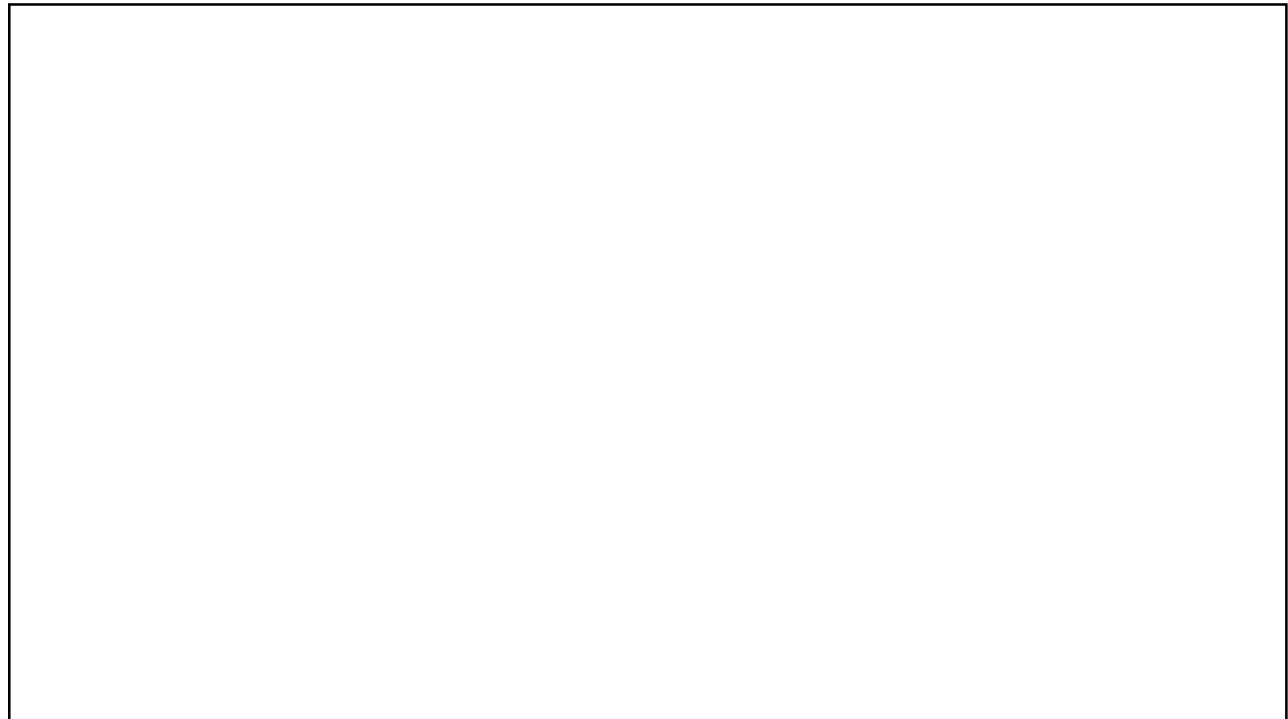


73

HC Subcommittee to Review:

- Shop drawings for all signs
- Final proportions of the storefront window transoms
- Final configuration of the base and replacement material, if needed
- Fasteners, adhesives, and caulks

74



75



LOWER MERION
TOWNSHIP
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION

STAFF ONLY	DATE RECEIVED:	REVIEWED BY:	STATUS: ☐ IN/C ☐
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PROPERTY ADDRESS

ADDRESS [STREET, CITY]:

46 ST JAMES PL
ARDMORE, PA 19003

APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME: ARCADIS ARCHITECTS | MICHAEL ROSTKOWSKI

PHONE:

ADDRESS: 233 BROADWAY, 6TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY

EMAIL:

ZIP/POSTAL CODE: 10279

APPLICANT'S CAPACITY: ☐ OWNER ☒ ARCHITECT ☐ ATTORNEY ☐ CONTRACTOR ☐ OTHER:

OWNER INFORMATION [IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE]

NAME[S]: ON RUNNING | LESLIE HUBER

PHONE:

ADDRESS: 165 MERCER STREET, SUITE 500
NEW YORK, NY

EMAIL:

ZIP/POSTAL CODE: 10012

PROPERTY INFORMATION

NAME OF BUSINESS [IF APPLICABLE]: ON RUNNING

CURRENT USE: RETAIL

PROPOSED USE: RETAIL

PROJECT DESCRIPTION [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

☐ ADAPTIVE REUSE ☐ ADDITION ☐ ALTERATION ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION ☐ OTHER (DESCRIBE BELOW)

PROJECT NARRATIVE [USE ADDITIONAL PAGES AS NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE ALL OF THE WORK PROPOSED]

The design approach is focused on complementing the existing limestone facade with architectural elements that are respectful of the building's historic character.

- awning removal
- storefront system Replacement
- stone base replacement
- light fixture & security device replacement
- limestone cleaning
- installation of one (1) new Projecting Sign, one (1) new surface mounted Corner Sign, and (1) new surface mounted Wall Sign as permitted by LMT Building Code, Table 9.2

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Application Checklist

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 - **PROPOSED METHOD(S) OF DEMOLITION/CONSTRUCTION**
Detail all of the changes proposed to the exterior of the subject structure(s)/property indicating the method(s) to be used in removing and constructing
 - **PROPOSED FUTURE USE OF THE SITE & MATERIALS FROM THE HISTORIC RESOURCE**
Include all information relevant to the removal, disposal, salvage, and/or recycling of materials (historic fabric) affected by the proposed change(s) to the resource
3. ☐ **SITE PLAN LOCATING ALL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES ON THE PROPERTY**
Provide a scaled site plan of the property, noting all existing and proposed structures and the names of adjacent property owners (unless otherwise exempted by the Building & Planning Department Staff)
4. ☐ **CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE HISTORIC RESOURCE(S)**
Provide high resolution digital photographs of each full exterior elevation of the subject structure(s). (Note: Include additional photographs of any relevant significant architectural feature or detail affected by the proposed alteration/demolition)
5. ☐ **SCALED DRAWINGS OF THE HISTORIC RESOURCE(S)**
Provide scaled architectural drawings (i.e., plans, elevations, etc.), 11"x17" format preferred, documenting the existing conditions of the resource (especially those affected by the proposed work), as well as all proposed changes (i.e., demolition and/or new construction, etc.)
6. ☐ **SPECIFICATIONS OF PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS**
Provide a detailed list and/or product brochure(s) of all exterior finish materials (i.e., product name, manufacturer, dimension, texture, color, etc.) proposed for use in the new construction
7. ☐ **HISTORIC RESOURCE IMPACT STUDY (HRIS)**
Provide an HRIS, as described in §155-7.1.J, unless the Building & Planning Department Staff determines that all or a portion thereof is not relevant to the current application

SIGNATURES

APPLICANT:	ARCADIS ARCHITECTS	DATE:	9/19/2025
OWNER [IF DIFFERENT]:	ON-RUNNING	DATE:	9/19/2025

Note: By filing this application, you are hereby granting permission to Township officials to visit the site for review purposes. In the event that an application is found to be incomplete as submitted, the application shall be returned to the applicant for completion as detailed in §62-2.D.2(c). The forty-five (45) day review requirement prescribed by §62-2.D.4 of the Code shall not apply to an incomplete application.

Revised 10/2023



Preliminary Consultant Review

Prepared by Carol Quigley, Senior Designer / Project Manager Frens & Frens Studio, Patterhn Ives LLC

2025-R-15

46 St. James Place, Suburban Square, Ardmore, Class 2

Owner / Applicant: Michael Rostkowski of Arcadis Architects for On-Running

Application Type: Commercial

Project Summary: The applicant proposes to rehabilitate the existing storefront facades including removal of awnings, replacement of storefront window and door systems, replacement of stone base and installation of new signage and lighting.

Comments:

- The subject tenant space is at a central location within suburban square, housed in part of the 1930s, one-story resource with facades facing St. James Place, the main pedestrian greenway and a narrow utilitarian alley south of the structure. The applicant has provided a complete and thorough presentation of all components of the proposed rehabilitation. Comments on each of the components of the application are listed below.
- Awning removal: The applicant proposes to remove the existing awnings and patch any anchors with mortar to match the limestone. Awnings are present at numerous but not all of the storefronts in Suburban Square. Early images of the environment exhibit the combination of awnings / no awnings as well. The presence or absence of awnings is appropriate at this historic commercial center.
- Storefront system replacement: The existing storefront is a dark bronze or black aluminum system. The applicant proposes replacement of the storefront with a stainless steel Kawneer assembly. In only a few locations elsewhere at Suburban Square, what appears to be the original bronze storefront system is still present, but most of the existing systems have been replaced over the years with dark aluminum or lighter steel or aluminum assemblies. A large variety of metal finishes is present in both the historic resources and the more contemporary structures. Darker tones are more prevalent at the historic building blocks of Suburban Square and may be seen as more compatible with the warm tones of the limestone, but the stainless-steel selection has been incorporated into some of the facades and as a replacement of a non-original fabric is not inappropriate.
- Base stone replacement: The applicant proposes two options for treatment of the base stone. (Note, Option 1 and Option 2 palettes are both presented in detail in the application, but the only difference is the treatment of the base stone.) Option 1 proposes replacement of the existing dark stone base with a light, cool granite base, matching the locations, profile, and

dimensions of the existing stone. ***Option 1 to retain and repair the existing stone base is now preferred by the applicant and is most appropriate within the building's immediate context.*** Option 2 proposes retaining and repairing as needed the existing stone base. The applicant notes that the existing stone base is not original, and this is likely given its vulnerable location and the varied tones of stone bases at the other portions of the historic structures. But the oldest images of the subject building exhibit a base that appears very consistent with the existing and therefore retaining that consistent and potentially original tone would be more appropriate than changing to such a light color. The layout of the storefront assembly is very similar to the existing, but eliminates many of the vertical mullions providing a simple four-bay assembly on the front façade and three bay assembly on the pedestrian façade.

- ***Lighting:*** The applicant proposes two new sconces be installed left and right of the entrance doors. The proposed fixtures are extremely simple, vertical grey down-lights that are very appropriate for the simplicity of the historic storefront facades. All necessary power and wiring should be concealed at the interior or within the wall assembly.
- ***Signage:*** The applicant proposes one building mounted projecting sign at the west end of the storefront along the pedestrian walkway, surface mounted sign of the brand logo above the entrance doors, and a larger surface mounted logo at the canted corner at the south end of the storefront along St. James Place. ***The surface mounted sign on the south canted corner of the building has been deleted from the application and a second building mounted projecting sign matching the proposed sign along the pedestrian walkway is now proposed at the south end of the storefront system along St. James Way. Notes on elevation drawings and the section detail of the projecting signs still state that the white pop-out logo is to be internally illuminated, but internally illuminated signage is not recommended at historic resources. The signage should be modified to eliminate the illumination.*** The graphics of the proposed signage are very simplistic and streamlined and appropriate to the overall context. ***Sign details of the building mounted entrance sign have been updated to clarify that no internal illumination is proposed. The details of the signs as clarified above would be appropriate within this historic context. If any future exterior illumination is to be proposed, the applicant should return to the HARB for its review.***

We recommend approval of this application, in accordance with Standards 9 and 10.



Township of Lower Merion
A FIRST CLASS TOWNSHIP

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Building & Planning

ITEM:

APPROVAL OF CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners approval of the following certificates of appropriateness as recommended by the Historical Architectural Review Board at their meeting held on October 7, 2025:

- a) 65 Cricket Avenue, Suite 101, Ardmore Commercial Historic District, 25-22 - approval to install halo-lit channel letters above one of the "Cricket Flats" storefronts, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standard 9.

- b) 421 Berkley Road, Haverford Station Historic District, 25-23 – approval to replace siding and garage doors in a garage at the rear of the property, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10.

- c) 419 Arthurs Round Table, English Village Historic District, 25-24 – approval to replace wood siding with a composite material, install new lighting fixtures, and make various repairs to trim and masonry, with a subcommittee to review exterior materials and mortar selection, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[BP Items - 10.15.pdf](#)



65 Cricket Avenue, Suite 101, Ardmore Commercial Historic District

25-22

HARB

2

Action:

Approval to install halo-lit channel letters above one of the "Cricket Flats" storefronts, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standard 9.

3

Day



Night



Proposed halo-lit signage

4

5



LOWER MERION
TOWNSHIP
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION

STAFF ONLY	APPLICATION NUMBER:	HARB
	HRI SURVEY #:	
	HARB MEETING DATE:	

HARB Certificate of Appropriateness Application

For Work Involving a Property in a Local Historic District

PROPERTY ADDRESS

ADDRESS [STREET, CITY]: 65 Cricket Avenue, Suite 101, Ardmore, PA 19003

APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME: Cricket Court Associates, LP
ADDRESS: 283 2nd Street Pike, Suite 110
Southampton, PA 18966
TELEPHONE #:
ALTERNATE #:
EMAIL:
ZIP/POSTAL CODE: 18966
APPLICANT'S CAPACITY: ☒ OWNER ☐ ARCHITECT ☐ ATTORNEY ☐ CONTRACTOR ☐ OTHER:

OWNER INFORMATION [IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE]

NAME[S]:
ADDRESS:
TELEPHONE #:
ALTERNATE #:
EMAIL:
ZIP/POSTAL CODE:

PROPERTY INFORMATION

NAME OF BUSINESS [IF APPLICABLE]: Raff's Fine Italian Cuisine
CURRENT USE: Vacant Retail Space
PROPOSED USE: Full service restaurant

PROJECT DESCRIPTION [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

☐ ADAPTIVE REUSE ☐ ADDITION ☐ ALTERATION ☐ DEMOLITION ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION
☐ REPAIR ☐ REPLACEMENT ☐ PAINTING ☒ OTHER (IDENTIFY) New Retail Sign

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES	MASONRY/ BRICKWORK	SIDING	TRIM	ROOF	DORMER/CUPOLA	CHIMNEY	GUTTER/DOWNSPOUT	EAVE CORNICE/SOFFIT	WINDOW/SCREEN/ STORM/SHUTTER	DOOR/SCREEN/STORM	PORCH/DECK/ STOOP/STAIR	PORCH ROOF	PORCH OR DECK RAILING/BALLUSTER	STOREFRONT	SIGN	AWNING	FENCE/WALL/GATE	OTHER STRUCTURE
REPAIR	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
REPLACE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ADD	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
REMOVE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

CONTINUED

PROJECT DESCRIPTION USE ADDITIONAL PAGES AS NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE ALL OF THE WORK PROPOSED. PLEASE REFER TO THE CHECKLIST WITHIN THIS APPLICATION FOR ADDITIONAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS.

New retail facade sign. Black aluminum lettering w/ 3/4" Acrylic LED back reveal - "halo" type backlit sign. Letters to be 18" high. Storefront is 45' 6" wide.

Please see attached shop drawing and elevation.

Note: Please include all information requested in the application checklist. Work cannot commence until a Certificate of Appropriateness, necessary building permits, and any zoning relief have been issued.

PROPOSED START DATE:

PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC CHARACTER WHAT STEPS WILL BE TAKEN AS PART OF THE SCOPE OF THIS WORK TO PRESERVE YOUR BUILDING'S HISTORIC CHARACTER AND THAT OF THE SURROUNDING DISTRICT?

This sign adheres to the Cricket Flats sign standard and exactly matches the sign criteria for the existing retail tenants currently occupying the other retail spaces in the building. The HARB took an active role in designing the sign criteria when the building signage was approved for appropriateness prior to Cricket Flat's original construction.

OTHER INFORMATION THE HARB SHOULD CONSIDER WHEN REVIEWING THIS APPLICATION

SIGNATURES

APPLICANT:

DATE: 9-21-2025

OWNER [IF DIFFERENT]:

DATE:

Note: This completed application, along with all required materials, must be submitted via original printed copy, email, or other electronic means to the Department of Building & Planning a minimum of ten (10) calendar days prior to the next HARB meeting for consideration.

In lieu of a signature, the owner can issue a letter stating agreement with the application and further agrees to be bound by any conditions imposed by the granting of the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Revised 10/2023



Preliminary Consultant Review

Compiled by Carol Quigley, Senior Designer / Project Manager Frens & Frens Studio, Patterhn Ives LLC

25-22

65 Cricket Avenue, Suite 101, Ardmore Historic District

Applicant / Owner: Cricket Court Associates

Application Type: Commercial

Project Summary: The applicant proposes to install a halo-lit building mounted sign.

Comments:

- This new tenant at the Cricket Flats building proposes to install a wide halo-lit channel letter sign above the entrance and storefront system.. The signage adheres to the signage standards established for the building and follows signage details of previous tenants reviewed by the HARB. The proposed sign is comprised of a halo-lit pin-mounted channel letters, 18" high, places above the storefront. All electrical conduit and power supply is to be concealed. Fasteners for the channel letters should be installed within the mortar joints in lieu of the stone veneer to the greatest extent possible.
- The proposed signage details are consistent with previous signage at the building and appropriate in the historic district.

We would recommend approval of this application in accordance with Standard 9.



421 Berkley Road, Haverford Station Historic District

25-23

HARB

6

Action:

Approval to replace siding and garage doors in a garage at the rear of the property, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10.

7

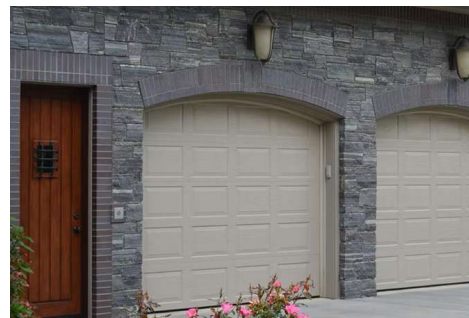
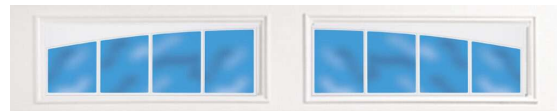


Existing garage, set back in rear of driveway

8



Siding Product Image



Proposed Garage Door Product Images

Proposed siding will replicate existing dimensions and texture

9



STAFF ONLY	APPLICATION NUMBER:	H A R B
	HRI SURVEY #:	
	HARB MEETING DATE:	

HARB Certificate of Appropriateness Application

For Work Involving a Property in a Local Historic District

PROPERTY ADDRESS

ADDRESS [STREET, CITY]:

APPLICANT INFORMATION

TELEPHONE #:

ALTERNATE #:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

EMAIL:

ZIP/POSTAL CODE:

APPLICANT'S CAPACITY: OWNER ARCHITECT ATTORNEY CONTRACTOR OTHER:

OWNER INFORMATION [IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE]

TELEPHONE #:

ALTERNATE #:

NAME[S]:

ADDRESS:

EMAIL:

ZIP/POSTAL CODE:

PROPERTY INFORMATION

NAME OF BUSINESS [IF APPLICABLE]:

CURRENT USE:

PROPOSED USE:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

ADAPTIVE REUSE
REPAIR

ADDITION
REPLACEMENT

ALTERATION
PAINTING

DEMOLITION
OTHER (IDENTIFY)

NEW CONSTRUCTION

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES	MASONRY/ BRICKWORK	SIDING	TRIM	ROOF	DORMER/CUPOLA	CHIMNEY	GUTTER/DOWNSPOUT	EAVE CORNICE/SOFFIT	WINDOW/SCREEN/ STORM/SHUTTER	DOOR/SCREEN/STORM	PORCH/DECK/ STOOP/STAIR	PORCH ROOF	PORCH OR DECK RAILING/BALLUSTER	STOREFRONT	SIGN	AWNING	FENCE/WALL/GATE	OTHER STRUCTURE
REPAIR REPLACE ADD REMOVE																		

CONTINUED

PROJECT DESCRIPTION USE ADDITIONAL PAGES AS NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE ALL OF THE WORK PROPOSED. PLEASE REFER TO THE CHECKLIST WITHIN THIS APPLICATION FOR ADDITIONAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS.

Note: Please include all information requested in the application checklist. Work cannot commence until a Certificate of Appropriateness, necessary building permits, and any zoning relief have been issued.

PROPOSED START DATE:

PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC CHARACTER WHAT STEPS WILL BE TAKEN AS PART OF THE SCOPE OF THIS WORK TO PRESERVE YOUR BUILDING'S HISTORIC CHARACTER AND THAT OF THE SURROUNDING DISTRICT?

OTHER INFORMATION THE HARB SHOULD CONSIDER WHEN REVIEWING THIS APPLICATION

SIGNATURES

APPLICANT:

DATE:

OWNER [IF DIFFERENT]:

DATE:

Note: This completed application, along with all required materials, must be submitted via original printed copy, email, or other electronic means to the Department of Building & Planning a minimum of ten (10) calendar days prior to the next HARB meeting for consideration.

In lieu of a signature, the owner can issue a letter stating agreement with the application and further agrees to be bound by any conditions imposed by the granting of the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Revised 10/2023



Preliminary Consultant Review

Compiled by Carol Quigley, Senior Designer / Project Manager Frens & Frens Studio, Patterhn Ives LLC

25-23

421 Berkley Road, Haverford Station Historic District

Applicant / Owner: James and Julia Hartling

Application Type: Residential

Project Summary: The applicant proposes to rehabilitate an existing one-car garage that sits at the rear of the lot.

Comments:

- The subject structure is a one-car garage with a gable roof set perpendicular to the street that is positioned at the back of the rear yard. The residence at 421 Berkley is on the north side of the street, with a driveway that comes off Berkley and runs along the west side of the lot all the way to the garage in the rear yard. The width of the driveway is little more than the width of the side yard between the primary dwelling and the lot line; the adjacent lot has a similar condition, yielding a minimal view to the rear lots from the street. The front of the garage, the overall form and the garage door are all that can be seen from the street.
- The applicant proposes to remove the existing board and batten siding and replace it with James Hardie board and batten siding. The applicant has selected a grained finish, but a smooth finish is typically recommended as the grained finish of composite products is often exaggerated and appears conspicuously fake. The applicant proposes to remove the asphalt shingle roof and provide a new asphalt shingle roof. The applicant also proposes replacement of the existing garage door with a paneled or crossbuck style with lights at the top quarter of the door; each option is appropriate, and the applicant has specifically noted that the arched form of the garage door opening will remain. The exposed rafter tails / cantilevered rafter tails at all sides of the eaves which are a characteristic feature of garage structures of this age are also to remain.
- Other modifications are proposed at the rear and sides of the garage, but those sides are not visible from the public way and are beyond the purview of the HARB.

We would recommend approval of this application in accordance with Standards 9 and 10.



419 Arthurs Round Table, English Village Historic District

25-24

HARB

10

Action:

Approval to replace wood siding with a composite material, install new lighting fixtures, and make various repairs to trim and masonry, with a subcommittee to review exterior materials and mortar selection, citing Secretary of the Interior's Standards 9 and 10.

11



Existing



Proposed

Proposed Light Fixtures

12



Examples of rotted trim and sills in need of replacement

13



Examples of deteriorated mortar

14



Example of deteriorated siding

15



STAFF ONLY	APPLICATION NUMBER:	
	HRI SURVEY #:	
	HARB MEETING DATE:	

HARB

HARB Certificate of Appropriateness Application

For Work Involving a Property in a Local Historic District

PROPERTY ADDRESS

ADDRESS [STREET, CITY]: 419 Arthurs Round Table, Wynnewood

APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME: Joseph and Suzanne Antonello

ADDRESS: 419 Arthurs Round Table
Wynnewood, PA

APPLICANT'S CAPACITY: ☒ OWNER ☐ ARCHITECT ☐ ATTORNEY ☐ CONTRACTOR ☐ OTHER:

ALTERNATE #:

EMAIL:

ZIP/POSTAL CODE: 19096

OWNER INFORMATION [IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE]

NAME[S]:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE #:

ALTERNATE #:

EMAIL:

ZIP/POSTAL CODE:

PROPERTY INFORMATION

NAME OF BUSINESS [IF APPLICABLE]:

CURRENT USE:

PROPOSED USE:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

☐ ADAPTIVE REUSE ☐ ADDITION ☐ ALTERATION ☐ DEMOLITION ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION

☒ REPAIR ☒ REPLACEMENT ☒ PAINTING ☐ OTHER (IDENTIFY)

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES	MASONRY/ BRICKWORK	SIDING	TRIM	ROOF	DORMER/CUPOLA	CHIMNEY	GUTTER/DOWNSPOUT	EAVE CORNICE/SOFFIT	WINDOW/SCREEN/ STORM/SHUTTER	DOOR/SCREEN/STORM	PORCH/DECK/ STOOP/STAIR	PORCH ROOF	PORCH OR DECK RAILING/BALLUSTER	STOREFRONT	SIGN	AWNING	FENCE/WALL/GATE	OTHER STRUCTURE
REPAIR	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
REPLACE	☐	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ADD	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
REMOVE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

CONTINUED

PROJECT DESCRIPTION USE ADDITIONAL PAGES AS NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE ALL OF THE WORK PROPOSED. PLEASE REFER TO THE CHECKLIST WITHIN THIS APPLICATION FOR ADDITIONAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS.

Please see attached document with the full Project Description.

Note: Please include all information requested in the application checklist. Work cannot commence until a Certificate of Appropriateness, necessary building permits, and any zoning relief have been issued.

PROPOSED START DATE:

PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC CHARACTER WHAT STEPS WILL BE TAKEN AS PART OF THE SCOPE OF THIS WORK TO PRESERVE YOUR BUILDING'S HISTORIC CHARACTER AND THAT OF THE SURROUNDING DISTRICT?

Please see the attached document with the full description of how we plan to preserve the historic character of our home.

OTHER INFORMATION THE HARB SHOULD CONSIDER WHEN REVIEWING THIS APPLICATION

Please see the attached document with the full description.

SIGNATURES

APPLICAN

DATE: 09/12/2025

OWNER [IF DIFFERENT]:

DATE:

Note: This completed application, along with all required materials, must be submitted via original printed copy, email, or other electronic means to the Department of Building & Planning a minimum of ten (10) calendar days prior to the next HARB meeting for consideration.

In lieu of a signature, the owner can issue a letter stating agreement with the application and further agrees to be bound by any conditions imposed by the granting of the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Revised 10/2023



Preliminary Consultant Review

Compiled by Carol Quigley, Senior Designer / Project Manager Frens & Frens Studio, Patterhn Ives LLC

25-24

419 Arhtur's Round Table, English Village Historic District

Applicant / Owner: Joseph and Suzanne Antonello

Application Type: Residential

Project Summary: The applicant proposes to replace numerous sections of deteriorated wood trim and replace three light fixtures.

- The subject resource is one half of a twin structure along Arthur's Round Table. Maintenance of the exterior envelope has been deferred by previous owners, and the applicant now proposes to restore the exterior envelope to match details that have been appropriately restored within the village, particularly at the attached adjacent dwelling. Repairs include replacement of applied wood trim, stucco repairs, siding replacement, and masonry repointing. All repairs are proposed to be in-kind relative to form and dimension, but with substitute materials that are intended to be more durable than the existing wood components. Replacement siding is proposed as Tru-exterior, a poly-ash product that matches the dimensions of the existing siding and can be field painted. This is a material that is routinely recommended in the Historic Districts as a substitute for wood products.
- All of the existing wood trim and timbers on the original Tudor dwellings is a rough-hewn wood. The applicant proposes to repair in place as much of the trim as possible, but where replacement is necessary, the applicant has proposed a composite material made of rice-hulls called Acre by Etchwood and Modern Mill. This product offers both a smooth side and a rough side that may blend in with the historic hewn trim. This is a product that has not been reviewed by the HARB before but is touted to look and feel like wood and be very sustainable. Information available about the product suggests that it might be very sustainable but may be less durable and stable than the trim products that could be appropriately milled and painted by the aforementioned Tru-Exterior. (It is assumed that the hewn finish could be achieved on the Tru Exterior poly ash trim, but it may not be a standard option.) The applicant should bring a sample of the Etchwood for the HARB to review in person, but should also consider use of the Tru Exterior custom milled trim in order to ensure long term stability of the product and compatibility with the preferred dark finishes of the trim. Further examination of the short history of the product is recommended prior to proceeding.
- Additional improvements include repointing of all of the stone and brick masonry at the first floor of the house. New pointing should match the existing or original pointing in mix, color and tooling profile.

- Three new exterior light fixtures are proposed for reinstallation. The proposed fixtures – one large and two smaller – are a sympathetic style to detailing of the village. The large fixture is proposed at the entrance and will replace an original fixture that is in poor condition. The original fixture will be retained by the owner for future restoration and reuse somewhere in the home. The two smaller fixtures will be placed on a porch and on a side façade, replacing a missing fixture and a contemporary spotlight.

Given the considerations noted above, we would recommend approval of this application in accordance with Standard 9.



Township of Lower Merion
A FIRST CLASS TOWNSHIP

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Building & Planning

ITEM: **AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE ORDINANCE - CHAPTER 155, ZONING - FREESTANDING GROUND & MONUMENT SIGNS ZONING AMENDMENT - Z-25-006**

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners authorizing the Township Secretary to advertise notice of a Public Hearing and intent to adopt an ordinance to amend the code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 155, entitled Zoning, Table 9.1, Permitted Sign Locations and Permit Types, to allow Freestanding Ground/Monument Signs in the MDR2 and MDR3 Districts by permit; and Table 9.2 General Sign Type Standard and Regulations, Section E, Freestanding Ground/Monument Sign, to amend the regulations for height to permit a maximum height of 4 feet for Multifamily (Large) buildings and to permit a maximum sign area of 20 square feet for Multifamily (Large) buildings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Staff Memo - Freestanding Signs Amendment](#)

[Ordinance - Freestanding Ground - Monument Signs in MDR2 and MDR3](#)

October 6, 2025

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Charlie Doyle, Assistant Director, Building & Planning
SUBJECT: **CODE AMENDMENT: Freestanding Ground/Monument Signs Z-25-006**

Background

Staff meets regularly with the Zoning Officer to discuss issues needing calibration in his implementation of the Zoning Code and regularly updates with minor edits. The proposed amendments address wayfinding for pedestrians and vehicles at appropriate scales for varying land uses. This amendment allows for freestanding ground/monument signs within the MDR2 & MDR3 Districts through zoning permit, generally designated for apartment and condominium buildings and complexes.

Freestanding Ground/Monument Signs Defined

A freestanding ground/monument sign is defined as both a “freestanding” sign type as well as a specifically a “ground/monument” sign. The definitions of the zoning code include:

FREESTANDING SIGN

A single- or double-faced sign that is placed on or anchored in the ground, and that is independent and detached from any building or other structure. The following are subtypes of freestanding signs:

A. GROUND/MONUMENT SIGN - A freestanding sign that is permanently supported by an internal structural framework or integrated into landscaping or other solid structural features.

Freestanding or monumental signs play a critical role in wayfinding and placemaking, especially for land uses like apartment buildings or condominium complexes that may be set back from the road, obscured by landscaping, or located in areas with limited visibility or complex circulation patterns.

Proposed Changes Overview

Prior to the adoption of the 2020 Zoning Code, signage in residential districts was regulated under a more traditional, use-based framework. Freestanding signs were generally prohibited in residential zones, except for institutional uses via special exception. The code lacked a consolidated table of permitted sign types and did not distinguish between different residential intensities.

The 2020 zoning code introduced a form-based approach, including the MDR2 and MDR3 districts, and consolidated sign regulations into Table 9.1. While this improved clarity and consistency, it also resulted in the prohibition of freestanding ground/monument signs in MDR2 and MDR3, for uses larger residential uses that may benefit from modest signage.

Lower Merion Township’s MDR2 and MDR3 districts are designed to accommodate multifamily residential developments, including apartment buildings and condominium complexes. However, the current sign ordinance does not adequately address the unique visibility, access, and identification needs of these land uses. As a result, many properties lack effective signage, making them difficult to locate, especially along higher-speed roadways or in areas with limited vehicular circulation options.

Freestanding and monumental signs are essential for wayfinding, safety, and placemaking in these districts. Without clear and visible signage, residents, visitors, emergency responders, and delivery services may struggle to identify entrances or

navigate to the correct location. This is particularly problematic in developments set back from the street or obscured by landscaping or topography.

Updating the ordinance to include permit standards for freestanding and monument signs in MDR2 and MDR3 Districts will ensure consistency with the Township’s broader planning goals. It will also support design quality, neighborhood character, and equitable access by allowing appropriately scaled signage that enhances visibility without compromising aesthetics. Aligning these standards with those already in place for other districts will also streamline the permitting process and provide clarity for developers and property managers.

Zoning Amendments (Chapter 155)

This amendment seeks to restore flexibility for such uses by allowing freestanding signs by permit, subject to the design standards in [Article IX: Sign Standards](#). Changes are limited to Table 9.1, allowing the use through permit, and Table 9.2, to mention MDR2 & 3 District inclusion for multifamily (large).

1. Table 9.1 Permitted Sign Locations and Permit Types

Proposed changes to Table 9.1 allow Freestanding Ground/Monument signs in the MDR2 and MDR3 Districts.

Table 9.1. Permitted Sign Locations and Permit Types

Key:
PR: Permit required
E: Exempt (no permit required)
(T): Temporary

Sign Type	LDR	MDR	VC	TC	NC	I	LI	RHR	BMV	Table Number
Freestanding ground/monument		PR*	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	9.2.E

* Permit limited to MDR2 and MDR3, and not MDR1

2. Table 9.2 General Sign Type Standards and Regulations

Proposed changes to Table 9.2 limit the height of Freestanding Ground/Monument signs to 4’ when development is 6 or greater units that constitutes a Multifamily (Large) defined building or buildings. An additional amendment to Table 9.2 limits the area of Freestanding Ground/Monument signs to 20 square feet for multifamily (large) buildings.

Table 9.2. General Sign Type Standards and Regulations	
E.	Freestanding Ground/Monument Sign
Description	
A freestanding sign that is permanently supported by an internal structural framework or integrated into landscaping or other solid structural features (also known as a "ground sign")	

Table 9.2. General Sign Type Standards and Regulations



Height	Number (maximum)	Sign Area (maximum)	Copy Height (maximum)
4 feet maximum for 1 or 2 tenants or up to 8 feet maximum for 3 or more tenants; <u>or 4 feet maximum for multifamily (large) buildings</u>	1 per street frontage	20 square feet for 1 or 2 tenants and 40 square feet for 3 or more tenants; <u>or 20 square feet for multifamily (large) buildings</u>	18 inches
Regulations			
(1)	Maximum clearance to the bottom of the sign is one foot.		
(2)	Shall have a minimum setback of 5 feet from the right-of-way.		
(3)	The width of the top of the sign structure may be no more than 120% of the width of the base.		
(4)	May be externally illuminated or internally illuminated by channel letters.		
(5)	Manual changeable copy signs are permitted.		

Staff Recommendation

Staff believes the proposed amendments satisfy the standards for a zoning code amendment and recommend the adoption of the proposed ordinance.

Next Steps

The proposed ordinance will be considered at the upcoming public meetings:

- October 6, 2025- Planning Commission: To make a formal recommendation to the Board of Commissioners (BOC).
- October 15, 2025- Building and Planning Committee: Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners the authorization to advertise an ordinance and schedule a public hearing for the BOC to consider the adoption of the proposed ordinance.
- Public Hearing- Date to be determined.

ORDINANCE

NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE To Amend The Code Of The Township Of Lower Merion, Chapter 155, Entitled Zoning, Table 9.1, Permitted Sign Locations And Permit Types, To Allow Freestanding Ground/Monument Signs In The MDR2 And MDR3 Districts By Permit; And Table 9.2 General Sign Type Standard And Regulations, Section E, Freestanding Ground/Monument Sign, To Amend The Regulations For Height To Permit A Maximum Height Of 4 Feet For Multifamily (Large) Buildings And To Permit A Maximum Sign Area Of 20 Square Feet For Multifamily (Large) Buildings.

The Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion hereby ordains:

Section 1. Table 9.1, Permitted Sign Locations and Permit Types, is hereby amended to allow freestanding ground/monument signs in MDR Residential Districts by permit (“PR: Permit required”), limited to MDR2 and MDR3. This limitation shall be expressly noted in the Notes section which follows the table.

Section 2. Table 9.2, General Sign Type Standards and Regulations, Section E, Freestanding Ground/Monument Sign,” is hereby amended as follows:

1. The regulations for height shall now read: “4 feet maximum for 1 or 2 tenants or up to 8 feet maximum for 3 or more tenants; or 4 feet maximum for multifamily (large) buildings”
2. The regulations for sign area (maximum) shall now read: “20 square feet for 1 or 2 tenants and 40 square feet for 3 or more tenants; or 20 square feet for multifamily (large) buildings”

Section 3. Nothing in this Ordinance or in Chapter 155 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, as hereby amended, shall be construed to affect any suit or proceedings in any Court, any rights acquired or liability incurred, any permit issued, or any cause or causes of action existing under the said Chapter 155 prior to the adoption of this amendment.

Section 4. Nothing in this Ordinance or in the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, as hereby amended, shall be construed to affect any suit or proceedings in any Court, any rights acquired or liability incurred, any permit issued, or any cause or causes of action existing under the said Code of the Township of Lower Merion prior to the adoption of this amendment.

Section 5. The provisions of this Ordinance are severable, and if any section, sentence, clause, part, or provision thereof shall be held illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such decision of this court shall not affect or impair the remaining sections, sentences, clauses, parts or provisions of this ordinance. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Board that this ordinance would have been adopted if such illegal, invalid or unconstitutional section, sentence, clause, part or provision had not been included herein.

Section 6. This Ordinance shall take affect and be in force from and after its approval as required by law.

Approved by the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Todd M. Sinai, President

ATTEST:

Jody L. Kelley, Secretary