

## **TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION**

### **Issue Briefing**

**Topic:** Landscape Maintenance Guarantee

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**Date:** October 13, 2016

#### **I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:**

The Board of Commissioners is requested to approve an amendment to the Natural Features Conservation Code to require landscape improvements installed for commercial and/or multi-family residential developments to be perpetually maintained in a healthy and/or sound condition.

Under the current code, landscape improvements approved for all other projects shall be maintained in a healthy and/or sound condition for a period of 18 months.

#### **II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:**

The Board of Commissioners is required to approve any ordinance amendment.

#### **III. Current Policy or Practice (If Applicable):**

The Board of Commissioners reviews and approves ordinance amendments on a case by case basis.

#### **IV. Other Relevant Background Information:**

An ongoing issue identified by Township staff is that over time landscape material that was required as part of the land development process dies but is never replaced by the property owner. Under the current Code, the material is only required to be guaranteed for a period of 18 months. The proposed amendment will allow the Township to require that any plant material that was shown on an approved landscape plan be maintained and/or replaced by the property owner in perpetuity. The attached amendment has been drafted by the Township's Environmental Advisory Council and reviewed by both staff and the Township Solicitor.

#### **V. Impact on Township Finances:**

There is no impact on Township finances.

#### **VI. Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Board approve the proposed Ordinance Amendment.