

# **TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION**

## ***Board of Commissioners***

### **Issue Briefing**

**Topic:** HARB Membership Amendment

**Prepared By:** Robert E. Duncan, Assistant Township Manager

**Date:** January 31, 2017

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

The Building & Planning Committee will discuss an ordinance to amend the residency requirements for members of the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB).

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

If the Building & Planning Committee directs staff to proceed with this amendment, an ordinance is required to change the number of HARB members that must reside in a Local Historic District.

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

The HARB is currently required to be comprised of nine members, three of which must be residents of or have their principal business within one of the Township's Local Historic Districts.

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

HARB currently has two members that reside in or have a business located in a Local Historic District. The third seat fulfilling this requirement has been vacant for approximately two years. Last year, staff brought an ordinance forward to amend the code to require that only two residents or business owners must reside in a Local Historic District but the Commissioners were not ready to adopt the amendment. Another year has passed and this seat remains vacant. Other residents of the Township have expressed an interest in serving on the HARB but they do not reside in one of the Local Historic Districts.

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

Any change to the HARB membership requirements will not have a direct financial implication on Township Finances.

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

This is a discussion topic at this time but staff supports an amendment to the HARB membership requirements to provide the Commissioners with more flexibility to appoint residents to the HARB. If the Board decides to proceed with a code amendment, they could include a policy decision to have a goal and encourage three members of the HARB to be a resident or business owner.