

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION
Finance Committee
Issue Briefing

Topic: Ardmore MUST District Amendments

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Date: June 2, 2017

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

Consider authorizing the advertisement for a public hearing and consideration for adoption of an ordinance to amend the Ardmore Mixed-Use Special Transportation (MUST) Overlay Zoning District.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

A public hearing must be authorized by the Board of Commissioners for zoning code amendments.

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):

In May, the Board of Commissioners discussed proposed amendments to the MUST District at which time the Township Solicitor suggested that the proposed language could be improved with a few edits. This revised draft incorporates the Township Solicitor's suggested edits and clarifies that new buildings may use the off-site parking provisions when two private property owners enter a parking agreement. The previous draft completely precluded new buildings from applying the off-site parking provisions.

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

The MUST District was originally adopted in 2006. This zoning overlay district will receive a comprehensive evaluation as part of the Zoning Code update that will be performed by DPZ, the consulting firm retained by the Township. However, there are a few amendments staff would like the Board to consider now which include one amendment to the Ardmore Special Development District (ASDD). The amendments include:

1. Create a definition for Personal Service Shop – This is a permitted use in most commercial zoning districts, but it is not a defined term in the Zoning Code.
2. Amend permitted uses in MUST – Dance, music, personal fitness training or an art studio are currently permitted uses but are subject to a 300-foot separation requirement. A new Section 155-87.21.D is being created to establish a reduced 100-foot separation requirement between these uses. A new 100-foot separation requirement is also proposed

between Personal Service Shops to encourage a better mix of uses in MUST.

3. Limit off-street parking provisions in MUST - Section 155-87.23 E (3) currently allows up to 75 public parking spaces to be counted as required parking for a private mixed-use development. The proposed amendment reduces this to 10 parking spaces and does not allow any public parking spaces to be counted for new buildings. The amended language does allow new buildings to continue to utilize off-site, private parking towards the required parking calculations, provided necessary agreements are in place.
4. Limit on-street parking provisions in MUST - Section 155-87.23.F currently allows on-street parking spaces in front of the property to be counted as required parking. This section is being amended to permit these spaces to be counted only when an existing building is rehabilitated or expanded. New construction will not be able to count existing on-street parking spaces toward the total requirement.
5. Limit off-street parking provisions in ASDD - Section 155-87.10.B in the ASDD also permits public parking spaces to be counted to meet the required parking for a private development. The proposed amendment will prohibit these spaces from being counted for new construction projects. It will also limit the number of public parking spaces that can be counted for existing buildings to 10.

Amendments 1 & 2 above are designed to clarify the definition of Personal Service Shop and separation requirement. The reduced separation requirement for dance, music, personal fitness, and art studios will provide more flexibility to fill vacant storefronts by reducing the separation requirements for these uses.

Amendments 3, 4 & 5 reduce the number of public parking spaces that can be designated to meet the parking requirement for a private development. This provision was included in the original MUST District to spur new development in Ardmore. Since there have been several recent developments that have used this provision staff believes the Township should evaluate the impact to public parking from these developments. As these projects are constructed staff can begin to determine the impact on public parking lots in Ardmore and can determine whether there is enough available parking in Ardmore to bring this concept back to the Board for consideration.

The proposed amendment is consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan recommendations:

- C6: Address parking needs as part of commercial area revitalization, including appropriate parking/loading requirements for multi-family, commercial, and mixed-use developments throughout the Township.
- LC52: Reevaluate MUST Zoning.

V. Impact On Township Finances:

There is no impact on Township finances.

VI. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Board authorize a public hearing to consider the proposed amendments.