

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Building and Planning Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Hospitals & Sidewalks

Prepared By: Christopher Leswing, Assistant Director, Building & Planning

Date: September 8, 2017

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

The Board of Commissioners is requested to consider an amendment to the Zoning Code to remove hospital as a special exception use in all residence districts. A second part of the ordinance will increase the minimum width of all newly installed sidewalks from four feet to five feet, except as otherwise provided in the Zoning Code.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

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

III. Current Policy or Practice (If Applicable):

The Board of Commissioners reviews and adopts ordinances amending the Township Code on a case by case basis.

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

As part of new subdivision and land developments where a developer is required to install a sidewalk, recommendation C11.a of the Circulation Element of the Comprehensive Plan suggests minimum sidewalk widths be increased. Staff routinely recommends five-foot-wide sidewalks be installed as they can more easily accommodate two people passing one another versus a four-foot-wide sidewalk. Amending the Code will ensure that an adequate pedestrian environment is provided with all new developments. This change will not affect those zoning districts where wider sidewalks are required such as the MUST, ROHO, and City Avenue Districts.

Prior to the adoption of the Medical Center District and the Bryn Mawr Medical District, a hospital was permitted as a special exception use in all residence districts. Upon the adoption of those districts the Township never removed a hospital as a special exception use from all residence districts in the Zoning Code.

V. Impact on Township Finances:

There is no impact on Township finances.

VI. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Board authorize the scheduling of a public hearing and consideration for adoption on October 18, 2017.