

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION
Building and Planning Committee
Issue Briefing

Topic: Proposed Floodplain District Ordinance

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Date: October 6, 2017

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

The Board of Commissioners is requested to consider an amendment to the Zoning Code which was submitted by the owner of 601 & 615 Righters Ferry Road. The Board reviewed an earlier version of the attached ordinance at their September 13, 2017 meeting and directed the Township Solicitor to make additional changes.

The following changes were made to the proposed ordinance:

- To provide alternative language to permit portions of all rooms, including basements, to be constructed at a level that is between the base flood level and a height which is between the base flood level and up to 12 inches above the base flood level.
- The Department of Environmental Resources is now identified as the Department of Environmental Protection.
- The list of prohibited uses in the Floodplain District has been adjusted to include those uses that are permitted in the Schuylkill River Floodway Fringe by conditional use.

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:

The applicant obtained Preliminary Land Development approval in June 2017 for the construction of two hotels and associated parking on the properties at 601 and 615 Righters Ferry Road. As part of the applicant's approved plan, portions of the iron trusses in the existing warehouse closest to Righters Ferry Road are being preserved to serve as a gateway and amenity to Hotel 1 and the gathering space along the river. The applicant indicated that constructing the hotels 24 inches above the base flood elevation would not allow adequate space between grade level and the bottom of the trusses.

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 of the attached ordinance.