

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Building & Planning Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Medium Density Residential Zoning

Prepared by: Christopher Leswing, Director, Building & Planning Department

Date: March 22, 2019

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

The Board will review the sections of the Draft Zoning Code related to medium density residential uses. No formal action is required by the Board at this time, but any direction provided will be incorporated into the draft Zoning Code.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

The Board of Commissioners must adopt Zoning Code amendments in compliance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):

The Zoning Code update is part of a multi-year effort to synchronize the Township's land use codes (Zoning, Subdivision & Land Development, Natural Features and Stormwater Management) to implement the goals and recommendations of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan.

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

This is a workshop meeting to prepare for the advertisement and adoption of a comprehensive update to the Township's land use codes. Staff proposes that the draft Zoning Code be evaluated/calibrated to ensure that it meets the following overarching goals of the Comprehensive Plan:

1. Align the standards with Land Use and other relevant recommendations;
2. Promote the desired form and pattern of the built environment; and
3. Create a user friendly, publicly-accessible document.

Comparison between Existing Zoning Code & Draft Zoning Code

Much of the Township was developed prior to the enactment of the community's first Zoning Code in 1927. Over the years numerous amendments have been made in an effort to improve new development in an attempt to conserve the established neighborhood pattern. While charts are provided at the end of the memo summarizing the existing and draft Zoning Code Standards it is misleading to compare many of the numerical standards, because the existing standards are not necessarily reflective of the current built environment. The standards in the draft Zoning Code are based on a Synoptic Survey prepared by the consultant team, which included an analysis of the location, form and scale of existing structures in the Township. As a result, the draft standards are more consistent with the existing development patterns

and promote the logical expansion of existing structures within established neighborhoods (View Exhibit A: Case Studies). When evaluating the standards, the question should be whether the existing pattern is desirable or if the standards should be calibrated to reflect a more desired pattern.

Review of Medium-Density Residential Zoning Standards

In January, the Building & Planning Committee reviewed the draft low-density residential zoning districts, which include the LDR1-4 and MDR1 zoning districts. The LDR districts only allow single-family detached homes. The MDR1 district allows twins, duplexes, and quads in a single-family form.

This month, staff is presenting the draft medium density residential zoning districts, which include the MDR2 and MDR3 zoning districts (View Exhibit B: MDR Zoning Districts Map). The MDR2 and MDR3 districts allow rowhouses (synonymous with townhouses) and multifamily developments. These areas are currently primarily zoned Residence – R6A and R7.

The MDR2 district includes rowhouses and small, multifamily buildings comprised of up to six units as permitted housing types. The MDR2 district primarily includes existing townhouse developments and garden-style apartments and is comprised of less than one percent of the land area in the Township.

The MDR3 district is the only residential district that allows large (more than six-unit) multifamily buildings. The MDR3 district primarily includes properties that were previously zoned R7 and contain multifamily developments.

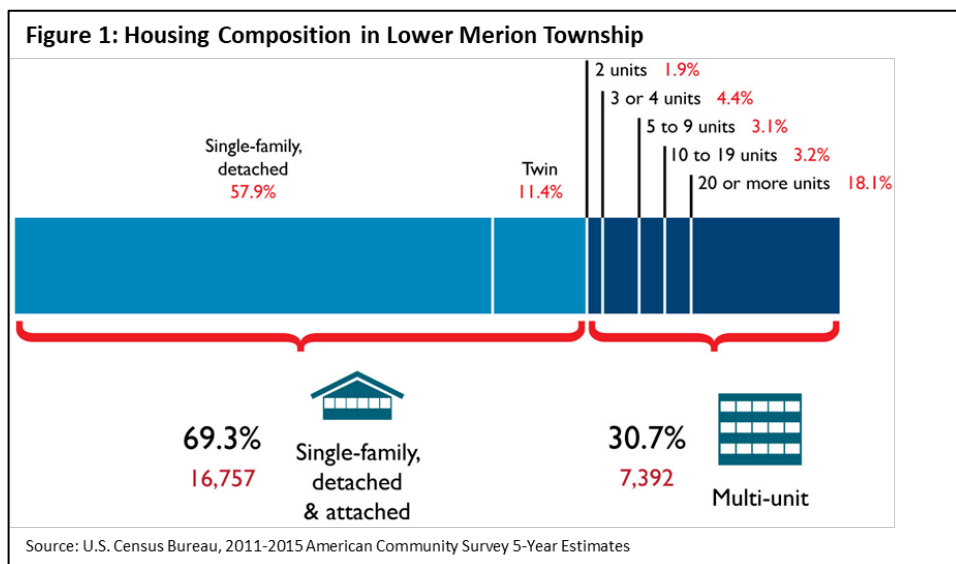
The majority of these properties are located along the railroad in close proximity to commercial areas and they serve as a buffer between the single-family neighborhoods and commercial uses. The MDR3 district is not very large and is comprised of 1.8 percent of the land area in the Township.

Despite the small land area historically delineated for medium density residential

zoning districts, multifamily units comprise roughly 30 percent of the Township's housing stock (view Figure 1). Because much of the district is already developed, new development will primarily occur through the modernization of the older housing stock or through redevelopment.

The following Articles are most applicable to the review of medium density residential uses:

- Article 3 - General to Districts
- Article 4 - District Specific Standards
- Article 5 - Uses
- Article 8 - Parking Standards



Consistency of Draft Code with Residential Land Use Recommendations

The following recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan are directly applicable to the medium density residential zoning districts:

- **LR1** Maintain the character of established residential neighborhoods.
- **LR2** Preserve stable, developed, higher density neighborhoods from unnecessary, speculative redevelopment and preserve the supply of existing affordable housing.
- **H1** Maintain the high quality physical character of residential neighborhoods.
- **H3** Promote logical modernization and expansion of existing residences.

Zoning Code Standards in the Medium Density Residential Districts

The draft Zoning Code requires some additional calibration with regards to the standards established in the MDR2 and MDR3 Districts. Lower Merion's current Zoning Code has a separate set of standards (i.e. setbacks, height, impervious surface) for each housing type, but the draft Zoning Code consolidates the housing types together with few variations. A careful analysis of the proposed MDR2 and MDR3 districts revealed that refinements to the proposed standards are necessary to better reflect the established pattern. Staff further recommends implementing different standards based on housing type. Charts at the end of this memo summarize the current and the proposed zoning standards (Exhibit C: Equivalency Tables). These changes are not included in the current draft Zoning Code but will be included as substantive edits with the next draft.

Rowhouse (Townhouse) Development

In 2015, the Board of Commissioners adopted Zoning Code amendments to deter townhouse development until better design standards could be put in place. Many of the townhouse developments were being crammed onto long, narrow lots and lacked any meaningful relationship to the street and surrounding neighborhood. The draft Zoning Code reintroduces townhouse (rowhouse) development in the MDR2 and MDR3 Districts. Staff recommends that standards be put in place to require that every rowhouse unit have a primary front façade facing onto a public or private street or pedestrian way shown on the Official Map of Streets. This makes a better streetscape and discourages speculative redevelopment/infill of deep lots with large curb cuts or buildings not facing the street. Staff recommends removing the Cottage Court standards and refining the requirements for rowhouses under Article 3.8.1.

Affordable Housing Incentives

The draft Zoning Code greatly reduces the affordable housing incentives in the MDR districts compared to those in the existing R6A and R7 districts. Under the existing Zoning Code, the minimum lot size is reduced thereby allowing for an increased density in the R6A and R7 zoning districts in exchange for providing affordable housing. The Ardmore House (75 Ardmore Avenue) and Ardmore Crossing Senior Housing (213 E County Line Rd) were developed under these incentives. Adjustments to the minimum lot size are not included in the draft Zoning Code.

The existing code also reduces the parking requirement from 2 spaces/unit to 1 space/unit for subsidized housing and 1/2 space per unit for subsidized elderly housing in the R6A and R7 districts. The draft Zoning Code includes a 15% parking reduction for affordable housing in MDR districts. Between the increased minimum lot size requirement and parking standards it is highly unlikely that new affordable units will be constructed in the MDR districts. Given the expedited Zoning Code approval process, staff

recommends bringing affordable housing standards forward for the Board's consideration after the draft Zoning Code is adopted.

Mapping

Staff will be bringing forward recommendations to further calibrate the transition from the current R7 district to the new Zoning Map. Several properties in the R7 district were not developed as apartment houses, although a greater density could have been achieved. Staff sees an opportunity to evaluate these properties to determine whether a lower density zoning classification, such as MDR2 is appropriate, particularly along Montgomery Avenue. These changes help to promote the adaptive reuse of the existing housing stock.

Landscaped Buffer

Landscaped buffers are not proposed for multifamily buildings in the MDR2 or MDR3 districts in the draft Zoning Code. Currently a buffer area of 25 feet is required in the R6A district and a buffer area of 20 feet is required in the R7 district for apartment houses (multifamily buildings). Staff recommends that a landscaped buffer be provided where a large multifamily building, comprised of seven units or greater, abuts a lower density residential district.

Zoning Code Standards General to All Residential Districts

Architectural Standards

The draft Zoning Code includes architectural standards (155-3.9) that apply to new construction in all districts visible from the public way. Additionally, two separate sets of design guidelines have been included as an appendix to the Zoning Code for properties located in Historic Districts and in Neighborhood Conservation Districts. Please view Exhibit D: Neighborhood Conservation District at the end of this document.

The architectural standards are intended to support the visual character of the Township, with the Township's historic buildings setting the example for massing, scale, material quality, and resilient design. They regulate the exterior wall and roof materials. A benefit of including the architectural standards in the Zoning Code is that they will apply to all properties, capturing lot-by-lot infill development. Conditional use may be sought to deviate from these requirements.

Home Occupations

Home Occupations that do not change the character of the property are permitted in LDR and MDR Zoning Districts. There are separate restrictions for LDR and MDR1 Zoning Districts and the MDR2 and MDR3 Zoning Districts.

The LDR and MDR1 Home Occupations must be entirely conducted within a building and the existence of the use shall not be visible from the exterior of the property. The home occupation cannot occupy more than 500 square feet of floor area or up to 25% of the home whichever is greater. No display of goods and no outside storage of materials or equipment is permitted. One business vehicle can be parked at the property provided that it is off street and behind the required front yard setback. These are similar to the regulations that exist in the Township's current code for home occupations.

The MDR2 and MDR3 Home Occupations must be entirely located within a user's unit if it is within a multi-family building. The home occupation cannot occupy more than 50 percent of the floor area of the unit and shall be located on the first floor of the unit. Lobbies cannot be used as waiting areas. These are similar to the regulations that exist in the current Zoning Code for apartment houses. Home Occupations require a certificate of occupancy to be obtained in both the existing and the draft Zoning Code.

The current Zoning Code regulates three separate types of home occupations (Nontraffic, Minor, and Historic Resource Home Occupation). In the current Zoning Code, there is a separation requirement of 500 feet for the minor home occupations. The proposed Zoning Code does not differentiate between the different types of home occupations nor does it propose any separation requirements. The current Zoning Code allows an applicant to apply for a special exception if they could demonstrate the proposed use was in a neighborhood which was not primarily residential in character or that the proposed use would not have a substantial tendency to commercialize the neighborhood. Staff is seeking the Board's input on whether nontraffic home occupations should have different standards than home occupations that generate traffic.

Live/Work

A Live/Work unit is a dwelling unit that contains ground floor retail, office or light industrial use that is limited to a maximum 50 percent of the total floor area. Live/Work units are permitted in the VC and TC commercial districts in the draft Zoning Code.

Properties previously located in the Ardmore Special Development District 2 (ASDD-2) were generally rezoned as either VC or MDR2 depending on the current use and building type. The ASDD-2 district was intended to provide a transition between the commercial uses and surrounding residential neighborhoods and included areas such as West Athens Avenue in Ardmore. West Athens Avenue is comprised primarily of twin homes and rowhouses, and is proposed to be zoned MDR2 to match the existing form. However, many of the residences on the street now also contain business uses, in conformance with the ASDD-2 standards. Staff recommends allowing Live/Work units in the MDR2 district when the property is adjacent to a VC or TC property to continue to allow the transitional use between commercial and residential areas.

Parking

The initial draft Zoning Code proposed reducing the minimum required off-street parking requirements in the MDR1 District from two spaces per unit to one space per unit for single-family homes and allowing on-street parking in front of units to be counted towards meeting the minimum off-street requirements. It also reduced the off-street parking requirements for multifamily homes in all MDR Districts from two spaces per unit to 1.75 spaces per unit. The Consultant proposed these reductions to reduce new construction costs and thereby promote affordability in transit-accessible neighborhoods. However, based on preliminary feedback from the community and the Board staff recommends maintaining the off-street parking requirement of two spaces per unit in all residential zoning districts.

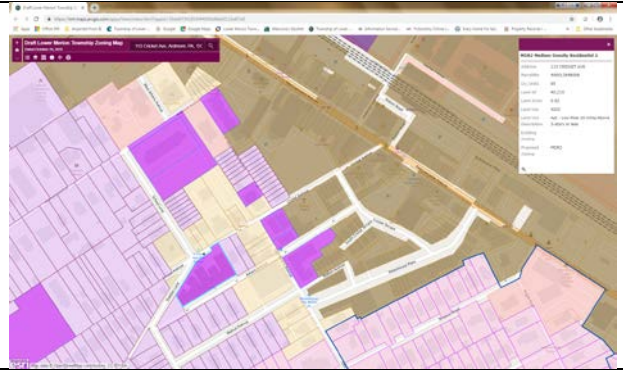
V. Impact on Township Finances:

This discussion will have no immediate impact on Township finances.

VI. Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the Building & Planning Committee provide feedback on the MDR sections of the draft code and the topics in this Issues Briefing. A summary of staff recommendations is listed below:

- Implement different form standards in the MDR2 and MDR3 Districts based on housing type.
- Require that every rowhouse unit have a primary front façade facing onto a public or private street or pedestrian way shown on the Official Map of Streets to create a better streetscape and discourage speculative redevelopment/infill of deep lots with large curb cuts.
- Remove the Cottage Court standards and refine the rowhouse requirements under Article 3.8.1.
- Bring affordable housing incentives and strategies forward for the Board's consideration after the draft Zoning Code is adopted, given the expedited schedule.
- Further calibrate the transition from the current R7 district to the new Zoning Map, particularly along Montgomery Avenue.
- Require a landscaped buffer where a large multifamily building, comprised of seven units or greater, abuts a lower density residential district.
- Allow Live/Work units in the MDR2 district when the property is adjacent to a property zoned VC or TC to continue to allow the transitional use between commercial and residential areas.
- Maintain the off-street parking requirement of two spaces per unit in all residential zoning districts.

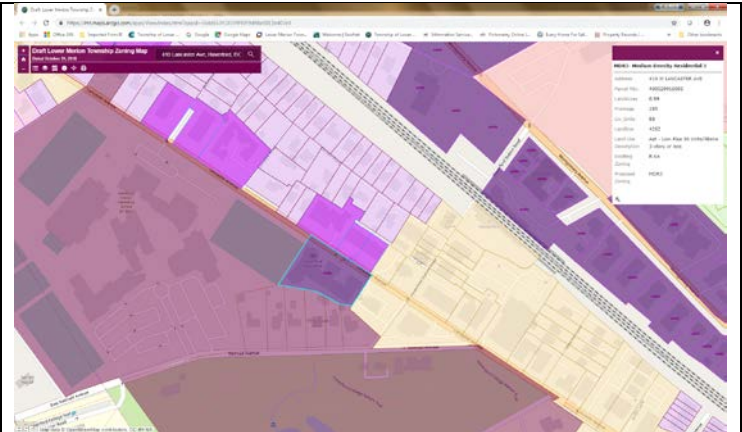


113 Cricket Avenue, Ardmore: Suburban Court

Year Built: 1926

Parking: Limited Off-street

Lot Area	40,075 sq. ft. .92 acres	Existing Conditions	Existing Zoning Requirements	Proposed Zoning Requirements
			C2	MDR2
Height		3/4 Stories	6 stories max.	3 stories max.
Units (Lot Area per Unit)		95 (421 sq. ft. per unit)	40 (1,000 sq. ft. per unit)	20 (2,000 sq. ft. per unit)
Density (Units per Acre)		103	43	21
Parking			190 (2 spaces/unit)	190 (2 spaces/unit)

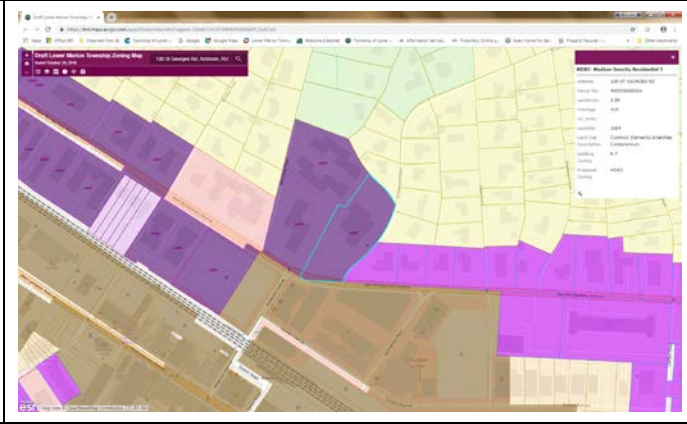


410 W. Lancaster Avenue, Haverford: Casa Del Sol

Year Built: 1925-1926

Parking: Garage & Small Surface Lot

Lot Area	43,560 sq. ft. 1 acre	Existing Conditions	Existing Zoning Requirements	Proposed Zoning Requirements
			R6A	MDR3
Height		3 Stories	6 stories max.	5 stories max.
Units (Lot Area per Unit)		88 (495 sq. ft. per unit)	14 (3,000 sq. ft. per unit)	21 (2,000 sq. ft. per unit)
Density (Units per Acre)		88	14	21
Parking			176 (2 spaces/unit)	176 (2 spaces/unit)

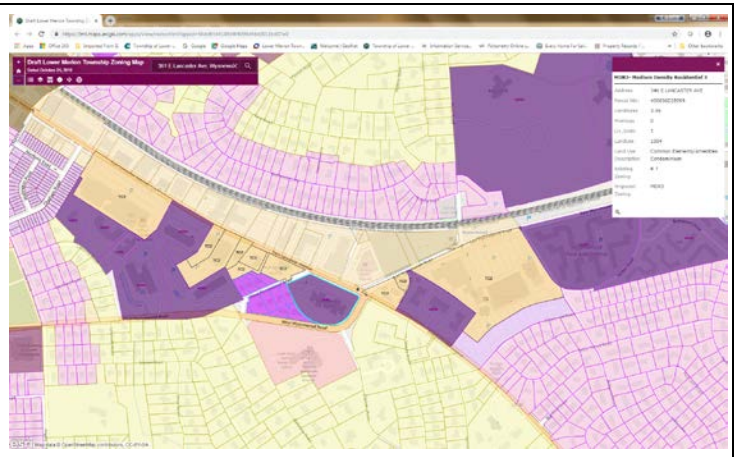


100 St. Georges Road, Ardmore

Year Built: 2017

Parking: Surface Lot/Garage

Lot Area	93,654 sq. ft. 2.1 acre	Existing Conditions	Existing Zoning Requirements	Proposed Zoning Requirements
			R7	MDR3
Height		3 Stories	6 stories max.	5 stories max.
Units (Lot Area per Unit)		31 (3,021 sq. ft. per unit)	37 (2,500 sq. ft. per unit)	47 (2,000 sq. ft. per unit)
Density (Units per Acre)		14	17	22
Parking			62 (2 spaces/unit)	62 (2 spaces/unit)



346 E Lancaster Avenue, Wynnewood: Wynnewood Plaza

Year Built: 1945

Parking: Surface Lot/Garage

Lot Area	148,104 sq. ft. 3.4 acre	Existing Conditions	Existing Zoning Requirements	Proposed Zoning Requirements
			R7	MDR3
Height		6 Stories	6 stories max.	5 stories max.
Units (Lot Area per Unit)		83 (1,784 sq. ft. per unit)	59 (2,500 sq. ft. per unit)	74 (2,000 sq. ft. per unit)
Density (Units per Acre)		24	17	22
Parking			166 (2 spaces/unit)	166 (2 spaces/unit)

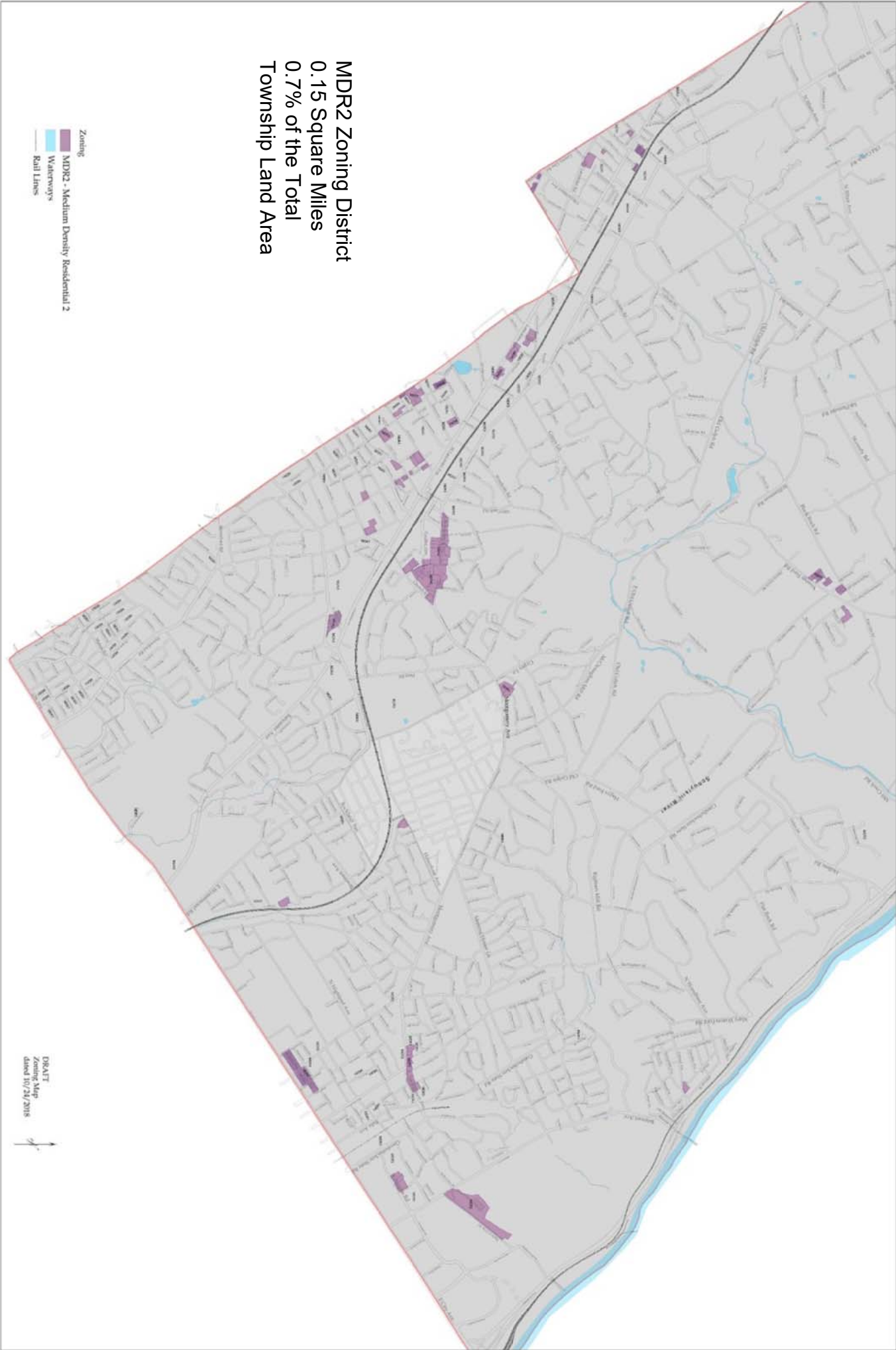
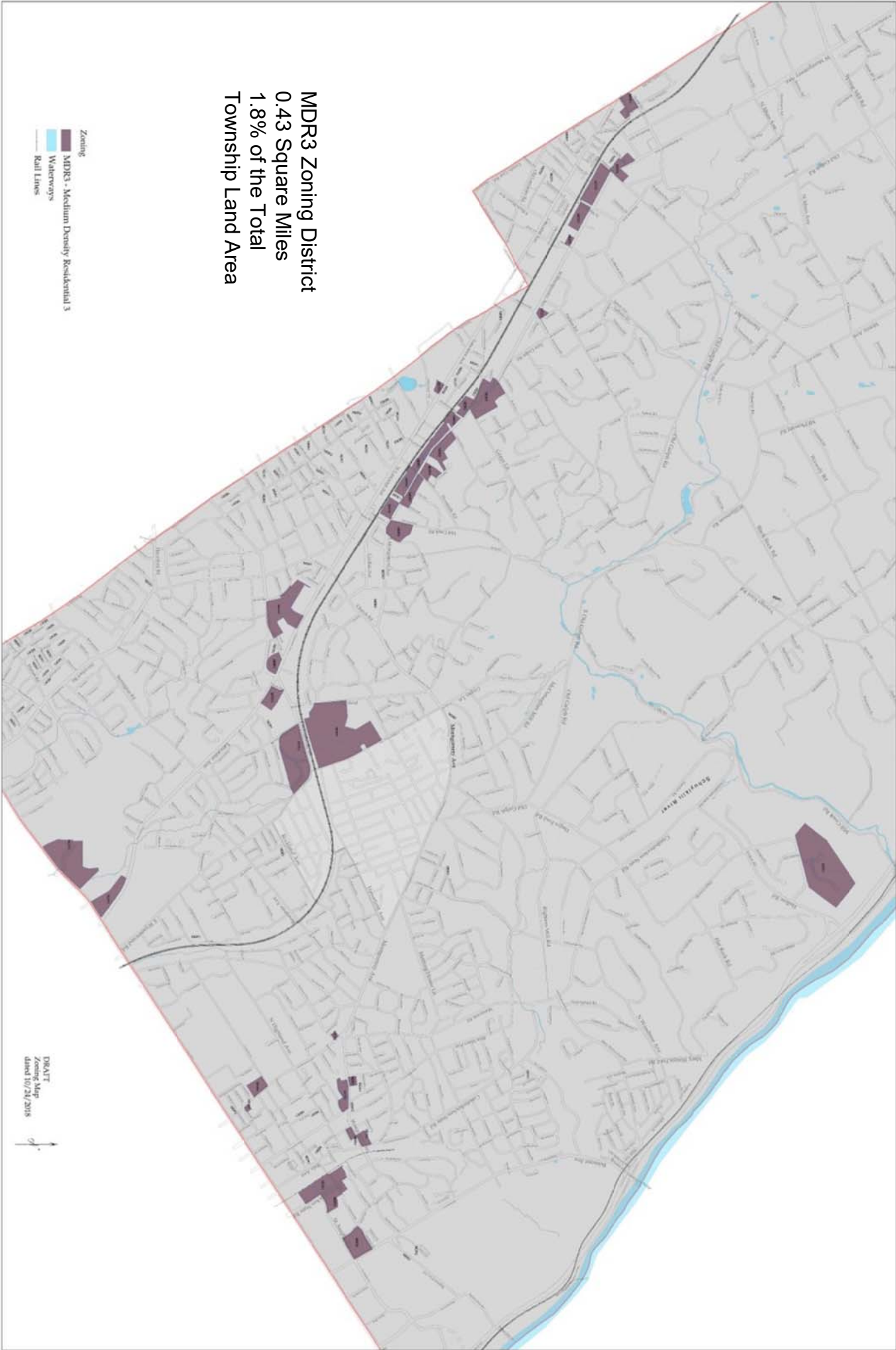
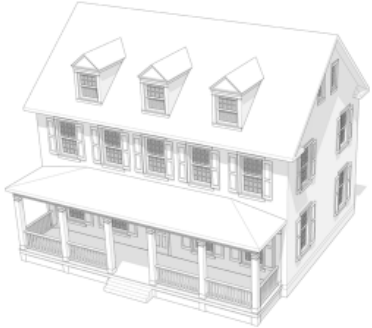


Exhibit B: MDR Zoning Districts Map



		Medium Density Residential Zoning Requirements: <u>Single Family</u> (Single Family Detached)					
		Existing Zoning			Proposed Zoning (Edits)		
	Zoning	R6	R6A	R7	MDR1	MDR2	MDR3
Lot Dimension	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	5,000	5,000	5,000	4,000	3,000	3,000
	Units/ Acre	8.7	8.7	8.7	10.8	14.5	14.5
	Min. Lot Width (ft.)	50	50	50	40	30	30 ¹
Bulk/Coverage	Max. Lot Coverage (%)	40%	40%	40%	-	-	-
	Max. Impervious (%)	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
	Min. Primary Frontage (%)	-	-	-	60%	60%	60%
	Max. Height (ft.)	35 ft/ 3 stories	35 ft/ 3 stories	35 ft/ 3 stories	2 stories up to 35 ft.	2 stories up to 35 ft	2 stories up to 35 ft ²
Setback	Min. Front Setback (ft.)	20	20	20	10 min. / 20 max.	10 min. / 20 max.	10 min. / 20 max.
	Min. Side Setback (ft.)	8' min/ 20' agg. ³	8' min/ 20' agg. ⁴	8' min/ 20' agg. ⁵	5	5	5 ⁶
	Min. Rear Setback (ft.)	25	25	25	25	25	25

¹ Previous Listed as Not provided: MDR2 has 30 ft. for single family and Townhouse/Rowhouse requires 20 ft.

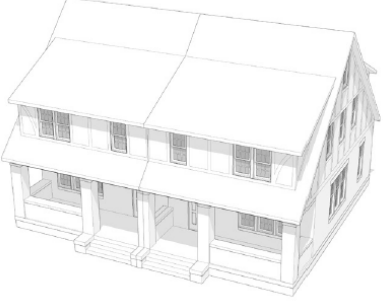
² 5 stories max. with a front step back of 15 feet after the 3rd floor for a Multi-family building. Add in Single Family Height form.

³ There shall be two side yards, one on each side of the principal building, together having an aggregate width of 20 feet, but neither of which shall be less than eight feet wide.

⁴ There shall be two side yards, one on each side of the principal building, together having an aggregate width of 20 feet, but neither of which shall be less than eight feet wide.

⁵ There shall be two side yards, one on each side of the principal building, together having an aggregate width of 20 feet, but neither of which shall be less than eight feet wide.

⁶ Previous listed as Not provided: Add in 5 ft for single family and Townhouse/Rowhouse requires 0'-5'

		Medium Density Residential Zoning Requirements: <u>Twin</u> (Single Family Semidetached)					
		Existing Zoning			Proposed Zoning (Edits)		
	Zoning	R6	R6A	R7	MDR1	MDR2	MDR3
Lot Dimension	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	3,000 per unit	3,000 per unit	3,000 per unit	4,000	2,000	2,000
	Units/Acre	14.5	14.5	14.5	10.8	21.8	21.8
	Min. Lot Width (ft.)	20	30	30	40	30 ⁷	30 ⁸
Bulk/Coverage	Max. Lot Coverage (%)	40%	40%	40%	-	-	-
	Max. Impervious (%)	50%	50%	50%	50%	50% ⁹	50% ¹⁰
	Min. Primary Frontage (%)	-	-	-	60%	60%	60%
	Max. Height (ft.)	35 ft/ 3 stories	35 ft/ 3 stories	35 ft/ 3 stories	2 stories up to 35 ft.	2 stories up to 35 ft.	2 stories up to 35 ft. ¹¹
Setback	Min. Front Setback (ft.)	20	20	20	10 min. / 20 max.	10 min. / 20 max.	10 min. / 20 max.
	Min. Side Setback (ft.)	One 10' side yard	One 10' side yard	One 10' side yard	0 or 5	0 or 5	0 or 5 ¹²
	Min. Rear Setback (ft.)	25	25	25	25	25	25

⁷ Not provided: Single Family requires 30 ft. and Townhouse/Rowhouse requires 20 ft.

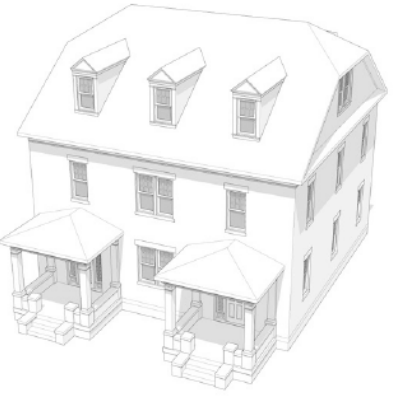
⁸ Not provided: Townhouse/Rowhouse requires 20 ft. and Multi-Family requires 75 ft.

⁹ Not provided: Single Family permits 50% and Townhouse/Rowhouse/ Multi-Family permits 70%

¹⁰ Not provided: Single Family permits 50% and Townhouse/Rowhouse/ Multi-Family permits 70%

¹¹ 5 stories max. with a front step back of 15 feet after the 3rd floor for a Multi-family building

¹² Not provided: Multi-Family requires 10' min (15' if the building is over 3 stories) and Townhouse/Rowhouse requires 0'-5'

		Medium Density Residential Zoning Requirements- <u>DUPLEX</u> (Two-Family Detached Dwellings)					
		Existing Zoning			Proposed Zoning (Edits)		
	Zoning	R6	R6A	R7	MDR1	MDR2	MDR3
Lot Dimension	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	3,000 per unit	3,000 per unit	2,500 per unit	4,000 per unit	2,000 per unit	2,000 per unit
	Units/ Acre	14.5	14.5	17.4	10.8	21.8	21.8
	Min. Lot Width (ft.)	60	60	50	40	30 ¹³	30 ¹⁴
Bulk/Coverage	Max. Lot Coverage (%)	40%	40%	40%	-	-	-
	Max. Impervious (%)	50%	50%	50%	50%	50% ¹⁵	50% ¹⁶
	Min. Primary Frontage (%)	-	-	-	60%	60%	60%
	Max. Height (ft.)	35 ft/ 3 stories	35 ft/ 3 stories	35 ft/ 3 stories	2 stories up to 35 ft.	3 stories	3 stories ¹⁷
Setback	Min. Front Setback (ft.)	20	30	30	10 min. / 20 max.	10 min. / 20 max.	10 ft. min. / 20 ft. max.
	Min. Side Setback (ft.)	10 & 10	10 & 10	10 & 10	0 or 5	0 or 5	0 or 5 ¹⁸
	Min. Rear Setback (ft.)	25	25	25	25	25	25

¹³ Previous Not provided: Single Family requires 30 ft.

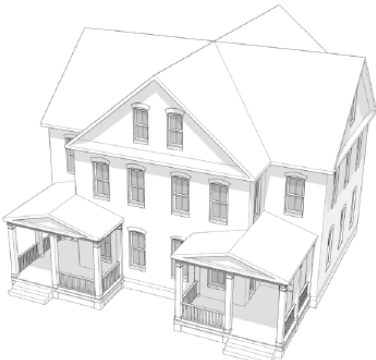
¹⁴ Previous Not provided: Single Family requires 30 ft.

¹⁵ Previous Not provided: Single Family permits 50% and Townhouse/Rowhouse/ Multi-Family permits 70%

¹⁶ Previous Not provided: Single Family permits 50% and Townhouse/Rowhouse/ Multi-Family permits 70%

¹⁷ 5 stories max. with a front step back of 15 feet after the 3rd floor applies to a Multi-Family

¹⁸ 0 feet with an attached building, 5 feet in all other cases.

		Medium Density Residential Zoning Requirements- <u>QUAD</u> (TWO-FAMILY SEMIDETACHED DWELLING)					
		Existing Zoning			Proposed Zoning (Edits)		
	Zoning	R6	R6A	R7	MDR1	MDR2	MDR3
Lot Dimension	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Not Permitted	2,500 per unit	2,500 per unit	4,000 per unit	2,000 per unit	2,000 per unit
	Units/ Acre		17.4	17.4	10.8	21.8	21.8
	Min. Lot Width (ft.)		35	35	40	30 ¹⁹	30 ²⁰
Bulk/Coverage	Max. Lot Coverage (%)		40%	40%	-	-	-
	Max. Impervious (%)		50%	50%	50%	50% ²¹	50% ²²
	Min. Primary Frontage (%)		-	-	60%	60%	60%
	Max. Height (ft.)		35 ft/ 3 stories	35 ft/ 3 stories	2 stories up to 35 ft.	3 stories	3 stories ²³
Setback	Min. Front Setback (ft.)		30	30	10 min. / 20 max.	10 min. / 20 max.	10 ft. min. / 20 ft. max.
	Min. Side Setback (ft.)		One 15' side yard	One 15' side yard	0 or 5	0 or 5	0 or 5 ²⁴
	Min. Rear Setback (ft.)		25	25	25	25	25

¹⁹ Single Family requires 30 ft. and Townhouse/Rowhouse requires 20 ft.

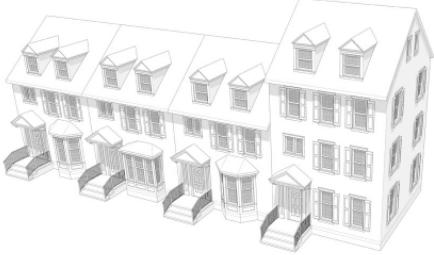
²⁰ Townhouse/Rowhouse requires 20 ft. per dwelling and Large Multi-Family requires 100 ft.

²¹ Single Family permits 50% and Townhouse/Rowhouse/ Multi-Family permits 70%

²² Single Family permits 50% and Townhouse/Rowhouse/ Multi-Family permits 70%

²³ 5 stories max. with a front step back of 15 feet after the 3rd floor for Multi-family

²⁴ 0 feet with an attached building, 5 feet in all other cases

		Medium Density Residential Zoning Requirements- <u>Rowhouse</u> (Townhouse)					
		Existing Zoning			Proposed Zoning (Edits)		
	Zoning	R6	R6A	R7	MDR1	MDR2	MDR3
Lot Dimension	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Not Permitted	Not Permitted	4,000 per unit	Not Permitted	2,000 per unit	2,000 per unit
	Units/ Acre			10.8		21.8	21.8
	Min. Lot Width (ft.)			32 ²⁵		60 ²⁶	60 ²⁷
Bulk/Coverage	Max. Lot Coverage (%)			30%		-	-
	Max. Impervious (%)			40%		70%	70%
	Min. Primary Frontage (%)			-		60%	60%
	Max. Height (ft.)			35 ²⁸		3 stories	3 stories
Setback	Min. Front Setback (ft.)			30		10 min. / 20 max.	10 ft. min. / 20 ft. max.
	Min. Side Setback (ft.)			2 side yards: 25' or 25% of the lot width ²⁹		0 or 5	0 or 5 ³⁰
	Min. Rear Setback (ft.)			25		25	25

²⁵ The zoning code requires 125' for a townhouse development- a townhouse consists of a minimum four units (125'/4=31.2')

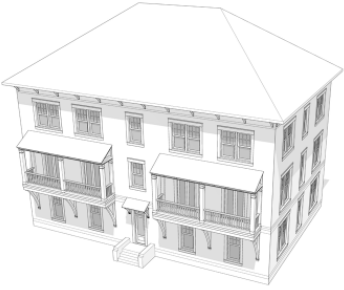
²⁶ The edit to draft code requires 20' per unit and each rowhouse development must contain a minimum of three units (20'*3=60')

²⁷ The edit to draft code requires 20' per unit and each rowhouse development must contain a minimum of three units (20'*3=60')

²⁸ The height of any townhouse shall not exceed 35 feet. The maximum height for a townhouse with a roof slope of 6/12 or less shall be 30 feet. Flat-roofed buildings shall have a parapet. The maximum height of the building including the parapet shall not exceed 30 feet.

²⁹ Whichever is smaller

³⁰ 0 feet with an attached building, 5 feet in all other cases.

		Medium Density Residential Zoning Requirements- <u>Multi-Family Small & Large</u> (Apartment House)					
		Existing Zoning			Proposed Zoning (Edits)		
	Zoning	R6	R6A ³¹	R7	MDR1	MDR2 ³²	MDR3
Lot Dimension	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Not Permitted	3,000 per unit	2,500 per unit	Not Permitted	2,000 per unit	2,000 per unit
	Units/ Acre		14.5	17.4		21.8	21.8
	Min. Lot Width (ft.)		150	125		75 ³³	100
Bulk/Coverage	Max. Lot Coverage (%)		25%	30%		-	-
	Max. Impervious (%)		30%	40%		70%	70%
	Min. Primary Frontage (%)		-	-		60%	60%
	Max. Height (ft.)		50' ³⁴	65' ³⁵		3 stories	3-5 stories ³⁶
Setback	Min. Front Setback (ft.)		30'	30'		10' min. / 20' max.	10' min. / 20' max.
	Min. Side Setback (ft.)		30 ft wide or 25% of the lot width ³⁷	20' & 20'		10 ³⁸	10 ³⁹
	Min. Rear Setback (ft.)		35	25		25	25

³¹ Apartment House Use requires Conditional Use approval.

³² MDR2 does not permit a Large Multi-family, only a Small Multi-family with a maximum of six unit in a building.

³³ Previous Not provided: Propose a 75 ft for the small multi-family building and increase Large Multi-family to 100 ft in MDR3.

³⁴ If the apartment house exceeds 30 feet in height, and the portion of the building over 30 feet does not consist solely of a roof with a slope of at least six units vertical for each 12 units horizontal, the following dimensional adjustments shall be made: The side and rear yard setback, and the required buffer area, shall be increased three feet for every one foot by which the building exceeds 30 feet in height & The maximum permitted building area and impervious surface percentages shall be decreased by 1/2 of a percentage point for every one foot or portion thereof by which the building exceeds thirty-feet in height.

³⁵ The depth of the front, side and rear yard setbacks shall be increased one foot for each foot or portion thereof by which the building exceeds 35 feet in height.

³⁶ 5 stories max. with a front step back of 15 feet after the 3rd floor

³⁷ Whichever is smaller

³⁸ Propose a 10' min, which is similar to the requirement for a large multi-family

³⁹ Requires 10' min (15' if the building is over 3 stories)



NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

What are Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs)?

NCDs are neighborhoods that have been identified as having a consistent form, whether in terms of scale, development pattern, age, or density. The main intent of designating areas as NCDs is to maintain those distinctive qualities, and as a result preserve their historical significance and architectural integrity through zoning regulation and design education. NCDs will not stop demolition, but they will control the form, scale, and appearance of new construction in order to protect the character and value of surrounding properties.

The **standards** are the requirements that modifications to buildings in an NCD will have to adhere to.

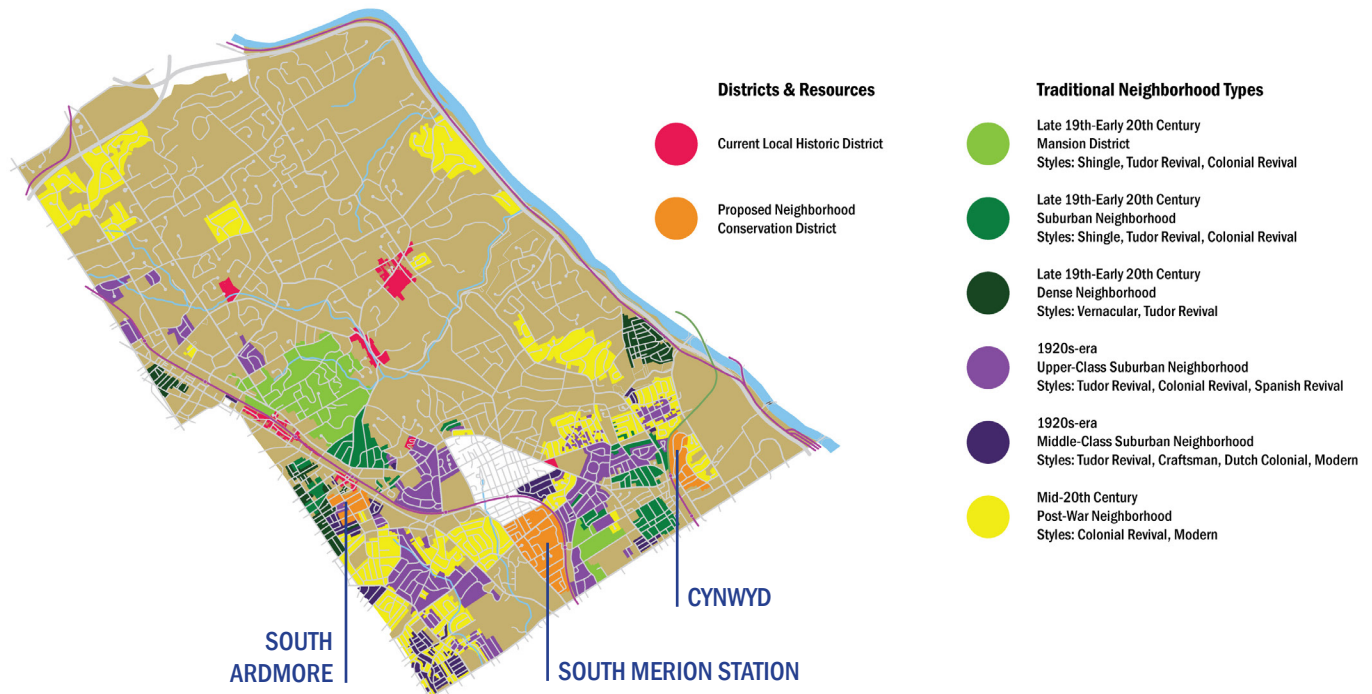
The **Design Guidelines** is a document showing visual examples of the standards and provides other recommendations for the treatment of properties within NCD boundaries to keep the neighborhood character intact.

The Review Process

- An application for a building permit triggers review of exterior modifications that are visible from the public way.
- Township Staff reviews application for compliance with NCD standards.
- Staff meets with applicant to review how proposal adheres to the Design Guidelines.
- If Staff determines that standards have been followed, application will be passed on for the normal review of a Township building inspector.
- If proposal does not comply, Staff will work with applicant to bring proposal into compliance.
- If a resolution cannot be reached, proposal will go to the Township's Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) for review. HARB's task would be to determine if the proposed modification matches the prevailing character of the NCD, even if it may not conform with the guidelines.
- If applicant does not agree with HARB's determination, it can be appealed to the Board of Commissioners.



This map shows several potential future NCDs identified by the Township. Their boundaries were chosen because of their continuity, era of development, and historical development trends. They are color-coded by typology, ranging from late Victorian “mansion districts” to middle-class neighborhoods of the 1920s and mid-century subdivision developments. While neighborhoods may be chosen primarily for their historical significance and integrity (like Historic Districts), any traditional neighborhood with a consistent theme and pattern might qualify as an NCD. Eventually each neighborhood typology will have its own unique set of guidelines reflecting the architectural elements that the communities sharing a color on the map have in common.



What is the Township Proposing?

Along with the Design Guidelines, the creation of three pilot NCDs is proposed at this time: South Ardmore, South Merion Station, and Cynwyd. These three areas represent some of the Township’s most intact and architecturally consistent residential neighborhoods built at the turn of the 20th century.

How are NCDs Different from Historic Districts?

Applications in NCDs can be approved administratively by Staff if they are found to comply with the Design Guidelines, while all applications in Historic Districts must first go to the HARB. Though demolition of existing structures in NCDs is discouraged, it cannot be prohibited. The main goal of NCD oversight is to ensure that the scale and character of the district is maintained, including that of any new construction.

What Comes Next?

The NCDs are one of the new aspects of the Zoning Code update, which is expected to be adopted this year. After that time, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) can evaluate the proposed districts and affirm the Township’s proposed boundaries as early as Fall 2019.



**LOWER MERION
TOWNSHIP
BUILDING
AND PLANNING**

Questions?

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