

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Building & Planning Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Zoning Revisions

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Date: May 31, 2019

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

The Board will review revisions to the draft Zoning Code. No formal action is required by the Board at this time, but any direction provided will be incorporated into the 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:

The Township received a Preliminary Draft Zoning Code from DPZ Associates in October 2018. Since the October delivery, the B&P has held 5 public workshops to review the details and policy implications of the Draft Code. Additionally, staff has engaged in an extensive public outreach process to solicit comments, questions and suggestions regarding the Draft provisions. The 6-month public engagement process included meetings with Ward Commissioners, Civic Associations, stakeholders and property owners and generated over 500 suggested substantive questions/edits to the document.

Wednesday's workshop is the second of three scheduled meetings by the Building and Planning since Commissioner Bernheim announced the revised schedule for adoption of the zoning code update in September. The revised schedule contemplates the authorization to advertise for adoption on July 31st. If authorization is approved, a Public Hearing for adoption of the Updated Zoning Code has been scheduled for Wednesday September 18th. The Building & Planning Committee met on May 22nd to review revisions to Articles 3, 4, 5 & 11. Two public review meetings have also been scheduled with the Planning Commission on June 3rd and June 24th, if needed.

Wednesday's meeting will focus on revisions to portions of Articles 6, a completed Article 7 & 8. Revisions to these Articles have been provided to the Committee and posted to the Township's website.

Pages that are revised are marked with a 'May 31st, 2019' revision date. Remaining Articles and sections will be updated and provided to the Building & Planning Committee, as well posted to the website, as they are completed. A chart indicating how public comments were addressed will also be posted to the website.

Articles 6, 7, 8, are supplemental articles dealing with Special Districts, Overlay Districts, and Parking. These Articles compliment the previously reviewed Articles 3, 4, and 5 which relate to form, density and use.

In anticipation of Wednesday's Workshop staff would like to highlight the following key revisions and to highlight additional items for policy direction:

ARTICLE 6. Special Districts.

As previously discussed, ROHO and City Avenue District will require Master Plans to better direct future growth and ensure that development aligns with community objectives. Staff reviewed and revised the draft language to ensure consistency within the code, specifically with Article 3 (form standards).

Key Revisions

- Special Districts have been assigned individual names relating to geography, rather than SD1-SD6:
 - SD1 = MC (Medical District)
 - SD2= BMMD (Bryn Mawr Medical District)
 - SD3= ROHO (Rock Hill Road District)
 - SD4 = BMVD (Bryn Mawr Village District)
 - SD5= CAD (RCA, BCR & BV) (City Avenue District, Regional Center Area, Bala Cynwyd Retail District & Bala Village)
- MC & BMMD: These sections have been directly translated into the draft code. Staff has formatted these sections to be consistent with the proposed code.
- ROHO: This section has been reworked to align the ROHO District with the form and bulk/area requirements of other commercial districts, while considering the unique geographical characteristic of this corridor.
 - ROHO is now a district rather than an overlay. The previous overlay permitted development to the underlying general commercial standards by conditional use and required form standards. The draft code requires form standards and specific use standards.
 - Residential development in the district has been disincentivized from current provisions by limiting residential to a maximum of two stories within a mixed use building.
 - The architectural standards have been aligned with those in the commercial district to simplify review requirements and ensure pedestrian scaled development.
 - Parking and loading requirements have been aligned with those contained within Article 8.
- CAD: The scope of this project did not include substantive changes to this key district. Change made by the Board last December are being incorporated into the draft. Staff is continuing to reformat these sections to be consistent with other articles in the code. No

changes to density or use will be proposed by staff. Staff anticipates that revisions to this district will be completed and released in the coming weeks.

ARTICLE 7- Conservation & Preservation Overlays

Key Revisions

- HROD Historic Resources Overlay District: This section been reorganized to include tables and regulations standards in a form consistent with the larger document.
 - Historic Home Occupation and Accessory Dwelling Units are regulated uses, no longer requiring Conditional Use.
 - Single-Family to Multi-Family Conversion Use has been permitted by Conditional Use.
 - Non-Residential to Multi-Family Conversion Use has been modified. The successful existing provisions permitting the conversions of historic clubs, lodges, and religious uses has been expanded to all non-residential uses.
 - The previous Home for Aged use has been updated to reflect current senior housing needs and reflect neighborhood context. The revisions include:
 - Requirement of a minimum of five acres with open space preservation.
 - Requirements for a minimum number of units within the historic structure.
- Open Space Preservation District:
 - The age targeted TDR use been removed.

ARTICLE 8- Parking: This Article has been updated to reflect changes to district uses and the standards have been revised to reflect current parking requirements:

- Standardized parking requirements across districts
- Generally parking standards are conservative; however, the draft includes reductions through reserve parking.
- Staff notes that many of the design standards proposed in the original draft will be migrated to the SALDO.

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 revised articles of the draft code and the topics in this Issues Briefing.