

APPENDIX C

ZONING DISTRICTS

Existing Zoning Districts

Land use within the Township is driven mainly by the zoning districts that regulate the uses permitted on any particular parcel of land. This is further driven by the availability of infrastructure such as public sewer and water services, as well as the roadway system. Whitemarsh Township’s Zoning Ordinance currently provides for many different types of residential and non-residential development through nineteen zoning districts.

Below is a summary of the existing zoning districts in Whitemarsh Township. The zoning districts regulate permitted uses, setbacks and densities. The Whitemarsh Township Zoning Ordinance provides detailed information about permitted activities related to each use, as summarized below:

AAAA, AAA, AA, A and B Residential Districts – The AAAA, AAA, AA, A and B Residential Districts are intended to provide single family detached homes on minimum lot sizes (see description below), agricultural or horticultural uses, except the commercial keeping or handling of farm stock or poultry, commercial greenhouses or establishments for the sale of farm or horticultural products.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT MINIMUM LOT SIZE	
District	Minimum Lot Size
AAAA	90,000 square foot (2.07 acre) minimum lot size
AAA	43,560 square foot (1.0 acre) minimum lot size
AA	30,000 square foot (0.7 acre) minimum lot size
A	15,000 square foot (0.34 acre) minimum lot size
B	10,000 square foot (0.23 acre) minimum lot size

By special exception, these districts permit public utility facilities, provided that the exterior architectural

design is of a residential character in conformity with all the regulations of the district, and shall at no time be used for the storage of equipment, vehicles or other commercial purposes. Passenger stations for public transportation are also permitted by special exception in these districts. In the AAAA and AAA districts, cluster developments are permitted as a conditional use.

C Residential District (Neighborhood Preservation) – The intent of the C Residential district is to encourage preservation of the existing residential character of the Spring Mill area which is essentially developed and contains a mix of single-family detached dwellings and single-family attached dwellings on smaller lot sizes than those found elsewhere in the Township.

LR and HR Apartment House Districts – The purpose of the LR and HR districts is to encourage the logical and timely development of land for apartment purposes in accordance with the objective, policies and proposals of the Comprehensive or general plan and Zoning Ordinance. This district is intended to ensure that proposed development will constitute a residential environment of sustained desirability.

AD Attached Dwelling District – The AD Residential District provides for single-family detached homes on minimum lot sizes (2,200 s.f. minimum), attached dwellings, combinations of attached and detached dwellings and outdoor recreational facilities and open space for the use of the dwelling occupants, their guests and/or other residents of the Township. Permitted

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uses also include agricultural or horticultural uses, except the commercial keeping or handling of farm stock or poultry, and except commercial greenhouses or establishments for the sale of farm or horticultural products. By special exception, this district permits public utility facilities, provided that the exterior architectural design is of a residential character in conformity with all the regulations of the district, and shall at no time be used for the storage of equipment, vehicles or other commercial purposes. Passenger stations for public transportation are also permitted by special exception in this district. The minimum lot size in this district is 2,200 square feet. All attached homes shall have a private yard, patio or outdoor area of at least 400 square feet. Any development shall also set aside at least 15% of the tract area as open space. The district also has additional building arrangement, parking, natural features protection and landscaping and screening requirements.

CCRC Continuing-Care Retirement Community District – This district is intended to provide suitable areas within the Township to accommodate senior housing, and to provide appropriate design standards for continuing-care retirement communities. A development within this district must be at least 90 acres.

MHP Mobile Home Park District – This district provides for mobile home parks, mobile homes for residential uses, offices used in the sale of mobile homes and attached dwellings at a density of no more than 6

dwelling units/acre with a requirement to provide at least 35% open space.

AR Administration and Research District – The intention of the Administration and Research District is to provide zones for administrative or professional offices, laboratories, conference centers and public and private golf courses, with open space and landscaping in keeping with the character of adjacent districts.

SC Shopping Center District – The purpose of the Shopping Center district is to provide for retail, restaurant, office and similar uses while establishing reasonable standards for building size, dimensions, traffic patterns and other potential impacts associated with Shopping Center uses. This designation also constrains SC districts to uses which are harmonious with the character of adjoining districts.

CLI and CLI-X Campus Limited Industrial Districts – The intent of the Campus Limited Industrial and Campus Limited Industrial-X districts is to provide an area for administrative and executive offices, laboratories, warehousing and light manufacturing while protecting the character and values of the adjoining districts.

CRC Commercial Retail Commercial – The Commercial Retail district provides for the establishment of planned commercial districts.

EX Extraction District – This district is intended to establish reasonable standards for the height and size of buildings, the area and dimensions of yards and

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open spaces, and the provision of facilities and operation of industries to minimize traffic congestion, noise, glare, vibration, air pollution, water pollution and fire and safety hazards. This classification is also intended to promote the rehabilitation of areas formerly used for extraction purposes once the extraction use is ended into residential uses compatible with neighboring properties.

Floodplain Conservation District - The goal of the Floodplain Conservation District is to protect natural resources located within a flood plain. The district prohibits most new development and severely restricts existing uses and development to those actions that will not adversely effect either the floodplain or waters herein.

HVY and HVY-X Heavy and Heavy X Industrial Districts – The purpose of the HVY and HVY-X district is to provide for heavy industrial and similar uses. Such developments must minimize adverse impacts on the surrounding areas, the highway system and the environment.

INST Institutional District – The Institutional District is to provides for suitable areas, as well as appropriate design standards, for institutional uses while minimizing their impact on the surrounding districts.

LIM and LIM-X Limited and Limited-X Industrial Districts – The purpose of the Limited Industrial and Limited Industrial-X districts is to provide for media production facilities, distribution plants, power stations and other light industrial and similar uses. Such developments must minimize adverse impacts on the surrounding areas and the highway system

environment, as well as be consistent with the character of the surrounding districts.

RCCD Riparian Corridor Conservation District

– The intent of this district is to establish reasonable standards and controls for governing the conservation, management, disturbance, and restoration of riparian corridors in conformance with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and Open Space Plan, and the objectives of Section 116-257 of the Zoning Ordinance., which are to establish reasonable standards and controls for governing the conservation, management, disturbance, and restoration of riparian corridors in conformance with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, Open Space and Environmental Resources Protection Plan and nine specific objectives.

REC Recreational District – The intent of the Recreational District is to provide suitable areas within the Township to accommodate spacious recreational uses and provide appropriate design standards for spacious recreational uses. Permitted uses include park facilities, country clubs and golf courses, museums and cemeteries, while minimizing their impact on the surrounding districts.

Riverfront Redevelopment District – Whitemarsh Township is drafting zoning regulations that will likely propose to control development along the Schuylkill Riverfront and preserve sensitive natural areas and public access to the Schuylkill River. This ordinance will likely be complementary to the riverfront preservation efforts taking place in the Borough of Conshohocken

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and may attempt to continue the significant green ribbon buffer along the Schuylkill River shoreline.

Proposed Zoning Legislation

Conservation Design Overlay District (Growing Greener) - In 2005, the Township drafted a conservation design overlay for the AAAA, AAA, AA and A Residential Districts which is designed to provide development design flexibility and preserve significant tracts of open space. The overlay district designates portions of each tract within the overlay as greenway lands, which can be used only for conservation and/or open space purposes, such as pastureland, forestry, common open space, or active recreation areas. Applicable tracts within the overlay district are given use options which provide varying degrees of open space preservation based upon calculations provided in the ordinance. The ordinance requires between 50% and 80% of the land to be preserved as open space, depending on the zoning district and the development option utilized. This ordinance is being proposed in an attempt to preserve the natural resources of the Township in the face of increasing development pressure in areas that are important for natural area conservation and resource protection.