



PLANNING DEPARTMENT
Cumberland County

Cumberland County Review Report

Cumberland County Planning Department
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Recommendation: Approval With Comments

<i>Name of Amendment:</i>				
Redevelopment Opportunity (RO) Overlay District				
<i>Municipality:</i>	<i>Date Received:</i>	<i>Date Reviewed:</i>	<i>Reviewed By:</i>	<i>Checked By:</i>
Middlesex Township	1/6/2023	2/16/2023	SH, EG, KS	Planning Commission
<i>Type of Amendment:</i>				
Zoning Map and Text Amendment				

Explanation of Amendment:

Middlesex Township has submitted an amendment to create a revitalization overlay district. The overlay will include optional use and design requirements that are designed to encourage reinvestment, revitalization and overall enhancement of the miracle mile corridor. The existing zoning ordinance was written in 1989. Middlesex Township is currently in the process of writing a new zoning ordinance and creating a new zoning map.

The township has also submitted a proposed revision to the Middlesex Township Comprehensive Plan. The revision will create a redevelopment opportunity overlay on the future land use map.

<i>Consistency with County Comprehensive Plan:</i>	
AMENDMENT IS CONSISTENT	AMENDMENT IS NOT CONSISTENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The county plan recommends implementing an industrial and commercial sites renewal program to encourage redevelopment of industrial and commercial sites (grow page 5). Development should be encouraged in areas already served by highway, sewer, water and utility infrastructure (grow page 24). Development projects are encouraged to utilize flexible parking regulations to decrease land needs and costs of new development (grow page 24). The miracle mile has been designated as an opportunity area on the Cumberland County Future Land Use Map. The plan recommends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The northwest corner of the RO overlay is shown in the agriculture rural character area. A parcel along the southwest RO overlay is shown in the residential character area. The plan encourages the protection of important natural features, including floodplains and riparian buffers, using local planning tools (conserve page 5). Portions of the northern and southern boundaries of the overlay occur within the floodplains of the Conodoguinet Creek and Letort Spring Run. These are indicated as conservation character areas and are included as major greenways of importance in the Land Partnerships Plan.

<i>Consistency with County Comprehensive Plan:</i>	
AMENDMENT IS CONSISTENT	AMENDMENT IS NOT CONSISTENT
support of the development of opportunity areas throughout the county (grow page 27).	

The Middlesex Township Comprehensive Plan was adopted on February 5, 2003. The county has reviewed 2 revisions to the comprehensive plan in 2022 and another amendment is proposed in 2023. Significant changes and growth have occurred in Middlesex Township and Cumberland County since 2003. The plan is no longer applicable to the proposed growth and development in the township. CCPD recommends the township begin the process of writing a new comprehensive plan with updated goals and a new future land use map that will guide growth and development.

Administrative Comments and Recommendations:

1. The township is currently in the process of writing a new zoning ordinance and zoning map. The township should work with the applicant to add the RO overlay district to the new ordinance rather than amending a zoning ordinance that is 33 years old and will likely be repealed in 2023.
2. Any adopted language should be included in the draft of the new zoning ordinance.

Technical Comments and Recommendations:

3. Page 4, section 23.01. The purpose of the RO overlay is to encourage reinvestment, revitalization and overall enhancement of the Miracle Mile corridor. The focus of the overlay should be on redevelopment of existing unattractive properties. The overlay district should encompass areas that are already occupied by buildings that need reinvestment or revitalization. Agricultural and open space areas should not be included in the revitalization overlay area.
4. Page 5, section 23.03.B.1 (residential uses). The language in section 23.03.B references the requirements in article XIV and includes the following phrase, ‘only when specifically listed below’.
The uses in section 23.03.B.1 should refer to the specific uses in Article XIV (see section 14.38 of the zoning ordinance which is titled ‘multiple dwellings’). For consistency and clarity, CCPD recommends changing the use to ‘multiple dwellings including apartment, row or attached and town house dwellings’.
5. Page 5, section 23.03.B.2. The asterisk next to the nonresidential uses indicates that a setback of 100 feet and a 50-foot-wide landscape planting strip is required from any building containing a dwelling unit. The proposed ordinance should be clarified. Does the asterisk apply to all of the uses in the section, or just the use next to the asterisk? For example. Does the requirement in section hh apply to only distribution centers, or everything listed in section hh (see below)?
 - hh. wholesaling, storing and warehousing, including lumber yards, building contractors, and farm supply and building material yards, and distribution centers. *

The additional setback should be required for each of these uses. For clarity, CCPD recommends an asterisk next to the number for each use or listing these uses in a separate section that requires the additional setbacks and screening.
6. Pages 5-8, section 23.03.B.2. Existing zoning ordinance article XIV states that “the provisions of the ordinance shall be subject to such exceptions, additions or modifications as herein provided by the following supplementary regulations.” This suggests that all provisions of the ordinance are applicable to individual land uses as described.

7. Page 8, section 23.03.B.2.FF. Vehicle sales and services should reference sections 14.46.B.3 through 14.46.B.7).
8. Page 9, section 23.04.B. The narrow minimum lot width (50 feet) could allow for flag lots that serve major developments. The township should consider a wider lot width requirement that will enhance the corridor and be consistent with the purpose of the RO overlay.
9. Page 11, section 23.05. The parking analysis option for determining the minimum number of parking spaces should be approved by the township engineer or the board of supervisors. CCPD recommends that a requirement for approval be indicated in the proposed language.
10. Page 12, Section 23.06.A.4 (access management). These requirements are listed in the design criteria which appear to be optional. The access management language should be required for development in the RO overlay.
11. Page 12, section 23.06.A.4. The township should require secondary streets, rather than shared driveways. The secondary streets should be designed to township specifications, dedicated and maintained by the township. All developments in the revitalization overlay should be required to utilize the secondary streets to limit driveways accessing the Harrisburg Pike.
12. Page 12, section 23.06.A.4. It seems like this section intends to limit the driveways accessing the Harrisburg Pike. The section appears to permit an unlimited number of buildings/lots to utilize a shared driveway. Who will enforce the maintenance of these access drives? Are there design specifications?
 - a. Consider limiting shared driveways to within 250 feet of the Harrisburg Pike. Any driveways longer than 250 feet should be a secondary access road designed to township road specification and dedicated to the township.
 - b. Shared driveways longer than 250 feet should be provided with a cul-de-sac meeting the requirements for a cul-de-sac in the subdivision and land development ordinance (section 703.F).
 - c. Driveways serving 2 or more land uses should be constructed or rebuilt to township specification for a street (subdivision and land development ordinance table 703.3).
 - d. Uses proposing heavy vehicle traffic should be required to provide heavy duty pavement (wholesaling, storing, warehousing, distribution centers).
 - e. Page 14, section 23.06.A.4.c. The bonuses for height and impervious cover are unrelated to the access management "incentive". Are the access management sections considered a requirement, or do they need an incentive? CCPD recommends making the access management section a requirement.

Option 23.06.A.4.a(3) appears to describe a situation where compliance with the ordinance is not possible. This situation should require a variance. The applicant should provide proof of the impossibility as a hardship.
 - f. Page 14, section 23.06.A.4.c.(2). The ordinance should be clarified. This incentive allows for the height limitation to be extended by an additional 20 feet. Does the requirement in section 23.04.F still apply? It appears that the minimum yard requirements would have to be increased 1 foot for each additional foot of height.
13. In the proposed overlay district, references occurring in 23.03.B.2 cite some sections from Article XIV, but do not in all cases make citations, nor do they always cite the entire section. For example, 23.03.B.2.HH Distribution Centers cites provisions 14.61.G through 14.61.J but excludes the other subsections in 14.61. Likewise, for Section 23.03.B.2.DD (page 8) why do only some of the self-storage

requirements apply? Many of the other self-storage requirements in section 14.62 (limited stories, hours of operation, external lighting, landscaping) should apply to self-storage in the RO overlay.

All sections should be applicable based on Zoning Ordinance provisions, and the citations should be consistently applied.

14. The township should consider using an official map to locate future driveways.
15. The township should complete a traffic study before enacting the access management requirements. Language should include more than just shared driveways as other opportunities such as secondary roadways could help improve traffic flow and safety in the corridor.
16. The purpose of the RO overlay district is to encourage reinvestment, revitalization and enhancement of the miracle mile corridor. The township should consider adding requirements for streetscapes, pedestrian amenities, landscaping etc. to improve the appearance of the area and encourage pedestrian activity.
17. The proposed zoning map shows the RO overlay district including lands in the floodplain. The areas shown on the floodplain overlay should not be included in the RO overlay district.

“Section 505 (b) and 609 (g) of the Municipalities Planning Code requires that amendments to municipal ordinances be filed with the county planning agency. If this amendment is approved, please forward a final copy to the county planning office so we may update our records.”