

Plans, Master Plans and Amendments

Report to the Board November 30, 2022, through January 11, 2023

‘Municipality	Township of Chester
Document	Sustainable Economic Improvement Plan
Public Hearing	12/13/22
Summary	Examination of existing nonresidential development and recommendations consistent with the Highlands Regional Master Plan economic development policies

- The Chester Township Sustainable Economic Improvement Plan (Plan) has the primary goal of maximizing utilization for the Township’s existing commercial zoning districts, i.e., the B Business District and the LB Limited Business District. This is to be accomplished by eliminating unnecessary restrictions and identifying opportunities for improvements and redevelopment, while also respecting the rural residential character of Chester Township and promoting the goals and policies of the Highlands Regional Master Plan. Roughly 84 percent of the Township is located in the Highlands Preservation Area.
- The Plan describes local demographic, housing and economic conditions. Its primary focus is existing nonresidential development as it relates to current zoning and built conditions, including the values of such properties in each zone. The Plan also describes permitted uses, bulk and design standards for each business district, as well as their relationship to Highlands Land Use Capability Zones and Highlands environmental constraints. Property descriptions for each property in each Business District are included in the Plan appendix.
- The Plan identifies recommendations related to these districts and the individual properties therein. Recommendations include:
 - Specific changes to parcels within these districts to eliminate split lot zoning.
 - Preexisting contractor and retail uses within the LB district are recommended as permitted uses.
 - Restrictions on outdoor dining in the B District and the number of second story apartments that can be developed above an existing uses in the B and LB District are proposed for elimination.
 - The conversion of single-family residential uses to business and professional offices in the LB District is recommended as specifically permitted.
 - Medical offices are recommended as specifically permitted.
 - Changes to relax existing design standards are recommended concerning the number of businesses permitted in a single building and maximum improvement coverage.
 - Standards are proposed to address freestanding signs within the B and LB Districts.
 - Additional design standards are proposed to address the design of buildings and protection of the community’s rural heritage.
- The Plan Appendix includes draft ordinance amendments reflecting the recommendations of the Plan.