

Plans, Master Plans and Amendments

Report to the Board May 11, 2023, through June 7, 2023

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| Municipality | Chester Township |
| Document | Reexamination Report of the Master Plan |
| Adopted | 4/11/23 |
| Summary | Reexamination in accordance with MLUL 40:55D-89 |

- The Chester Township Reexamination Report (Report) is an update to the 2013 Reexamination Report; the last comprehensive revision of the Master Plan was adopted in 2000. The Report identifies the goals of the previous reexamination report and finds that they remain relevant to the Township. Local demographic and socio-economic changes for the period 2000 to 2021 are documented and include, but are not limited to: a decline in population, an increase in median age, a declining rate of dwelling unit growth, a decline in housing values, an increase in rental costs and a rise in household income. Planning changes include adoption of a Housing Element, Sustainable Economic Improvement Plan, and Combe Fill South Area Redevelopment Plan. Also noted are new County Circulation, Land Use and Farmland Preservation Plan elements, changes in the Municipal Land Use Law and new laws related to cannabis, electric vehicle charging, special occasions on preserved farmland and stormwater regulations. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are also discussed.
- Recommended Master Plan changes include updates to the Land Use and Historic Preservation Plans. The report also recommends adding language to the Master Plan discouraging the conversion of commercial properties in the B and LB zones to 100% residential developments unless otherwise permitted by zoning. Regulatory recommendations include, but are not limited to:
 - Elimination of split lot zoning on multiple properties.
 - Changes to the B business district related to definitions and permitted use (e.g., permitting outdoor dining, second story apartments, urgent care centers and health clubs).
 - Changes to the LB limited business district permitting single-family dwellings, second story apartments, conversion of dwellings to professional offices, medical offices, all existing retail uses and existing contractor and storage yards.
 - Changes to bulk/design regulations concerning outdoor dining, updated signage standards and eliminating restrictions on the number of business uses permitted in a building.
 - Developing an application pertaining to special occasion events on farmland, and amendments to rules pertaining to minor site plan processing.
 - Reassessment of accessory dwelling unit regulations in consideration of the Township’s aging population and increasing emphasis on aging in place; consideration of adjustment of accessory apartment standards.
- The Report recommends incorporating the Combe Fill South Area in Need of Rehabilitation plan into the Township’s Master Plan.
- The Report recommends that the Township study the feasibility of installing Electric Vehicle Supply/Service Equipment and Make-Ready Parking spaces in key public areas, such as the municipal building, Black River Field and at the Chester Area Pool.