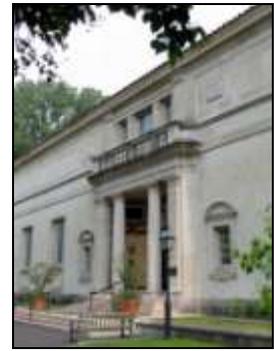


Local Historic Districts in Lower Merion



Creation of a local historic district offers a historic neighborhood a tried and true tool to manage change, preserve historic character, and protect from inappropriate development pressures.

Like thousands of other municipalities throughout the nation, Lower Merion created this tool to manage change in traditional neighborhoods, and to preserve historic architecture. Lower Merion already has seven historic districts, and a long tradition of historic preservation and protection of traditional neighborhoods.

Why create an historic district?

- Prevent the demolition of historically and culturally significant buildings
- Avoid construction of unsympathetic out-of-scale buildings and loss of community character
- As part of the review process, Lower Merion Township provides expert guidance by historic architectural professionals
- Zoning code relief
- Protection of and increase in property values ¹

Studies have shown that in historic districts, people stay in their properties longer, sell them faster and for a higher price than properties outside of a district. ¹

Existing Lower Merion Historic Districts

- Ardmore Business District
- Harriton
- Merion Friends Meeting/
General Wayne Inn
- Gladwyne/Merion Square
- Mill Creek
- Haverford Station
- English Village



¹ A great deal of information is available about the effect of historic districts and property values. Many studies may be found through an online search of “historic districts” and “property values.” To get you started, here’s a brief list:

“Historic Districts and Property Values” www.anaheimcolony.com/provalprinter.htm;

“Impact of Historic Districts on Residential Property Values” www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/HistoricDistricts.pdf;

“Historic Districts are Good for Your Pocketbook” <http://www.state.sc.us/scdah/propval.pdf>;

“Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation in GA” www.athensclarkecounty.com/~planningdept/hpecon1.html;

“Economic Benefits of Preserving Philadelphia’s Past” www.preservationalliance.com/resources/EconBene.php;

“Profiting from the Past” <http://www.gfoa.org/services/dfi/ed/documents/EconomicImpactofHistoricPreservationinGeorgia.pdf>.

Lower Merion Historic Districts²

What is regulated?

- Exterior improvements, visible from a public way
- Demolition and new construction (NOTE: additions can and have been approved!)

What is NOT regulated?

- Interior improvements are not regulated
- HARB has no jurisdiction on work proposed for areas not visible from a public right-of-way
- Repairs with in-kind materials are not regulated
- Paint colors are not regulated
- Plantings are not regulated

What approval is required?

- Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), prior to issuance of building permit
- COA reviewed by Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB), granted by the Board of Commissioners
- Review of massing/scale issues of large projects at Tentative Sketch phase; submitted to Planning Commission for consideration
- Design review and assistance offered by Township through their consulting historical architect, HARB experts, and the Building & Planning Department staff

Considerations

- HARB members are architects, preservationists and owners of properties in historic districts - their goal is to help applicants meet their needs in the most pragmatic but historically appropriate way possible
- HARB reviews typically take 30 days; exceptional or complex projects may take an additional 1 to 2 months although HARB reviews typically run concurrent with other Township reviews
- HARB will recommend repair rather than replacement of certain features where possible, however replacement materials are often approved
- Higher-quality replacement materials may be recommended by HARB. These typically last longer and fit the character of a property better, but can sometimes be more expensive than lower-quality materials

If you have any questions about this flyer or about historic preservation, please contact Lori Salganicoff, Lower Merion Conservancy

Lori@Dragonfly.org or 610-645-9030

² For more information about Lower Merion historic districts, rules, processes and the HARB, go to “Historic Preservation in Lower Merion” on the Lower Merion Township website at <http://www.lowermerion.org/planning/hp/histpresrv.htm>



-----Original home-----Rear addition

935 Youngsford Road, Gladwyne Historic District after HARB review



-----Original-----Rear addition-----



52-56 East Lancaster Avenue, Ardmore Commercial Historic District



-----No HARB review-----|-----HARB review-----|