



# Lower Providence Township

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Dear Resident,

This letter is being sent to dispel rumors and clarify misinformation concerning the future of the Audubon Inn, the revitalization of the General Washington Country Club, and the Township's commitment to preserving open space. We want to make it perfectly clear to all Lower Providence Township residents that the intention of the Board of Supervisors has been, and will continue to be, the preservation of the historic Audubon Inn structure.

The Board of Supervisors intends to:

1. Prevent the demolition of the historic Audubon Inn structure.
2. Work with the property owner and prospective buyer to restore and preserve the original structure.
3. Work with the property owner and prospective buyer to offer the Audubon Inn back to Lower Providence Township.



A front-page article in the Township's Winter 2004 Newsletter detailed the Board of Supervisors' effort to preserve the Audubon Inn and other historic structures. The article also explained how the Township worked to update the Village Commercial Zoning District Ordinance in order to aid in that preservation.

The Township's intentions, outlined in the article, have not changed. The following statements, supported by excerpts from the 2004 newsletter (highlighted in italics), reiterate these intentions:

## **The Township has been proactive in its effort to preserve the Audubon Inn.**

*"...the Township approached the Nase family, the owners of the Audubon Inn, with regard to purchasing a portion of their property frontage for a turning lane. The Nase family declined the offer and informed the Township that the Audubon Inn was up for sale along with the likelihood of its demolition. At that point, the Township initiated steps to not only preserve the Audubon Inn, but also craft an ordinance that would aid in preserving all historic structures within the Township."*

**The Township adopted a zoning ordinance amendment to preserve the Audubon Inn and other historic structures that will:**

1. ***Require the property owner of Audubon Inn to retain, rehabilitate and re-use the existing Audubon Inn, should they choose the option to expand or change the use of the property;***
2. ***Require any new construction on the site to use natural materials in period architecture to resemble the historic characteristics of the existing Audubon Inn;***
3. ***Require the applicant to secure a Conditional Use approval by the Board of Supervisors, which permits the Board to impose conditions on how and in what manner development can occur...***

**The Board of Supervisors enhanced the Village Commercial Zoning District Ordinance to preserve historical buildings while allowing new land development.**

*“This ... amendment was implemented for several reasons. First and foremost is that the Lower Providence Township 2001 Comprehensive Plan suggests **the Township provide incentives to developers to save old structures** during the development process. The Board believes they have now accomplished this directive as a result of this zoning text amendment. The Comprehensive Plan states that the Township require the placement of modern additions behind the historical structures.”*

**The Board of Supervisors welcomes, and is grateful for, community input.**

*“The Board wishes to express their gratitude to everyone who participated in the Village Commercial District Zoning text amendment and map change. Your input enabled the Board to enact a zoning amendment that ... requires the preservation of historical buildings within a Village Commercial District.”*

**General Washington Country Club Revitalization**

The Township has worked diligently with the community and Montgomery County to resolve concerns and to formulate a solid revitalization plan for the General Washington Country Club. This plan recently received county approval and ensures that **the 97-acre golf course will remain protected open space**. And although Lower Providence has received approval from the county to develop 8 of those acres, only 3.78 acres will be used. The Township has given back over 4 acres to be preserved as open space.

In addition, as a condition of its agreement with the county, the Township dedicated/set aside 19-acres along the Perkiomen Creek as open space. The tract, received by the Township from Superior Tube, is located between the Perkiomen Creek and River Road, adjacent to land owned by the county and the Borough of Collegetown. **It completes a mile-long preserved area of some 100 acres along Perkiomen Creek**. The township will work with the county and Collegetown to create a connected trail system along the creek and the land will be used for hiking, fishing, boating access, nature study and similar activities.

A thorough environmental assessment of the entire 19-acre tract was completed. Approximately one acre was found to contain acid lime residue and plans for the remediation of this area are underway and will be paid for by Superior Tube. The site will be heavily planted with native wetland plant species. **The EPA approved the tract for passive use. The Board of Supervisors and the County Commissioners are confident that the area will be a beneficial addition to the Township’s open space reserves.** As part of the agreement with Superior Tube, Superior Tube will indemnify and hold harmless Lower Providence Township and Montgomery County.

It is our hope that this letter cleared up any misconceptions concerning the Audubon Inn and the General Washington Country Club. Residents who are aware of conflicting information about these issues are encouraged to contact the Lower Providence Township office or a member of the Board of Supervisors directly so that any rumors can be laid to rest.

Thank You,

Lower Providence Township Board of Supervisors

*W. Douglas Hager, Chairman*

*Craig M. Dininny, Vice Chairman*

*James E. Dougherty*

*John P. Lomire*

*Piero A. Sassu*