

Proposed Ridge Pike Zoning District Western Section



Produced by the Lower Providence Township Planning Commission

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In partnership with

The Montgomery County Planning Commission

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Introduction

The Lower Providence Township Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission have been working to create new ideas and visions for development along Ridge Pike as it traverses the entire township from Trooper Road to the Perkiomen Creek. This work got underway in July 2012 with public workshop sessions that helped create and refine the Planning Commission's ideas. A plan for the corridor was published in March 2013 that illustrates the following concept elements: roadway design, streetscape, bike and pedestrian facilities, natural resource protection, recreation, and building form standards.

The main product of this work is the proposed draft ordinance amendment including herein that details recommended zoning map and text amendments. Public comment and revisions to this draft will occur during the June, July, and August 2013 Planning Commission meetings, leading to a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for their consideration.

Geography

Ridge Pike is a main transportation corridor for the Township to points east and west. The Planning Commission decided to break up the corridor into three sections to not only make the project more manageable but respond to the differences in character between the zones. The map on the facing page shows where these areas begin and end. The zoning map and text amendment included in this report correspond only to the western section. It hasn't been discussed yet whether one zoning district will be appropriate for all sections. Regardless of that decision, existing zoning districts shall remain in place until new plans and amendments are prepared for each section.

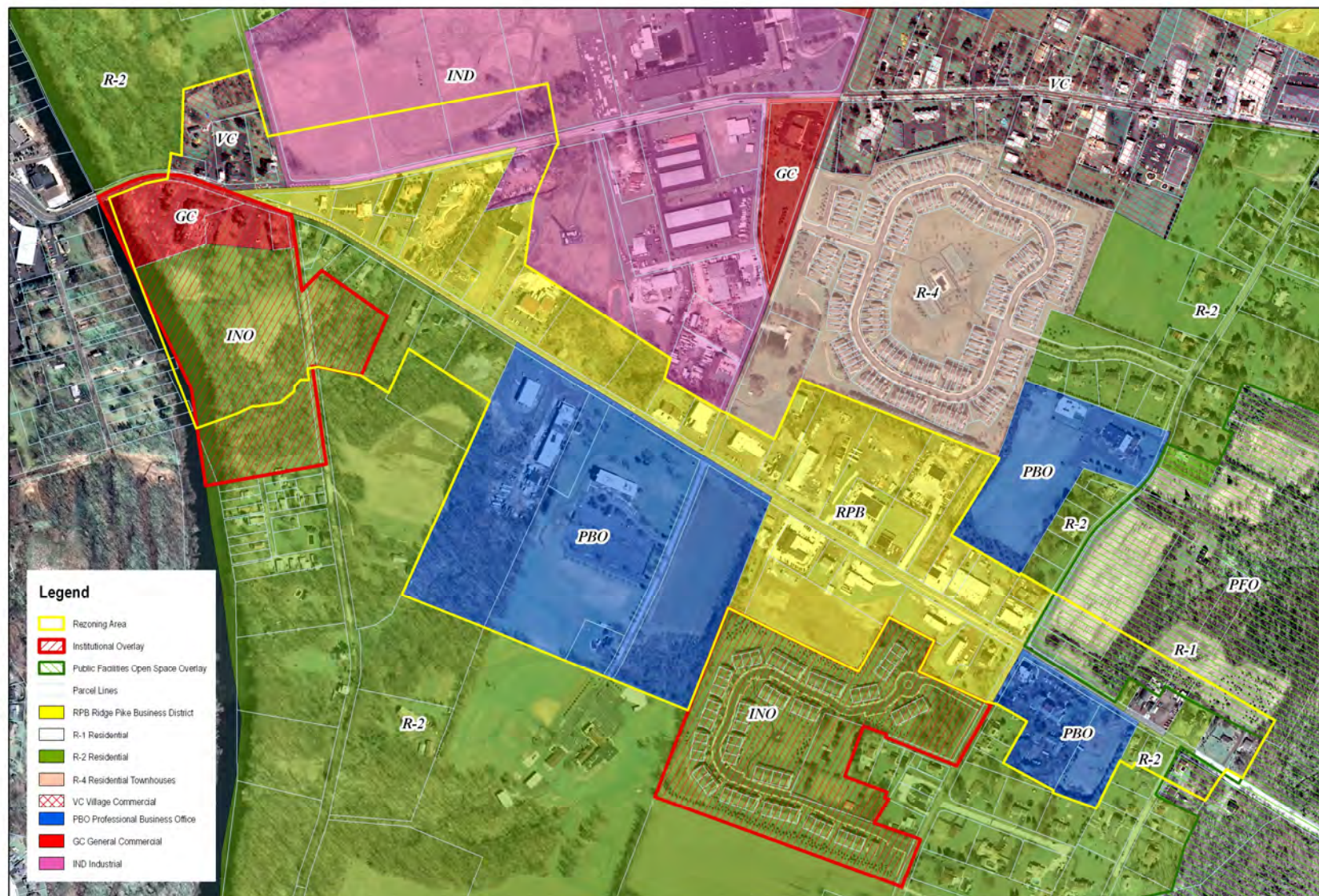


Zoning Map Amendment

The area to be rezoned mostly follows property line boundaries that are adjacent or close to Ridge Pike indicated on the facing map . The area outlined in yellow is currently zoned under seven different zoning districts which has led to some confusion regarding what future development will look like and whether the existing districts communicate a consistent vision for the corridor.

Consider the following issues

- The new district attempts to combine the uses and standards of all the existing districts.
- Areas that are currently zoned R-2 and R-1 Residential and proposed to be rezoned to these standards will be granted the right to develop more intensely than before.
- All other areas are permitted to develop as intensely as the existing code with some additional building form standards.
- Areas within Evansburg Park at the intersection of Ridge and Level Road are proposed to be rezoned.
- A portion of the Superior Tube site on Germantown Pike is included in this proposed rezoning from Industrial to the new district. Details of environmental issues have not been discussed.



September 9, 2013
Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Commission



**RIDGE PIKE WEST
EXISTING ZONING DISTRICTS AND AREA TO BE REZONED**

Zoning Text Amendment

The zoning text amendment consolidates standards of multiple zoning districts into one. In accordance with the vision set out in the plan, the standards afford additional intensity in the form of taller building height in areas closest to the following intersections: Germantown Pike, Crosskeys Road, and Level Road.

Article XX Name of District

§143 – xxx Legislative Intent

It is the intent of the XX District to provide regulations and standards for new development along commercial corridors of the Township to improve the overall safety and appearance of the built and natural environments while providing opportunities for well-designed commercial and residential development with a focus on mixing uses and pedestrian-friendly designs.

- A. Minimize the potential for increased traffic congestion, by providing incentives that require shared access points, cross-access easements, shared parking areas, and quality public spaces.
- B. Increase the number of pedestrian and vehicular connections between adjacent properties to provide complementary and coordinated development of adjacent properties.
- C. To provide regulating standards which require orderly, well-planned development and to ensure that new buildings and additions enhance the surrounding streetscape, including incentives for burial of existing utilities within the right-of-way.
- D. Use scale, building orientation and landscaping to establish community identity.
- E. Effectively and efficiently regulate the establishment and maintenance of businesses requiring outdoor storage of vehicles, types and heights of signage, equipment or merchandise.
- F. Establish a walkable streetscape by promoting a pedestrian orientation of streets and buildings and providing a safe and convenient interconnected sidewalk network

§143 – xxx General Regulations

- A. Where standards of this Article differ from standards found elsewhere in this Chapter, the standards herein shall apply to properties or portions of properties located in this District.

Biggest changes to use provisions is addition of multifamily and mixed use, reduction of overall number of definitions, potential elimination of prohibited uses.

Not necessary to mention adult uses since only permitted in Institutional Overlay, which we are removing in this location with the map amendment.



§143 – xxx Permitted Uses

A. The following uses shall be permitted by right in the district

- (1) Retail establishment for the sale of goods and merchandise.
- (2) Personal service shop including funeral home
- (3) Dry-cleaning drop-off establishment
- (4) Professional offices
- (5) Restaurant
- (6) Dance, music or art studio
- (7) Municipal or governmental use
- (8) Financial institution
- (9) Medical outpatient care including veterinary care
- (10) Outdoor recreation and open space uses.
- (11) Child day-care facility
- (12) Educational, religious or philanthropic use
- (13) A gasoline service station, car wash, service center, body shop, emissions testing center, parking areas including structures for parking.
- (14) A hotel, motel, or bed and breakfast
- (15) Indoor theater for performing arts or motion-pictures
- (16) Indoor sports or exercise facility
- (17) Building materials or garden supply center
- (18) Self-storage facility
- (19) Light industrial uses such as manufacturing, warehouse facilities, assembly, food processing, etc.
- (19) Single-family detached dwelling
- (20) Single-family attached dwelling
- (21) Multifamily dwelling
- (22) Mixed use structures containing any combination of permitted uses
- (23) Any use similar to ones indicated above and not specifically prohibited in this Article or elsewhere in this Chapter.

B. Uses Permitted by Special Exception

- (1) Any of the permitted uses in this Article in combination with drive through facilities shall conform to the following standards and all applicable procedure and standards of Article XXII Zoning Hearing Board.
 - (a) a minimum of twelve-car stacking area shall be provided which can include the space at the pickup window.
 - (b) The pickup window shall be located in the rear or side of the principal building.

§143 – xxx Prohibited Uses**§143 – xxx Performance Standards for Specific Uses****A. Gasoline or auto service stations and car washes**

- (1) Servicing and repair of vehicles shall be within an enclosed building only.
- (2) Storage of parts or vehicles shall be to the rear of all principal buildings
- (3) Shall conform to all applicable State and Federal environmental standards regarding emissions and storage of hazardous materials.
- (4) Fuel pumps shall be set back at least 25 feet from the ultimate right of way.
- (5) Only passenger autos, vans, and trucks rated equal or less than Class 5 according to the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration– having a gross vehicles weight rating of no more than 19,500 pounds can be serviced at stations in the district.

B. Child day care facility

- (1) Shall conform to all State standards and maintain a current license with the Department of Public Welfare according to Title 55 Public Welfare, Part V Children, Youth, and Families, Subpart D, Article I; in addition to the following:
- (2) Outdoor play areas shall be located to the side or rear of principal buildings.
- (3) A driveway and parking area with a drop off zone shall be provided off street.

I recommend only prohibiting uses when there is a compelling reason to do so, for instance no car washes in a floodplain, and the uses are permitted somewhere else in the Township.

C. Mixed use structures

- (1) Residential uses shall not occupy the ground floor.
- (2) Fire escapes shall be located to the side or rear of buildings.

D. Light Industrial Uses, Auto service, Storage of Bulk Materials, and Parking as the only use on a lot

- (1) Performance standards, design requirements, and prohibitions found in this Chapter under § 143—125, § 143—126, and § 143—127 shall apply to these uses in this district.
- (2) Light Industrial and Auto service uses shall be entirely contained within buildings on the lot.
- (3) The uses shall be set back no less than 200 feet from the ultimate right of way of Ridge Pike in lieu of Frontage Zone Buildout and Building Setbacks standards found in his Article.
- (4) Additional buildings on the lot shall be located between these uses and Ridge Pike in accordance with all standards of this Article; or as an option an architectural element such as a plaza, or a landscaped area shall be located between the building(s) and the ultimate right of way.

§143 – xxx Site Plan Standards**A. Lot Size**

- (1) Lot width at frontage zone minimum 50'
- (2) Lot size minimum 6,000 sqft

B. Building Setbacks

- (1) Front yard maximum 10' forming a frontage zone of 0' to 10' from the lot line.
- (2) Side yard minimum 20'
- (3) Rear yard minimum 30'
- (4) Minimum distance between buildings 30'.

C. Setbacks of Parking Areas

- (1) In lieu of Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance § 123-37E all parking areas, except driveways for ingress and egress, shall be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the ultimate right of way line of any street bordering the lot.

- (2) Where parking areas abut a sidewalk along a public road; a low wall, fence, landscape plants that form a hedge, or earthen berm of at least 24" and no more than 42" in height shall be provided in the frontage zone. Fences and wall shall comply with the standards and permitting requirements of Chapter 81 Fences and Walls.
- (3) Parking areas shall be set back a minimum of 8 feet from all buildings.
- (4) New parking areas shall not be constructed between existing or new buildings or additions and the frontage line.
- (5) Parking areas shall be setback 12 feet from all tract boundaries, except boundaries with the R-1, R-2, and R-4 Residential Districts where areas shall be setback 20 feet.

D. Frontage Zone Buildout

The following frontage zone buildout requirements only apply to facades of buildings that face Germantown Pike, Ridge Pike, and Level/ Evansburg Road.

- (1) The sum total of all linear distances of primary facades located in the frontage zone shall be a minimum of 40% of the lot width in the frontage zone or 25 feet whichever is greater except as provided as follows in this subsections.
- (2) Frontage zone buildout may be less than 40% where existing buildings compose more than 50% of the sum of proposed first floor gross square footage or lot widths at the frontage zone are greater than 125 feet. In these cases, new buildings and additions shall be configured to such that 50% of their primary facades are located in the frontage zone.
- (3) Alternately, an applicant may set buildings back up to 75% of the linear distance required by this section greater than the frontage zone provided that the additional area between the building and the street is used only for outdoor seating and not the display of goods.

E. Coverage Limits

- (1) Building coverage limit 50% of lot area maximum
- (2) Maximum building footprint 15,000 square feet
- (3) Impervious coverage limit 75% of lot area maximum

Maximum building footprint of 15,000 sqft

Collegeville In ~25,000 sqft

3938 Ridge (truck repair) ~18,000 sqft

No explicit density limit for multifamily development. I recommend letting us test the ordinance on a site to see what a maximum buildout of apartments would look like .

§143 – xxx Access Management Standards

A. Number of Driveways

- (1) A maximum of one curb cut of no more than 30 feet in width is permitted for each lot.
- (2) One additional access shall be permitted if the applicant demonstrates that it is necessary to accommodate traffic to and from the site and it can be achieved in a safe and efficient manner.
- (3) The Board of Supervisors may restrict access to right turn only ingress and egress or to another road if safe and efficient movements cannot be accommodated.
- (4) For a property that abuts two or more roadways, the Board of Supervisors may restrict access to only that roadway that can more safely and efficiently accommodate traffic.
- (5) Driveway accesses shall be at least 200 feet apart.

B. Nonconforming Driveways

- (1) Existing nonconforming driveways and lots shall be brought into conformance with the standards of this Article when any of the following are proposed: a change in use, subdivision, land development, or substantial modification.
- (2) Existing nonconforming driveways may remain only in cases where unique topography or conditions prohibit the creation of a cross access easement to access the subject property.

C. Corner Clearance

- (1) Driveways shall be located so that the point where the center lines of the driveway and street is a minimum of 200 feet from any intersections of the centerlines of streets.
- (2) Where this setback requirement cannot be met due to the size of the applicant's property or the inability to create a cross access easement with another property in the district, driveways may be located closer than 200 feet—but in no case shall the intersection of driveway and street centerlines be located less than 100 feet from any intersections of the centerlines of streets.
- (3) If no other reasonable access to the property is available, and no reasonable alternative is identified, the driveway shall be located

the farthest possible distance from the intersecting roadway. In such cases, directional connections such as right in and right out only movements may, at the discretion of the Board of Supervisors, be required.

D. Safe Sight Distance

- (1) Driveways shall be designed to meet roadways at 90 degree angles.
- (2) Driveways shall maintain a clear sight triangle according to the standards found in § 123-34 F and G in the Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

E. Driveway Channelization

- (1) Where driveway volume is expected to exceed 500 vehicles per day, a raised median shall be installed in the driveway to separate entering and exiting traffic of minimum length of 50 feet.

F. Joint and Cross Access Easements

- (1) At time of land development or subdivision, applicants shall record cross access easements for its parking areas and aisles with all neighboring properties in the same zoning district. Such access need not be explicitly located or constructed at the time of recording the easement.
- (2) At the time of land development or subdivision, applicants shall take advantage of any existing cross access easements to eliminate driveways on the applicant's lot, reducing the aggregate number of curb cuts between neighboring properties. The Board of Supervisor, alternately, may authorize the elimination of an access driveway on a property neighboring the applicant's where conditions warrant.
- (3) Parking areas connected through a cross access easement need not satisfy the requirements for tract boundary setback between the sharing properties and shall be designed in a way to maximize parking opportunity on both parcels.
- (4) Shared access may be located entirely on one lot or may be split along a common property line.
- (5) Where unique topography or conditions exist that make cross access easements and the construction interconnected parking areas impossible or prohibitive, the Board of Supervisors may approve plans that do not comply with this section.

Density bonus in the form of height for the concentrated areas identified in our plan.

Current RPBD building form and design standards are in Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. Form based coding puts these standards in zoning which is harder for the applicant to waive since they must prove a hardship to the Zoning Hearing Board.

§143 – xxx Building Form Standards

The applicant shall submit sufficient information in the form of architectural elevations or sketches of building(s) and restoration of existing structures, in order to determine the extent to which the following building form standards are being followed.

A. Building Height

- (1) First floor of retail or office uses finish floor to ceiling Minimum 12' Maximum 25'
- (2) Second story or higher finish floor height to ceiling Maximum 12'
- (3) Total building height maximum 3 stories or 45 feet except where building footprints are wholly located within a circle of 500 foot radius centered on of the centerline intersections of the following streets and Ridge Pike : Germantown Avenue, Crosskeys Road, and Level Road; where maximum building height shall be 4 stories or 60 feet.

B. First Floor Standards

The following standards apply to the facades of new buildings that occupy frontage zones along any road and to existing buildings where a change of use is proposed except the following; buildings built on or before 1949 need not comply with the following first floor design standards when used in compliance with the remaining standards of this Chapter.

- (1) The first floor of any façade located in the frontage zone shall be composed of minimum 40% and maximum 75% transparent glass between 30" and 8' above sidewalk grade. Glass may be tinted but may not be opaque or reflective. Signs, merchandise or other temporary fixtures shall not obscure the view into the property.
- (2) The first floor shall have a primary entrance located in its primary façade and be connected via an uninterrupted pathway for walking to the sidewalk along the lot line required in §XX.
- (3) Shop front awnings may intrude upon the pedestrian area at the along the primary facade or into the ultimate right of way up to four feet provided that the height of such awnings is no less than eight feet above the sidewalk.
- (4) Residential uses are not permitted in the first floor of new buildings located in the frontage zone of Ridge or Germantown Pike.

C. Building Massing

- (1) Any façade greater than 40 feet long along any public road shall be interrupted by changes in surface materials and depth of façade such that no uninterrupted portion of the façade be longer than 30 feet.
- (2) Alternately, buildings may be setback from the build to zone, provided that the standards of § 143 xx Frontage Zone Buildout have been met to break up the horizontal mass of the building.
- (3) For buildings taller than one story an expression line shall define the boundary between the ground and second floors making use of a change in dimension of surface materials that separates the ground floor of the building from upper floors.

D. Building Design

- (1) Buildings located wholly are partially within 500 feet of the intersection of the centerlines of Ridge Pike and Germantown Avenue or Level./Evansburg Road shall use surface materials such as stucco, brick, or clapboard siding in accordance with the prevailing pattern of neighboring properties.
- (2) Buildings located wholly are partially within 500 feet of the intersection of the centerlines of Ridge Pike and Germantown Avenue or Level./Evansburg Road shall have pitched roofs in accordance with the prevailing pattern of neighboring properties.
- (3) Buildings located wholly are partially within 500 feet of the intersection of the centerlines of Ridge Pike and Germantown Avenue or Level./Evansburg Road shall have windows in the primary façade whose ratio of length to width are similar to the prevailing pattern of neighboring properties.
- (4) Buildings located wholly are partially within 500 feet of the intersection of the centerlines of Ridge Pike and Germantown Avenue or Level./Evansburg Road shall have frontage features such as porches, porticos, terraces, or awnings in accordance with the prevailing pattern of neighboring properties.
- (5) Upper stories of new buildings shall be designed so that facades facing a public road shall have no less than 25% and no more than 40% glazing material.

E. Public Area Standards

- (1) Sidewalks shall be required along all public frontages and be a minimum six feet in width located so that they are entirely within the ultimate right of way and the greatest distance from the road centerline.
- (2) A continuous trench of minimum four foot width and four foot depth of topsoil shall be located within the ultimate right of way between the edge of the cartway and the sidewalk closest to the sidewalk for the installation of street trees required in §123-50 B and 123-52, except where utilities or driveway entrances prohibit.

Other text amendments to the Zoning Code

Article I – §143-6 Definitions

Façade, primary – The exterior wall of a building that is set along a frontage zone that faces the street of highest order and with the main entrance to the building.

Frontage – The area between a building façade and the vehicular lanes, inclusive of its built and planted components.

Frontage Buildout – The linear distance of a building's primary façade within the frontage zone.

Frontage Zone – An area between the lot line and maximum front yard in which a certain percentage of a building's primary façade must be located.

Child Day Care Facility— Any of the following as defined by Pennsylvania Code Title 55, Part V, Subpart D, Article I, Chapters 3270, 3280, and 3290: child day care center, group child day care home, or family day care home.

Group Child Day Care Home—The premises in which care is provided at one time for more than six but fewer than 16 older school-age level children or more than six but fewer than 13 children of another age level who are unrelated to the operator. The term includes a facility located in a residence or another premises.

Family Day Care Home—A home other than the child's own home, operated for profit or not-for-profit, in which child day care is provided at any one time to four, five or six children unrelated to the operator

Substantial Modification— An alteration to an existing building valued at 50% more than the replacement cost of the entire building.

Schedule for Review and Revision

June 26 Planning Commission Meeting—Present and Discuss. Publish on website. Send an email to property owners to download draft and provide comments.

July 24 Planning Commission Meeting—Edits and presentation of potential buildouts, presentation of DVRPC access management report and standards. Incorporate PC recommended changes.

August 28 Planning Commission Meeting—Final Draft of amendments and recommendation to BOS by September meeting date with final edits and remarks.

**September Board of Supervisors Information Meeting-
Deliberations and recommendations from Board of Supervisors.**

Date TBD

Official advertisement for adoption.

Question and Comments

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