

Historic Resources

East Norriton has established an Historic Advisory Commission which meets on a periodic basis to administer measures to identify and protect historic properties as well as to bring awareness of the need for preservation of worthy architectural and historic qualities and encourage reuse of historic resources through appropriate land use regulations. The Appendix of the Township Open Space Preservation Plan 2005 Update contains a complete list of historic properties identified to date. A brief summary of some noteworthy properties is listed below:

Nestor House - Germantown Pike and Trooper Road. The property was used at times as the parsonage for a nearby Presbyterian Church. The 18th century rough fieldstone structure has been restored. It is located across Germantown Pike from the Norriton Presbyterian Church at Germantown Pike and Trooper Road.

Norriton Presbyterian Church - Germantown Pike and Trooper Road. The old stone foundation and walls still stand today as they were built circa 1690 by Dutch masons. This was the first Presbyterian church in the state. Many well known historical figures worshiped here, including Benjamin Franklin and David Rittenhouse. During the Battle of Germantown the church was used as a hospital and George Washington visited the wounded here. Adjoining the church is a graveyard with some stones dating back to 1689 and 1700. The grave sites of 28 Revolutionary soldiers and the ancestors of Mary Todd Lincoln can be found here. The building has been restored and is still used as a church.

Barley Sheaf Tavern/Sign of General Jackson - Now an office building at 420 West Germantown Pike. Solomon and Hannah Stewart owned the Barley Sheaf Tavern for many years in the early nineteenth century. The Barley Sheaf Inn is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. When Arnold Baker became innkeeper in 1826, he renamed it the Sign of General Jackson and hosted meetings of the Montgomery County Democratic Party as well as training sessions of the Montgomery County Militia. Sometime during Baker's tenancy the building underwent "modernization" and took on the style of Victorian Gothic which became popular in the 1840s. Montgomery County has identified this site as important for the following reason: "significant as a location where Montgomery County Court first held".

1033 West Germantown Pike - 1790, David Rittenhouse Farm; home of Scientist, Astronomer and Statesman David Rittenhouse. He built his own observatory here.

807 West Germantown Pike - 1757, St. Clair Farm has a substantial walk-in fireplace in the basement. Home of General David St. Clair, a Revolutionary War hero. Built by Robert Shannon, the first physician in Norristown.

800 West Germantown Pike - 1894, Norritonville School. A school existed on this property as early as 1771.

716 West Germantown Pike - circa 1800, DeSage House. A historic farm house and outbuilding.

529 North Whitehall Road - Burr Meeting House, Georgian Architecture. From 1841 – 1914 the site was used for worship, Sunday School, meetings of the Norritonville Total Abstinence Society and the Norritonville Literacy Society.

3131 North Wales Road - 1826, Campbell/Stratton Farm with spring house, Greek Revival Architecture. As early as 1748, there was a dwelling on this property. In 1826 the Yost family began to run the farm. Henry Nuding bought the farm in 1906 and kept it until 1922 when it was purchased by J. Henry Beale.

313 West Germantown Pike - Pre-revolutionary, Bartle Bartleson Tavern. On maps in 1759 and 1770. American Troops camped on the property on June 19, 1778. British troops were also there. Widow Bartleson was awarded money for damages done in 1777-78.

Norris City Cemetery - 1858, close to 200 veterans buried in this small cemetery with 142 Civil War Soldiers also buried here. Prior to being a cemetery this is the original site of the Methodist Chapel and the Supplee School house.



DeSage House, circa 1800
Current Day Office Building

Goals and Objectives

Community Character/Growing Greener - To maintain a rural-suburban character utilizing smart growth initiatives.

Objectives

- ★ *Pursue a long-term environmental and energy management strategy that will achieve environmental and economic sustainability and a high quality of life. Encourage the use of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified buildings.*
- ★ *Continue to support and work with the Norristown Farm Park Advisory Board. Promote the retention of the few agricultural lands remaining.*
- ★ *Preserve environmentally sensitive and ecologically fragile lands. Improve water quality through the use of riparian buffers and wetlands preservation.*
- ★ *Consider additional uses, such as offices and apartments in some established shopping areas, to help establish mixed use town centers and a more walkable environment.*

Residential - To maintain the character of the residential neighborhoods in the Township and to preserve residential property values.

Objectives

- ★ *Preserve the unique character of historic neighborhoods.*

Encourage "cluster style" open space preservation development for tracts greater than 10 acres.

- ★ *Apply RP Residential Professional style zoning to locations along busy highways previously used for residential or as an option to C – Commercial to provide for transitional uses which also protect adjoining residential neighborhoods.*
- ★ *Continue to provide for a variety of housing types, including housing opportunities for active adults and the elderly.*
- ★ *Allow for future higher density housing in exchange for additional open space or other amenities in core areas of the Township (see Town Center objectives).*
- ★ *Discourage typical suburban development which consumes open space and "hides" distinctive characteristics of the Township and pursue options of "traditional neighborhood design" as outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, for high density sites along major highways.*

2410 Swede Road - 1811, Gothic Revival Architecture, listed as National Register Eligible with the State, probably associated with the Supplee Mill complex.

The Historic Advisory Commission has also identified the following possible historic districts:

Grand View Heights - Rahway Avenue

Washington Square - Washington, Jefferson, Adams Avenues and DeKalb Boulevard

Farm Park - Numerous properties

Recreation and Parks - Provide for the future recreation and open space needs of residents. Integrate plans for the Norristown Farm Park into Township recreation plans.

Objectives

- ★ *Identify suitable recreational sites which would satisfy the community's recreational needs for active and passive recreation.*
- ★ *Extend the most desirable and varied opportunities for recreation activities to the greatest number of people throughout the Township, including such characteristics as age, health, sex, and ease of access.*
- ★ *Coordinate the location and development of new open spaces with other existing and projected land uses or existing open spaces so that they enhance one another.*
- ★ *Maintain and update the Township's Open Space fee-in-lieu of ordinance.*
- ★ *Increase the total park land acreage based on the 2005 Open Space Plan Update.*
- ★ *Provide a network of walking and bicycling trails.*

Retail and Office - Continue to provide for retail and professional service needs of residents. Concentrate retail development into "nodes" of activity, specifically at Germantown Pike/Route 202 and Swede Street/Germantown Pike.

Objectives

- ★ *Limit intensification and encourage quality infill to these nodes.*
- ★ *Encourage the revitalization of older centers and vehicular and pedestrian connectivity between existing centers; and to nearby residential communities.*
- ★ *Provide for small-scale office uses along major road corridors to serve the residential neighborhoods nearby.*
- ★ *Encourage mixed use developments (i.e., higher density residential/office, retail office) such as the Employment Center Districts.*



Hillcrest Plaza

Industrial

Objectives

- ★ *Limit light industrial users to locations in the industrial park area.*
- ★ *Buffer existing heavy industrial users from residential neighborhoods and adjacent streets.*

Institutional

Objectives

- ★ *Encourage medical and surgical related uses to locate near hospital uses.*
- ★ *Maintain institutional zoning which permits and regulates the large number of places of worship in the Township.*



Saint Patrick's Cemetery - DeKalb Pike

Transportation - Reduce the amount of locally generated automobile trips by integrating uses, encouraging mass transit, and improving walkability within the Township.

Objectives

- ★ *Identify and improve vital sidewalks along major highway arteries and link to trail network to connect residential neighborhoods to retail services, employment centers and institutional uses such as hospitals, parks and places of worship.*
- ★ *Encourage jitney service to link homes, retail stores and institutional uses such as hospitals.*
- ★ *Provide for mass transit, specifically a park and ride lot off of Germantown Pike on the Stony Creek line.*
- ★ *Accommodate the widening of Route 202 while carefully protecting existing streetscapes and residential neighborhoods.*

Natural Environment - Protect stream valleys, wooded areas, steep slopes and other areas of environmentally sensitive lands.

Objectives

- ★ *Acquire environmentally sensitive lands and stream valleys to ensure protection including as a part of open space and park acquisition. Protect urban forests, replant riparian corridors.*
- ★ *Work toward adopting an Environmental Advisory Council.*
- ★ *Assist in the PADEP Watershed Restoration Action Strategy for the Stony Creek. Implement the goals and recommendations from the Act 167 Study, i.e., pursue use of best management practices for stormwater management.*

Aesthetics - Provide quality planting buffers between conflicting land uses. See also objectives under Community Character/Growing Greener.

Objectives

- ★ *Preserve existing natural edges along street frontages and property boundaries where practicable.*
- ★ *Provide stringent buffer planting and street tree/parking lot landscaping regulations in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.*
- ★ *Regulate cell towers and limit their location within the community.*

Historic Preservation - Preserve historic properties and neighborhoods.

Objectives

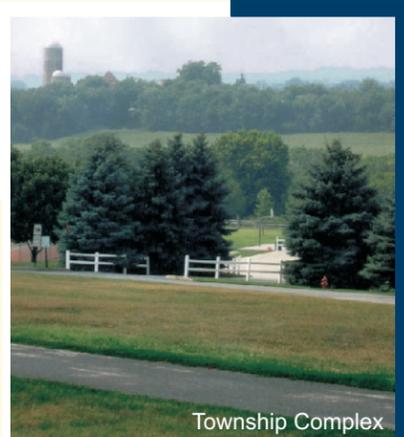
- ★ *Continue to support the Historic Advisory Commission.*
- ★ *Identify historic resources – bring awareness to need for preservation of worthy architectural and historic qualities.*
- ★ *Enforce historic preservation ordinance to prevent/delay demolition or alteration and encourage reuse of historic resources.*

Greenway Trails and Open Space Preservation

Provide off-road trail systems and acquire priority properties.

Objectives

- ★ *Implement recommendations of the Greenway Trail Feasibility Study.*
- ★ *Coordinate regional trail planning with County and identify and implement local trails as recommended (see Open Space Recommendations Plan).*
- ★ *Support the construction of the Liberty Bell Trail.*
- ★ *Pursue the acquisition of the Barrington property as preferred priority for preservation under current Montgomery County Open Space Grants Program.*



Township Complex