

# Chapter 3: A Sense of Place

## Introduction

The preservation and enhancement of community character will be one of the most essential growth and development issues over the next 10-20 years in the Township. As a major destination community, it is a difficult, but crucial, task to find balance between protecting small town character, while providing adequate services for the Township's residents and numerous visitors that come to the Township each year. With the appropriate regulations in place, the Township has an opportunity to maintain and enhance community character, to promote our cultural heritage, and to provide additional services to the residents and visitors of our community.

In the Community Survey that was conducted prior to drafting this Plan, residents were given a total of 24 choices of what they feel makes Derry Township unique. They were then asked to pick their top five choices; below are the top ten responses in the survey:

- Low crime rates
- Quality of schools
- Access to quality healthcare
- Biking/walking paths
- Small town atmosphere
- Community appearance and aesthetics
- Scenic/natural beauty
- Community history and heritage
- Close to major cities
- Distinctive community character

These responses indicate that both physical and intangible characteristics of the Township play significant roles in determining our perceptions of a sense of place. Our sense of place is ultimately what creates our sense of belonging in the community. A sense of place is what visitors will remember long after leaving and what they will talk about to others when describing their stay. These characteristics identified in the Survey are what make Derry Township a unique, attractive place to live. These are also the same characteristics that will result in the continued demand for additional housing and commercial development in the Township, which under conventional zoning, provides no distinctive character differences from development in any other community.

With the amount of land that is available for future development, it is important to consider regulations that promote infill and redevelopment rather than rezoning significant amounts of land from their current designations under agriculture or conservation. It is also important to consider policies that promote a denser, more traditional village style of development which more efficiently uses land area than conventional suburban developments, and also tend to promote the preservation of open spaces. Higher densities tend to promote walkability and pedestrian connectivity through sidewalk and trail connections, and also provide further consideration to the insertion of community character elements which conventional zoning tends to ignore.

## Goals & Objectives

Three overall goal are to be implemented by is Chapter. A goal tends to be a vision for the future, in this case promoting the preservation of a unique sense of place. The objectives described below are intended to be measureable tasks that accomplish the identified goals. When revising zoning regulations, the objectives identified in the Comprehensive Plan ultimately become the purpose and intent for the adopted zoning regulations.

- Goal #1: Preserve the integrity and unique character of Derry Township, including the legacy of Milton S. Hershey in creating a model industrial town.
- Goal #2: Balance the needs of residents with those of visitors (services, infrastructure, etc.) - support Hershey as a place to live and work, and as a regional destination.
- Goal #3: Blend historic and cultural preservation with modern infrastructure and amenities.
  - Objective #1: Require development projects to be site-sensitive to the scale and character of neighboring buildings and to contain quality building materials and design elements that are unique to Derry Township;
  - Objective #2: Establish regulations that promote mixed-uses in the developed areas of the Township, including the Downtown and Palmdale areas, in order to promote a traditional small-town atmosphere and as a means to improve the character of underdeveloped or unused space;
  - Objective #3: Utilize innovative development techniques, such as Cluster Developments or Traditional Neighborhood Developments, as a means to define the character of new neighborhoods and provide for higher densities that more efficiently use available land and preserve open spaces;
  - Objective #4: Ensure zoning and land development policies are consistent with the historical development patterns of existing residential neighborhoods, in order to preserve the character of the development.

- Objective #5: Maintain the character of rural areas in the Township by promoting a continuation of agricultural uses and by preserving scenic vistas and bucolic open spaces.
  
- Objective #6: Preserve the integrity of identified historic resources in the Township.

## Implementation

This implementation section discusses the strategies that will be utilized to accomplish the desired goals and objectives of this Chapter. Timelines have been assigned to each strategy so that once the plan is adopted, progress on implementation can be measured on an annual basis in reports back to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. Each strategy also has corresponding recommendations to be considered during the implementation process.

### Building Character & Design – Considerations for Future Development

**Implementation Strategy #1:** Revise current design guidelines for the Chocolate Avenue Preservation Overlay District.

**Applicable Planning Districts:** Downtown.

**Implementation Timeline:** Short Term, 0-5 years.

It is the intent of this strategy to provide revisions that require compliance with the design standards, rather than recommended a list of guidelines. Current guidelines tend to be too vague which presents issues of varying interpretations by both private developers and the Design Review Board. The revised regulations should describe the most critical issues to downtown character so that there is focus on those items during the review process. Diagrams, photos and sketches should be provided in the design standards to provide clarity in the vision of the downtown, and also to provide justification for the decisions made during the review process.

**Recommendation #1 -** Identify the predominant architecture in the downtown.

Many of the buildings in the downtown are designed to specific architectural styles that have been documented by the Pennsylvania Museum and Historical Commission (PHMC). Each architectural style that is identified should contain photos or diagrams, including a description of the main elements that make each of the architectural styles unique. This will distinguish the important architectural features that

should be maintained on existing buildings, as well as what to replicate on new building construction.

**Recommendation #2** - Create a list of desirable building materials and design elements that are consistent with the predominant architecture.

Building materials and design elements should be consistent with the predominant architecture that is identified for the downtown. The use of natural materials such as stone and brick are the prevalent materials used for many of the buildings in the downtown; therefore, these are the materials that should be encouraged over manufactured materials such as stone veneers, plastics, and vinyl-or aluminum siding.

There are several historic buildings remaining in the downtown, including the Post Office building, First United Methodist Church building and the Hershey Community Building that all contain natural stone work that could be utilized as a template for new development. Other projects to consider include the rehabilitation projects at the Hershey Press Building; the rehabilitation project at the former Chocolate Factory, now being converted to office space, and the construction of the Hershey Story Museum; all have maintained or replicated historic architectural styles.

Design elements including prominent entry ways that are oriented towards the public street and the use of features such as dormers, covered porches, and awnings are all commonly seen on many of the buildings in the downtown. These features should be focal points for new infill development and redevelopment of existing buildings. Window elements are also defining features of a building that should be preserved and replicated on all structures within the Downtown. Windows should be provided at street level, at a similar mass and scale to the predominant architecture in the Downtown. Where window space is not conducive, standards should be implemented to require innovative design features to prevent large, blank walls along public access areas.

**Recommendation #3** - Establish build-to-lines in lieu of traditional front yard setbacks.

Build-to-lines create a maximum setback for buildings from the pedestrian sidewalks, rather than the more traditional setbacks from property lines or street rights-of-way. This will create the opportunity for building lined streets that are often seen in more traditional downtown settings. Existing buildings which would be setback further than the build-to-lines would be

afforded the opportunity to construct outdoor patios or courtyards for outdoor dining or seating areas which is also common to downtown areas.

**Recommendation #4** - Draft regulations that require uniformity of building mass and scale.

Requiring that all buildings contain similar scale and massing features as those of neighboring buildings will result in a well-proportioned and unified building form for the downtown. Building mass and scale should also be similar to the mass and scale of the predominant architecture, to create compatibility between new construction and existing and historic structures. One-story buildings should not be constructed in a downtown setting as they are more similar to suburban development and detract from the character of the downtown.

Considering the amount of land in the downtown available for infill or redevelopment, it would be appropriate to consider requirements for the articulation of building facades for large-scale uses, such as hotels, large retail uses, or dense residential apartment buildings. Options may include the requirement to provide structural offsets and vertical design elements, such as columns and pilasters that break up the façade into several smaller segments that is more indicative of the traditional scale of small downtowns. It is also possible to require large scale uses to be inset behind smaller storefronts which would maximize commercial space in the downtown, in addition to maintaining character of smaller scale buildings.

**Recommendation #5** - Establish regulations for streetscape design improvements.

Many traditional downtowns see embellished streetscapes that include street trees, wider sidewalks to encourage walkability, streetlights, street furniture, art features such as fountains and statues, and public spaces such as porches, green spaces and small parks. These features play an important part of defining community character and are often opportunities to display the local heritage as evident by the “Kiss Streetlights”.

Street trees should be predominantly indigenous trees with shallow growing roots to prevent sidewalk damage. A list of acceptable tree types should be adopted that is consistent with or refers to the Township Street Tree Ordinance, or other regulations which may be in place at the time of

implementation. Criteria permitting portable planters, window boxes or other landscaping features will allow for character improvement of the streetscape, but must also be required to not block pedestrian sidewalks or access ways.

Street furniture elements should be considered when determining the character elements of a downtown. Street furniture may include benches, sitting walls, trash receptacles, and eating tables. It may also include other pedestrian elements such as bus shelters or bike racks, both being important structures to a downtown in order to alleviate some of the demand for parking. These elements should generally be complementary to the predominant building materials. Such elements should be permitted within the front yard of a property, adjacent to pedestrian travel areas.

Public art features in the downtown play an important role in creating a sense of place by communicating local heritage and history to both residents and visitors of the Township. These features also create opportunity to provide way-finding elements for those trying to navigate town by foot. A desired list of public art elements should be included in the design standards. The opportunity for community organizations to gift public art to the Township should be embraced as a way to improve the character and sense of place in the downtown.

**Recommendation #6** - Improve on existing regulations for the design and screening of parking lots and parking structures.

One of the main improvements desired in the downtown is to improve walkability; however, the automobile will still remain a prevalent part of the downtown for the foreseeable future. For businesses in the downtown to flourish and for the safety of pedestrians in town, parking needs will need to be met and remain visible to motorists traveling to the downtown. Appropriate regulations should be implemented to soften the view of parking areas, with most of the parking being located behind or to the side of buildings. The use of masonry or brick walls offer opportunity to create the appearance of a continuous flow of building walls similar to traditional downtowns. In combination with the use of landscaping features, this will provide further screening of parking areas as well as add green elements to the downtown.

With one downtown parking structure already being utilized, identifying future locations for additional parking structures will be paramount to the



downtown revitalization process. Drafting regulations that either require parking structures to be located to the rear of buildings or to contain store frontage on the first floor of the structures will maximize opportunity for commercial development in the downtown. Parking structures should contain similar requirements for the massing and scale of the structure, as well as for building materials that were previously discussed for infill and redevelopment of buildings in the downtown.

**Recommendation #7-** Draft regulations that allow for sufficient signage and lighting techniques, using elements that complement the predominant architecture of the downtown.

Lighting is an important element of building design for both aesthetic and safety purposes. There are generally two types of lighting that should be considered when drafting design standards, functional and accent lighting. Functional lighting would serve a specific purpose related to safety and identification. This would include lighting elements used in parking areas and pedestrian corridors, as well as those that are used in the identification of businesses through the illumination of signage. Period-style lighting should be recommended in the downtown areas to blend with the predominant architectural styles and should contain full-cutoff or shielded fixtures to prevent adverse glare. The use of neon or multi-color lighting elements, interior illumination of signage and other lighting practices that are contradictory to the desired character of the downtown should be prohibited. Accent lighting serves as decorative features and is typically part of the building façade. These elements should be compatible with material and massing of the buildings where they are located.

Signage regulations in the downtown are generally sufficient with minimal changes required to meet design standards. Minor changes could include adding requirements to integrate external sign lighting with the lighting elements of the building. Wall signs could be integrated into the material and design elements of a building façade, while window or projection type signs catered towards the pedestrian should be encouraged.

**Recommendation #8 -** Determine a plan for the provisions of green design elements in new and altered building construction.

With the potential for redevelopment and the increase in development densities of the Downtown, it is important to provide for innovative stormwater management solutions that use the limited space available in the downtown. These elements may include the use of green roofs or other means of roof stormwater collection systems. Additionally, the Township should research opportunities to provide incentives to developers that provide appliances and equipment that put less strain on public utilities and infrastructure.

**Implementation Strategy #2:** Review existing zoning regulations and make appropriate revisions to lot requirements, (setbacks, impervious coverage and other dimensional requirements) in order to permit property improvements that are consistent with historical development patterns.

**Applicable Planning Districts:**

1. Downtown area - The majority of properties have been developed prior to zoning regulations; residential areas contain similar regulations to the suburban neighborhoods under the Village Residential District.
2. Palmdale area - Similarly to the Downtown, the majority of properties have been developed prior to zoning regulations and contain restrictions similar to the suburban neighborhoods of the Township.
3. Areas which contain neighborhoods that were developed under prior zoning ordinances and were subject to subsequent revisions that resulted in larger setbacks than what were developed following plan approvals.

**Implementation Timeline:** Short Term, 0-5 years.

The residential neighborhoods in the Downtown and Palmdale areas, for example, are subject to the regulations of the Village Residential Zoning District. The regulations relate more to the suburban neighborhoods of the Township, many of which share the same zoning classification. The majority of the properties in the Downtown and Palmdale areas already encroach on setbacks and exceed impervious coverage limitations which have been designated under current zoning. In other neighborhoods, development regulations have changed from those regulations that were in effect at the time of subdivision and land

development approvals. Often times, the changes resulted in greater setback requirements than when the developments were constructed.

In both of these circumstances, the properties became nonconforming uses at the time of adopting zoning regulations. As nonconforming uses, these dwellings are limited to the amount of expansion that can occur on the property, many times requiring approvals from the Zoning Hearing Board. In many of these cases, proposals would be consistent with the character of the neighborhood. These discrepancies should be eliminated to allow landowners to improve their properties and afford the opportunity to stay marketable against newer home construction in the Township. Consideration should still be given to the scale and character of neighboring properties when considering potential revisions to Township ordinances.

**Recommendation #9** - Inventory the residential neighborhoods of the Township to identify predominant development patterns and make appropriate changes to the zoning requirements in order to maintain existing community character.

Once the inventory is complete and patterns are identified, the appropriate changes can be implemented through text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. It may be necessary to consider changes to the zoning district classifications to better differentiate between the older, village style neighborhoods from those of the more modern, suburban developments of the Township.

**Recommendation #10** - Review existing zoning policies regarding the side and rear yard setbacks for detached accessory uses.

In the developments that have rear access via an alley network, reducing setbacks for detached garages would be appropriate so that the garage may be in proper relation with the existing garages that have been developed over time. By requiring greater setbacks than what has been historically developed, the character of the neighborhood is being adversely altered and greater impervious coverages are being encouraged as a result of the longer driveways necessary to access the garages.

Under present zoning regulations, the setbacks for detached accessory uses are similar or only slightly less than the rear and side yard requirements of principal uses. As a result, detached uses, such as storage

sheds, would need to be located either directly behind the principal building or near the middle of the rear yard. Such uses may benefit from reduced side or rear yard setbacks, similar to those patterns that have developed over time, either prior to zoning requirements or prior to the review of zoning permit applications. Depending on utility easement locations and other limitations such as floodplains and steep slopes, all properties may not be able to benefit from reduced setback regulations for detached accessory uses.

**Recommendation #11** - Review existing zoning policies regarding front yard special exceptions.

Under present zoning regulations, there are front yard setback exceptions that permit buildings to be located closer to front property lines, in order to be in proper relation with neighboring buildings. This currently requires a special exception approval from the Zoning Hearing Board. Since locating buildings in proper relation to surrounding buildings would maintain community character, it would be appropriate to consider streamlining the review process and permit such exceptions by right at the determination of the Zoning Officer.

**Implementation Strategy #3:** Establish design guidelines and regulations for mixed-use neighborhoods and mixed-use buildings in identified target growth areas of the Township.

**Applicable Planning Districts:**

1. With an objective to create a true downtown center, the Downtown area has been identified for its potential to contain mixed-use buildings to emulate the traditional, small town character and to provide for additional services to meet the future needs of the residents and visitors; mixed-use buildings would primarily be permitted in the Village Core and Downtown Commercial districts.
2. Hersheypark Drive Corridor has been identified for its potential to contain mixed-use, commercial type buildings; there is vacant land along the corridor that is currently zoned Commercial Recreation and Economic Development.
3. Medical Center/Research Park (HCAR) Area has been identified for its potential to create a mixed-use zoning overlay district; vacant land

currently exists in the Business Office/Research Overlay district. The Applied Research facility already contains a mix of land uses.

4. Middletown Road corridor has been identified for its potential to create planned, mixed-use centers; primarily in the vacant lands located in the Neighborhood Commercial district; however, there is also vacant land that is being actively advertised for sale in the Economic Development district as well.
5. The Palmdale area has been identified for its potential to create concentrated commercial activities rather than scattered and isolated uses that exist along East Chocolate Avenue. It is also an objective to support multi-family residential density to support the commercial activities in the area. Permitting mixed-use buildings would enable implementation of this objective for the neighborhood; vacant land and infill potential exists along the East Chocolate Avenue corridor in the Neighborhood Commercial district.

**Implementation Timeline:** Short Term, 0-5 years.

Mixed-use buildings are frequently identified as “live-work units”. These types of uses offer a dual purpose of developing smaller retail, restaurant or office spaces on the first floor of the building and residential uses on the upper floors. The residential components are either occupied by the owner of the business or are leased to occupants for income opportunity. These types of uses provide housing choice as well as the opportunity for economic development, in areas such as the Downtown and in Palmdale. They also tend to maximize the use potential of a property which is especially important in providing the density needed to support a vibrant downtown.

On a larger scale, mixed-use neighborhoods combine residential and neighborhood commercial type uses that provide services to the residents of the development and to visitors. These types of developments tend to promote walkability through the interconnection of streets that are lined with sidewalks and pedestrian trails. Lastly, they tend to create a sense of place through design standards that are unique to the development. The PA Municipalities Planning Code identifies these types of developments as Traditional Neighborhood Developments, or TND’s. The reference to “traditional” refers to a return to the development patterns that were seen in older, village style neighborhoods. These patterns include the development of a grid pattern of interconnected streets as well as provisions that require dwellings to be accessed by rear alleys, similar to what we see in the neighborhoods adjacent to the Downtown. These

types of developments also encourage mixed-uses with commercial services in close proximity to residential areas, also similar to the patterns we see in the Downtown.

**Recommendation #12** - Identify properties that are conducive to the development of TND's; draft and implement a TND Ordinance that is compliant with the standards of the MPC.

Properties that are suitable for the development of TND's include those properties that are already zoned for development and are near existing public infrastructure, including major roadways and existing water and sewer facilities. This would create less expenditure on extending roads and public services, as well as prevent the rezoning of lands which are currently zoned for agriculture or conservation. Larger land parcels, generally greater than 25 acres, would be more conducive to TND's, as these types of developments require providing a dense residential population to keep the commercial uses profitable. Areas already near denser residential populations and commercial workforces could also be conducive to TND development.

The MPC requires that new TND development be permitted through the use of overlay zoning districts. Additionally, the MPC has a list of requirements pertaining to the design standards and conditions for TND development and approvals. Through the permitted design standards, TND's provide opportunity for defining the character of new development. With higher densities recommended, it will enable more efficient use of land and will meet or exceed the population and housing projections for the Township.

**Recommendation #13** - Review existing zoning policies relative to mixed-use ratio requirements and determine appropriate revisions in order to enable live/work buildings in the Downtown and Palmdale areas.

Mixed-use ratios have been established in order to control the density of development on properties in districts that would permit the mixing of uses; this includes the Downtown Commercial and Village Core districts. However, the ratios are inconsistent with traditional downtown development densities and would often prevent mixed-use buildings without first obtaining relief from the Zoning Hearing Board. To be consistent with the goals of this chapter and in order to provide for a

vibrant downtown community, these regulations should be reviewed and revised accordingly to permit live/work buildings in the downtown.

The Palmdale area has seen increases in building conversions from residential to commercial space along the East Chocolate Avenue corridor. Many of the buildings see the residential character being preserved with the commercial conversions. Similarly to the downtown, allowing opportunity for the provisions of live/work units would increase housing choice and provide opportunity for economic development in the Palmdale area. Changes to existing zoning regulations along the corridor would need to be made since current zoning prohibits residential uses.

## Preservation of Open Space & Rural Character

**Implementation Strategy #4:** Review existing regulations and develop appropriate revisions to existing buffer requirements in order to preserve scenic vistas and rural areas of the Township.

### **Applicable Planning Districts:**

1. The Hersheypark Drive Corridor contains an objective to preserve bucolic open spaces in order to preserve its rural identity and their visual impacts on the Corridor.
2. The Route 743 South Corridor contains an objective to preserve open spaces and to provide buffer elements in order to provide visual and safety benefits to the corridor.

**Implementation Timeline:** Short Term, 0-5 years.

The existing buffer areas established by zoning requirements are intended to preserve the rural character of the areas that are described in the Zoning Ordinance. The only permitted uses within the buffer areas are agricultural uses, conservation areas, as well as the conservation of open space, water, soil and wildlife resources. The only exceptions made are in circumstances that may be necessary to provide access to the property and enable utility placement. These buffer areas could be extended to include lands along Hersheypark Drive and Route 743 South, to preserve the viewsheds along both corridors.

**Recommendation #14 -** Require buffer areas between developments of higher densities to screen uses from developments of lower densities.

In addition to the added buffer areas described above, consideration should also be given to extend buffer areas to higher density developments in order to create transition between those of a lower density. This would screen denser uses from view in attempt to preserve the character of existing developments. Requirements to provide landscaping features in buffer areas would implement this strategy.

**Implementation Strategy #5:** Connect and expand the Township walking and biking trails as a unique identifying character element in the Township.



**Applicable Planning Districts:** All planning districts.

**Implementation Timeline:** On-going over the Long Term, 0-20 years.

This strategy serves multiple purposes that include providing pedestrian connections to services and amenities, providing alternatives to automobile travel and promoting additional opportunities for a healthy, active lifestyle that are important to many residents in the Township. Walking and biking paths have become an identifying feature in what makes Derry Township unique. In the community survey, 37% of the respondents identified the walking/bike paths in their list of the five most liked features in the Township; while 68% feel that increasing opportunities for walking and biking is important.

**Recommendation #15** - Establish trail connections that are consistent with the Township, County and neighboring municipal Park and Open Space plans.

The Township Parks and Recreation Department has identified the need to update the existing Recreation, Parks and Open Space Master Plan since many of the connections identified in the current plan have been completed. These efforts were in the preliminary discussion phase at the time of writing this plan. Providing for future trail connections offers opportunity to think regionally, by reviewing County and neighboring municipal Park and Open Space plans for the potential to provide connections outside of Township boundaries.

The Dauphin County Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Greenways Study, approved in April of 2009, identifies several recreational/cultural greenway elements in Derry Township, in addition to the Township trail system. The County defines recreational/cultural greenway elements as being those elements which support human activity; provide low impact recreation opportunities and provides "quality of life" benefits that are identified in the Study. The first greenway element is the Horse Shoe Trail which is a 140-mile long path that connects the Appalachian Trail in Dauphin County to the Valley Forge National Historical Park in Chester County. This trail runs through Derry Township starting along Sand Beach Road and meanders through the Township, eventually into Lebanon County in the area of Route 322. The Trail is the only trail in Dauphin County that is maintained for pedestrian and equestrian use. The second greenway element identified is the Swatara Creek/Union Canal Greenway and Water Trail which extends 21 miles through the County and provides connection to Boat House Road Park in the

Township. These two greenway elements present an opportunity for future trail improvements and connections to the Township trail system, as well as implementation of elements in the County study.

**Recommendation #16** - Research and implement the adoption of an Official Map as a regulatory tool that identifies future trail connections.

The MPC permits municipalities to adopt Official Maps in order to depict public lands and facilities that are existing, or proposed, and that are discussed in the Comprehensive Plan. This would include identification of areas for future pedestrian paths and walkways. For properties that contain a future trail connection, the Map becomes a tool for negotiation with developers to either provide an easement for the trail as a condition of land development plan or permit approvals. Another option is that negotiation can occur for the acquisition of the land by the Township on a fee basis. The Township would have one year to acquire the land for the improvement which starts from the time the developer would give notice of the intent to develop the property. There are guides that could assist the Township in completing an Official Map, including *The Official Map: A Handbook for Preserving and Providing Public Lands and Facilities*. This guide is a PennDOT publication released in June of 2011. Since the regulatory tool is not as common as Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development ordinances, public outreach will be essential prior to adoption of an Official Map.

**Implementation Strategy #6:** Promote agricultural and agritourism uses as a cultural resource in the Township's rural areas.

**Applicable Planning Districts:** All districts, coinciding with the Agricultural/Conservation zoning district.

**Implementation Timeline:** Short Term, 0-5 years.

**Recommendation #17** - Revise zoning regulations in the Agricultural/Conservation district to permit agritourism uses.

Agritourism can be defined as any use related to a working farm that is intended to draw visitors to the farm for the purchase of products created by the farming activities on the property and to serve as a source of supplemental income to the farmers. These uses can include wineries, produce stands, farmers markets and u-pick operations. While not a

prevalent use in the Township at the time of writing this plan; recent trends in neighboring communities have seen increases in agritourism uses, particularly related to viticulture and wine making. Additionally, there appears to be an increase in the demand for the consumption of locally produced and organically grown food as more than 73% of the individuals responding to the community survey indicated the desire to see more natural/organic food stores in the Township. Agritourism uses can instill a sense of place by offering products that are unique to Derry Township.

## Preservation of Historic Resources

**Implementation Strategy #7:** Establish and implement a plan for the preservation of historic resources in the Township.

**Applicable Planning Districts:** All districts.

**Implementation Timeline:** Short Term, 0-5 years.

Historic preservation regulations may be enacted in the Township under two different enabling legislation. The first type of requirements is enabled by the Pennsylvania Historic District Act of 1961 (Act 167). The regulations under this Act work well for historic resources that are densely concentrated in one area. A municipality may to establish a historic district which would need to be reviewed and approved by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Historic Preservation (BHP). If approved, the district would be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Upon the approval by the BHP, the governing body of a municipality would need to approve the district and would also need to approve corresponding preservation regulations. Regulations may include issues relating to aesthetics or structural alterations as a result of new construction, additions or demolitions. Historic district regulations would also require the Township to establish a Historic Architecture Review Board (HARB) to review applications against the preservation requirements.

The second type of regulations is enabled by the MPC. Historic preservation requirements may be adopted as part of the Township Zoning Ordinance. This would be effective in both areas where historic resources are spread over a large area or are concentrated in one area of the Township. Preservation requirements are implemented by creating an overlay district which may regulate such activities as maintenance, alterations and repair to historic resources. A description of possible ordinance criteria is described below, under recommendation #16.

**Recommendation #18 -** Update the Township's historic inventory listing.

The Township's current historic inventory list was last completed in 1988, during the last Comprehensive Plan. An up-to-date inventory list is essential for the adoption of historic preservation regulations and is the first step in identifying and documenting the historical context of the Township. Historic resources are generally those that are included on the

National Register of Historic Places or that are identified as being eligible to be on the Register, by the Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission (PHMC). For example, the Township may further designate historic resources outside of these definitions if the resource is of local historic importance or is of a certain period of architecture that is desired to be preserved.

**Recommendation #19** - Review alternatives and determine the desired goals to be achieved through implementation of historic preservation requirements.

Public outreach and education will be essential in determining the goals and strategies of preserving the historic architecture in the Township. Using the two enabling legislative documents in the State, regulations for the preservation of historic resources have taken on many forms. Below is a summary of some of the more common forms of preservation requirements in our region:

- Many municipalities adopt regulations under the MPC requirements and implement a Historic Preservation Overlay District. Many regulations are strictly limited to a demolition review by the governing body requiring the approval of a conditional use prior to demolition of the resource. In this case, applicants that propose demolition of historic buildings typically must demonstrate that the building meets one or more criteria established in the Zoning Ordinance. This may include that the applicant demonstrate that the preservation of the building is not economically feasible, it is not possible due to structural deficiencies which were not caused by neglect of the building, and that the reconstruction of buildings will improve the streetscape of the community. An example of this type of Ordinance has been adopted in Hummelstown Borough.
- The second type of Ordinance is similar to the first, in that, municipalities would adopt a Historic Preservation Overlay District under the MPC zoning requirements and require a similar demolition review process. However, in addition to this process, municipalities may establish regulations for the alteration, adaptive reuse, rehabilitation and reconstruction of historic resources. Many municipalities will require that an applicant demonstrate that the alterations will be in compliance with the recommendations of those listed in the document titled *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. Lastly, municipalities may also

establish design criteria for new construction or infill development within the Historic Overlay District. An example of this type of Ordinance has been adopted in Lititz Borough.

There are many variations among ordinance requirements adopted under the MPC requirements. For example, in-lieu of review by the governing body, many municipalities have established an advisory board that reviews permit applications for the alteration of historic resources, and provide recommendation to the Zoning Officer prior to issuance of a building permit. The extent of review is at the discretion of the governing body at the time of adopting revisions to the ordinances to include a historic preservation element.

- The last type of ordinance would be adopted as a Historic District designated on the National Register of Historic Places. Over 400 districts have been implemented under the PA Historic District Act of 1961 as identified on the Register. Local examples include the historic districts in Annville, Gettysburg, West Chester and Harrisburg. These districts have established Historic Architectural Review Boards for review of alterations to historic properties. Gettysburg, for example, requires the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness prior to the issuance of permits for alteration to buildings within the District. The PHMC provides a model ordinance on their website for establishing a Historic District, this model should be considered if it is determined that the goals of the Township would be better accomplished by this method.

**Recommendation #20** - Establish an appropriate link between the residential dwellings in the Downtown and the predominant architecture established for the Chocolate Avenue Preservation Overlay District.

Much of the architecture along Chocolate Avenue in the Downtown area, is of similar architecture to the residential village areas adjacent to the Preservation District. Therefore, a similar overlay district in this area may be another possible alternative to the historic preservation requirements. Section 605 of the MPC permits the establishment of different requirements for overlay districts if the intent of the district is to preserve a specific type or period of architecture. Therefore, an overlay district with design guidelines for this area is another option for consideration. The addition of another overlay district does not necessarily mean that the design guidelines would need to be reviewed by an Advisory Board. As

with the historic regulations adopted under MPC requirements, review for compliance with the design guidelines can be completed by the Zoning Officer, prior to issuance of building permits.