**FAQ**

**Frequently-Asked Questions**

1. What is the Haddonfield Neighborhood Character and Zoning Initiative?

The Haddonfield Neighborhood Character and Zoning Initiative is a community planning effort created in response to concerns among many residents about the impacts of home development activities on the character of their neighborhoods. The specific recommendations grew out of the concerns of residents voiced to the Borough Planning Board that some newer residential projects in the neighborhood seemed over-large and out-of-place, as if planned for another area. That led to a request to evaluate the zoning regulations for the Residential zoning districts. The Planning Board tasked a 5-member working committee to investigate the issues and, if deemed necessary, to propose remedies that might take the form of recommended amendments to the Borough Zoning Code.

1. What is its purpose and goals?

The purpose is to improve the regulations that shape future home development activities. Do the outcomes complement the character and form of Haddonfield’s residential neighborhoods and streets? Where the answer is clearly no, the Planning Board’s Land Use Committee looked further at Borough development standards as well as those of other communities that seem to have similar concerns.

1. Which neighborhoods?

The project takes a fresh look at development standards in each of Haddonfield’s residential neighborhoods. In addition to conducting a photo-inventory of recent construction, the Land Use Committee conducted numerous interviews with residents, builders and architects in order to better understand the geography and scale of residential expansions, demolitions, and development. From the beginning, it was understood that some policy and regulatory changes might benefit all or most residential neighborhoods, while other types of modifications might be more appropriate, feasible, or effective for specific neighborhoods.

1. How long will it take?

This project began as a technical study initiated by the Planning Board in 2015, so it has been several years in the making. It is now focused on actionable proposals. This spring, the recommendations of the Board are to be brought to Council to be heard as proposed amendments to the zoning Code. After public discussion and deliberation by the Board and by Commissioners, the Commission may vote to adopt the amendments as proposed, or they may request that some or all be modified in some way, or they could elect to not to pass the proposed ordinances. In that case, the existing provisions will continue to apply.

1. ***What is being proposed?***

Amendments that could be adopted over the summer months include site plan review and zoning standards that the Planning Board believes will lead to improved outcomes as existing houses are expanded and new homes are built. The proposed amendments:

1. **Update neighborhood residential zoning standards** for the R-2 through R-9 zoning districts; looking particularly at house height, front yard setback, façade articulation, fenestration, garage location, and projections into front and side yard setbacks.
2. **Refine definitions** for Basement, Height, and Grading and add definitions for Corner Lot, Lot Depth, Lot Width, and Half Story.
3. **Update the zoning map** where there are significant inconsistencies between the zoning provisions and the character of certain streets, lots, or blocks.
4. How can I stay informed?
	* + - First, visit and bookmark [***this Link***](http://www.haddonfieldnj.org/boards_and_committees/planning_board/planning_board_land_use_sub-comittee.php)***\*\*.*** It will be the central public portal of information for this initiative.
* Second, press releases will be drafted and distributed so that local newsletters and newspapers can publish timely information for their readers during the course of the initiative.
* Third, any future workshops or meetings will be announced on the webpage, in addition to any other opportunities for residents to contribute facts, opinions, photographs, data, etc.
1. Who is leading this initiative?

This initiative is being guided by a Planning Board subcommittee, with support from the Commissioners. A full list of subcommittee participants is posted on the webpage. The Commissioners have been updated regularly throughout the process. Last summer the findings of the study were heard by the Planning Board and adopted as the Board’s recommendations for amending Borough Code. Subsequently, at the request of the Borough, planning experts T&M Associates have been asked to provide incidental assistance to the Planning Board and the Commissioners with ordinance illustrations, presentation materials, webpage updates, and research; supporting the office of the Borough administrator and the Planning Board counsel.

1. Are other towns facing similar issues?

Many cities and towns throughout the country and in New Jersey are facing similar issues; Haddonfiled is not alone. Articles and case studies highlighting experiences and practices from other towns facing similar issues will be consulted and may inform the process. Look for the “Research” section on the webpage, which will include links to these references and resources.

\*\*(<http://www.haddonfieldnj.org/boards_and_committees/planning_board/planning_board_land_use_sub-comittee.php>)