

**Conditional Use Application
The Farm @ 415 Birmingham**

Impact Assessment Report (Section 115-48.2.I.)

I. INTRODUCTION.

In accordance with Section 115-48.2 of the Township of East Bradford Zoning Ordinance relating to Bed and Breakfast Estates, this Impact Assessment Report has been prepared for purposes of the conditional use application submitted for the property to operate a Bed and Breakfast Estate for overnight guests and special events on the property.

A. Purpose.

The purpose of this report is to evaluate any potential negative impacts the proposed Bed and Breakfast Estate would have in the surrounding community with respect to such matters as parking, traffic, noise, lighting and views in accordance with Section 115-48.2.I of the Township of East Bradford Zoning Ordinance.

The subject property is located at 415 Birmingham Road, West Chester, Pennsylvania 19382 and is approximately 10.96 acres in size ("Property"). The Property contains a residential lot consisting of a historic farmhouse ("Farm House"), a tenant house ("Tenant House"), a large barn ("Barn") and several other historic buildings, driveways, turf grasses, substantial trees, vegetation, woodlands and residential landscaping. The Property is accessed from two separate entrances along Birmingham Road with a long driveway which leads directly to the historic farmhouse and four of the historic auxiliary buildings in the heart of the Property. This unique Property is located in the R-2 Residential Zoning District and is serviced by private well water and two private waste management systems.

B. Background as Class I Historic Resource.

This unique Property is a significant historic resource for East Bradford Township as well as for Chester County. It is a Class I Historic Resource as defined by the Township Historic Resource Inventory (HR #135, also known as the Phillip Paxon House) and dates back to 1777 (and likely is older). Of historic significance is that James Townsend and a Strode boy reportedly watched troops go by from the second story of this house. Also, in 1796, the East Bradford Board School for Boys was built on land sold from this farm. As a Class I Historic Resource the Property is thus eligible for adaptive reuse as a Bed and Breakfast Estate.

II. **BED AND BREAKFAST ESTATE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

A. **Description.**

The Property is proposed to be used as a Bed and Breakfast Estate for overnight guests and special events, including but not limited to non-profit events, community events, showers, birthdays, graduations, indoor and/or outdoor weddings and receptions and other special events.

The Bed and Breakfast Estate will be operating year-round to host overnight guests and accommodate special events. Six overnight guest rooms are proposed in the Tenant House and four overnight guest rooms are proposed in the Farm House. It is anticipated that just one or two weddings will be held a month during the first few years of operation with more expected in the future. The Applicant agrees to host no more than 100 guests for the special events consistent with Section 115-48.2.L.(8) of the Zoning Ordinance. The special events will be held in a tent structure adjacent to the Barn. Applicant also agrees that all special events will be restricted to be between the hours of 9:00 AM and 9:00 PM.

Proposed sewage disposal for the special events will be provided by temporary portable facilities which will be located in close proximity to the tent structure. There are two existing septic systems currently servicing the property which are located in the open space areas as approved by the Township in accordance with the prior Drury subdivision. The existing on-site septic system for the Farm House is sufficient to accommodate the guest suites in the Farm House. The existing on-site septic system for the Tenant House can accommodate any required improvements as may be necessary for the Tenant House overnight suites.

B. **Parking.**

Parking is planned to be provided for overnight guests and special events on-site. As stated above, the Applicant expects to be hosting no more than 100 guests for the special events consistent with available parking on-site in compliance with the ordinance requirements. As shown on the Parking Plan Exhibit prepared by DL Howell and Associates, approximately 50 guest vehicles can be parked on the property. Pursuant to Township Ordinances, this Parking Plan can accommodate a gathering for 100 guests. The Parking Plan further depicts employee and guest parking in various areas around the structures. Valet parking will be provided if necessary for ADA purposes. The primary parking for guests is not proposed to be paved as permitted by Section 115-48.2.L(9)(b) of the Township of East Bradford Zoning Ordinance. The Applicant agrees to permit the Township to conduct annual inspections to confirm the unpaved surface area is appropriate for parking and agrees to accept this as a condition.

c. Traffic.

The property currently has two means of access along Birmingham Road. Each access drive will be restricted to one-way traffic with the northern access being utilized for incoming traffic and the southern access being utilized for departing traffic. By restricting departing traffic to only utilize the southern access drive, this increases the sight distances looking in both directions which creates a safer condition. The only potential traffic problems could occur upon the arrival of adult guests for a wedding reception as party guests tend to arrive generally at the same time, while departing guests tend to leave at staggering times. Wedding receptions, however, are generally limited to weekends and do not conflict with any peak, weekday travel periods. Additionally, the long one-way driveways provide plenty of stacking space to allow vehicles to enter the Property to park their vehicle without causing backups onto Birmingham Road and to allow vehicles to exit the Property without causing vehicle congestion around the buildings which could be a safety issue.

d. Noise.

The Applicant agrees to end the special events at 9pm and to comply with all other applicable Bed & Breakfast Estate Ordinance regulations with respect to noise levels. It is expected that the noise levels would not be greater than those normally associated with another similar Bed and Breakfast Estate use. Also, it is not expected that the noise levels would exceed existing conditions experienced during the weekday rush hours. For example, noise associated by automobiles driving past the Property frontage is expected to create more noise than the levels that would be generated from the proposed use. The nearest neighboring home is a substantial distance away from the location of the proposed tent area on the Property where the guests will be gathering. In addition, there is a sufficient amount of vegetation surrounding the property which will help reduce noise levels along the adjacent properties and the applicant is providing additional landscaping which will further suppress the noise. The existing Barn structure should also suppress noise from the tent area for the northern and eastern properties. The Applicant agrees to comply with all applicable ordinance requirements governing noise for the proposed use.

e. Lighting.

The Property currently has lighting similar to most residences in the area. There is a typical post light located where the two driveways converge, wall sconces are located on some of the buildings, and landscape lighting may be installed in the future. Existing vegetation reduces apparent light levels and glare and is consistent to the amount of lighting that would be found in most residential neighborhoods.

F. Visual Impacts.

The proposed use is expected to not create any visual impacts. Most of the existing buildings are shielded from the views from the adjacent properties by virtue of the historic barn or the significant existing vegetation that currently exists on the Property. While the property is already heavily vegetated, the applicant has agreed to provide additional landscaping and plantings as shown on the Parking Plan and the Conceptual Landscape Plan.

III. CONCLUSIONS.

The property is appropriate for the proposed B&B Estate use (including the special events) given the size of the property, the existing vegetative screening and the historic value.

The Property is a valuable historical resource as documented by the East Bradford Township Historic Commission and by Chester County. The viable, economic use of this unique Property is critical to preserving this East Bradford Township historic resource which is an intrinsic value to the community. The Applicant appreciates the Property's historic value and is committed to bringing back its charm and sharing it with others for years to come.

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