

Chapter 5 HISTORIC and CULTURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION PLAN

Introduction

This chapter provides recommendations to best preserve historic and cultural resources in East Goshen Township. The rich history of the Township is reflected in its landscapes and development patterns, and although the community has changed significantly over the past few decades, the remaining historic sites and districts provide historical context to the Township's character.

The intent of the recommendations that follow is to implement the following goal and objectives:

GOAL: Preserve historic and cultural resources for the benefit of future generations.

Objective 5A Create an awareness of the historical and cultural significance of East Goshen.

Objective 5B Protect the Township's historical structures from the impacts of development.

Objective 5C Preserve Goshenville as the historic and cultural centerpiece of East Goshen.

Objective 5D Preserve Rocky Hill, Milltown and Hershey's Mill as historic areas.

Recommendations

Objective 5A Create an awareness of the historical and cultural significance of East Goshen.

- **Recommendation 5A-1** Create an information program emphasizing the historic past of East Goshen.

DISCUSSION:

Encouraging and emphasizing the Township's civic pride is necessary to get citizens involved in the preservation effort. The historic preservation effort should invite public involvement and participation. The principal vehicle for this effort is the Township Historical Commission. Keeping residents informed on the progress of preservation efforts and the status of various activities should be a priority. Information on rehabilitating existing historic structures is made widely available.

ACTIONS NEEDED:

- 5A-1-1** Develop informational programs.
- 5A-1-2** Prepare and distribute informational materials.
- 5A-1-3** Encourage use of approved historical names for all new developments and roads.
- 5A-1-4** Involve volunteer organizations and individuals in implementation strategies.
- 5A-1-5** Develop and provide local historical information for use in local schools.
- 5A-1-6** Develop and implement a local plaque program for historic structures and properties.

- **Recommendation 5A-2** Create greater involvement in and recognition of Historical Commission tasks.

DISCUSSION:

The East Goshen Historical Commission has broad responsibilities associated with historic preservation and serves in a general advisory role to the Board of Supervisors on historic preservation matters. The membership composition, duties and responsibilities of the Township Historical Commission are not required per any enabling legislation, but are defined by the local ordinance authorizing the Commission. The Historical Commission is given the following responsibilities:

- Identifying local historic resources and recommending their preservation to the governing body;
- Preparing historic preservation grant applications;
- Maintaining and updating the inventory of historic resources;
- Representing the community on historical and preservation matters at the local, regional, and state levels; and
- Educating the community about historical matters.

ACTIONS NEEDED:

- 5A-2-1** Clarify and broaden the current roles, responsibilities, and duties of the Historical Commission.
- 5A-2-2** Develop design guidelines for the preservation and protection of historic resources.

- **Recommendation 5A-3** Encourage National Register-eligible sites to complete the application process.

DISCUSSION:

The National Register serves several purposes:

- Listing in the National Register provides an important and honorary level of recognition to the property, generates pride in the community, and heightens interest in historic resources;
- In addition, listing on the Register provides a measure of protection against federally funded programs, through the Section 106 Review Process (required for all federally funded programs that have any impact on historic resources). For purposes of the National Register nomination, historic resources are classified as buildings, sites, structures, objects, or districts; and
- Property owners can benefit from being listed on the National Register as they are eligible for certain types of funding designed to encourage specific preservation activities associated with rehabilitation or adaptive reuse.

Township sites eligible for the National Register include the Rocky Hill historic district. Other sites for consideration are the Milltown and Hershey's Mill historic districts.

ACTION NEEDED:

- 5A-3-1** Assist in the preparation of application materials to nominate eligible structures, sites, and districts for the National Register.

Objective 5B Protect the Township’s historical structures from the impacts of development.

East Goshen Township has an extensive inventory of historic resources. The initial inventory forms the basis for an Historic Preservation Ordinance adopted in January 2003. Although a significant start has been made, additional options could be implemented. The identification and implementation of strategies that emphasize the local history and the importance of preserving the physical evidence of that history are crucial. The following recommendations can help East Goshen officials and residents protect and preserve their historic resources.

- **Recommendation 5B-1** Compile additional information for the Historic Resources Inventory.

DISCUSSION:

The Township prepared a “drive-by” survey inventory when developing the Historic Preservation Ordinance (adopted 2003). Completing the historical documentation of the properties on the survey as well as reviewing the current condition of these sites can enhance this inventory. Such a comprehensive survey provides the identification and documentation necessary for further preservation efforts and is therefore the first priority. The survey process paves the way for preservation strategies such as recommendations of properties for nomination to the National Historic Register, establishment of certified historic districts, adoption of historic overlays, or implementation of other strategies.

STATUS OF CURRENT ORDINANCE STANDARDS:

The Historic Preservation Ordinance currently includes an Historic Resources Inventory, which was evaluated in 2002. This Inventory includes “drive-by” information and does not include other elements of a comprehensive survey as indicated by the guidelines of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. (PHMC)

ACTIONS NEEDED:

- 5B-1-1** Update the historical documentation for properties on the Historic Resource Inventory.
- 5B-1-2** Investigate opportunities for grants or funding to update the Historic Resource Inventory.
- 5B-1-3** Evaluate the historical documentation and establish preservation priorities

- **Recommendation 5B-2** Consider the creation of additional Local Historic Districts.

DISCUSSION:

A certified *local* historic district can be established following the evaluation of the historic survey and inventory data. The Pennsylvania Historic Districts Act (Act 167 of 1961) enables municipalities interested in protecting locally important historic resources to regulate alterations and modifications.

Certified local historic districts, utilizing the formal rules and regulations for review under Act 167, are a useful and effective method for protecting historic structures that are part of a defined historic district. For East Goshen, this method would be more effective for limited areas (such areas as Goshenville, Rocky Hill, Hershey’s Mill, and Milltown) and may not be suitable on a Township-wide basis. In addition, this method should be utilized following an effective informational program to define the rights of property owners under the regulations of the certified local historic district.

STATUS OF CURRENT ORDINANCE STANDARDS:

The Historic Preservation Ordinance provides criteria for issuing demolition permits for historic structures on the Historic Resources Inventory. It also includes options designed to maintain the historic structure while allowing for flexibility of reuse of the structure for purposes other than the original intent of the structure.

ACTIONS NEEDED:

5B-2-1 Review historical documentation to see if additional Local Historic District(s) should be created.

5B-2-2 Establish an overlay zoning district for the Rocky Hill historic area.

- **Recommendation 5B-3** Consider pursuing recognition in the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program.

DISCUSSION:

The Certified Local Government (CLG) program is a local, state, and federal partnership established to preserve a community's unique historic character. This national initiative provides valuable technical assistance and small grants to local governments seeking to preserve historic resources for future generations. Funds are appropriated annually by the U.S. Congress and administered by the National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Offices in each state. The CLG program integrates the functions of a local government with historic preservation. The program has institutionalized historic preservation by making it part of local government and making it an integral part of local land use policy.

ACTION NEEDED:

5B-3-1 Investigate and consider applications for recognition as a Certified Local Government.

- **Recommendation 5B-4** Encourage creation of preservation easements or other private property legal mechanisms.

DISCUSSION:

Preservation easements, deed restrictions, and restrictive covenants are an effective alternative method to protect existing historic sites and buildings from development or demolition. First, they reflect the actions of the landowner, not the legal requirements of the Township. Second, they allow for greater flexibility on the part of landowners.

ACTIONS NEEDED:

5B-4-1 Establish program guidelines to encourage private historic preservation measures.

5B-4-2 Develop materials to promote voluntary historic preservation.

- **Recommendation 5B-5** Promote adaptive reuse of historical resources.

DISCUSSION:

Historic and cultural resources can be developed as a source of sustainable economic development. Community awareness and public involvement in historic preservation activities is a key to foster awareness and interest and encourage such development. As economic development is a key goal of every community, the potential of historic preservation to fulfill this goal should be used to East Goshen's benefit.

STATUS OF CURRENT ORDINANCE STANDARDS:

The Historic Preservation Ordinance allows for adaptive reuse of historic structures through a public review procedure. This typically includes a conditional use approval from the Board of Supervisors and, in some cases, approval as a land development through the Planning Commission. Multiple review steps (and the time cost associated with these) may impede property owners from retaining resources if they are under time constraints or cost constraints.

ACTIONS NEEDED:

5B-5-1 Review ordinances to enhance the benefits of adaptive uses that maintain historic resources.

Objective 5C Preserve Goshenville as the historic and cultural centerpiece of East Goshen.

The preservation of Goshenville is, to a certain extent, already assured through the designation on the National Register, the inclusion of properties on the Historic Resources Inventory, regulation of demolition and use of the historic structures through the Historic Preservation Ordinance, and the outright ownership of several Historic Resources by the Township. The question of how to maintain Goshenville as the historic and cultural centerpiece of East Goshen turns on the ability of the Township Historical Commission to create programming, in coordination with other local interests, that celebrates the history and vital contribution of Goshenville to the development of East Goshen Township.

The recommendations under Objective 5B, above, provide the legal and structural parameters for protection of historic structures and historic areas. Development of an annual program of activities celebrating Goshenville’s history and the individual histories of each structure would enable greater understanding of the past and provide greater impetus to protect such resources.

- **Recommendation 5C-1** Utilize historic re-enactment events to showcase period daily life activities.

DISCUSSION:

The re-enactment of historic events, whether major events (such as the Battle of the Clouds) or the everyday lives of local residents, provide a view of life in the early days of Goshenville. A reenactment, complete with period dress, equipment, and background stories of local experts and re-enactors, can provide a bridge to Township residents to appreciate the quality of life in the 18th and 19th centuries.

ACTIONS NEEDED:

- 5C-1-1** Continue to re-enact the typical life of Goshenville residents in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- 5C-1-2** Provide sponsorship and facilities for re-enactment events .
- 5C-1-3** Develop additional events to re-enact the typical life of Rocky Hill, Milltown, and Hershey’s Mill residents in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- 5C-1-4** Coordinate re-enactments with other activities of a historical nature.

- **Recommendation 5C-2** Prepare an outline and description of the historic character of buildings and structures in Goshenville, including former sites.

DISCUSSION:

Promoting historic preservation is easier when history is memorialized in text. The preparation of a text for local distribution provides a marker to establish and maintain the history of the Goshenville village area.

ACTIONS NEEDED:

- 5C-2-1** Develop programs describing the background and emergence of Goshenville.
- 5C-2-2** Prepare a written document with historic photographs and site area plans showing Goshenville.

Objective 5D Preserve Rocky Hill, Milltown, and Hershey's Mill as historic areas.

In addition to the protection of historic Goshenville, the areas of Rocky Hill, Milltown, and Hershey's Mill are a reflection of the history and character of East Goshen. Each in its own way demonstrates the economic forces that served as community centers and locations for personal interaction and development of the social network that became Goshen and, later, East Goshen Township. Preservation of Rocky Hill, Milltown, and Hershey's Mill is, therefore, an investment in safeguarding East Goshen's connection with and understanding of its past.

The recommendations under Objective 5B, above, provide the legal and structural parameters for preservation of historic structures and historic areas. Like Goshenville, an annual program of activities celebrating the history of Rocky Hill, Milltown, and Hershey's Mill will serve to invite greater dedication to understanding the past and to protecting these historic areas.

- **Recommendation 5D-1** Create an historic re-enactment to highlight activities and practices of daily life in Rocky Hill, Milltown, and Hershey's Mill.

DISCUSSION:

The re-enactment of historic events, whether major events (such as the Battle of the Clouds) or the everyday lives of local residents can provide a view of life in the early days of Rocky Hill, Milltown, and Hershey's Mill. Re-enactments, complete with period dress, equipment, and background stories of local experts and re-enactors, can provide a bridge to Township residents to appreciate the quality of life in the 18th and 19th centuries.

ACTIONS NEEDED:

- 5D-1-1** Develop an event to re-enact the typical life of Rocky Hill and Milltown residents, and of works at Hershey's Mill, in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- 5D-1-2** Provide sponsorship and facilities to enable the re-enactment event to occur.
- 5D-1-3** Prepare to coordinate re-enactments with similar activities for Goshenville.

REFERENCES:

A Toolbox for Managing Change in Chester County – Volume I. Chester County Planning Commission. 1997.

A Toolbox for Managing Change in Chester County – Volume II. Chester County Planning Commission. 1999.

Preserving Our Places. Chester County Planning Commission, 1998.

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