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November 15, 2017

The Honorable Ray O'Connell
President, City Council
City of Allentown
435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, PA 18101

Re: Amends the Zoning Code, Article 1303 (Definitions), Article 1309.06.H (Purposes of Each District) and Article 1327.NN (Specific Uses) of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Allentown which would expand the student overlay district north of Tilghman to Washington Street and west to Broad Street requested by Allentown City Council. 17-1(Z)

Dear Mr. O'Connell:

Please be advised that at the monthly meeting of the Allentown City Planning Commission held on Tuesday, November 14, 2017, the Commission reviewed the above-referenced amendment to the City's Zoning Map requested by City Council. The Commission voted to RECOMMEND APPROVAL of this amendment to City Council.

If you have any questions concerning this action, please contact me.

Yours very truly,

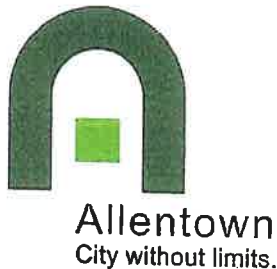

R. Douglas Stewart
Director of Planning

Enclosures

RDS:jmm

Xc: Mayor Ed Pawlowski
Leonard Lightner, Interim Director of Community & Economic Development
Michael Hanlon, City Clerk

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STAFF REPORT TO THE ALLENTOWN CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

November 9, 2017

SUBJECT: Request to expand the R-SO Student Residence Overlay District in the vicinity of Muhlenberg College to include 346 additional parcels. The current boundary of the R-SO Student Residence Overlay District is Tilghman Street to the north and N. 27th Street to the west. The proposed northern boundary is Washington Street and the western boundary is N. Broad Street.

(Note: the actual limits of the proposed R-SO Student Residence Overlay District expansion are shown on the attached map).

BACKGROUND:

Responding to concerns expressed from residents in the Muhlenberg College vicinity about the nuisances associated with student residences, the City is proposing to expand the current R-SO Student Residence Overlay District. Currently, in areas not within the overlay district, up to 4 non-related people may reside in a dwelling. Within the Overlay District the number of unrelated students living in a dwelling unit is limited to 2 providing the student residence is annually registered with the City. There are 35 student residences in the current Overlay District. The expanded area includes 5 additional student residences.

The City held 2 community meetings to discuss with the area residents the proposed expansion. The first meeting on September 19, 2017 was attended by approximately 100 people with 5 of them whom acknowledged they are landlords in the area. The second meeting on October 17, 2017 was attended by 16 people. The primary concerns expressed by those attending both meetings involved noise, student parties and parking. An informal poll was held at the second meeting and all of the 16 were in favor of the expansion area. A representative of Muhlenberg College spoke about what the College is doing to address the community concerns. The College has taken no official stand in favor or opposed to the proposal.

EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING:

The area requested to be included in the expansion overlay district consists mostly of single family detached and attached dwellings. The area is located in the R-M Medium Density and R-L Low Density Residential Districts.

FINDINGS:

The purpose of the R-SO Student Residence Overlay District is to limit by half the number of students living within the residential area in close proximity to the college campus in an attempt to control the nuisances often attributed to college student housing. It is also the intent of the proposed expansion to preserve the existing residential character of the neighborhood.

RECOMMENDATION:

Based upon generally accepted planning and zoning principals to protect the health, safety and welfare of the surrounding community, and the above findings, this office finds the proposed expansion of the R-SO Student Residence Overlay District to be acceptable and appropriate.


R. Douglas Stewart
Director of Planning

ORDINANCE NO. _____

FILE OF CITY COUNCIL

BILL NO. - 2017

Introduced on September 6, 2017

AN ORDINANCE

Amending the Zoning Code, Article 1303 (Definitions), Article 1309.06.H (Purposes of Each District) and Article 1327.NN (Specific Uses) of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Allentown.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN:

SECTION ONE: That the area on the Zoning Map of the City of Allentown depicted on Exhibit "A" attached hereto be added to and included in the R-SO Student Residence Overlay District Zone.

SECTION TWO: That upon approval, the City Clerk is directed to incorporate the above onto the Official Zoning Map of the City of Allentown.

SECTION THREE: That all Ordinances inconsistent with the above provisions are repealed to the extent of their inconsistency.

Bill: Rezoning of an area in the vicinity of Muhlenberg College to be added to and included in the Student Residence Overlay District Zone (R-SO)

- What Department or bureau is Bill originating from? Where did the initiative for the bill originate?

City Council

- Summary and Facts of the Bill

The Bill expands the Student Residence Overlay District Zone (R-SO) into the area shown on Exhibit "A" attached to the Bill.

- Purpose

- What does the Bill do – what are the specific goals/tasks the bill seek to accomplish
 - What are the Benefits of doing this/Down-side of doing this
- How does this Bill related to the City's Vision/Mission/Priorities

The Bill enlarges the R-SO District to include 346 additional parcels.

The benefit is to preserve the residential character of the neighborhood.

- Financial Impact

- Cost (Initial and ongoing)
- Benefits (Initial and ongoing)

None.

- Funding Sources

Make sure bill gives specific accounts if money is moved around.

N/A

- Priority status/Deadlines, if any.

None.