

Neighborhood Preservation Overlay District (NPOD)

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Neighborhood Preservation Overlay District?

A Neighborhood Preservation Overlay District (NPOD) is a zoning layer placed on top of a base zoning district that serves to protect the distinctive character of residential neighborhoods. Each NPOD develops and adopts a Conservation Plan that includes design standards to protect the existing features of the neighborhood from incompatible infill. The Conservation Plan standards may vary from setbacks and building massing to distinct architectural features to special natural or environmental characteristics.

Will an NPOD downzone my property or change its land use?

No, the existing base zoning will remain unchanged. Parcels will maintain the range of uses permitted by the underlying zoning. An NPOD may affect the dimensional standards (lot area, setbacks, building height, etc.) but not the use or density of the base zoning.

What sorts of things can the guidelines regulate?

Items such as, but not limited to: building height, massing, building materials, roofline and pitch, dimensional requirements, driveways, landscaping, signage, and lighting.

Will an NPOD make me change the appearance of my property or rehabilitate it right now?

No. Property owners are not required to alter their properties upon designation. If, however, an owner wishes to alter their property after designation, the owner would be required to follow any applicable NPOD Conservation Plan standards.

Who will decide how the guidelines will affect my property?

Property owners within the proposed NPOD will be actively engaged in what is included in the Conservation Plan, with the assistance of Land Use staff. The Conservation Plan will be reviewed by the Planning Board and County Council for consideration of approval.

How do you start an NPOD in your neighborhood?

Applications will be limited to the initial study areas identified in the *New Castle County Department of Land Use Action Plan & Work Program, 2014/2015*; areas include: Pike Creek, Concord Pike, Route 9, Kirkwood Highway, Newark/Route 273 Corridor and Claymont; and where a WILMAPCO study has been conducted. If located within the study areas identified above, an application may be initiated by the Department or by petition of 2/3 of the property owners within the proposed district boundaries. The petition shall include a statement of justification, a proposed boundary map, contact information for any neighborhood, homeowner, or maintenance associations whose membership consists of person owning property within the boundaries of the proposed NPOD, and any other supporting material such as photographs, histories, etc. If the neighborhood is found eligible using the criteria of the NPOD ordinance, a neighborhood meeting will be scheduled to develop Conservation Plan standards. The Department will work with the neighborhood to further define community character and identify conservation solutions. Public hearings will be scheduled for the Planning Board and County Council for review of the proposed NPOD rezoning ordinance and Conservation Plan. Once the NPOD is adopted, land use applications within the NPOD will be required to comply with the adopted Conservation Plan.