

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION

## LINK TO PLAN'S VISION

This chapter is closely connected to the theme Desirable Residential Areas

## OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

### EXISTING HISTORIC RESOURCES

National Register of Historic Places

Abington Township Historic Resource Survey

### EXISTING HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCES

### GOALS

### ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

## INTRODUCTION

Abington's historic resources add to community character and symbolize a connection to the township's origins and rich historical past. Additionally, they enhance the built environment and the township's unique "sense of place."

This chapter will examine Abington's historic resources and make recommendations for initiating preservation measures.

## EXISTING HISTORIC RESOURCES

### National Register of Historic Places

Abington has properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which is administered by the National Park Service. Listing in the National Register is honorary, and makes a property eligible for certain funding opportunities, such as historic preservation grants and tax incentives (both national and state), as

well as alternatives in the International Building Code. It also ensures that federal agencies allow the State Historic Preservation Office (in this case, PHMC) and other local consulting parties an opportunity to review and comment on projects affecting listed and eligible properties, per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Properties on the National Register that are income-producing are eligible for tax credits (20% of rehabilitation costs) and federal and state grants (eligible properties are also eligible for PA



*Fox Chase Farm manor house, 8500 Pine Road (listed on National Register)*

Keystone Historic Preservation Grants). Inclusion on the National Register also fosters heritage tourism, increases awareness of important historic structures, and honors the landowners for preserving and maintaining the historic structures.

*tool of historic resources in the state called that have been listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, called "PA-Share": <https://www.phmc.pa.gov/PA-SHARE/Pages/default.aspx>*

*Note: the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) maintains an online database and mapping search*

TABLE TITLE

NAME	STATUS	LOCATION	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION
Abington Township High School (former high school)	<b>Listed</b>	1801 Susquehanna Road	1881, c.1931
Fox Chase Farm (a.k.a. Stanley) <i>Note: part of this property (but not the buildings) are located in Philadelphia.</i>	<b>Listed</b>	8500 Pine Road	Farmstead: 18th century. Buildings: 1822 (Manor house) and later
Keswick Theater	<b>Listed</b>	291 Keswick Avenue	1928
Abington Branch of the YMCA	Eligible	1073 Old York Road	1916
Alverthorpe Manor	Eligible	515 Meetinghouse Road	1932, 1939 (alterawtions, 2001)
Friends Orthodox Meetinghouse	Eligible	515 Meetinghouse Road	1836
Hollywood Historic District	Eligible	Hollywood Village (bounding roads include Huntingdon Pike, Fox Chase Road, Cedar, and Montgomery Roads)	1929 and later



*The Hollywood Historic District, a Mission / Spanish Colonial Revival style neighborhood built by Gustave Weber in 1917, is Eligible for the National Register*

## Abington Township Historic Resource Survey (2015-2019)

Phase 1 of a survey of historic properties in Abington was conducted from 2015-2019, with funding provided by the Heritage Conservancy. After consulting with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC), the survey included properties with structures built prior to 1950. Structures on selected streets, totaling 602 properties, were surveyed. The purpose of the survey was to gather data for a clearer understanding of the age, location, nature, and number of historic properties. Future phases of the survey, which are anticipated to occur in the near future, will identify significant properties throughout the township, and will identify properties that may be eligible for the National Register or important to the region and/or community.

The properties surveyed were located on the following roads:

- Arden Road
- Arlington Avenue
- Cadwalader Avenue
- Cloverly Lane
- Coates Road
- Corinthian Avenue
- Evergreen Road
- Fox Chase Road
- Gordon Road
- Hammond Place
- Harte Road
- Jericho Road
- Lenox Avenue
- Lynnewood Avenue
- Mill Road Circle
- Randolph Road
- Roseland Avenue
- Running Brook Road
- Runnymede Avenue
- Sewell Lane
- Sunset Avenue
- Valley Road
- Westbury Road
- Wheatshaff Lane
- Winding Road
- Wyndale Road

Structures included were almost totally constructed in the first half of the 20th century, with the years 1920 to 1950 being the most common years of construction. Nearly all structures surveyed were “historically domestic single dwellings,” with two entries each for properties with educational, religious, agricultural, and commercial uses.

The most common architectural style was American Colonial revival (221 resources), followed by Tudor revival (45) and Dutch Colonial revival (43). The most common exterior materials surveyed were stone (173), stucco (113), and brick (98).

## EXISTING HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCES

Currently, Abington does not have an ordinance protecting historic resources, unlike its neighbors, Cheltenham, Lower Moreland, Upper Dublin, Upper Moreland, and Springfield. These range from stronger provisions (such as Historic Architectural Review Board ordinances (HARBs), such as those in Cheltenham and Lower Moreland), authorized by the Pennsylvania Historic District Act; to less stringent but still important measures like those authorized by PA Act 247, the Municipalities Planning Code (such as

those in Springfield and Upper Moreland). The provisions in force in neighboring municipalities also include regulations in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) or building construction ordinance (like those in Upper Dublin).

## GOALS

- Encourage preservation of the township’s historic resources.
- Celebrate and publicize the township’s history.
- Recognize and incentivize effective examples of historic preservation.

## ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The following factors' perceived importance may influence historic preservation recommendations:

- Retention (not demolition of) existing historic structures.
- Documentation of existing historic structures.
- Alterations to historic structures that occur in a way that preserve the historic integrity of the structure.
- The financial viability of reusing or rehabilitating historic structures.

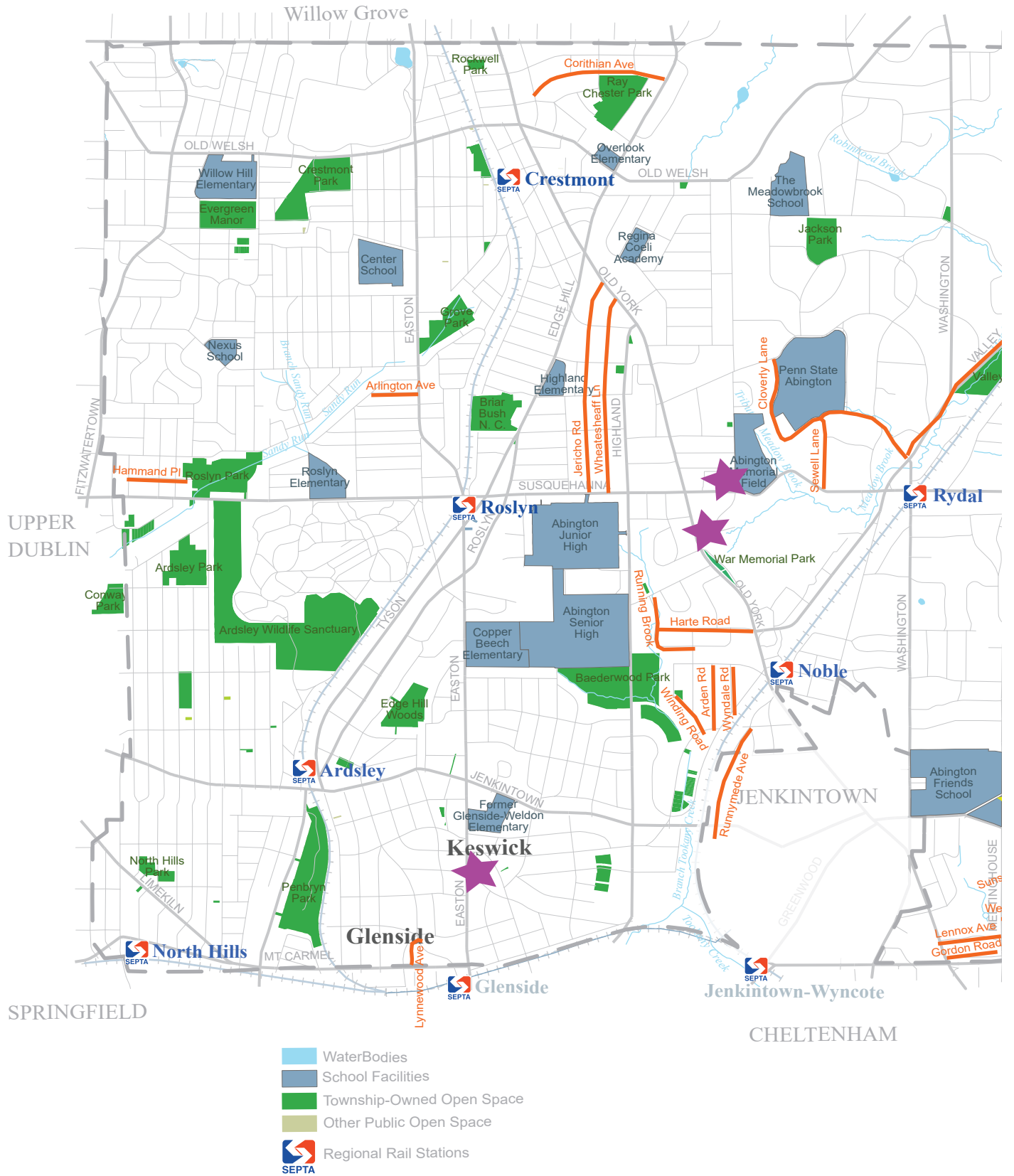
### Old York Road Historical Society

**The Old York Road Historical Society is located at Alverthorpe Manor in. The Society specializes in historical collections of areas along Old York Road in Montgomery County, including Abington. Its mission is to “preserve and promote the history and folklore” of these areas, and also other areas along Old York Road between Philadelphia and New Hope.**

**It holds a regular lecture series at Abington Friends Meetinghouse, organizes outings and field trips, and holds an annual walk-and-talk educational event with the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust (PERT) on the Bryn Athyn Train Wreck.**

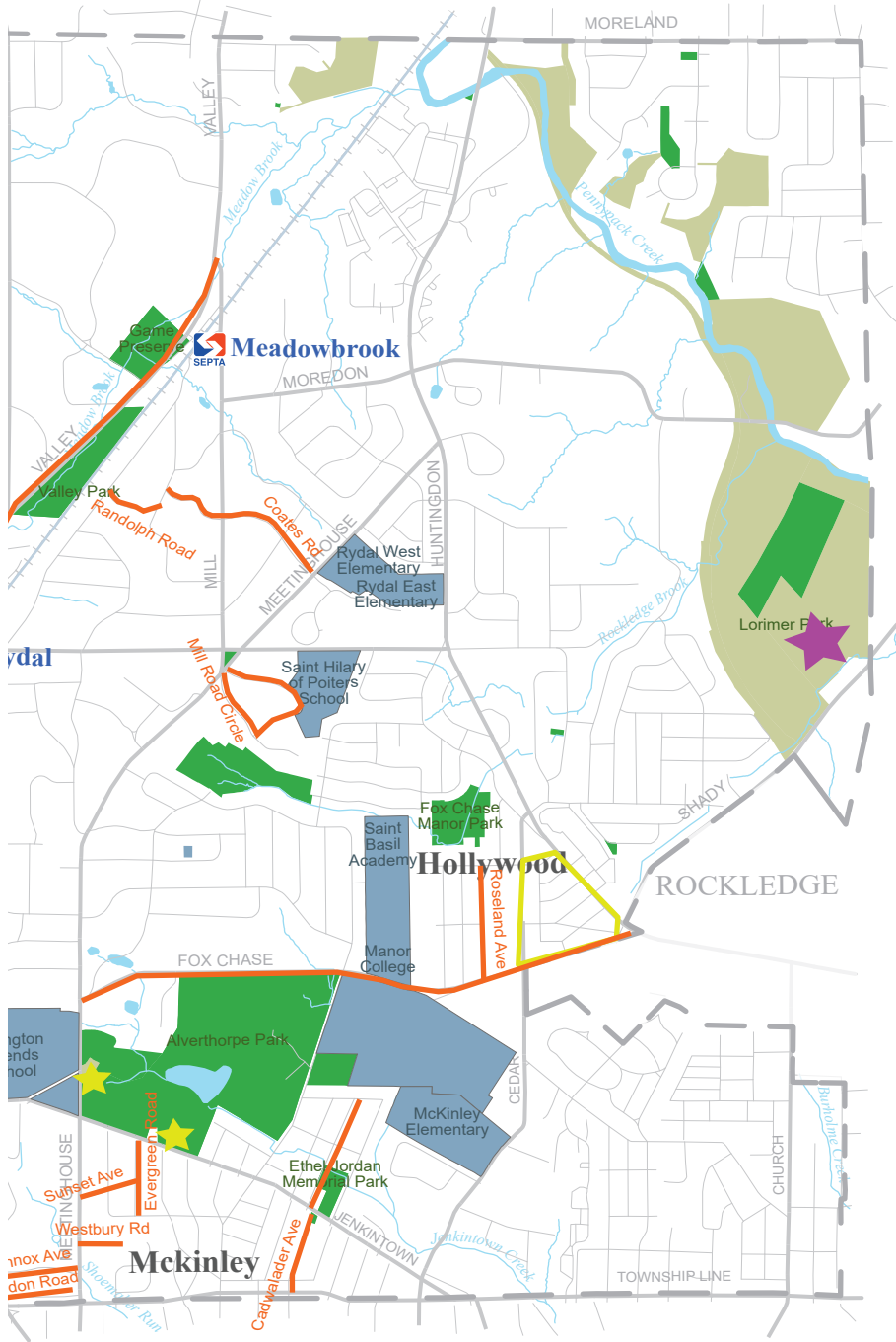
**It maintains a collection of historical atlases and maps available for review, and conducts research into historical obituaries or death notices in local records upon request for a nominal fee.**


UPPER MORELAND



LOWER MORELAND

Bethayres



-  National Register Listed
-  National Register Eligible
-  National Register Eligible District
-  Abington Township Historic Survey



PHILADELPHIA COUNTY



1 inch = 2,500 feet

- Recognition of existing historic resources that maintain their historic integrity (by national or township government).
- Use of historic structures as a tool for education and heritage tourism.
- Use of art to celebrate Abington's historic buildings.



*This residential structure at Susquehanna and Rydal Roads was demolished. A historic preservation ordinance could incentivize preservation and reuse of such structures.*



*The township includes numerous attractive structures exemplifying various architectural styles.*



*These images show a sample of the various architectural styles of homes in the township. From upper left and clockwise: Tudor, Colonial Revival, Four-Square, and Craftsman.*

## Certified Local Government (CLG)

The Certified Local Government program is a partnership of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC), local governments, and the National Park Service. It provides incentives for establishing effective historic preservation protections, and it serves as a mark of distinction for the most effective ordinances. Incentives include qualifying a municipality for:

- Dedicated grants.
- Specialized technical assistance from the PHMC.
- Priority consideration for grants to the Keystone Historic Preservation Fund.
- Scholarship funds for training.
- Participation in the National Register nomination process.

Should Abington wish to qualify for this mark of distinction, as its neighbor Cheltenham has, it would need to adopt a historic preservation ordinance that not only does some of the things contained in this chapter's recommendations, but it would also need to adopt stronger measures, such as enabling the ability to prevent demolition of historic structures and require review of new construction that has an impact on historic properties.