

**DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Rescheduled February 23, 2026 Regular Meeting  
Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 7 PM  
Community Meeting Room, 425 Wells Road  
Meeting Minutes**

The Doylestown Township Planning Commission rescheduled February 23<sup>rd</sup> Regular Meeting was held at 7:00 pm on Thursday, March 12, 2026. Members of the Doylestown Township Planning Commission in attendance included Judy Hendrixson, Chairman; and members Tom Kelso, Robert Repko, and Amy Kaminski. Others in attendance included Elizabeth Naughton, Solicitor; Craig Bryson, Acting Planning Consultant, Pennoni; Dan Wood, Board of Supervisors Liaison; and Stephanie J. Mason, Township Manager.

Not present for the meeting was Vice Chairman Michael Kracht.

The meeting officially began at 7:01 pm.

**Public/Commission Comments**

None.

**Review of Minutes**

On a motion by Mr. Repko, seconded by Ms. Kaminski, the minutes from the rescheduled January 26<sup>th</sup> meeting held on February 4, 2026 were unanimously approved.

**Land Development**

N/A

**Other Business**

**Proposed Zoning Change/Amendment – Continued Discussion  
Zaveta – Hart Property – 2250 S. Easton Road**

Ms. Hendrixson asked Ms. Naughton to walk through the updates for the zoning amendment so that they could go through the changes. The items of note were as follows:

**Section1 – 15.1 B-15.1 (a)** Removed from the section was the statement that *open space created shall be owned and maintained by the HOA, deed restricted or a combination thereof, as determined by the Township Board of Supervisors.*

**Section 2 – 15.1 B-15.2 (c)** Removed from the section was the statement *not in long rows or parallel to street lines.* Multifamily buildings must be arranged in groups or clusters.

**Section 2 – 15.1 B-15.2 (f)** This item was removed completely, which stated that multifamily developments shall have frontage on a minimum of two arterial or higher classification roads.

**Section 2 – 15.1 B-15 (h)** New multifamily developments with fewer than 45 units shall not be required to comply with having two accesses, but one emergency access.

**Section 2 – 15.1 B-15 (j)** A note was added that Doylestown Township or homeowners shall be responsible for keeping current with the B-15 use open space requirements.

**Section 2 – 15.1 B-15.2 (k)** Minimum buffer area shall stay consistent with the existing ordinance.

Ms. Naughton summarized that we are here for a proposed amended ordinance to the zoning code, that would add a new use in the zoning code, with regard to historic properties and single-family developments. It would allow for a multifamily use in conjunction with preserving the historic buildings on the property.

Ms. Hendrixson opened the discussion to comments from the Planning Commission.

Ms. Mason asked Ms. Naughton to clarify the B-15 use.

Ms. Naughton stated that historically the B-15 use has been for townhomes and clusters up to 4 units in a row. This change would allow for multifamily stacked condominiums.

Mr. Kelso raised the question of whether the secondary access removal was consistent with other parts of the ordinance. It seems more lenient for multifamily use as opposed to single family, where 25 or more units require a secondary access.

Mr. Repko suggested that it is different because this is a different use.

Ms. Hendrixson noted that the emergency access is necessary but not the secondary access in this case.

Mr. Kelso suggested adding conditions, as the Board has a right to do with conditional uses according to the ordinance. First with regard to façade easements and the historic preservation of the tract, to include all buildings. Second would be to identify the property with some type of marker or plaque under a shelter. There was a discussion as to what would be an appropriate location, and Mr. Repko noted that much of the property would not be visible from public streets.

Mr. Wood asked if this would apply retroactively to the Burpee/Fordhook Farm property as well.

Ms. Mason replied that it would apply if and when they develop the property, but not today.

Mr. Kelso added his third condition with regard to multiuse trail access to connect to the Doylestown Township community trail system.

Mr. Wood asked for clarification as to the protections to the property under the B-15 use.

Ms. Naughton answered that the historic buildings must be maintained in order to utilize this use, which includes the buildings around the structure, in perpetuity.

Mr. Wood asked if the ordinance would apply to any other properties besides Hart and Burpee.

Mr. Bryson said that there is one other small property, as well as the Doylestown Country Club, should it ever be sold.

Mr. Kelso then raised concerns about density and how it would apply to Burpee also. He noted an increase in this case of about 60% but would prefer it staying consistent with the use as it is.

Ms. Naughton noted that the ordinance has specific limitations based on lot size. Ms. Mason added that the requirement for open space is 50%. Ms. Naughton explained that they are not individual lots because they are multifamily buildings.

Mr. Kelso said that in comparison to what is in B-15, adding density makes these historic properties more valuable to developers, and that he sees that as a mistake.

Mr. Repko suggested that the units are not spread out, but the density increases vertically. He added that he does not have the same concerns and sees that the majority is okay with the ordinance as it has been proposed.

Mr. Kelso asked the applicant where 3.2 (dwelling units per acre of net buildable site area, as noted in the draft ordinance), came from.

Mr. Murphy, attorney for the applicant, said that they didn't believe that B-15.1 was sufficient to enable them to do the plan they think is most respectful to the site. He added that this is not a new issue and has been in the draft.

Mx. Hendrixson suggested putting up a motion and then opening to discussion.

Mr. Repko made a motion to recommend the amended ordinance to the Board of Supervisors, as discussed and with the conditions, as proposed. He added that he doesn't understand the façade easement as presented. There was a discussion as to how the ordinance, as written, protects the historic buildings and their preservation, in perpetuity. Ms. Mason noted that the Planning Commission has always held developers to those standards.

Mr. Repko altered his motion to approve the ordinance as written, with a provision for identifying signage for the historical significance of the property developed, and with no change to the access requirement.

Ms. Kaminski seconded. Ms. Hendrixson held the vote for public comment and asked to start with the presentation requested by Ms. Scott, prepared and previously submitted to the Township.

A power point was presented by Melissa Scott of Buckingham, Edna White of Central Bucks, and Kathryn Auerbach of Tinicum Township. The presentation, (Exhibit A), highlighted their concerns regarding the history of the property, the Historical Society's original intention for the property, traffic flow to and from the site, noise from the 202 bypass and the cost of mitigating that noise, and the safety risks to the public.

Mr. Wood, speaking as the Board of Supervisors liaison, said that it is not typical for municipalities to allow non-residents to speak, and that we do it as a courtesy.

Diedre Sarego of Buckingham Township, formerly of Doylestown, stated that it should not matter if nonresidents want to comment. She raised the question of school buses picking up on 611 and cars waiting at the bus stop. She added that they are planting the seeds for future problems that might arise. She concluded that we have something beautiful here, what brings people to the area, that developers are slowly destroying.

Phil Hoke of Clemens Farm in Doylestown Borough, raised two concerns, first regarding where sewage would go, as he is close to the sewage treatment plant, and it could affect his quality of life, and second, another 5G tower would be built to accommodate the added residents.

Ms. Kaminski replied that the plans are not there yet, those items are all considered during the land development process. Ms. Hendrixson added that this is about zoning, a 5G tower is not part of this discussion.

Randal Henderson of Doylestown Hunt noted that he looks at the Hart property from his front door. He stated that he is not generally a fan of development but does not have a problem with this project. He sees it as minimal impact and the very best option. He noted that the reality is that the property will be sold, it will not be a park or public space, and there is no money to leave it as preserved space. Additionally, he has been on the property, and noted that the buildings are falling apart, so Mr. Zaveta's plan of rebuilding them safely would be a good idea. He realizes that it will be housing one way or another, or something industrial, but not as environmentally friendly as the plan proposed. He sees such visceral opposition from people who don't live here. He said the least of his worries is getting on 202 at that intersection. Traffic flows pretty smoothly. There are 270 houses in The Hunt, and there is not much problem there. He doesn't see 36 more units changing that a whole lot. Mr. Zaveta invited all of The Hunt owners to information sessions, where we all saw the plans. He is not going by minimum setbacks. As someone who also cares about the environment, he thinks this option presents the fewest trees to be cut down. He hasn't heard any proposals that would leave it as open space or anything better than this. He is concerned about what might happen otherwise.

Sanford Bender of Newtown Township, an architect in PA and NJ, floodplain manager and master watershed steward, and for the last 14 years a reservist with FEMA. He visited the site and looked quickly at the buildings, which he believes have a good foundation. He noted their interesting details, and how they interrelate, depicting how people lived at the time. As he understands, Mr. Hart had arranged for the property to be preserved in perpetuity. His intuition suggests that this area is of great value and that has to be dealt with sensitively. He believes the structures can be worked with and that once they are occupied, they can be ruined.

Greg Gauser of Pipersville noted that he avoids Doylestown because of the density and traffic. He is concerned about increased density and would like to see old properties left alone. He is against a zoning change.

Mary Elizabeth Meininger from Buckingham Township said that she used to live in Doylestown Township and does not believe we should all be seen as separate, and that Bucks County is all connected. What happens in the Borough affects the Township and vice versa, and she hopes that the Township has worked with the Borough to discuss this possibility. She hopes further that with all the scrutiny, the

Township can still say no, although it feels like they are moving toward a yes. She appreciated that Mr. Kelso asked some serious questions. She said that if anybody should develop at this density, Mr. Zaveta's project is beautiful, but should the zoning change go through and it not happen, is the Township prepared to address what could happen with a new applicant? There could be more units with a smaller square footage. She still hopes that an angel may come along and pay the price with the intention of preserving the property, seeking grant programs, etc. She votes no.

Ms. Hendrixson addressed the comments explaining that this has been going on since 2022 when the Bucks County Historical Society decided to sell. The Planning Commission is aware that there is a lot of history here and has been working on the zoning issue for six months, taking it into careful consideration. Trees are a big part of the ordinance and when any are taken down there is replacement required. The site will not be cleared, traffic will be scrutinized, utilities and stormwater will all be looked at through the land development process, which is a very carefully thought-out the process, not a one-time, one evening decision.

John Everett of Doylestown Township thanked the Planning Commission for their service and appreciates their time and effort. With all the flack received, they do not get enough praise. As he understands, the zoning change is not decided by the Planning Commission but is recommended to the Board of Supervisors and then they decide on it. Further, he would suggest that people talk to the principles involved, go to meetings of the Historical Society and voice opinions there. That is where the pressure needs to be applied, and volunteer if you want to preserve the Township and go to Board of Supervisors meetings, because they are going to vote, not here. Mr. Zaveta is a builder, not an evil person. He does very nice work. Don't think this is the devil here, just a guy in business, who has been doing it for a long time. He suggests everyone apply their concerns and pressures where they are receivable.

Ms. Hendrixson confirmed that the Planning Commission is an advisory board, and that it would go next to the Board of Supervisors for their vote.

Brian Boger, a resident of Doylestown Borough, said that he is a huge fan of local history, and that when this all began in 2022, he did not understand the issue. He was aware of the property and understands the pressures facing the Historical Society. He added that he too appreciates the Planning Commission's service and he understands the process. He said that he knows Rich Zaveta, knows that he preserves a lot of history, and that this project will give those buildings the best possible historical treatment. He expressed relief that it is he who is proposing development of this property. The comments are out of control and unfortunate, and there is a misunderstanding of what is happening here. He added that there was redevelopment of the Tabor property, where there used to be an orphanage. His wife was adopted from there and it holds a place for them personally. They were pleased with the redevelopment of the site and how they maintained the historical integrity with the project.

Chris Valeri of Buckingham Township, spoke as the founder of the Buckingham Historical Society. He said that he felt compelled to come up and say that the AM250 committee is pouring millions of dollars into projects in New Jersey and the like, so there is money out there. He added that there is a huge, new storage shed that is at the property that they intend to demolish. He questioned what would be done with the artifacts that are stored there. This shed would have to be rebuilt.

Ms. Mason clarified that the shed was built in the late 90's. Furthermore, the question of the artifacts is not in the Township's purview, but that of the Historical Society.

Karyn Hyland, Planning Director for Doylestown Borough, explained that the Borough's focus on this project is in regard to access at the intersection. She read a letter from Borough Manager John Davis that was sent to the Township Manager in February, stating that they would wish for the Township to require a traffic study to be completed and a plan reviewed, before considering the zoning change. They would then accept the best that PennDOT can do with the situation.

Chris John from Doylestown Hunt said that he does have a worry about the density. He admitted that he was not a fan of the Wawa going in, but that he uses it all the time now, so you learn to live with it. He said that people live here and come here because it is a great small town, but in the long run we need to think about density and traffic. He said that he currently does not have a problem getting in and out of the Hunt, but it could become an issue with 36 more units nearby. He concluded that the decisions made here are for the long term.

Another resident of the Hunt who moved in a couple months ago said that she is not against the development and has seen the plan. She said that she is right next to the property so is uniquely affected by the plan. Her question was about the next steps, and what happens if the traffic study shows that there are issues requiring larger roads, buffers, etc. Can the plan be rolled back?

Ms. Kaminski said that the traffic study would be done during the land development process. It is a PennDOT road so they would make the decisions regarding the changes needed. The Township traffic engineer would also work with PennDOT and the Borough to make sure all concerns are considered. Additionally, more detailed plans will be submitted during the subdivision and land development process. Traffic concerns could be brought up during those meetings.

Jonathan of Hilltown Township said that despite being out of the Township, he came to the meeting because he cares. He said that the study would be done after all is put into motion already. If it is evident now that it won't work, it shouldn't be put forward. He questioned what is ethical and right and said that he believes that what is proposed is not safe. He understood that if this fell through, and the property remained institutional, it would still go through the planning process. He noted that the Historical Society is not willing to talk. He said that Ms. McCoy from the Historical Society suggested putting in a better bid but no one knows what that would be. He said if there was transparency, he could see it as a fair process. He does not have confidence in what is being done here. He said that he believes the Historical Society has a right to sell the property, but as a nonprofit, they cannot break their mission statement to save their mission. He added the possibility of bringing the issue to the state attorney general with a formal complaint. He urged the Planning Commission to talk to the Historical Society and tell them to talk to the community and tell them to be transparent. He said it is his opinion that if this goes through, lives are on the line.

Mike Minnick, a resident in Doylestown Hunt, said that he is close to the property line, and does not have a problem. It is crystal clear that the property is going to be sold. He is very pleased with what has been proposed, and many neighbors also have no issue. He knows that there has been a lot of opposition to the project, but given the alternatives, he would much rather high value, quality homes

that will have nice trees and buffers. He added that he has never had issues in or on 202 and accessing the Wawa. He sees this as the best option based on the meetings he has attended over the last several months.

James Donnelly said that he lives in the Borough on Main Street. He said that the power point presentation was very good and that it addresses valid concerns, which are his as well. He said that for him and based on those he has talked to and Facebook comments he has seen, the majority of the community feels the same.

Ms. White asked if all of the studies haven't been done yet, how can the Planning Commission say yes? How can you then come back and say no if the traffic studies don't work out?

Ms. Hendrixson reiterated that this meeting is only to discuss the zoning ordinance.

Ms. Naughton explained that because this is a conditional use, even if it goes through and the builder has a right to build, they still need approval, and all conditions need to be met regardless of whether the project changes or not. Approving the zoning change does not give the right to do what they want. It gives the Township the right to create conditions that the applicant must meet.

Ms. Meininger asked if the ordinance changes, is there any possibility that Fonthill woods could become condos.

Ms. Mason replied that this change in use effects R1 zoning, and that the Fonthill property is not zoned R1.

Ms. Hendrixson asked for any additional public comment. With no more comment, and because there is a motion and a second, she asked if there were any additional comments from the planning commission.

Mr. Kelso stated that he has been on the Planning Commission since 1983 and that he is always surprised by how much he learns, and that is why he is still here. He thought he knew about the Hart tract but has learned so much more. He is impressed with the work people have put into this. He expressed that he is not opposed to changing the zoning from Institutional to R1, and is not opposed to apartments under that, but he is opposed to and objects to having density strictly based on the development potential and value of the property. It will make Burpee more attractive to developers too. Further, he objects to removing the requirement for secondary access, and wants more robust protection for historic properties, other than just a requirement to preserve the buildings.

Ms. Hendrixson took the motion to a vote. The motion passed 3-1 with Mr. Kelso voting nay. She concluded by thanking everyone for coming out. She recognized that there is a lot of emotion in this debate and a lot of history. The main objective is to preserve the architecture of the property and that setting, and she believes the Planning Commission is achieving that here with what could be a very nice project. There is a long road ahead with a lot of approvals and a lot of public meetings. The Planning Commission's job is to advise and give it to the Board of Supervisors. They will have the final vote, and if they approve it, then that starts the land development process.

It was questioned when this matter will go to the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Mason added that this item will not be on the Board's March meeting agenda. She will work with the solicitor to decide when it is appropriate for a future Board agenda and that it will be advertised. The next step is to go to the Board of Supervisors, and a presentation will be made. They will review the proposed ordinance, and the Board has to authorize it for advertisement. It will also be reviewed by the Bucks County Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing. At that time, it will either be adopted or not.

**Adjournment**

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 8:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kaitlyn Finley  
Office Manager, Code Enforcement

# Exhibit A

## Hart Property Proposals That Threatens Character of Doylestown

South Main Street near Route 202 Bypass



Prepared by Melissa Scott

Based upon research by Kathryn Auerbach

Presented by Edna White

A gravel driveway leads through a lush green landscape with tall trees and a building in the background. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking down the driveway. The trees are tall and thin, with some green leaves and some bare branches. The sky is overcast and grey. A building is visible in the distance on the right side.

## Hart Property

**24 scenic acres including historical buildings representing the quality of life that the community wants to preserve.**

The Buildings are Artifacts of the 1700's that are treasured by the Community



# In 1998 an Application was Made by the Bucks County Historical Society to Preserve the Structures



 BUCKS COUNTY  
Application for the Exemption of Real Estate

Under the provisions of law any owner of real estate (includes taxing districts) desiring tax exempt classification, must file a statement of appeal, in writing, with the Board of Assessment Appeals. Such statement shall designate the tax parcel number, the assessment appealed from, and the address to which the Board shall mail notice of when and where to appear for a hearing. No appeal hearing shall be scheduled or heard until appellant shall first have filed the appropriate appeal forms and required documents as set forth by Board policy.

Record Owner(s) Name: BUCKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mailing Address: 845 PINE ST DOCKLESTOWN PA 18901

Location of Property: 2258 S. EASTON RD. DOCKLESTOWN  
Number Street City/Boro/Township

Assessors Tax Map #: 9 9 66 1  
District Tax Map Block Lot

There is erected on said property: 12,500 SQ. FT RESEARCH AND STUDY CENTER HOUSING EARLY AMERICAN ARTIFACTS

Size of Lot for which exemption is requested: 1/3 UNDIVIDE INTEREST IN 247 ACRES

Part of the ground not covered by the present building(s)/improvements: STONE FARMHOUSE AND BARN Is/are used for: BEING PREPARED FOR HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL STUDY AND ARTIFACT STORAGE AND DISPLAY

Property is now and since 1998 has been used continuously and exclusively for the following purpose(s): SEE ABOVE TWO RESPONSES FARMHOUSE IS OCCUPIED BY A SOCIETY EMPLOYEE WHO IS BOTH CURATOR AND CARETAKER

No rent, revenue or income is or will be derived therefrom.

Except: NONE

- over -



# “Stone Farm House and Barn to be Used for Historic and Architectural Study, and Artifact Storage and Display”

 BUCKS COUNTY  
Application for the Exemption of Real Estate

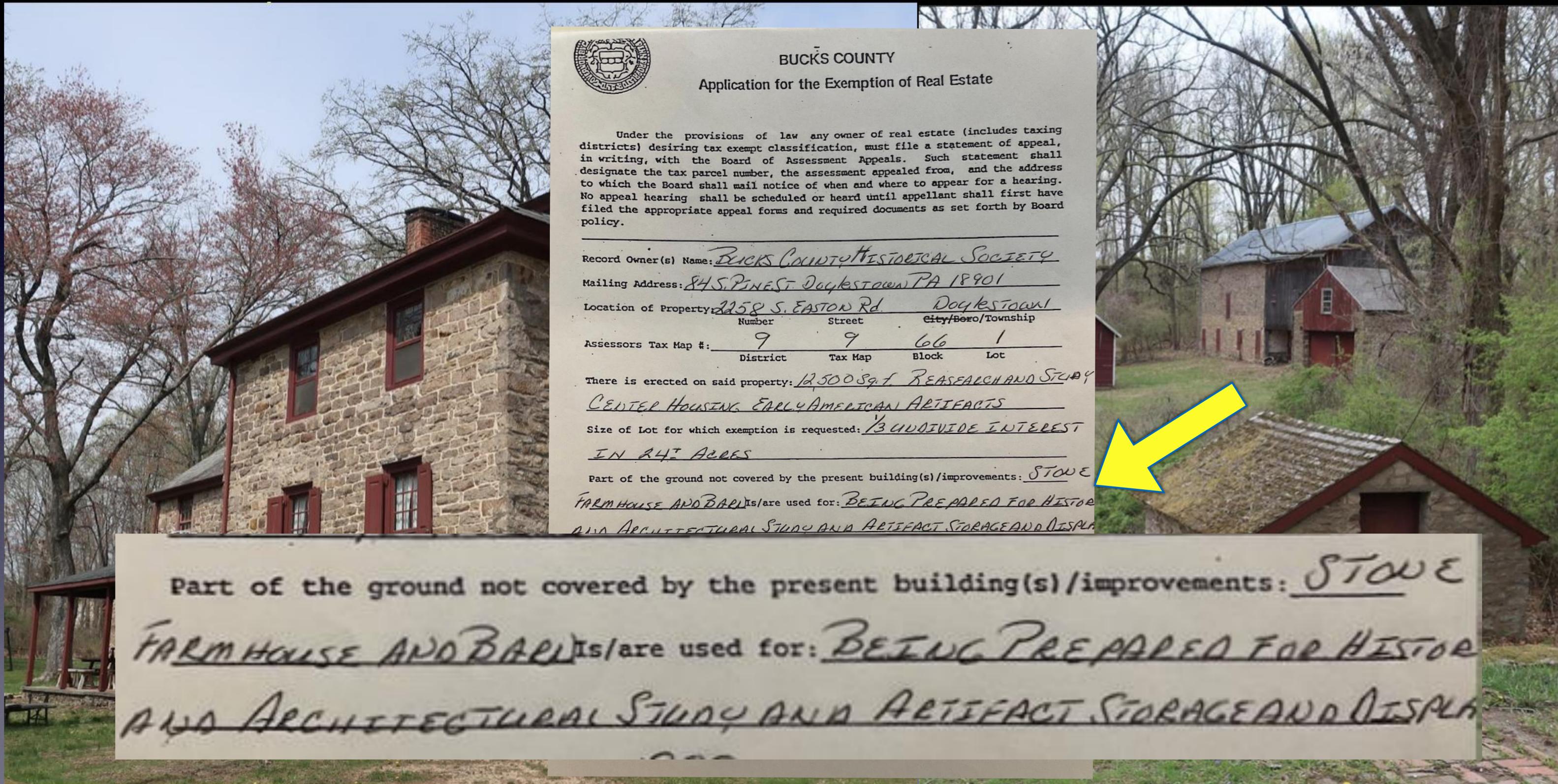
Under the provisions of law any owner of real estate (includes taxing districts) desiring tax exempt classification, must file a statement of appeal, in writing, with the Board of Assessment Appeals. Such statement shall designate the tax parcel number, the assessment appealed from, and the address to which the Board shall mail notice of when and where to appear for a hearing. No appeal hearing shall be scheduled or heard until appellant shall first have filed the appropriate appeal forms and required documents as set forth by Board policy.

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Mailing Address: 845 PINE ST DOCKLESTOWN PA 18901  
Location of Property: 2258 S. EASTON RD. DOCKLESTOWN  
Number Street City/Township  
Assessors Tax Map #: 9 9 66 1  
District Tax Map Block Lot

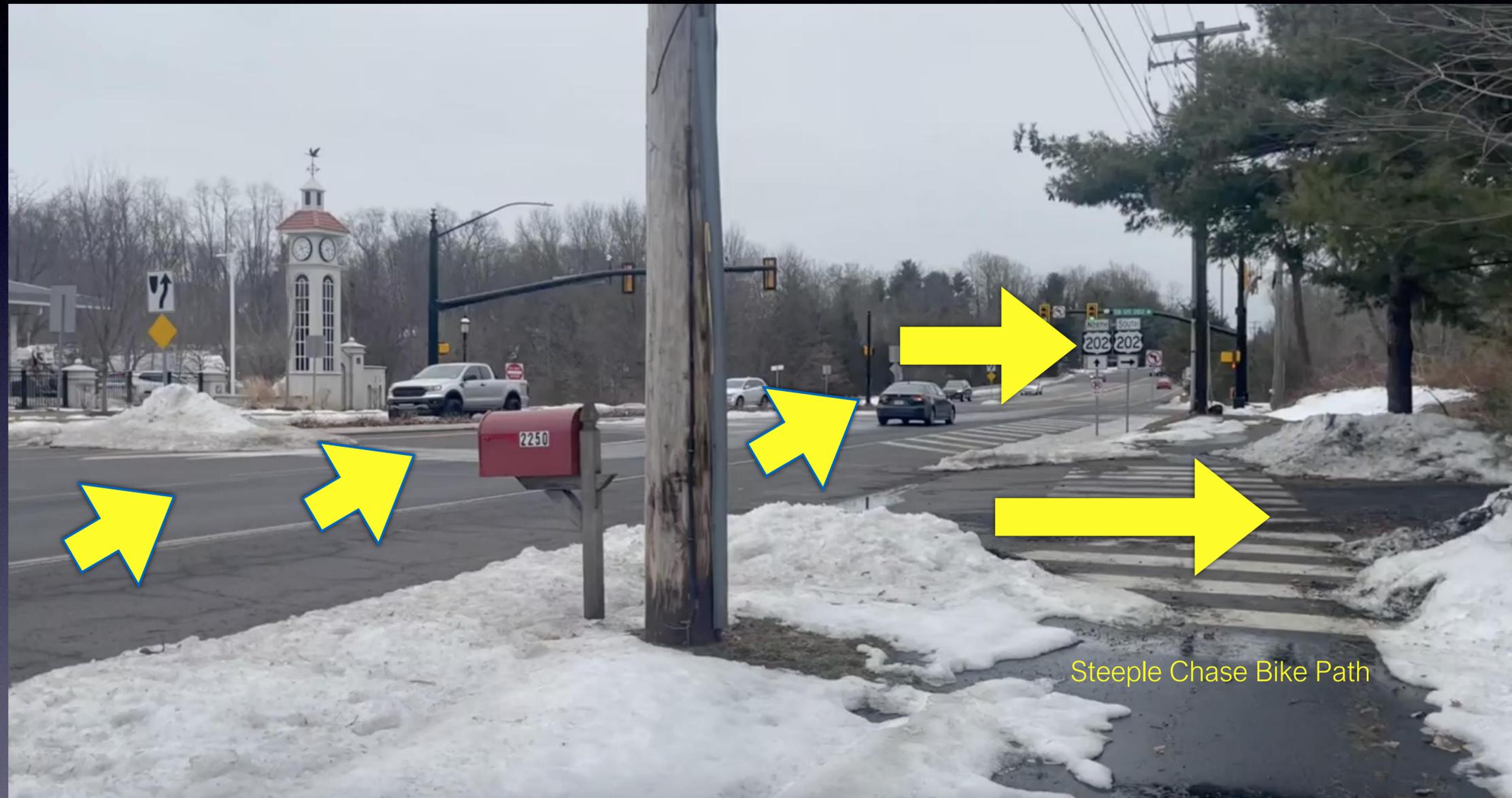
There is erected on said property: 12,500 SQ. FT RESEARCH AND STUDY CENTER HOUSING EARLY AMERICAN ARTIFACTS  
Size of Lot for which exemption is requested: 1/3 UNDIVIDE INTEREST IN 241 ACRES  
Part of the ground not covered by the present building(s)/improvements: STONE FARMHOUSE AND BARN is/are used for: BEING PREPARED FOR HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL STUDY AND ARTIFACT STORAGE AND DISPLAY



Part of the ground not covered by the present building(s)/improvements: STONE FARMHOUSE AND BARN is/are used for: BEING PREPARED FOR HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL STUDY AND ARTIFACT STORAGE AND DISPLAY



# Latest Proposal Clashes with Traffic Conditions and Doylestown's Quality of Life



**Implications: MOTORISTS' FOCUS ARE NATURALLY ON APPROACHING THE 202 BYPASS RAMP WITH POTENTIAL FOR ACCIDENTS**

# Hart Property Entrance is Directly Across from the Active Wawa Gas Station

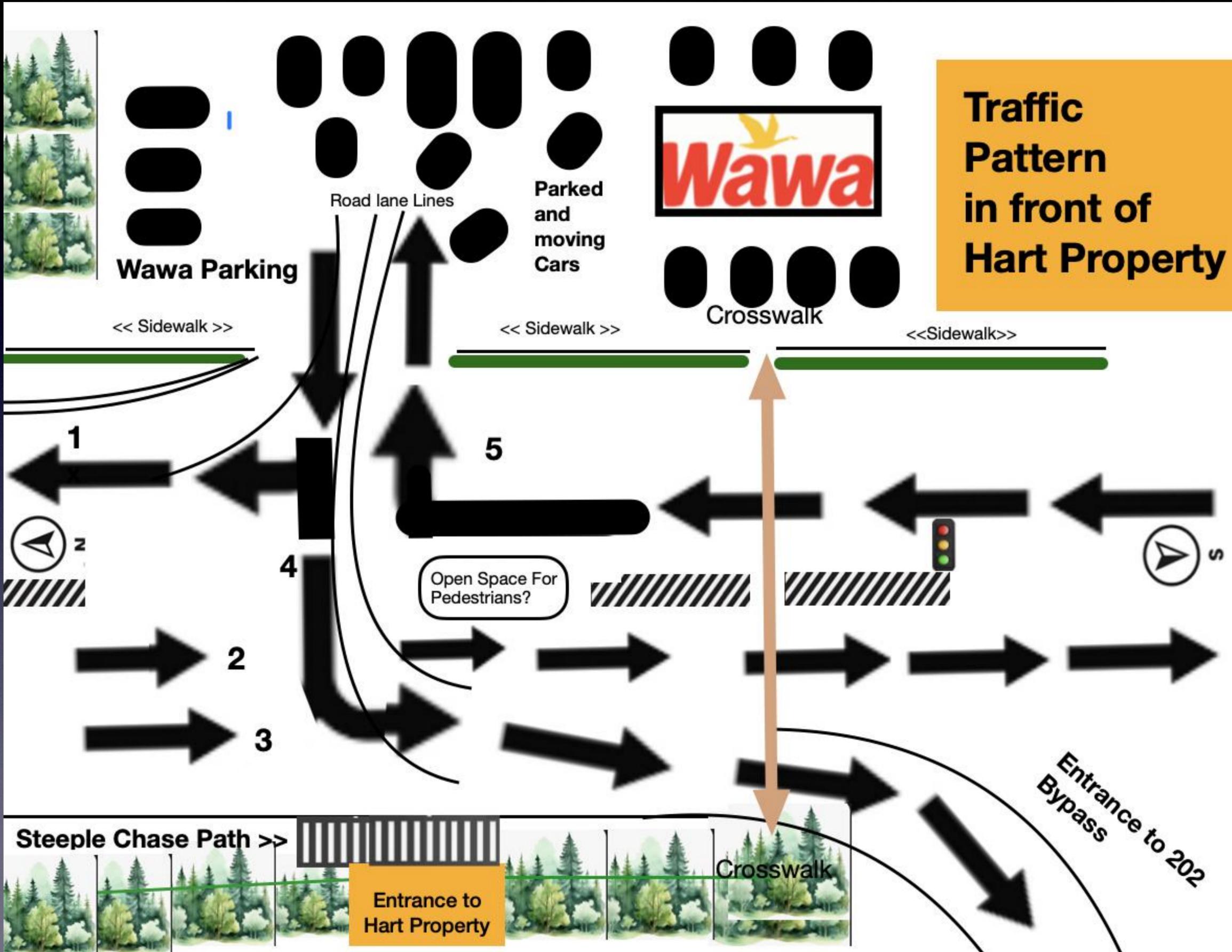


**Implications: DRIVERS ARE CONSTANTLY IN FRONT OF ACCESS TO HART PROPERTY**

Traffic Passing Hart Property Entrance from Five Different Directions as seen on the map that is provided



**Implications: COMPLEX ROAD PATTERNS NO WAY TO CROSS STRAIGHT TO AND FROM DRIVEWAY**



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3

# Heavy Road Traffic Blocks the Entrance and Exit From Hart Property



**Implications: HIGH DENSITY PROPOSAL CREATES NO ROOM TO SPLIT TRAFFIC FOR ENTERING AND EXITING HART PROPERTY**

# The Steeple Chase Hike and Bike Trail System is the Pride of Doylestown



**Implications: TRAIL CROSSES IN FRONT OF HART VEHICLE ENTRANCE CAUSING POTENTIAL DANGER TO ADULTS AND CHILDREN**

# Just beyond the Hart Property is the Noisy Rt. 202 Bypass

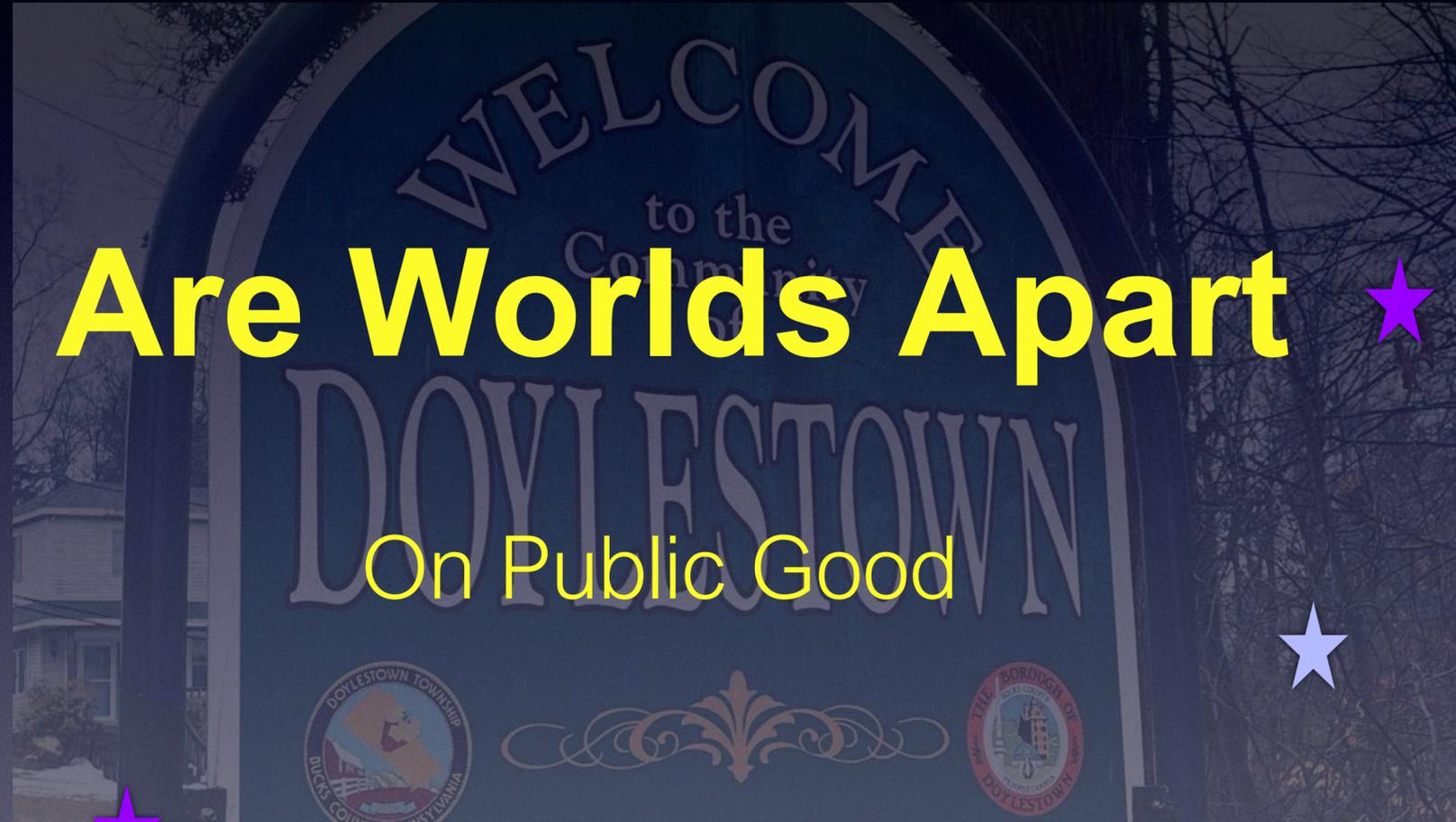


Rt. 202 side angle



**Implications: UNBEARABLE CONSTANT NOISE COSTLY TO MITIGATE WITH SOUND BARRIERS**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
★ The Community and The Zoning Amendment



**Are Worlds Apart** ★

On Public Good



# The Community's Views on the Zoning Amendment

- More Traffic
- More Danger
- Destruction of Mature Trees
- Expensive Sound Barriers
- More Paved Roads
- More Impervious Large Condo Roofs
- Loss of Historical Setting and Environment
- Diminished Quality of Life



# To Bring Us Together

- Truly Consider Community Safety and Needs
- Reject Amending for High Density Housing
- Uphold Current Zoning
- Support Original Mission for BCHS
- Encourage More Creative Solutions and Funding
- Respect Community Desire for Preservation and Conservation



*Keep Bucks County, Bucks County.*