

## The Philadelphia Code

## CHAPTER 7 SPECIAL CONTROLS IN DESIGNATED AREAS

### SECTION PM-701.0 LEGISLATIVE PURPOSE

**PM-701.1 Revitalization areas:** The purpose of this Chapter is to promote the public welfare by encouraging the revitalization of deteriorating neighborhood commercial revitalization areas and to provide that a reasonable degree of control may be exercised over the design, construction, alteration and repair of the front faces of commercial buildings in designated neighborhood commercial revitalization areas in order to prevent further deterioration and blight in such areas and to protect surrounding neighborhoods from the adverse effects of deterioration and blight.

**PM-701.2 Center City:** It is further the purpose of this Chapter to promote the public welfare in the Center City Extended Commercial Area by ensuring the continued suitability of the area as the City's primary business district, by encouraging the growth of the hotel and tourism industry therein, and by prohibiting the type of building disrepair that leads to property value depreciation, through the use of the reasonable controls specified herein. Additionally, this Chapter is intended to promote health and safety in the area by eliminating dangerous conditions on properties, including structural weaknesses on appurtenances, exposed electrical elements, broken glass, and solid security shutters which act to block visibility of police and fire personnel.

**PM-701.3** It is further the purpose of this Chapter to promote the public welfare in other specified neighborhood commercial areas by ensuring the continued visibility of businesses in these areas and to provide that a reasonable degree of control may be exercised over the design, construction, alteration and repair of the front faces of commercial buildings in these designated neighborhoods in order to prevent deterioration and blight. Additionally, this Chapter is intended to promote health and safety in these specified neighborhood commercial areas by eliminating dangerous conditions on properties including, but not limited to, solid security shutters which act to block the visibility of police and fire personnel and which attract graffiti and vandalism.

### SECTION PM-702.0 DEFINITIONS

**PM-702.1 Applicability:** In this Chapter, the following definitions shall apply:

**Front face:** The side of any building abutting on a street which has been designated a neighborhood commercial revitalization area.

**Rigid:** Free of any warping or distortion. Rigid materials shall not include tin.

### SECTION PM-703.0 DESIGNATED AREAS

**PM-703.1 Area descriptions:** The designated areas shall consist of those areas described in Sections PM-703.1.1 and PM-703.1.3.

**PM-703.1.1 Center City:** The Center City Extended Commercial Area shall consist of the area

bounded by Front street, Vine street, the west side of Eighteenth street, and the south side of Pine street.

**PM-703.1.2 Historic area:** The Main Street Manayunk National Historic District shall consist of the following area: Beginning at a point on the northerly side of Main street, approximately three hundred seventy feet east of Shurs lane, at the eastern boundary of Littlewoods Dyers & Bleachers (4025 Main street); thence extending northwardly approximately one hundred eighty feet along said boundary to a point of the southerly boundary of the Reading Railroad right-of-way, south of Cresson street; thence extending westwardly approximately one thousand eight hundred feet along the southerly boundary of the Reading Railroad right-of-way, to the easterly side of Roxborough avenue; thence extending westwardly approximately eight hundred fifty feet along the southerly side of Cresson street to the easterly side of Levering; thence extending north to the northerly side of Cresson street (sixty feet wide); thence extending westwardly approximately two hundred sixty feet along the northerly side of Cresson street to the easterly boundary of the waiting room and public facilities building of the Manayunk passenger station of the Reading Railroad; thence extending northwardly along the eastern boundary of said facility approximately thirty feet; thence extending westwardly along the northerly boundary of said facility approximately one hundred feet, to a point of the easterly side of Carson street; thence extending southwardly one hundred feet along the easterly side of Carson street, to a point on the southerly side of Cresson street; thence extending westwardly four hundred feet along the southerly side of Cresson street to the westerly side of Green lane; thence continuing westwardly along the southerly boundary of the Reading Railroad right-of-way one hundred fifty feet to a point; thence extending southwardly crossing the Pennsylvania Railroad right-of-way, following the easterly boundary of the Manayunk substation property, one hundred fifty feet to a point on the northerly side of Main street; thence extending westwardly along the northerly side of Main street one thousand one hundred feet to the westerly side of Leverington avenue; thence continuing westwardly along the southern boundary of the Reading Railroad right-of-way approximately five thousand seven hundred feet to a point adjacent to Flat Rock Dam; thence extending southwardly, crossing the canal channel and continuing along the westerly side of the dam structure to the southern bank of the Schuylkill River; thence returning along the easterly side of the dam structure to the westerly tip of Venice Island; thence extending eastwardly along the southern shore of Venice Island nine thousand eight hundred fifty feet to the easterly tip of Venice Island at the lower lock; thence crossing the lower lock channel and continuing eastwardly approximately seven hundred feet along the north bank of the Schuylkill River to the easterly property line of 4026 Main street, thence extending northwardly along said property line approximately one hundred feet to the southerly side of Main street; thence crossing Main street (sixty feet wide), to a point on the northerly side of Main street; at the eastern boundary of Littlewoods Dyers & Bleachers, the first mentioned point and place of beginning.

**PM-703.1.3 Specified neighborhood commercial areas:** Specified neighborhood commercial areas shall consist of any neighborhood commercial area, other than a neighborhood commercial revitalization area designated pursuant to Section 14-2009 of The Philadelphia Code, designated by Council pursuant to Section PM-704.3.2.

## **SECTION PM-704.0 BUILDING STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO DESIGNATED AREAS**

**PM-704.1 Front faces:** Within designated areas, the front faces of buildings or structures used for commercial purposes shall conform with the following requirements:

**PM-704.1.1 Architectural elements:** All exposed architectural elements or appurtenances thereto, including facades and business signs, shall be maintained in good structural and decorative repair. All such elements or appurtenances exhibiting substantial conditions of deterioration including rusted finishes, peeling paint, accumulated grime, graffiti, bent, broken or distorted surfaces shall be considered

in violation of the provisions of this subsection. For the purpose of this subsection "substantial conditions" shall be considered 20% or more of the surface area; except that within the Center City Extended Commercial Area, any publicly visible graffiti shall be considered "substantial conditions" of deterioration.

**PM-704.1.2 Other elements:** All other unused and exposed elements, including wires, brackets and conduits, shall be removed.

**PM-704.1.3 Glazing:** Except as provided in subsection PM-704.1.5, broken window glass shall be replaced.

**PM-704.1.4 Security devices:** All security devices designed to limit or block access to the front face of the buildings or structures used for commercial purposes shall allow for substantial visibility of the front face at all times. Solid shutters shall not be permitted. However, notwithstanding the above, any security device lawfully in existence prior to January 20, 1982 or, in regard to the Center City Extended Commercial Area, lawfully in existence on January 1, 1993, and not in conformance with the provisions of this subsection, shall not be repaired or altered in any substantial manner unless it be to comply with the design specifications of this subsection.

**PM-704.1.4.1 Finish:** Within the Center City Extended Commercial Area, such non-conforming security devices shall be painted in a single solid color and maintained graffiti free at all times.

**PM-704.1.4.2 Advertising:** Advertising shall be prohibited from being placed on shutters.

**PM-704.1.5 Window openings:** Blocking of window openings located on any story above the ground floor shall be permitted. Blocking of window openings shall conform to all requirements of the building code. The blocking of any such openings shall be performed in a neat and workmanlike manner, and only rigid permanent materials shall be permitted.

**PM-704.2 Historic area standards:** Standards within the designated historic area shall be as set forth in Sections PM-704.2.1 through PM-704.2.7 in addition to the requirements of Sections PM-704.1 through PM-704.1.4.2.

**PM-704.2.1 Permit:** No building or portion of the exterior thereof within the historic district shall hereafter be constructed, altered, repaired, demolished, or partially demolished unless a permit has first been obtained from the Department.

**PM-704.2.2 Approval:** All applications for such permits shall be forwarded by the Department to the Historical Commission for review and approval, before issuance of the permit. No permit shall be issued unless the proposed work has been approved by the Historical Commission staff as preserving the historical character of the district.

**PM-704.2.3 Repair:** Original architectural features such as cornices and bays shall not be removed. Deteriorated features shall be repaired where possible. Replacement material where necessary shall duplicate the original as closely as possible.

**PM-704.2.4 Facings:** Refacing of facades, bays, cornices with inappropriate materials such as aluminum siding, or brick veneer shall be prohibited. Existing inappropriate facade facings shall be removed at the termination of the useful life of the facing. Any inappropriate facing material lawfully in existence shall not be repaired or altered in any substantial manner.

**PM-704.2.5 Elements:** Original window and door openings, sills, lintels, and sashes shall be retained and repaired whenever possible. Replacement elements shall match the original appearance in proportion, form, and materials as closely as possible.

**PM-704.2.6 Storefronts:** Original existing storefronts contributing to the character of the district shall be retained and repaired. New storefronts shall be compatible with the proportion, form and materials of the original building.

**PM-704.2.7 Design:** Additions, alterations, and new construction shall be designed so as to be compatible in scale, building materials, and texture, with contributing buildings in the historic district.

**PM-704.3 Neighborhood commercial areas:** Standards within the specified neighborhood commercial areas shall be as set forth in Sections PM-704.3.1 through PM-704.3.1.3.

**PM-704.3.1 Security devices:** In the neighborhood commercial areas specified in Section PM-704.3.2, the following requirements for security devices shall apply:

**PM-704.3.1.1 Permitted design:** All security devices designed to limit or block access to the front face of the buildings or structures used for commercial purposes shall be of open link design and shall allow for substantial visibility of the front face at all times.

**PM-704.3.1.2 Prohibited design.** Solid shutters, solid roll-down security grates or similar devices shall not be permitted.

**PM-704.3.1.3 Compliance.** Any security device lawfully in existence on the effective date of this Section and not in conformance with the provisions of this Section shall not be altered or repaired in any substantial manner unless the alterations or repairs comply with the design specifications of this Section. Such previously existing security devices which are solid shutters shall be painted in a single solid color, shall be maintained graffiti free at all times, and shall not be used for advertising. For purposes of this subsection, "the effective date of this Section" shall mean the effective date of any ordinance adding a specified neighborhood commercial area to this Section.

**PM-704.3.2 Specified areas:** Neighborhood commercial areas shall consist of the following:

1. Both sides of Haverford avenue between City avenue and Brookhaven road. (December 28, 1995)
2. All commercial corridors and neighborhood commercial properties throughout the Ninth Councilmanic District. (July 6, 1996).
3. The East Passyunk Avenue Business Improvement District as delineated in Bill No. 020431 (Approved December 17, 2002). [334](#)
4. All commercial corridors and neighborhood commercial properties throughout the First Councilmanic District not already covered by Section PM-704.3.2(3), relating to the East Passyunk Avenue Business Improvement District. [335](#)

## **SECTION PM-706.0 ZERO GRAFFITI TOLERANCE ZONES [336](#)**

### **PM-706.1 Designation of Zero Graffiti Tolerance Zones.**

The Designation of Zones and the provision for future Zones shall be in accordance with Sections PM-706.1.1 and PM-706.1.2.

The following areas are designated as Zero Graffiti Tolerance Zones:

1. The area consisting of all properties which front on any portion of Broad street.
  2. The area of the City comprising the Philadelphia Empowerment Zone as designated by the federal government on December 21, 1994, which consists of Census Tracts 105, 111, 140, 141, 144, 147, 148, 156, 157, 162, 163, and 165.
  3. The area consisting of all properties which front on any portion of Germantown avenue, from the 2300 block to the 9500 block.
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#### Notes

- 334** Added, Bill No. 040134 (approved January 25, 2005). Section 2 of Bill No. 040134 provides that the bill shall be effective 60 days after enactment.
- 335** Added, Bill No. 100251 (approved July 29, 2010).
- 336** Added and former Section PM-705.0 repealed, Bill No. 970358 (approved July 1, 1997).

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