

## SECTION 321 Gateway District – Intent

Pottstown’s gateway districts form the major entryways to downtown Pottstown and its historic neighborhoods. They do much to establish the initial impression of Pottstown. Unfortunately, these areas include some of the least attractive development in the Borough.

After the Second World War, a new form of development evolved that was much different from Pottstown’s downtown and traditional neighborhoods. Located on the eastern and western edges of Pottstown along its major thoroughfare, High Street, this development was geared almost entirely to automobile use. It usually consisted of modest buildings with large parking lots in front of them.

At the crossroads of other thoroughfares, such as Charlotte and Wilson Streets, and Hanover Street and Farmington Avenue, other small businesses cropped up that were designed for the automobile. Meanwhile, automobile-oriented industrial uses evolved at the southern entrance of Pottstown, Hanover Street. These uses are convenient for people in cars, but not very attractive, and certainly not compatible with adjacent historic residential neighborhoods.

Although the use of the car is essential to keep these businesses viable, it is the intent of Pottstown Borough to encourage the revitalization and redevelopment of these areas to make them more attractive and more compatible with surrounding historic neighborhoods. In the long term, Council believes, this will enhance their economic viability for the future and improve Pottstown’s quality of life.

## SECTION 322 Gateway District – Effect

1. Within the Gateway District, the Borough shall regulate:
  - A. The proposed demolition of any building with a footprint larger than 150 square feet and located in a district declared eligible for the National Register of Historic Places by the Pennsylvania Bureau for Historic Preservation
  - B. Any proposed addition to an existing building
  - C. The size and height of any new building
  - D. The location of any new building on a lot
  - E. The location and design of parking lots
  - F. The location and size of fences
  - G. The design of fences as part of any land development plan
2. Within the Gateway District, the Planning Commission shall review:
  - A. Any major alteration of a façade of any building visible from a public street
  - B. The design of new buildings
  - C. The design of fences

## SECTION 323 Gateway District – Design Review Procedure for Existing Buildings

1. Any applicant who seeks within the Gateway District to demolish a building, construct an addition to an existing building, or erect a fence shall submit an application provided by the Borough. The application shall include the information described in Section 202 of this Article.
  - A. The Planning Commission shall review the application and make a recommendation to Borough Council, which shall approve or deny the application based on the design guidelines in Section 326 through Section 331 of this Article.

## **SECTION 323 Gateway District – Design Review Procedure for Existing Buildings (continued)**

2. Any applicant who seeks to alter the façade of an existing building in the Gateway District shall submit an application provided by the Borough. The application shall include the information described in Section 202 1.B of this Article.
  - A. If the Zoning Officer determines the proposed change meets the guidelines of this Ordinance, he shall issue a permit for the work.
  - B. If there is any question as to whether the proposed change meets the guidelines of this Ordinance, the Zoning Officer shall refer the matter to the Pottstown Planning Commission to review the application and either recommend approval of the proposed alteration or recommend alternatives to the applicant.
  - C. No permit shall be issued until the applicant has formally acknowledged he has received the recommendations of the Planning Commission. However, if the proposed change conforms to the Building Code and all other applicable state and borough ordinances, the Zoning Officer shall issue a permit for the work. The Zoning Officer shall act on all permit applications within 90 days of receiving them.

## **SECTION 324 Gateway District – Design Review Procedure for New Buildings**

1. Any applicant who seeks to construct a new building and/or fences in the Gateway District shall submit an application provided by the Borough. The application shall include the information described in Section 202 1.B of this Article in addition to the material required in the Subdivision and Land Development process.
  - A. If the Zoning Officer determines the proposed construction meets the guidelines of this Ordinance, he shall issue a permit for the work.
  - B. If there is any question as to whether the proposed construction meets the guidelines of this Ordinance, the Zoning Officer shall refer the matter to the Pottstown Planning Commission to review the application and either recommend approval of the proposed construction or recommend alternatives to the applicant. Recommendations shall be advisory only and shall not be considered as grounds for approving or denying an application.
  - C. No permit shall be issued until the applicant has formally acknowledged he has received the recommendations of the Planning Commission. However, if the proposed construction conforms to the Building Code and all other applicable state and borough ordinances, the Zoning Officer shall issue a permit for the work. The Zoning Officer shall act on all permit applications within 90 days of receiving them.

## **SECTION 325 Gateway District – Design Guidelines**

When reviewing applications for permits under this Ordinance, the Pottstown Planning Commission and Pottstown Borough Council shall apply the design guidelines in **Section 326** through **Section 331**.

## SECTION 326 Demolition

1. In any district declared eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the demolition of any existing building of historic value should be considered a last resort, only after the applicant can either:
  - A. Demonstrate that no other viable alternatives for reuse of the building exist. This would include:
    1. An analysis of the building’s adaptive re-use feasibility
    2. Evidence that no feasible re-use has been found within an 18-month period
    3. Evidence that no sales or rentals have been possible during an 18-month period of significant marketing, or
  - B. Demonstrate that demolition of a building is an unavoidable and integral part of a construction scheme affecting a larger area than the building in question, which will, in the opinion of Borough Council, provide substantial public benefit.
2. No building shall be demolished until a plat and design review of any proposed new buildings has been conducted by the Planning Commission and approved by Borough Council.

GATEWAY DISTRICT SUMMARY CHART		
This chart is designed for quick reference only. Specific requirements are stated in the design guidelines, Section 326 through Section 334.		
Category	Existing Buildings	New Buildings
<b>Demolition</b>	Review required in district eligible for National Historic Register	Design review required for replacement buildings
<b>Architectural style New Buildings Additions</b>	When renovating, modify building when possible to reflect architectural style of adjoining historic neighborhoods	Architectural style should be compatible with adjoining historic neighborhoods
<b>Placement</b>		Buildings should face a principal street downtown.
<b>Proportion of building walls to openings</b>	Window and door openings visible from the street in existing historic buildings should not be enlarged or reduced.	The proportion of walls to openings on walls visible from the street should be from 2:1 to 1:1.
<b>Texture and pattern of materials</b>	When renovating, modify building when possible to reflect the texture and pattern of construction materials in adjoining historic neighborhoods	Construction materials should reflect the texture and pattern of construction materials in adjoining historic neighborhoods.
<b>Fences and walls</b>	Front fences: 3 feet Side fences facing street: 4 feet Interior side and rear fences: 6 feet Restrictions on materials for front and side fences.	Front fences: 3 feet Side fences facing street: 4 feet Interior side and rear fences: 6 feet Restrictions on materials for front and side fences.
<b>Parking lots</b>	Should be located to the side and rear of buildings when possible.	Should be located to the side and rear of buildings when possible.
<b>Lot size, building placement, building size and height</b>	See charts, Sections 332 through 334, pages 30 through 34.	See charts, Sections 332 through 334, pages 30 through 34.

## SECTION 327 Architectural Style and Additions

Downtown Pottstown and Pottstown's traditional neighborhoods were built in a number of distinctive styles which give the borough its pleasant character. Various examples are pictured in the Conservation District Sections 307 through 316.

- Design guideline:** New buildings within the Gateway Overlay District should be compatible with these styles. As existing buildings are renovated, and additions constructed, they should be designed to be compatible with the styles of existing buildings in adjacent traditional neighborhoods.



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*Pottstown's new Borough Hall, right, was designed to complement the former First Union bank building, left. Both are made of brick, have vertical arched windows, similar height, and similar bulk.*



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*The Hill School's new academic building, above, was designed to be compatible with existing buildings on campus, left.*



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*There are many styles in Pottstown's traditional neighborhoods that can easily be reflected in new or renovated buildings in Pottstown's Gateway Districts. For example, the auto service station at right reflects the Tudor style, as seen as the home, left, in Pottstown's neighborhood residential district.*

## SECTION 327 Architectural Style and Additions (continued)



*A lackluster gas station was inexpensively remodeled into an attractive convenience store to blend with more traditional architecture in Niagara-by-the-Lake.*



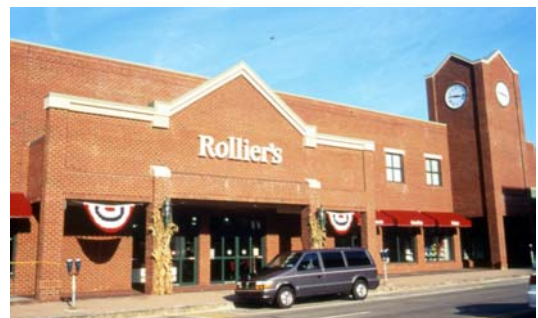
*This convenience store, with an island for dispensing gasoline, is built of brick, with a standing seam hip roof, making it compatible with traditional neighborhoods.*



*This McDonald's Restaurant in Freeport, Maine, made use of an existing farmhouse (left photo) with parking to the side and a compatible addition to the rear (right photo), to blend in with nearby traditional neighborhoods.*



*This Banana Republic clothing store in Freeport is designed to look like a house. A building like this in the Gateway district would be compatible with Pottstown's traditional neighborhoods.*



*A building like this would be appropriate in Pottstown's downtown Gateway district.*



*This bank building, with parking to the side or rear, would make an excellent fit for Pottstown's Gateway East or Gateway West districts.*

## SECTION 328 Placement

In the downtown gateway district, buildings should face a principal street.

## SECTION 329 Proportion of Building Walls to Openings

**Background:** The number and size of windows and doors in a building strongly affect its appearance. The amount of open space in a wall can be expressed as a ratio. For example, a building with twice as much wall space as windows and doors would have a 2 to 1 ratio.

Most of Pottstown’s historic buildings have a wall to openings ratio between 2 to 1 and 1 to 1. To be compatible with Pottstown’s existing buildings, new buildings in Pottstown’s Gateway Districts should have wall to openings ratios between 2 to 1 and 1 to 1.

## SECTION 330 Texture and Pattern of Materials

### Design guideline:

1. For existing buildings:
  - A. Brick walls of buildings visible from any public right-of-way shall not be covered with vinyl or aluminum siding, stucco, or any other such materials.
  - B. In the case of other existing walls, if new materials are used to cover them, the materials should be compatible with the materials on buildings in adjacent traditional neighborhoods, such as wood and brick.
2. For new buildings:
  - A. The exterior materials of new buildings should be similar in appearance to those of existing buildings in adjacent traditional neighborhoods, such as wood and brick.
  - B. New materials not found on existing buildings in adjacent traditional neighborhoods may be judged acceptable if, in the judgment of the Borough, the new building conforms in other ways, such as height, form, and proportion of walls to openings.
3. Dark tinted or reflective glass in windows is prohibited.

## SECTION 331 Fences and Walls

1. **Design Guideline:** Fences and walls shall be placed according to the following chart:

Location	Maximum height	Materials
Front yard	3 feet	Brick Ornamental iron
Side yard adjacent to a street (alleys excluded)	4 feet	Ornamental aluminum or steel designed to look like iron
Rear yard adjacent to a street (alleys excluded)		Stone Wood in the form of a picket fence Vinyl designed to look like wood in the form of a picket fence Vinyl designed to look like iron
Front or side yard of a building that abuts sidewalk	6 feet	Brick Ornamental iron Ornamental aluminum or steel designed to look like iron Stone Wood Vinyl designed to look like wood or iron Stucco over concrete block, capped with brick or stone
Interior side yard Rear yard	6 feet	Any common fence material

## SECTION 332 Neighborhood Business (Gateway)

- Intent:** To enhance small areas for businesses that predominantly serve the surrounding neighborhood while eliminating any undesirable impacts that these businesses might cause to those neighborhoods.

2. Permitted Uses	3. Conditional Uses (See Conditional Uses -- Sections 400-401)
Direct retail store of 3,000 square feet or less	Car wash
Direct service store of 3,000 square feet or less	Convenience Store with Gasoline Dispensing Center
Dwelling – apartment/condos, if located on the upper floors of a building with a store or office	Drive-through window as an accessory use
Office, except client-based social service provider	Neighborhood automobile service station
Restaurant, other than a drive-in restaurant	Utility Company Operational Facility
	Uses of the same general character as those listed in this chart, with the same or lesser impact on the community as determined by Borough Council.
4. Accessory Uses	
Parking lot	
Solid waste storage unit	
Storage shed (Maximum 200 square feet)	

- Requirements for lot area, building setbacks, and building size:**

Standard	Size	Size for auto service station
Minimum lot area	2,000 square feet	7,000 square feet
Minimum open space	10 percent	10 percent
Maximum building coverage	75 percent	45 percent
Front setback	From 0 to 15 feet	From 0 to 20 feet
Minimum side setback	0	10 feet
Minimum rear setback	20 feet	20 feet
Minimum lot width	20 feet	70 feet
Minimum lot depth	100 feet	100 feet
Maximum building height	35 feet	35 feet
Minimum building coverage	35 percent	25 percent

**SECTION 333 Downtown Gateway (Gateway)**

- 1. Intent:** To promote the redevelopment of existing vacant industrial sites at the entryway to the downtown, creating a pleasant mixture of stores, homes, and offices that will complement the downtown to the north, the historic residential neighborhood to the east, and the Schuylkill River and Greenway to the south.

2. Permitted Uses	3. Conditional Uses (See Conditional Uses -- Sections 400-401)						
<p>Bank and financial institution</p> <p>Direct retail store</p> <p>Direct service store</p> <p>Dwelling – Apartment/condominium (second floor and above )</p> <p>Health and fitness center</p> <p>Hotel/motel</p> <p>The following light manufacturing if less than 20,000 square feet:</p> <p>Manufacture and assembly of small electrical appliances and parts such as lighting fixtures, fans, electronic measuring and controlling devices, radio and television receivers, and home electronic equipment, not including electrical machinery</p> <p>Manufacture of boxes, containers, bags, and other packaging products from previously prepared materials, but specifically excluding the manufacture of paper from pulp.</p> <p>Manufacture, assembly and packaging of jewelry, watches, clocks, optical goods and professional and scientific instruments</p> <p>Manufacture, compounding, processing, packaging, or treatment of bakery goods, confections, candy and dairy products</p> <p>Printing, publishing, lithographing, binding and similar processes</p> <p>Scientific research laboratory or other experimental testing establishment</p> <p>Park</p> <p>Office (except client-based social service provider)</p> <p>Restaurant (excluding drive through facilities)</p> <p>School</p> <p>Trade school (second floor and above)</p>	<p>Child Care Facility -- Day Care Center</p> <p>Child Care Facility -- Family Day Care Home</p> <p>Child Care Facility -- Group Day Care Home</p> <p>Dwelling, attached single family (No Hanover Street frontage)</p> <p>Drive-through service windows as an accessory use</p> <p>Indoor entertainment (excluding adult entertainment)</p> <p>Parking garages</p> <p>Parking lot</p> <p>Utility Company Operational Facility</p> <p>Uses of the same general character as those listed in this chart, with the same or lesser impact on the community as determined by Borough Council.</p> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="background-color: #d9ead3;"> <p><b>4. Existing Building Conditional Uses (see Section 402)</b></p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> <p><b>Any existing building two or more stories high with a minimum of 2,400 square feet on the ground floor:</b></p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> <p>Dwelling -- apartment/condominium</p> </td> </tr>	<p><b>4. Existing Building Conditional Uses (see Section 402)</b></p>		<p><b>Any existing building two or more stories high with a minimum of 2,400 square feet on the ground floor:</b></p>		<p>Dwelling -- apartment/condominium</p>	
<p><b>4. Existing Building Conditional Uses (see Section 402)</b></p>							
<p><b>Any existing building two or more stories high with a minimum of 2,400 square feet on the ground floor:</b></p>							
<p>Dwelling -- apartment/condominium</p>							

**SECTION 333 Downtown Gateway (Gateway, continued)**

<b>5. Accessory Uses</b>	
Home occupation	Solid waste storage unit
Parking lot	Storage shed (Maximum 100 square feet)

**6. Requirements for lot area, building setbacks, and building size (except for accessory uses):**

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Size</b>
Minimum lot area	8,000 square feet 1,600 square feet for single family attached
Minimum open space	10 percent
Maximum building coverage	75 percent
Front setback	0 feet minimum on Hanover, South, and Charlotte streets
Side setback	10 feet minimum/ 25 feet maximum 0 feet/ 10 feet for single family attached structures 0 feet/ 10 feet for non-residential uses as a conditional use where the adjacent uses are deemed similar by Borough Council
Rear setback	25 feet
Maximum building height	60 feet
Minimum floor to area ratio	40 percent (Area in parking garage is not included in calculating developed floor area)

**SECTION 334 Gateway East and Gateway West (Gateway)**

1. **Intent:** To improve the aesthetics of the eastern and western commercial entryways to Pottstown, making them more attractive and compatible with the nearby historic residential areas.

2. Permitted Uses	3. Conditional Uses (See Conditional Uses – Sections 400-401)
Bank and financial institution	Automotive Repair Station (Gateway West only, rear of buildings only)  Car wash  Convenience Store with Gasoline Dispensing Center  Drive-through windows as an accessory use  Neighborhood automobile service station  Trade School (Gateway West only, limited to automotive and machine training only)  Utility Company Operational Facility  Veterinary office and kennel  Uses of the same general character as those listed in this chart, with the same or lesser impact on the community as determined by Borough Council.
Commercial greenhouses	
Direct retail store	
Direct service store	
Health and fitness center	
Hospital	
Hotel/motel	
Public park or non-profit recreation use	
Office, except client-based social service	
Restaurant	
Social club	

4. Accessory Uses	
Home occupation	Solid waste storage unit
Parking lot	Storage shed and other similar structures

5. **Requirements for lot area, building setbacks, and building size:**

Standard	Size
Minimum lot area	30,000 square feet
Minimum open space	20 percent
Maximum building coverage	75 percent
Front setback	0-20 feet
Side setback	15 feet
Rear setback	20 feet
Minimum lot width	150 feet
Minimum lot depth	200 feet
Maximum building height	35 feet
Minimum floor to area ratio	20 percent

**SECTION 335 Park (Gateway)**

- Intent:** To preserve Pottstown’s last remaining natural areas, to promote active and passive recreation, and to improve access to the Schuylkill River and the Manatawny Creek.

2. Permitted Uses	4. Conditional Uses (See Conditional Uses – Sections 400-401)
Boat Launches	Restaurants (no drive through facilities)
Park	Recreational Rental Facilities
Picnic Areas	Utility Company Operational Facility
Trails	Uses of the same general character as those listed in this
Water Access Areas	chart, with the same or lesser impact on the community as
	determined by Borough Council.
<b>3. Accessory Use</b>	
Parking lot	

## SECTION 336 Flex Office (Contemporary)

- Intent:** To establish and improve areas for modern, efficient offices and industries that provide a wide variety of employment opportunities and enhance the community. To provide a variety of job-producing manufacturing industries in Pottstown’s Keystone Opportunity Zone, located along Keystone Boulevard.

2. Permitted Uses	3. Conditional Uses (See Conditional Uses – Sections 400-401)
Food processing not including slaughter	Utility Company Operational Facility  Uses of the same general character as those listed in this chart, with the same or lesser impact on the community as determined by Borough Council.
Health and fitness center	
Light manufacturing, assembly and processing	
Office, including client-based social service provider	
Park	
Printing and publishing	
Research and development laboratories	
Warehouse	
The following uses are permitted along Keystone Boulevard only:	
Medium manufacturing, assembly and processing	

4. Accessory Uses
Parking lot
Solid waste storage unit
Storage shed and other similar structures

- Requirements for lot area, building setbacks, and building size:**

Standard	Size
Minimum lot area	30,000 square feet
Minimum open space	20 percent
Maximum building coverage	75 percent
Front setback	20 feet
Side setback	15 feet
Rear setback	20 feet
Minimum lot width	150 feet
Minimum lot depth	200 feet
Maximum building height	55 feet
Minimum floor to area ratio	20 percent*
* 15 percent if full-time employment exceeds 12 persons per acre	

## SECTION 337 Highway Business (Contemporary)

1. **Intent:** To preserve and enhance general commercial areas where customers reach individual businesses primarily by automobile.

2. Permitted Uses	
Automotive repair station	Restaurant, including fast food with or without drive-through service.
Automotive service station	Social club
Automobile, truck and construction equipment sales and service	Utility company operational facility
Bank and financial institution	Veterinary office and kennel
Car wash	Warehouse
Commercial greenhouse	
Convenience Store with Gasoline Dispensing Center	<b>3. Conditional Uses</b> (See Conditional Uses – Sections 400-401)
Direct retail store	Mobilehome park
Direct service store	Uses of the same general character as those listed in this chart, with the same or lesser impact on the community as determined by Borough Council.
Health and fitness center	
Hotel/motel	
Neighborhood automobile service station	<b>4. Accessory Uses</b>
Office, except client-based social service provider	Parking lot
Outdoor Auction/Flea Market	Solid waste storage unit
Rental storage	Storage shed

5. **Requirements for lot area, building setbacks, and building size:**

Standard	Size
Minimum lot area	30,000 square feet
Minimum open space	20 percent
Maximum building coverage	60 percent
Front setback	20 feet
Side setback	15 feet
Rear setback	20 feet
Minimum lot width	150 feet
Minimum lot depth	200 feet
Maximum building height	55 feet
Minimum floor to area ratio	20 percent

## SECTION 338 Heavy Manufacturing (Contemporary)

1. **Intent:** To establish and preserve areas for necessary industrial and related uses of such a nature that they require isolation from many other kinds of land uses, and to make provision for commercial uses that are located most appropriately near industrial uses or that are necessary to service the immediate needs of people in these areas.

2. Permitted Uses	3. Conditional Uses- Sections 400-401
Automobile, truck, and construction equipment sales and service  Building contractor  Food processing plant  Heavy manufacturing, processing, and assembly  Junkyard  Office, except client-based social service provider  Off-Premises Sign  Research and development laboratory  Trucking, carting, and hauling station.  Utility company building, operational, storage, or repair facility  Warehouse	Adult establishment  Solid waste mechanical processing unit  Utility Company Operational Facility  Uses of the same general character as those listed in this chart, with the same or lesser impact on the community as determined by Borough Council.

4. Accessory Uses	
Parking lot	Storage shed
Solid waste storage unit	

5. **Requirements for lot area, building setbacks, and building size:**

Standard	Size
Minimum lot area	20,000 square feet
Minimum open space	5 percent
Maximum building coverage	85 percent
Front setback	20 feet
Side setback	0 feet
Rear setback	20 feet except when abutting railroad
Minimum lot width	100 feet
Minimum lot depth	200 feet
Maximum building height	85 feet
Minimum floor to area ratio	20 percent

## SECTION 339 Floodplain Overlay District

1. **Intent:** To protect Pottstown residents and property owners from the dangers of floods, the floodplain of the Schuylkill River and its tributaries within Borough boundaries are incorporated into a Floodplain Overlay District.

## SECTION 340 Floodplain Boundaries

1. The identified floodplain area shall be those areas of Pottstown which are subject to a 100 year flood, as identified in the Flood Insurance Study dated December 19, 1996, and the most recent maps prepared for the Borough of Pottstown by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to accompany that study. The Flood Insurance Study Maps are located in the Pottstown Zoning Officer's Office in Borough Hall.
2. Description of Floodplain Areas. The identified floodplain area consists of the following specific areas:
  - A. **Floodway Area:** The areas identified as "Floodway" in the AE Zone in the Flood Insurance Study prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
  - B. **Flood Fringe Area:** The remaining portions of the 100 year floodplain in those areas identified as an AE Zone in the Flood Insurance Study, where a floodway has been delineated. The basis for the outermost boundary of this area shall be the 100 year flood elevations as shown in the Flood Insurance Study.

## SECTION 341 Floodplain Regulations

1. The floodplain districts described in Section 340 shall be overlays to the existing underlying districts as shown on the official Pottstown Borough Zoning Map, and as such, the provisions for the Floodplain District serve as a supplement to the underlying district provisions.
2. In the **Floodway Area**, only uses such as agriculture, recreation, and storage that do not involve the construction of permanent buildings are permitted.
3. In the **Flood Fringe Area**, all structures shall be elevated or designed and constructed to remain completely dry up to at least 1 1/2 feet above the 100 year flood. These structures shall also be designed to prevent pollution from the structure or activity during the course of a 100 year flood.

## DETAILS

For details of these standards, see the Zoning Appendix, Section A339, pages A7 through A14.

## **SECTION 342 Airport Overlay District**

**Intent:** To protect people using the Pottstown Municipal Airport as well as the residents and property owners who live in the vicinity of the airport, an Airport Overlay District is created.

## **SECTION 343 District Boundaries**

The boundaries of the Airport Overlay District are shown on the official Pottstown Borough Zoning Map located in the office of the Pottstown Zoning Officer in Borough Hall.

## **SECTION 344 Effect**

To prevent accidents and eliminate safety hazards in the vicinity of the Pottstown Municipal Airport, certain height restrictions are imposed on all structures within the Airport Overlay District. In addition, any land use which interferes with navigational signals or radio communications between the airport and aircraft is restricted.

## **DETAILS**

For details of these standards, see the Zoning Appendix, Section A342, pages A15 through A20.

