

# Upper Makefield *Township*

## **Sign Design Guide Washington Crossing District**

Washington Crossing has always been a gateway ... first to the Leni Lenapi, then colonist, William Penn, farmers, rangers, all foraging lives out of the wilderness. A ferry springs up, the brainchild of Henry Baker. More than just a ferry, it was this single idea that becomes the springboard for what we, centuries later, know as Washington Crossing, a village of full gems that make this a truly unique place. It becomes the lifeblood, a gateway for settlement, and the turning point in the Revolutionary War as Washington moves his troops across the river to defeat the British. Residences, taverns, businesses and an inland canal all bring growth to the area. The "Ferry Road" becomes the main artery of any area that serves as a cultural crossroads for Dutch, Quakers, Swedes, English and Germans.

Today, centuries later, Washington Crossing remains a gateway, with its anchor in the Washington Crossing Historic Park and Museum. Preserved through the efforts of the state of Pennsylvania, it's one of the gems we all share. Likewise The Delaware Canal provides both residents and visitors with a truly unique and valuable recreational and educational experience.

As a crossroads through the centuries, Washington Crossing grew to accommodate all modes of travel - horses, buggies, river and canal barges and cars. Today, the area is a network of streets that intertwine with scenic River Road, Ferry Street (now Route 532) and Taylorsville Road. It has become the heart of an exploding residential area and so it is no wonder that many established and new businesses choose Washington Crossing as a base of commerce. It still beacons and attracts.

In an effort to preserve and protect the historic and patriotic influences, as well as its natural beauty and rural charm, Washington Crossing has been defined as a special place by an Upper Makefield Township Zoning Overlay, Ordinance #05-267. As such, special regulations, considerations and approvals apply to sign designs within the District of Washington Crossing.



### **Sign Design Basics**

Signs of many different sizes, shapes and heights can create a confusing scene as they compete for the attention of the viewer. However, too much uniformity is as detrimental as a disjointed arrangement of signs. The following design basics allow individual expression while respecting the historic and patriotic influences of Washington Crossing. They are applicable to all sign types permitted in the district area.

## Size

Typical of small towns in Bucks County the Village of Washington Crossing includes residential and historic buildings many of which have shallow front yards. These characteristics suggest the need for smaller signs than those found on a major commercial strip. Larger signs are often erected on the theory that “bigger means more business”. However, this marketing approach is generally inappropriate for small towns and villages. The overall appearance of the town is more important than sign size in relationship to the marketability of the area’s businesses. Keeping the size of the signs in scale with the surrounding buildings and streetscape is a very important factor in maintaining a pleasant and attractive village.

## Information

The information shown on signs should identify in simple and straight forward manner. The message should be easy to read and direct. Too much information on a sign or group of signs is difficult for the viewer to absorb. Sign text, identifying a business should be limited to the name of the business and perhaps a secondary item such as the principal product or service. A simple illustration is sometimes the best way to convey this idea. The only other information that should be included is the street number or address. This is necessary for safety and emergencies.

## Color

No more than two or three colors should be used. Colors used for the signs should match or complement the building's color or trim. This links the building to the sign. When one sign is used by multiple tenants, the colors on the signs should be coordinated to present a unified image.

## Materials

Wood or wood-look signs, either painted or carved are usually the most appropriate given the architecture of Washington Crossing. Other materials may be used if their design is compatible with the architecture of the building and use natural or natural looking components. Modern materials may be used but glossy plastic is not appropriate.

## Copy Characters

The style of the characters used for sign copy should complement the architectural style of the building it serves or promote the historic nature of Washington Crossing Village, generally, typefaces described as “serif”, meaning with a foot or slash at the ends. The style of characters used for sign copy should enable the reader to clearly see and easily read the message on the sign. Decorative and script faces due to their reduced legibility and exuberant flourishes, are more appropriate as accents than copy characters. Below you can find a partial list in order to provide a small sample of possible appropriate typefaces:

**Baskerville Old Face**  
**Goudy Old Style**

**Bookman Old Style**  
**Perpetua**

**Century Schoolbook**  
**Times New Roman**

## Standard Sign Types

Signs in Washington Crossing District shall meet the requirements of the Newtown Area Joint Municipal Zoning Ordinance (JMZO). In addition to the requirements set forth in the JMZO, signs in the District shall reflect a historic design. No sign in the District shall be internally lighted. Rotating or revolving signs, pennants, flags, banners, balloons, and objects such as tires, automobiles, food products, or other items designed to draw attention to the product or business are prohibited. No signs shall be painted or placed on a utility pole or any natural feature such as a rock or a tree.

As put forth in the JMZO a certificate of appropriateness shall be obtained from the Upper Makefield Planning Commission for the use, erection, structural repair, alteration, moving, removal or demolition of any sign for use within the Washington Crossing District. The applicant shall secure a sign permit under Section 1102.C of this ordinance prior to the application for a certificate of appropriateness. Furthermore, signs in the Washington Crossing District will conform to regulations of type, location and duration as indicated in Section 1106 of the JMZO for signs for specific use.

These are five standard sign types permitted in Washington Crossing District: freestanding, projecting, wall, window and fascia. The following section defines each permanent sign type and makes recommendations on the content, location, size, lighting and design of the signs.

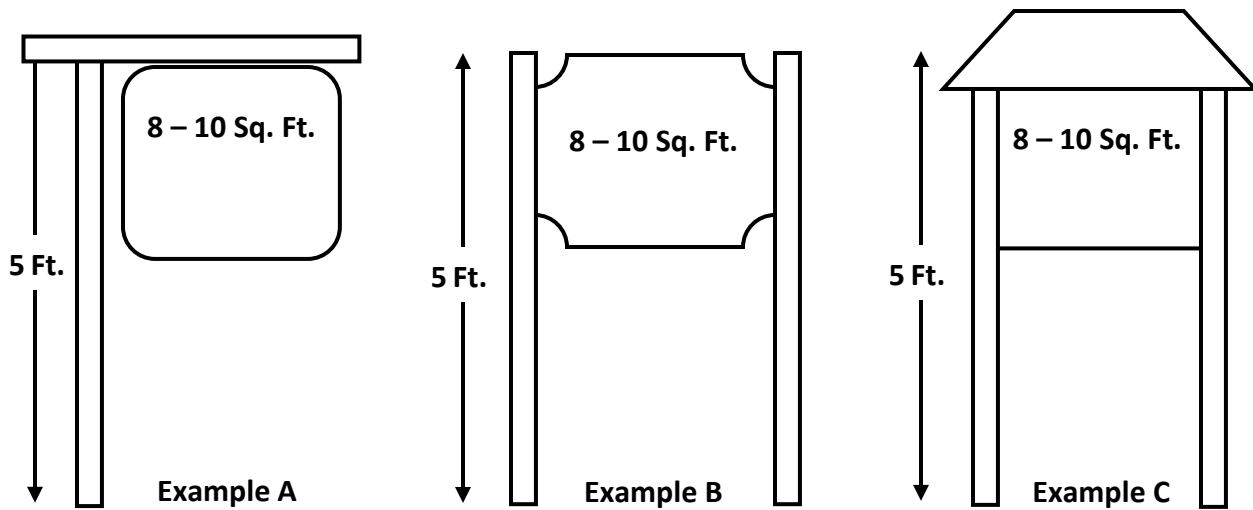
### Freestanding Signs

A freestanding sign is permanently supported by an upright pole(s) that is permanently anchored into the ground below the frost line with a foundation. A freestanding sign for use in Washington Crossing District is effective because the sign face can be oriented perpendicular to the street and easily viewed by motorists as well as pedestrians.

**Content** – The freestanding sign is used as the primary identifier of a business. Information on this sign type should be limited to the name and function of the business.

**Location** – The sign should be situated where it neither blocks nor obscures important architectural features.

**Size** – The area of the sign is regulated by the JMZO. It is important to understand that the regulations for sign area and height in the JMZO define the maximum allowable and, as such, should be applied only to largest properties in Washington Crossing. For most properties in Washington Crossing District, the size of the sign face should be 8 to 10 square feet. The height of the sign face may not exceed 5 feet except for a complex identification and a directory sign may only be 6 feet in height.



**Lighting** – If a light source for freestanding signs is desired, it must be external and concealed from view. Glare from light sources should be reduced through the use of shielded light fixtures and plantings. Down lit lighting is preferred as it lessens the impact of light pollution and as shown in Example C, can be housed in the roofing of the sign.

**Sign Supports** – A variety of supports can be used. Posts should be painted or stained a neutral background color to match the building. Accent colors may be used in coordination with building trim colors or sign lettering. Details such as routed areas and finials can enhance the appearance and add a historic flavor to most signage.

## Projecting Signs

A projecting sign is attached to and projects more than 12 inches but less than 48 inches horizontally from the façade or face of the building. Because projecting signs tend to interfere with the appearance of the façade, the use of this type of sign is only recommended where it is not possible to use a freestanding sign. For example, a property with little or no front yard is an appropriate situation in which to use a projecting sign.

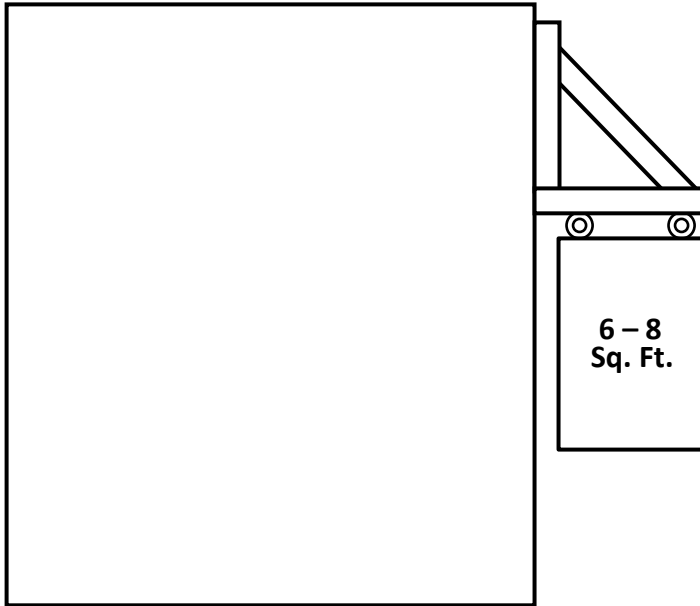
**Content** – As with the freestanding sign, information on this sign type should be limited to the name and function of the business. This type of sign is only appropriate for single use of an individual property.

**Location** – The sign should be placed where it neither blocks nor obscures important architectural elements of the façade. In most cases, either the front corners of a building or the center of the façade are the best locations. Smaller signs projecting from porches are also appropriate.

**Size** – The area of the sign is regulated by the JMZO. It is important to understand that the regulations for sign area and height in the JMZO define the maximum allowable and, as such, should be applied only to largest properties in Washington Crossing. For most properties in Washington Crossing District, the size of the sign face should be 6 to 8 square feet. The height of the sign face may not exceed 5 feet.

**Lighting** – Lighting, if required, must be external and should be shielded so no direct light shines onto streets or adjacent properties. The light source should be concealed from view.

**Sign Support** – Supports should be either painted to match the building or of a metal look and finish, for instance, wrought iron.



## Wall Signs

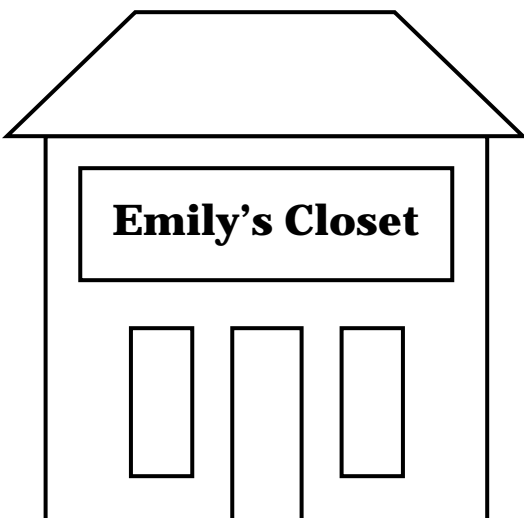
A wall sign is mounted parallel to the face of the building or wall and may project not more than 12 inches from the building wall or above roof line.

**Content** – Information on this sign type should be limited to the name and function of the business.

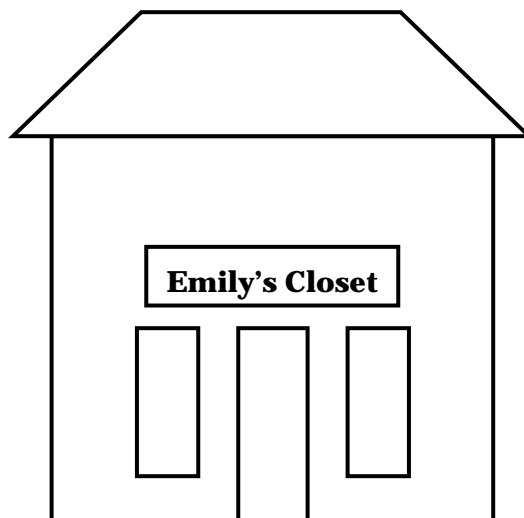
**Location** – Because many of the buildings in Washington Crossing were originally constructed as residences, there are a limited number of places on building facades where wall signs may be affixed without obscuring important architectural details. However, some commercial buildings are designed to make sign space an integral part of the façade. The lintel, which extends across the top of a store, usually above the door or windows is the usual placement for this type of architectural detail. In this case, the wall sign should be used as the primary identifier for the building.

**Size** – The area of the sign is regulated by the JMZO. It is important to understand that the regulations for the sign area and height in the JMZO define the maximum allowable. For most properties in the Washington Crossing District, the sign face is less than 35 feet from the cart way and can be 12 square feet however, 8 – 10 square feet is preferred.

**Lighting** – If lighting is required it must be external and shielded or concealed from direct view.



*Sign too large for wall space*



*Sign in proportion to wall space*

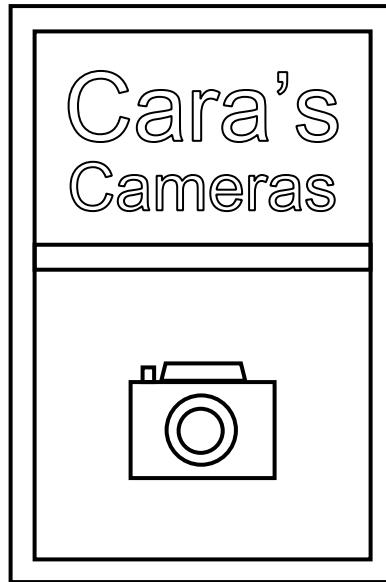
## **Window Signs**

A window sign is painted on or attached to the inside surface of a window. Windows provide an excellent area for signs and signs do not interfere with the appearance of the building. Window signs are particularly appropriate for buildings with large display windows.

**Content** – Information on this sign type should be limited to the name and function of the business and should not have a painted background. This type sign is only appropriate for single use of an individual property. Windows should not be covered with lists of products, prices, credit card or vendor logos, and announcements of sales or special events as this creates a cluttered and unattractive appearance. The information and design used for window signs should not be confused with temporary advertising signs.

**Size** – Window signs should be limited to 40% of the total glassed area in which they are displayed.

**Lighting** – Window signs may be illuminated through the use of interior backlighting.



## **Fascia Signs**

A fascia sign is a flat, horizontal sign that is placed upon or hung from a relatively narrow building surface (other than a wall of a building) that projects, is cantilevered or supported on columns. Since, as with projecting signs, fascia signs tend to interfere with the appearance of the façade, they are only recommended where it is not possible to use a free standing sign.

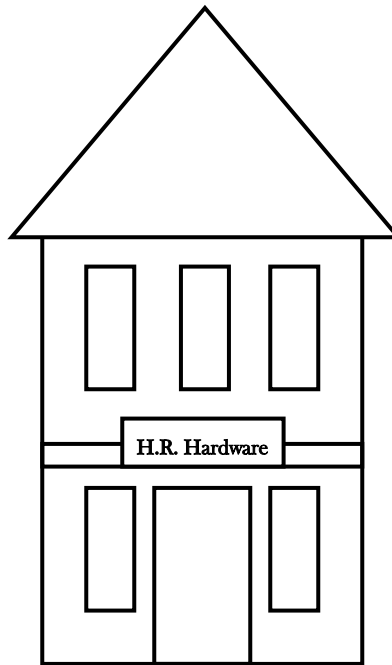
**Content** – The fascia sign is used as the primary identifier of a business. Information on this sign type should be limited to the name and function of the business.

**Location** – The sign should be positioned where it neither blocks nor obscures important architectural elements of the façade. It may not extend above the eaves or parapet of the building.

**Size** – The fascia sign should be limited to 2 feet in height. The copy of a fascia sign should not extend within two feet of the party or end wall of a building.

**Lighting** – If lighting is required, it should be external and shielded so that no direct light shines onto sidewalks, streets or adjacent properties. If possible the light source should be concealed from view.

**Sign Support** – The supports should be as simple and unobtrusive as possible.



## **Directory Signs**

A directory sign is a type of freestanding sign designed to identify the name and location of multiple occupants on the same lot. Refer to recommendations for free standing signs. Size is regulated by the area of the lot and may be found in JMZO Section 1106.

## **Development Signs**

A development sign is a type of freestanding sign designed to identify a development. Refer to recommendations for free standing signs. Development signs are for identification purposes only; therefore, information on this sign type is limited to the name of the subdivision or land development.

## **Bibliography**

*Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Act 167 District Certification, Historic District Project*, Bucks County Conservancy, 1985.

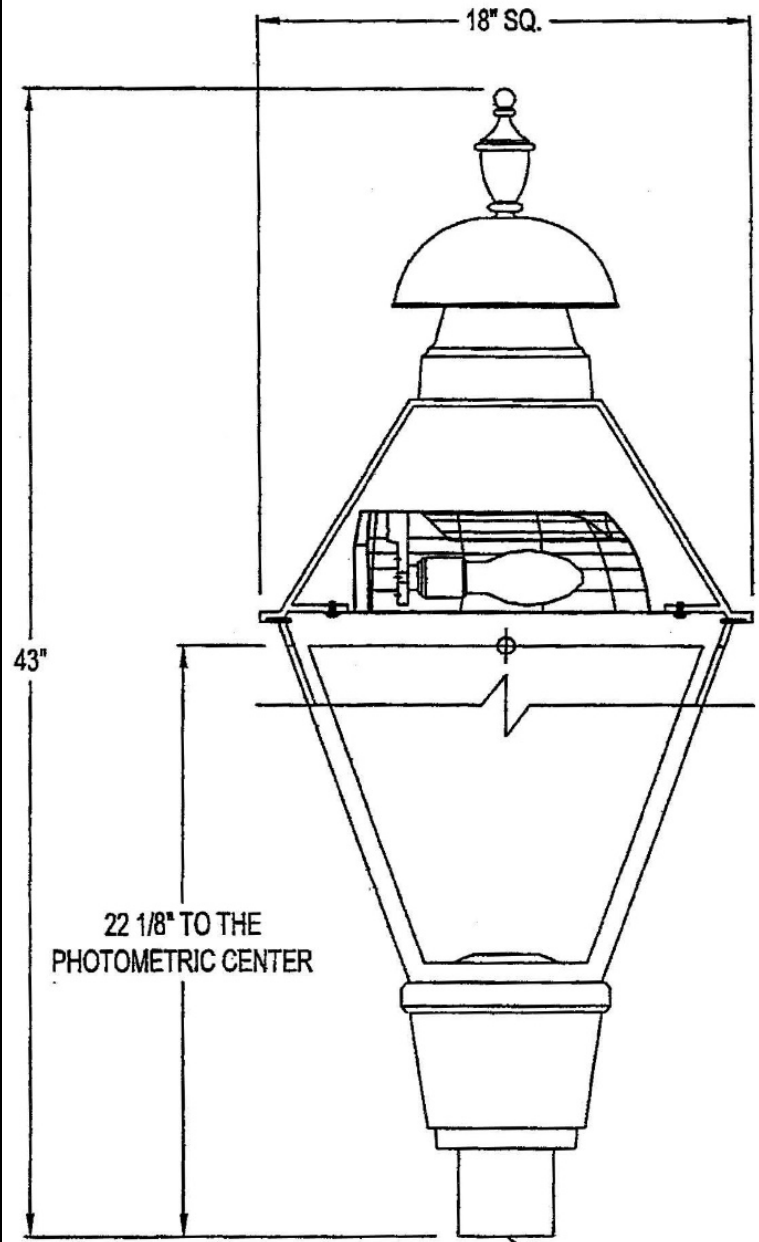
*The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings*, Kay D. Weeks and Anee E. Grimmer, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1995.

*Village Planning Handbook*, Bucks County Planning Commission, 1989.

*Historic Yardley Sign Design Guide*, Susan L. Micklewright, 1997.



*This drawing is the property of Spring City Elec. Mfg. Co. and is issued to the recipient with the understanding that it shall not be copied, duplicated, passed on to unauthorized parties, nor used for any purpose other than that for which it is specifically furnished except with Spring City's written permission.*



**LUMINAIRE SPECIFICATIONS**

**STYLE:** CLEARWATER HORIZONTAL LAMP, TYPE III, CUTOFF  
**HEIGHT:** 43"  
**WIDTH:** 18" SQUARE  
**MATERIAL:** CAST ALUMINUM ALLOY ANSI 356 PER A.S.T.M. B26-95  
**PANELS:** CLEAR POLYCARBONATE  
**DISTRIBUTION:** TYPE III - ASYMMETRIC  
**FINISH:** PRIME PAINT THEN FINISH SHERWIN WILLIAMS ACROLON - PLEASE ADVISE COLOR  
**LAMPING:** \_\_\_\_\_ WATT  HPS  MH  MV  INC  OTHER \_\_\_\_\_  
**VOLTAGE:**  120  208  240  277  480  QUAD  
**SOCKET:** MEDIUM BASE  
  
**PHOTO CONTROL:** OPTIONAL - BUTTON TYPE

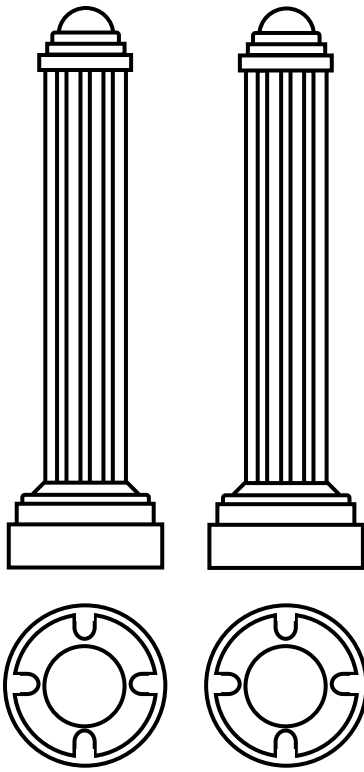
22 1/8" TO THE PHOTOMETRIC CENTER

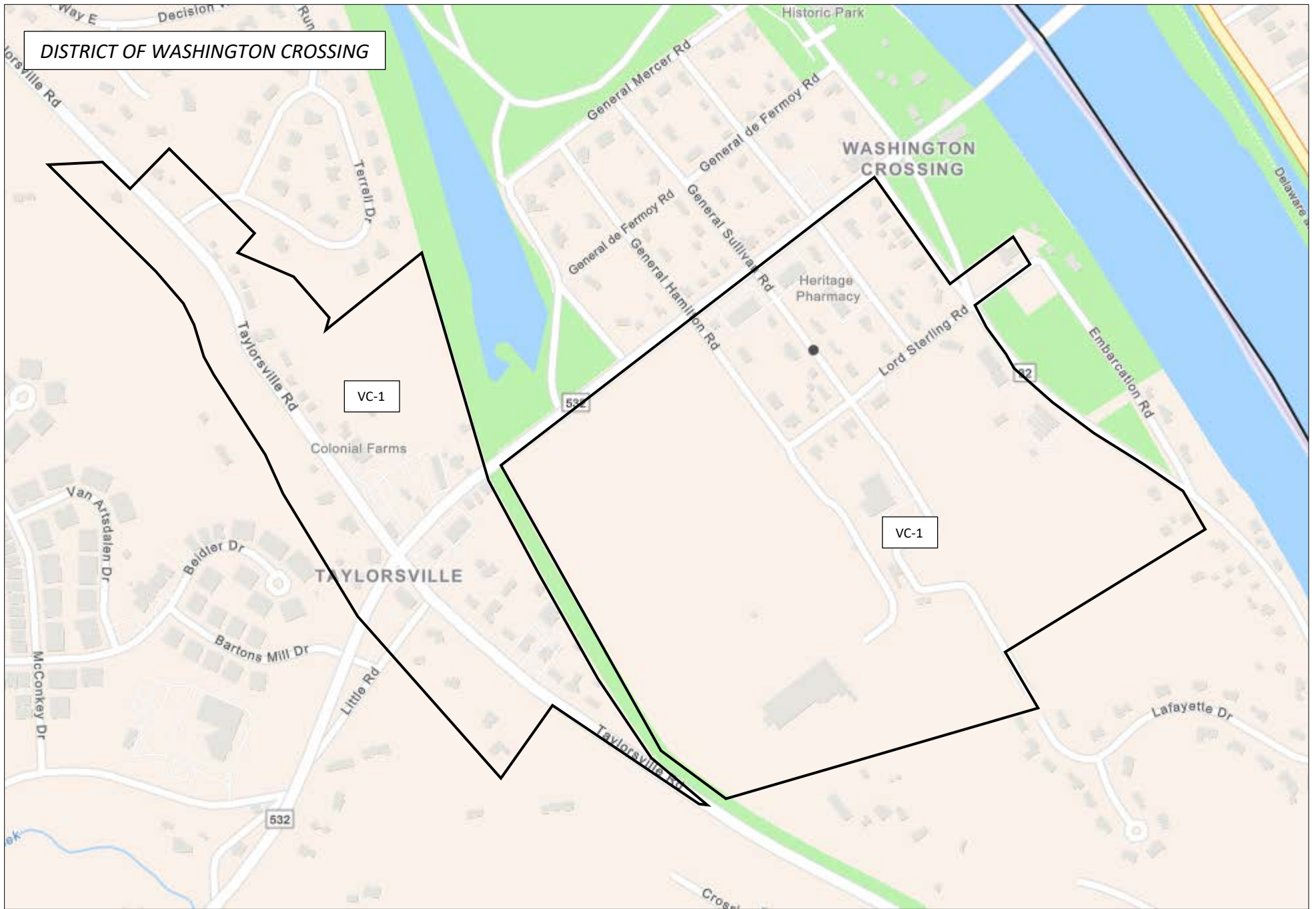
TO ACCEPT A 2 7/8" DIA. X 3" HIGH TENON



**Spring City Electrical Mfg. Co.**  
SINCE 1910  
 HALL AND MAIN STREETS - P.O. BOX 19 - SPRING CITY, PA. 19475  
 PHONE (610) 948-4000 FAX (610) 948-5577  
 E-mail ADDRESS: sales@springcity.com

DESCRIPTION	ALMCLW-PPLO-HC3	PDF
-------------	-----------------	-----





**EXHIBIT "A"**