

A GUIDE TO THE PLANNING & ZONING PROCESS

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

A long-range policy document that looks at the future of the township. A zoning resolution is the local law that spells out the immediate, allowable uses for each piece of property within the community. On December 20, 2000, the Board of Trustees adopted the **Goshen Township Growth Management Plan** as our guide to the future of Goshen Township.

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ZONING RESOLUTION

A local law that spells out the immediate, allowable uses for each piece of property within the community. One of the purposes of zoning is to implement the policies of the growth management plan.



ZONING DISTRICTS

Under the concept of zoning, various kinds of land uses are grouped into general categories or "zoning districts" such as single-family residential, multi-family residential, neighborhood commercial, light industrial, agricultural, etc. The Goshen Township Zoning Resolution describes 12 different zoning districts that are applied to land within the township. Each piece of property in the community is assigned a zone listing the kinds of

uses that will be allowed on that land and setting standards such as minimum lot size, maximum building height, and minimum front yard depth. The distribution of residential, commercial, industrial, and other zones will be based on the pattern of land uses established in the community's growth management plan.

Zoning maps are used to keep track of the zoning for each piece of land.

Zoning is adopted by Resolution and carries the weight of local law. Land may be put only to those uses allowed by the applicable zoning classification. For example, if a commercial zone does not warehouse buildings, then no such building could be built on the lands, which have been assigned that zone. The Goshen Township Zoning Resolution has two parts: (1) a precise map illustrating the distribution of zoning districts within the community; and, (2) a text that identifies the specific land uses and development standards allowed in each zoning district.

ABOUT REZONING AND HOW IT'S DONE

REZONING DEFINED

The particular zoning district determines the uses to which land may be put. If a landowner proposes a use that is not allowed in the zone, the property owner could apply for a rezoning (change in zone) to allow that development. The Zoning Commission and the Board of Trustees must each hold public hearings before property may be rezoned. The hearings must be advertised in advance and notice mailed directly to surrounding property owners. The Board of Trustees will make the final decision on all rezoning requests.

THE REZONING PROCESS

The property owner typically initiates a Zone Change request. In rare cases, the Zoning Commission may initiate a zone change. The property owner must submit a Zone Change Application to the Townships Department of Community & Economic Development. The application must clearly state the existing zoning and the proposed zoning. It must also include a plan showing how the property will develop.

A Zone Change request requires three public meetings. The process may take 3-6 months to complete depending on the complexity of the request.

Meeting 1 - Clermont County Planning Commission

The first meeting is before the Clermont County Planning Commission. The Planning Commission meets the fourth Tuesday of each month. The Planning Commission will review the request and make a recommendation to Goshen Township.

Meeting 2 - Goshen Township Zoning Commission

The second meeting is a public hearing before the Goshen Township Zoning Commission. The Zoning Commission meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Notice of the public hearing will be sent to all property owners within 200 feet of the property to be rezoned. Everyone attending the public hearing will be given an opportunity to comment on the proposed rezoning application. After the completion of the public hearing, the Zoning Commission makes a recommendation to the Township Trustees.

Meeting 3 - Goshen Township Board of Trustees

The third meeting is public hearing before the Township Trustees. These public hearing are set by the Trustees and will vary. Notice of the public hearing will be sent to all property owners within 200 feet of the property to be rezoned. Everyone attending the public hearing will be given an opportunity to comment on the proposed rezoning application. After the public hearing, the Township Trustees will take final action on the zone change request.

ABOUT VARIANCES AND CONDITIONAL USES

VARIANCES DEFINED

A variance is a limited waiver of development standards for a use that is otherwise permitted in that zoning district. The Goshen Township Board of Zoning Appeals may grant a variance in special cases where it is determined the strict enforcement of the zoning resolution will create a hardship for the property owner. The Board of Zoning Appeals may not grant a variance that would permit a use that is not otherwise allowed in that zone (for example, a commercial use could not be approved in a residential zone by variance). Typically, variances are considered when the physical characteristics of the property make it difficult to develop. For instance, in a situation where the rear half of a lot is a steep slope, a variance might be approved to allow a house to be built closer to the street than usually allowed. Variance requests require a public hearing and neighbors are given the opportunity to testify. The Board of Zoning Appeals then decides whether to approve or deny the variance.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS DEFINED

The Goshen Township Zoning Resolution identifies certain land uses which do not precisely fit into existing zoning districts, but which may be allowed upon approval of a conditional use permit. These might include community facilities (such as hospitals or schools), outdoor recreational facilities, self storage facilities or other land uses that would need special conditions to mitigate potential impacts on other properties. The zoning resolution specifies those uses for which a conditional use permit may be requested, which zoning districts they may be requested in, and the public hearing procedure.

As with rezoning and variances, a public hearing must be held to consider a Conditional Use. If the Board of Zoning Appeals approves the use, it will usually do so subject to certain conditions being met by the permit applicant. Alternatively, it may deny uses that do not meet local standards.

OBTAINING A VARIANCE OR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

A property owner will initiate a request for a variance or a conditional use. A property owner must submit an application for a variance or a conditional use to the Goshen Township Department of Community & Economic Development. The application must clearly describe the variance and conditional use request. In the case of a variance, the applicant must describe the hardship created by strict adherence to the zoning standards. In the case of a conditional use, the applicant must explain how the proposed use meets all the conditions of the zoning resolution.

The Community & Economic Development staff will present the application to the Board of Zoning Appeals at their next regular meeting. If the Board finds the application to be in order, the Board will set a public hearing for the next regular meeting. Depending on when an application is submitted review of a variance or conditional use request can take 45-60 days.

A request for a variance or conditional use requires one public hearing before the Board of Zoning Appeals. Notice of the public hearing will be mailed to all adjoining property owners and property owners directly across the street from a subject property. At the public hearing, everyone will be given an opportunity to comment on the variance or conditional use. All testimony before the Board of Zoning Appeals must be in person. The Board will not accept correspondence or petitions. After the public hearing the Board of Appeals will decide whether to approve or deny the request for a variance or conditional use.

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