

Township Board Policy 2014-01
(Deletes PC Policy 2006-01 and ZBA Policy 2008-01)
Georgetown Charter Township
Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals Procedures
Adopted by the Township Board February 24, 2014 with motion #140224-06

In order to formulate the application, review and action process for the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals, the Township adopts the following policy. This process will save valuable assets relating to time and financial investments both for the applicants and the Township in regard to meetings and reviews.

The Planning Commission normally meets the first and third Wednesdays of the month and both are regular meetings when review, discussion and action could take place. The ZBA normally meets the fourth Wednesday of the month unless affected by a holiday and all are regular meetings when review, discussion and action could take place. The Planning Commission or ZBA may table or postpone discussion and/or action on any item the Board determines appropriate to require revisions or additional information, or for any other reason determined necessary.

Information, Forms, and Fees.

Information, application forms, submittal material requirements, deadline dates and fee schedules are available in the Building and Zoning Department at the Township Office or at the Township website.

The Township requires submission of certain electronic files including site plans (in pdf format) along with the other required submission materials for use at meetings.

Deadline for application submission.

The submittal deadline for applications to be placed on a Planning Commission agenda or a Zoning Board of appeals agenda is normally noon **five to six weeks prior to a meeting based on publication requirements. Deadlines are listed on the Township website or can be obtained at the Township office.**

If application materials are submitted with **substantial**, necessary or required information missing, incorrect or not in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Commission or ZBA normally would postpone review and action on the application until such time as the missing or incorrect material is addressed and submitted to the Township. The Pre-Application Meeting helps to eliminate such a possibility with a review by the Township zoning administrator prior to the formal application submission.

If no applications have been submitted to the Township by noon on a deadline date, the corresponding meeting may be cancelled by the zoning administrator. Such notice will be posted on the Township website and in the lobby of the Township Office.

Pre-Application Meeting.

A pre-application meeting with the zoning administrator and the applicant **is required prior to the formal application submission.** The pre-application meeting **must be scheduled** with Township staff and may be scheduled by calling the Building and Zoning Department at 616-457-2340. This meeting **must be scheduled and held at least five business days prior to the submission deadline for a**

particular meeting agenda (or as scheduled by Township staff). Failure to attend a pre-application meeting could result in the application being withheld from a Planning Commission or ZBA agenda.

The cost for a pre-application meeting is established by the Township Board and can be applied toward the application fee of the particular application being reviewed if the particular application is submitted to the Township within two months of the Pre-Application Meeting. Alternately, the complete application fee could be submitted at the time of the submission of materials for the pre-application meeting.

The purpose of the Pre-Application Meeting is for a **complete or nearly complete** proposal and/or plan to be reviewed by the zoning administrator with the applicant present to determine if all the necessary and required elements are provided and that all submittal requirements are fulfilled. The proposed plan would also be initially reviewed for compliance with Township Zoning Ordinance requirements. If necessary, the Township zoning administrator could schedule the attendance of other Township representatives at the Pre-Application Meeting.

Attendance at a Pre-Application Meeting does not guarantee approval for a proposal, rather it helps to ensure that the application has all of the necessary elements and required submission materials for review by the Planning Commission or ZBA.

Since the Open Meetings Act (Public Act No. 267 of 1976, as amended) requires that all deliberations towards decisions, as well as decisions, are to be made at meetings that are open to the public rather than private meetings between applicants and members of a public body (Boards and Commissions), no decisions nor deliberations towards decisions would be made at any time other than at a public meeting.

Direct contact by applicants with Township consultants would be at the applicant's expense.

SOPS-Township Procedures for Planning Commission and ZBA Applications

The following are procedures for applications that come before the Planning Commission or ZBA.

1. When a potential applicant contacts the Township Office, information is supplied regarding meeting deadlines, meeting dates, submittal materials, pre-application meeting requirements, and fees and forms. This information can be obtained at the Township website or at the Township Office.
2. When a petitioner plans to submit a formal application, the materials required for a pre-application meeting must be submitted prior to scheduling pre-application meeting. The pre-application meeting with the petitioner and zoning administrator present must be held at least five business days prior to the submission deadline (or as scheduled by Township staff). The complete or nearly complete plan or proposal is reviewed for completeness of submittal materials and preliminarily for compliance with Zoning Ordinance requirements and any applicable general ordinances. A fee as established by the Township Board must be submitted and can be applied towards an application fee amount if the application is submitted within a two month period of the date of the pre-application meeting. Alternately, the complete application fee amount could be paid at this time without the payment of the separate pre-application meeting fee. The petitioner should use the information provided at the pre-application meeting to revise the plan and/or submittal material if needed prior to the formal application submission. Planned Unit Development applications have additional requirements listed in Sec. 22.4 of the Zoning Ordinance that must be met in addition to the above standards for a pre-application meeting.

3. At the time a formal application is submitted (including a signed application, fee as established by the Township Board, ten copies (or 8 for the ZBA) of a site plan and any other relevant information), the materials are reviewed by the zoning administrator for completeness and the application is placed on the appropriate agenda for a meeting which coincides with a scheduled deadline. If substantial or required elements are missing or incorrect, the zoning administrator would recommend to the Planning Commission or ZBA to postpone review and action on the application until such time as the missing or incorrect elements are addressed. An application would not be added to the Planning Commission or ZBA agenda until the pre-application meeting has been held.
4. Notices for any required public hearings would be according to the requirements of State Law.
5. The zoning administrator conducts a formal review of each application that has been submitted by the deadline, which has been determined to be sufficiently complete and correct, and for which a pre-application meeting was held. The application materials are reviewed for compliance with all requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and applicable general ordinances. The zoning administrator may contact the planning consultant, lawyer or engineer with questions regarding any application, site plan or complicated detailed proposal in order to incorporate additional information into the review.
6. The formal review compiled by the zoning administrator would provide information as to whether Zoning Ordinance and applicable general ordinance requirements have been met. For rezoning applications, capability, consistency and compatibility would be evaluated. In addition, information regarding past history, current circumstances and any other relevant material would be incorporated into the review.
7. The agenda and the formal review compiled by the zoning administrator (along with submission materials) would be forwarded to the appropriate Board or Commission members prior to the meeting. Members who have questions or would like additional information prior to the meeting could contact the zoning administrator.
8. At the appropriate meeting, the zoning administrator would present the formal review with any additional information that had been requested by Board or Commission members. If requested, the zoning administrator would provide options for motions, including possible conditions. However, the intent is for the Planning Commission or ZBA to have the responsibility to deliberate and to take the action they deem appropriate, after being provided with all pertinent information (including if ordinance requirements are met) and considering the request.
9. If an applicant withdrawal an application, the request must be in writing.
10. In instances when an application is tabled or postponed, either the meeting date will be announced when the application will be reviewed again or else the item could be placed on a future agenda after any necessary notice is published again and property notices sent as per State law.