



Delaware County Regional Planning Commission

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Re: Interaction between RPC, Zoning Inspectors, and other departments

We were recently asked about core responsibilities of township **Zoning Commissions**, **BZAs**, and **Regional Planning**. Which entities provide which guidance/direction? Does one supersede the other or do they operate complete as separate entities and simply consult with one another? Here is a general explanation of the responsibilities of various boards, as well as how the Regional Planning Commission and staff interacts with those boards and committees.

Core Responsibilities

Township Zoning Commission: reviewing rezoning requests and reviewing the Zoning Resolution, making changes when necessary. Townships with more activity will also be reviewing amendment requests to development plans and other steps in the development process. Zoning Commissions should also ask for regular updates of activity from the BZA and Zoning Inspector.

Board of Zoning Appeals: a quasi-judicial board that reviews requests from landowners who want to vary from the established rules, or challenge a decision by the Zoning Inspector. Hearings follow a specific process and include evidence and sworn-in witnesses.

Zoning Inspector: provides information to the public on the various processes of the township, reviews and approves zoning approvals for new lots to be created (Lot Splits), zoning permits for proposed buildings and uses, and zoning approvals for subdivision plats.

Zoning Secretary: makes sure applications are processed and timelines for notice and meetings are followed.

Regional Planning Commission: the subdivision authority for the unincorporated areas of Delaware County. Primarily manages the subdivision process, both through the simple "No-Plat lot split process" of creating lots along existing roads, and the larger Platting process that includes new streets and utility and public improvements. Those processes are managed by the RPC, but the Zoning still must conform to local township zoning. We seek input at a Sketch Plan phase, at the Preliminary Plan phase, and of course, when the Plat has to be signed. This is accomplished by sending out notices and plans on a monthly basis when applicable to the township.

The RPC is also an agency that reviews rezoning requests from applicants, on behalf of the township. Non-binding recommendations are sent to the Zoning Commission for consideration during its hearing for a rezoning.

The RPC also provides services such as working with the township on amendments to the Zoning Resolution and updates to the Comprehensive Plan. We usually do this with an agreement for services and work directly with the Zoning Commission and sometimes members of the BZA and public.

Training availability - Local training is limited. The County Prosecutor provides a seminar every other year, but zoning is a small part of the schedule but I recommend attending. The next one is planned for Fall, 2024.

We have sporadically provided training sessions as well, utilizing our legal counsel.

We have some information on our website at the following link. The first three videos are from a training session in late Summer, 2021. <https://regionalplanning.co.delaware.oh.us/media/>. Staff is preparing a transcription.

RPC Interaction with Townships

Sketch Plans

RPC receives **Sketch Plans** monthly at a specific deadline for review. The sketch is a rough estimation of what an applicant wants to do and is intended to give them information they can use to create their Preliminary Plan (and can result in the realization that they need to rezone, or go through other processes).

Notice is sent to the related zoning inspectors, along with an invitation to the physical or virtual meeting. Plans are sent via e-mail and available at regionalplanning.co.delaware.oh.us/current_events/mailing/

Zoning Inspectors can submit comments before or after the meeting. Ideally, the Zoning Inspector attends the meeting and adds any input that will help the applicant in not making costly mistakes in preparing their Preliminary Plan.

Preliminary Plan

RPC receives Preliminary Plans monthly for review and placement on an RPC agenda. These are detailed drawings showing current features of the site as well as proposed features.

Notice is sent to any impacted zoning inspectors, along with an invitation to the physical or virtual **Technical Review Committee** meeting. Plans are sent through the mail, and are available at regionalplanning.co.delaware.oh.us/current_events/mailing/

The applicant will eventually use the Preliminary Plan to create the Final Plat. It is important that the Zoning Inspector reviews the plans for conformance with zoning. RPC staff checks the zoning as well. For development within a Planned district, we require that the consultant file an approved zoning Development Plan unless we are sure that we have an accurate copy. Staff compares the Preliminary against the Zoning Development Plan, but individual Zoning Inspectors may have more background or know of other items to check, so we value the input.

Comments submitted to our office prior to the Tech Review meeting, as noted on the memo we send out, are included on the day of the Tech Review Committee meeting. Township representation (Zoning Inspector and/or Fire Department) at the TRC meeting is ideal.

Final Plat

The Final Plat is the last chance to make sure features match the approved zoning. Applicants are required to circulate a Draft version of the plat and ensure all issues are resolved before circulating for signature, so there SHOULDN'T be any changes after the township signature.