****Internal Review Process

Zoning Permits

Draft: August 2019

**Application Processing**

**Completeness Review**

1. Were all of the application materials included? (Refer to checklist on each application form)
   1. If no, notify the applicant of the application deficiencies and hold further action.
   2. If yes, continue to file creation.

# File Creation

1. Assign a case name.
   1. Locate the appropriate application type in the Zoning Administration folder.
   2. Open the folder which corresponds with the board/commission (ZBA or PC) and year the case will be heard by the Planning Commission or, for administrative site plan reviews, the year of receipt.
   3. Create a new electronic folder.
   4. Name the folder using the project description-Year. Example: Biggby 2019
   5. Fill out the Office Use Only box at the top of the application form with the payment information, submission date, and meeting date.
2. Scan all application documents and save to the electronic case folder.
3. Place the hard copy application materials in the paper case folder created by the Zoning Administrator.
4. Store the case folder in the Zoning Administrator’s office.

# Processing the Application Fee

Once you have determined that the application is complete, the application and fee. Attach the receipt to the case folder.

# Application Routing

1. Establish a comment due date. Comments on cases that will go before the Planning Commission are generally due the Tuesday of the week before the meeting date. Comments for administrative site plan reviews are generally due one week following receipt.
2. Forward electronic (via email) copies of the complete application package to the internal review team:
   * City Planner Adam Zettel
   * City Engineer Andy Harris
   * Building Official Matt Hart
   * Fire Marshal David Plumb

If large site plans are included, send hard copies.

# Public Hearing Notices

* All ZBA requests for appeals/variances and Planning Commission requests for Special Use Permits & Rezoning require Public Hearing notices to be published in the *Swartz Creek View* newspaper and mailed to all owners and occupants of property located within 300 feet of the subject parcel(s).
* Notices must be published in newspaper at least 15 days prior to the hearing. Notices should generally be published in a Thursday (weekly) edition, when possible, which is generally 19 days before the hearing. The notice submission is due to the newspaper by noon on Monday for publication that Thursday.
* Mailed notices are sent the same week the publication notice is submitted to the newspaper.
* Site Plan Reviews do not require Public Hearing notices.

*Preparing the mailing lists*

* The Zoning Administator will create the GIS mailing list using online Pictometry supplied by Genesee County GIS.
* Ken Koleda, with Genesee County GIS, can train a member of staff on this process or conduct it on behalf of staff on a temporary/emergency basis.

*Preparing the public hearing notice*

* Open the public hearing notice template located in the *respective* “Public Notices” *f*olders for Planning Commission and ZBA.
* Update the notice with the appropriate meeting date, address, applicant name, case description, property legal description, and publication date. Use common names, general descriptions, and common landmarks to better identify and describe projects. Example, for the location of vacant land without an address, one might write: “vacant land with PID #, located near the intersection of Miller and Elms, by the KFC restaurant.”
* Review the notice for accuracy and completeness.
* Save the public hearing notice under the appropriate project name and year.

*Submitting for publishing*

1. Email Connie Eskew (copy Sue Arvoy) with the following message and attach a Word copy of the notice:

SUBJECT: Notice of Public Hearing DATE: [date sent]

Please publish the attached notice of public hearing in the **DATE YOU WANT IT PUBLISHED** edition, and please furnish an affidavit of publication.

1. Email Connie Eskew (copy Sue Arvoy) with the following message and attach a Word copy of the notice, as well as an excel spreadsheet of owner information supplied in by GIS:

SUBJECT: Notice of Public Hearing DATE: [date sent]

Please mail the attached notice of public hearing by **DATE YOU WANT IT MAILED**, and please furnish an affidavit of mailing.

*Additional public notification outlets*

1. Consult the Community Engagement Strategy for additional outreach opportunities and expectations.

# Application Review

**Staff Review**

1. Review the application package for conformance with the following standards:
   1. Appendix A: Site Plan Review (Staff Zoning Administrator or Contract Planner)
   2. Design Engineering Standards 2004 Ed (Andy Harris or OHM Advisors)
   3. Appendix A: Special Use Permit (Staff Zoning Administrator or Contract Planner)
   4. Appendix A: Rezoning (Staff Zoning Administrator or Contract Planner)
   5. Appendix A: Variances (Staff Zoning Administrator or Contract Planner)
2. Visit the site.
   1. If the project involves a public hearing, this visit should occur at least 15 days prior to the public hearing.
   2. For all site visits, photographs are recommended for use in the staff report and subsequent presentations.
3. Identify any missing, incomplete, or inaccurate information.
4. Identify any issues with conformity with City standards.

# Internal Review Team Meeting

The Internal Review Team will meet – generally two weeks after receipt of applications – to discuss preliminary comments. The meeting focuses on ensuring the consistency of staff comments to the application prior to finalization of the staff report and Planning Commission packet.

# Initial Feedback to Applicant

Any missing, incomplete, or inaccurate information; clarification questions; or issues of conformance with the zoning ordinance are shared with the applicant, typically one week prior to the finalization of the staff report and typically in writing via email. The applicant may decide at this time to submit additional information or postpone consideration of the application until a later date.

# Staff Reports

A staff report will be prepared for each case that goes before the Planning Commission. The staff report is prepared by the Zoning Administrator. The staff report template is available in the “Packets”folders of respective boards/commissions.

Attachments to the staff report typically include a copy of the application; a copy of the site plan (if required); a copy of any building plans or elevations; and a copy of comments from the City Engineer, Building Official, Fire Chief, and Professional Service Companies.

Copies of comments from the City Engineer, Building Official, Fire Chief are received via email. The comments are saved in both the electronic and paper case files.

# Packets

Upon completion of the staff reports (generally one week before the meeting date) the meeting packet is prepared by the Zoning Administrator for the Planning Commission/ZBA and distributed to the parties below.

Electronic copies of the packet are delivered by the Zoning Administrator to the following (hard copies are distributed by the DPW staff to PC or ZBA for materials in excess of 11x17 or upon request):

* Planning Commission (9 copies).
* ZBA (7 copies).
* Zoning Administrator
* City Council
* DDA
* Park Board
* City Attorney
* City Staff

An electronic copy of the packet is also posted to the city website.

# Application Finalization

Following consideration of the application by the Planning Commission, ZBA, or staff a letter is sent to the applicant with the determination (outcome) of the application review. Below are the typical scenarios for these letters:

1. Approved as submitted. The application is approved without conditions. If a site plan is connected to the application, a stamped and signed copy of the site plan is attached to the letter.
2. Approved subject to conditions. The application is approved with conditions which are listed in and/or attached to the letter.
   1. If a site plan is connected to the application, a stamped and signed copy of the site plan is attached to the letter ONLY if the conditions of approval do not include modifications to the site plan.
   2. If site plan modifications are needed, the first letter will indicate that the applicant must submit an updated site plan meeting those conditions to receive final approval. Upon receipt of a site plan meeting those conditions, a second letter indicating final approval is sent with a stamped and signed copy of the final site plan.
3. Postponed. The Planning Commission, ZBA, the applicant, or staff has postponed action on the application. An explanation of next steps is included in the letter.
4. Denied. The Planning Commission, ZBA, or staff has denied the application. Reasons for denial are outlined in the letter along with information about appeal of that decision.

All letters are distributed in the following ways:

* Electronic copy to the electronic case file.
* Electronic copy attached to the property record in BS&A.
* Hard copy to the paper case file.
* Electronic copy sent via email to:
  + Applicant(s)
  + Zoning Administrator
  + City Attorney
  + City Assessor

Attach the approval letter and site plan (if applicable) to the property record in BS&A.

1. Open “Building Department.net”.
2. Click the Address line and type in the street number for the address.
3. Select the subject property.
4. Click “Property” in the far left panel.
5. Click “Add” (top menu).
6. In the menu that pops up click on “Add New Variance” and hit OK.
7. The next screen will let you choose the type (i.e., Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, etc.) and the category (i.e., Site Plan Review, Special Use Permit, etc.)
8. Fill in the application date and hearing date.
9. The system assigns its own number so in the “Description” box, type in the number that we assign with a description.
10. Click “Add”.
11. Once the case has been decided, go back in and change the status and add any stipulations that have been identified.
12. Attach any approval/denial letters and approved site plans by highlighting the case (left side of screen) and click on “Add” (top of screen). From this window you can add comments, images or other documents.

Store the paper case file in the property files (sorted by address).

*For Rezoning and Special Use Permit cases only:*

The following items are provided to the City Manager via email for inclusion in the packet for the next City Council meeting:

* A narrative report is prepared by planning staff indicating the recommendation made by the Planning Commission regarding the application.
* A copy of the application package
* A copy of the Planning Commission and consultant reports
* Draft Planning Commission minutes related to the application