

Milford Township Zoning Ordinance

ARTICLE VI - ADMINISTRATION

601 Authority

601.1 Zoning Officer

It shall be the duty of a Zoning Officer, to be appointed by the Township Board of Supervisors, to enforce the provisions of this Ordinance. The Zoning Officer shall examine all applications for permits, issue permits for construction and uses which are in accordance with the requirements of this Ordinance, record and file all applications for permits with accompanying plans and documents and make such reports as the Township Supervisors may require.

601.2 Conditional Uses

Permits for construction or uses which are conditional uses shall be issued only upon written order of the Township Supervisors subsequent to the recommendation of the Planning Commission. Permits for construction and uses that necessitate variances from the requirements of this Ordinance shall be issued only upon written order of the Zoning Hearing Board.

602 Permits

602.1 Requirements of Permits

A building and/or zoning permit shall be required prior to the erection, addition, or alteration of any building or structure or portion thereof; prior to the use or change in use of a building or land; and prior to the change or extension of a non-conforming use. It shall be unlawful for any person to commence work for the erection or alteration of any building or for a change in land use, until a permit has been duly issued therefore. No Zoning Permit shall be required in cases of normal maintenance activities, minor repairs or alterations which do not structurally change a building or structure.

602.2 Applications for Permits All applications for permits shall be accompanied by plot sketch in duplicate, drawn to show the actual shape and dimensions of the lot to be built upon, the exact size and location of any buildings existing on the lot, the lines within which the proposed building or structure shall be erected or altered, the existing and intended use of each building or part of a building, the number of families or dwelling units the building is designed to accommodate and such other information deemed necessary by the Township to determine compliance with this Ordinance and all other pertinent ordinances which shall additionally include:

- (1) A narrative description of the nature of on-site activities and operations.
Additionally, for all non-residential uses, the following shall be provided:
- (2) The general scale of operation, in terms of its market area;
 - (a) Specific floor space requirements for each activity;
 - (b) Hours of operation including anticipated shift start and end times, days of the week;
 - (i) Whether/How operations will change in inclement weather;
 - (c) Total number of employees on each shift;

Applications for variances and conditional uses shall include the tax map number of the project parcel and a list of property owners, and the mailing address of each, located within two hundred (200) feet of the project parcel; and, the applicant shall mail notice of any required meeting to such neighboring property owners and provide proof of service of same at the public hearing. All applications with accompanying plans and documents shall become a public record once discussed at a public meeting.

All applications for variances, and conditional uses of a non-residential nature, which require earth disturbance of one acre in size or more, shall additionally include the following; and

For all such applications which will require earth disturbance of less than one acre in size which are subject to Section 426 of the Township's Zoning Ordinance, whether Zone A, B, or C, the following may be required:

- (1) The types of any materials to be stored;
 - a. The frequency of distribution and restocking;
 - b. The duration period for storage of materials;
 - c. Quantity of materials to be stored;
- (2) The methods for disposal of any surplus or damaged materials;

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- a. Evidence that the disposal of materials will be accomplished in a manner that complies with all applicable state and federal regulations;

If the proposed use will not involve storage of any materials, the applicant shall so affirm in its narrative accompanying the application.

If the proposed use will require earth disturbance of an area one acre in size or more, the application shall also additionally include the following documentation;

If it will not require such an earth disturbance, the applicant shall be prepared to discuss these items when presenting its application to the Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors and/or Zoning Hearing Board but is not required to provide the documentation at the time of the application.

(3) Any environmental impacts that are likely to be generated (e.g. odor, noise, smoke, dust, litter, glare, vibration, electrical disturbance, wastewater, stormwater, solid waste, etc.) and specific measures employed to mitigate any negative impacts;

- a. Evidence that the environmental impacts generated by the proposed use comply with all applicable laws and ordinances;

(4) The site layout, internal circulation, parking, buffering, and other elements of proper design as specified in the Township's Code of Ordinances

602.3 Subdivision Approval

Applications for uses which also necessitate approvals under the Township Subdivision Ordinance shall be processed in the manner provided for plat approval under that Ordinance. Such applications shall also contain all information or data normally required for a submission under the Subdivision Ordinance. A Zoning Permit shall not be issued until the proposed use has been granted a Preliminary Approval under the Subdivision Ordinance. However, no building or property shall be occupied or used until final subdivision approval has been granted and a Certificate of Use has been properly issued pursuant to Section 605 of this Ordinance.

602.4 Issuance of Permits

No permit shall be issued until the Zoning Officer has certified that the proposed use, building, addition or alteration, complies with all the provisions of this Ordinance as well as with all the provisions of other applicable regulations.

602.5 Temporary Permit

A temporary permit may be issued by the Board of Supervisors for any non-conforming structure or use which it deems necessary to provide for the needs of the community, provided such structure or use is completely removed prior to expiration of the permit and the area is restored to its original condition. All such permits shall be of specified limited duration to be set forth by the Board of Supervisors in granting the permit. This shall not, however, prevent any party from reapplying on a regular basis for permits for recurring activities, provided such uses are neither permanent nor continuing in nature.

603 Fees

As authorized by Section 617.2(e) and Section 908(1.1) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, the Board of Supervisors shall establish a uniform schedule of fees, charges and expenses, as well as a collection procedure, for zoning permits, conditional use permits, Zoning Hearing Board proceedings and other matters pertaining to this Ordinance.

Permits and variances shall be issued only after fees have been paid in full, and the Zoning Hearing Board shall take no action on appeals until all fees have been paid in full.

The appearance fee for a stenographer shall be shared equally by the applicant and the Board. The cost of the original transcript shall be paid by the Board if the transcript is ordered by the Board or shall be paid by the person appealing the decision of the Board if such appeal is made, and in either event the cost of additional copies shall be paid by the person requesting such copy or copies. In other cases the party requesting the original transcript shall bear the cost thereof.

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604 Inspection

604.1 Inspection by the Zoning Officer

It shall be the duty of the Zoning Officer to make the following minimum number of inspections on property for which a permit has been issued:

- A. At the beginning of construction: A record shall be made indicating the time and date of the inspection and the finding of the Zoning Officer in regard to conformance of the construction with plans submitted with the application for the building. If the actual construction does not conform to the application, a written notice of the violation shall be issued by the Zoning Officer, and such violation shall be discontinued. Upon proper correction of the violation and receipt of written notice from the Zoning Officer, construction shall proceed.
- B. At the completion of construction: A record shall be made indicating the time and date of the inspection; the findings of the Zoning Officer in regard to the issuance of a Certificate of Use. Nothing contained in this Ordinance shall impose or imply any responsibility upon the Township or its officials or agents for the quality of workmanship or materials employed in construction.

605 Certificate of Use

605.1 Definition

A Certificate of Use shall be a statement issued by the Zoning Officer setting forth either that a building, structure or parcel of land complies with the provisions of this Ordinance; or that a building or structure lawfully may be employed for specified uses under the provisions of this Ordinance, or both.

605.2 Required

No vacant land shall be occupied or used, and no structure or part of a structure, hereafter erected, structurally altered or changed in use shall be occupied or used, until a Certificate of Use shall have been issued therefore by the Zoning Officer.

605.3 New Structures and Alterations

A Certificate of Use, either for the whole or part of a new building or for the alteration of an existing building, shall be applied for co-incident with the application for a building permit, and shall be issued within fifteen (15) days after the erection or alteration of such building or part shall have been completed in conformity with the provisions of this Ordinance.

605.4 Change In Use

A Certificate of Use for the use or occupancy of vacant land or for a change in the use of land, or for a change in the use of an existing building, shall be applied for and issued before any such land shall be occupied or used or such land or building changed in use, and such Certificate shall be issued within fifteen (15) days after application has been made, provided such proposed use is in conformity with the provisions of this Ordinance.

605.5 Non-Conforming Uses

A Certificate of Use for changing or extending a non-conforming use, existing at the time of the passage of this Ordinance or of an amendment thereto, shall be applied for and issued before any such non-conforming use shall be changed or extended. Such Certificate shall be issued within fifteen (15) days after application has been made, provided such proposed change or extension is in conformity with the provisions of this Ordinance.

605.6 Records

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A record of all Certificates of Use shall be kept on file in the office of the Zoning Officer and a copy shall be furnished on request to any person having a proprietary or tenancy interest in the building or land affected.

606 Violations

Failure to comply with any provision of this Ordinance, failure to secure or comply with a decision of the Board of Supervisors or Zoning Hearing Board or the failure to secure a permit, when required, prior to or (when ordered) after the erection, construction, extension, or addition to a building or prior to or after the use or change of use of land; or failure to secure a Certificate of Use Permit, shall be violations of this Ordinance. When written notice of a violation of any of the provisions of this Ordinance shall be served by the Zoning Officer, personally or by certified mail, in the manner prescribed by Section 616.1 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and such violation shall be discontinued or corrected as set forth in said notice.

607 Penalties and Remedies

Any person, partnership or corporation who or which has violated or permitted the violation of any of the provisions of this Zoning Ordinance shall, upon being found liable therefore in a civil enforcement proceeding commenced by the Township, pay a judgment of not more than \$1,000 plus all court costs, including reasonable attorney fees incurred by the Township as a result thereof.

No judgment shall commence or be imposed, levied or be payable until the date of the determination of a violation by the district justice. If the defendant neither pays nor timely appeals the judgment, the Township may enforce the judgment pursuant to the applicable rules of civil procedure. Each day that a violation continues shall constitute a separate violation, unless the district justice determining that there has been a violation further determines that there was a good faith basis for the person, partnership or corporation violating the Ordinance to have believed that there was no such violation, in which event there shall be deemed to have been only one such violation until the fifth day following the date of the determination of a violation by the district justice and thereafter each day that a violation continues shall constitute a separate violation. All judgments, costs and reasonable attorney fees collected for the violation of this Zoning Ordinance shall be paid over to the Township.

The court of common pleas, upon petition, may grant an order of stay, upon cause shown, tolling the per diem pending a final adjudication of the violation and judgment.

Nothing contained in this section shall be construed or interpreted to grant to any person or entity other than the Township, the right to commence any action for enforcement pursuant to this section.

In case any building, structure or land is, or is proposed to be, erected, constructed, reconstructed, altered, converted, maintained or used in violation of any provisions of this Ordinance, the Board of Supervisors or, with the approval of the Board of Supervisors, an officer of the municipality, or any aggrieved owner or tenant of real property who shows that his property or person will be substantially affected by the alleged violation, in addition to other remedies, may institute (in the name of the Township) any appropriate action or proceeding to prevent, restrain, correct or abate such building, structure or land, or to prevent, in or about such premises, any act, conduct, business or use constituting a violation. When any such action is instituted by a landowner or tenant, notice of that action shall be served upon the Township at least thirty (30) days prior to the time the action is begun by serving a copy of the complaint on the Board of Supervisors. No such action may be maintained until such notice has been given.

608 Conditional Uses

608.1 Procedure

Uses specified as conditional uses shall be permitted only after review and approval pursuant to the express standards as provided for specific conditional uses in this Ordinance and in Section 608.3; and as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

Upon determining that an application for a specific use may only be granted as a conditional use under the terms of this Ordinance, the Zoning Officer shall forward a copy of said application, along with the required supporting data, to the Township Planning Commission. The Planning Commission shall review the application within thirty (30) days following its next regular meeting, and may hold a public hearing pursuant to public notice

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to receive comment on the proposed use.

The Planning Commission shall report its findings, together with a recommendation indicating whether the criteria listed above and any applicable performance standards have been satisfied. Upon receipt of the conditional use application and the recommendation of the Planning Commission, the Township Board of Supervisors shall conduct a public hearing pursuant to public notice and shall grant or deny the application. If the application is granted, the Board of Supervisors shall attach such reasonable conditions and safeguards as the Board deems necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare and implement the purposes of this Ordinance; and shall direct the Zoning Officer, in writing, to issue a permit for the same. If the application is denied, the applicant shall be notified within five (5) days of the action in person or by certified mail; such notice including reasons for denial.

608.2 Reserved

608.3 Expansions and Additions to Conditional Uses

Any expansion of or addition to a use or structure classified as a "Conditional Use" shall also be considered a Conditional Use unless the expansion or addition shall qualify as an Accessory Use or still meet the Minor Impact Use definition when considered together with previous property improvements.

608.4 Standards and Criteria

The standards and criteria applied to conditional uses are intended to ensure that the proposed use will be in harmony with the purposes, goals, objectives and standards of this Ordinance and other ordinances of Milford Township. In addition to all the applicable standards provided in this Ordinance for specific conditional uses, the following standards and criteria shall be applied in the review of applications for conditional uses.

- A. There shall be a community need for the proposed use at the proposed location. Need shall be assessed in light of existing and proposed use of a similar nature in the area and an objective to provide or maintain a proper mix of uses within the Township and, more specifically, that portion of the Township in the immediate area of the proposed use. The proposed use in the proposed location shall not result in either a detrimental over-concentration of a particular use within the Township or within the immediate area. The location chosen shall not be one demonstratively better suited or likely to be needed for uses which are permitted as a matter of right in the District. The proposal shall also be evaluated as to the degree to which the proposed location may be particularly suitable or unsuitable for the proposed use in light of other potential sites in the immediate area including those which might exist in adjacent communities.
- B. The proposed use at the proposed location shall not result in a substantial or undue adverse effect on adjacent property, the character of the neighborhood, traffic conditions, parking, public improvements, public sites or rights-of-way, adjacent property values, or other matters affecting the public health, safety, and general welfare, either as they now exist or as they may in the future be developed as a result of the implementation of this Ordinance, or any other plan, program, map or ordinance of the Township or other government agency having jurisdiction to guide growth and development.
- C. The proposed use shall not impose an undue burden on any of the improvements, facilities, utilities, and services of the Township, whether such services are provided by the Township or some other entity. The applicant shall be wholly responsible for providing such improvements, facilities, utilities, or services as may be required to adequately serve the proposed use when the same are not available or are inadequate to serve the proposed use in the proposed location. As part of the application and as a condition of approval of the proposed use the applicant shall be responsible for establishing ability, willingness and binding commitment to provide such improvements, facilities, utilities and services in sufficient time and in a manner consistent with this and other ordinances of the Township. The permit approval shall be so conditioned.
- D. In reviewing an application, the following additional factors shall be considered:
 - 1. Location, arrangement, size, design and general site compatibility of buildings, lighting and signs.

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2. Adequacy and arrangement of vehicular traffic access and circulation, including intersections, road widths, pavement surfaces, dividers and traffic controls.
3. Location, arrangement, appearance and sufficiency of off-street parking and loading.
4. Adequacy and arrangement of pedestrian traffic access and circulation, walkway structures, control of intersections with vehicular traffic and overall pedestrian convenience.
5. Adequacy of stormwater and drainage facilities. Stormwater leaving any site shall not exceed predevelopment levels and shall otherwise comply with Sections 407.13 and 414.2 of this Ordinance and Sections 605 and 606 of the Milford Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.
6. Adequacy of water supply and sewage disposal facilities.
7. Adequacy, type and arrangement of trees, shrubs and other landscaping constituting a visual and/or noise buffer between the applicant's and adjoining lands, including the maximum retention of existing vegetation.
8. Adequacy of fire lanes and other emergency zones and the provision of fire hydrants.
9. Special attention to the adequacy and impact of structures, roadways and landscaping in areas with susceptibility to ponding, flooding and/or erosion.

F. No application shall be approved unless it is found that, in addition to complying with each of the standards enumerated above, any of the applicable standards contained in this Ordinance shall be met. In instances where the supplemental standards contained herein do not adequately protect the general health, safety and welfare of parties affected, all conditions necessary to protect the general health, safety and welfare shall be imposed as conditions of approval. Conditions which might be imposed shall include (but not be limited to) provisions for additional parking, traffic control, submission of landscaping plans for screening, setbacks, special measures addressing sales period activities, hours of operation, environmental controls and other measures which mitigate any potential adverse impact the use may have on adjoining uses. The applicant shall supply evidence regarding compliance with the express standards and criteria contained herein; and data or evidence may be accepted from protestants. Such evidence shall be evaluated relative to the injurious impact on the health, safety and welfare of the Township; and the proposed use shall be approved with appropriate conditions or denied based on said evaluation.

609 Zoning Hearing Board

609.1 Jurisdiction

The Township Board of Supervisors shall appoint a Zoning Hearing Board, which shall have the number of members of such powers and authority as set forth in Article IX of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code as enacted or hereafter amended. The Zoning Hearing Board shall have exclusive jurisdiction to hear and render final adjudications in the following matters:

- A. Substantive challenges to the validity of any land use ordinance, except those brought before the governing body pursuant to sections 609.1 (Curative Amendments) and 916.1(a) (2) (Ordinance Validity) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.
- B. Challenges to the validity of a land use ordinance raising procedural questions or alleged defects in the process of enactment or adoption which challenges shall be raised by an appeal taken within 30 days after the effective date of said ordinance. Where the ordinance appealed from is the initial zoning ordinance of the municipality and a zoning hearing board has not been previously established, the appeal raising procedural questions shall be taken directly to court.
- C. Appeals from the determination of the Zoning Officer, including, but not limited to, the granting or

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denial of any permit, or failure to act on the application therefor, the issuance of any cease and desist order or the registration or refusal to register any nonconforming use, structure or lot.

- D. Applications for variances from the terms of the Zoning Ordinance pursuant to Section 910.2 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.
- E. Reserved.
- F. Appeals from the Zoning Officer's determination under Section 916.2 (Preliminary Opinion) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.
- G. Appeals from the determination of the Zoning Officer or municipal engineer in the administration of any land use ordinance or provision thereof with reference to sedimentation and erosion control and storm water management insofar as the same relate to development not involving Subdivision and Land Development applications.

The Zoning Hearing Board shall not, under any circumstances, have the authority to order any specific change in or amendment to the Zoning Map or to allow any use of property substantially different from those permitted under the Schedule of Use Regulations for the particular district.

In all its actions, the Zoning Hearing Board shall follow procedures as provided in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

609.2 Zoning Hearing Board Applications

Application to the Zoning Hearing Board shall be made in writing to the Chairman of the Zoning Hearing Board and shall state:

- A. The name and address of the applicant.
- B. The name and address of the owner of the real estate to be affected by such proposed exception, or variance.
- C. A brief description and location of real estate to be affected by such proposed change.
- D. A statement of the present zoning classification of the real estate in question, the improvements thereon, and the present use thereof.
- E. A statement of the section of this Ordinance under which the application is being requested and the reasons why it should be granted.
- F. Any reasonably accurate description of the present improvements, and the additions intended to be made under this application, indicating the size of such proposed improvements, material, and general construction thereof. In addition, there shall be attached a plot plan of the real estate to be affected, as required to accompany applications for building permits, indicating the location and size of the lot, and size of improvements now erected, and proposed to be erected thereon.
- G. Any other information the applicant deems appropriate.

If the Zoning Hearing Board finds the appeal or request outside its scope of jurisdiction, it shall return the application for the same to the Zoning Officer for proper processing. Zoning Hearing Board matters shall otherwise be processed in conformance with the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

609.3 Variances

The Zoning Hearing Board shall have the right to authorize such variances from this Ordinance as are permitted under Section 910.2 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The Board may grant a variance provided the following findings are made where relevant in a given case:

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- A. That there are unique physical circumstances or conditions, including irregularity, narrowness, or shallowness of lot size or shape, or exceptional topographical or other physical conditions peculiar to the particular property, and that the unnecessary hardship is due to such conditions, and not the circumstances or conditions generally created by the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance in the neighborhood or district in which the property is located;
- B. That because of such physical circumstances or conditions, there is no possibility that the property can be developed in strict conformity with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and that the authorization of a variance is therefore necessary to enable the reasonable use of the property.
- C. That such unnecessary hardship has not been created by the applicant.
- D. That the variance, if authorized, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or district in which the property is located, not substantially or permanently impair the appropriate use or development of adjacent property, not to be detrimental to the public welfare; and
- E. That the variance, if authorized, will represent the minimum variance that would, in fact, afford relief and will represent the least modification possible of the regulation in issue.

In granting any variance, the Board may attach such reasonable conditions and safeguards as it may deem necessary to implement the purposes of Article VI and the Zoning Ordinance.

This authority shall not include the right to grant a use variance that would, in fact, alter the Zoning Map and thus constitute a rezoning.

610 Appeals to Court and other Administrative Proceedings

Appeals to court and other administrative proceedings shall be governed by Article X-A and Article IX of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, respectively.

611 Amendments

The Township Supervisors may amend the Zoning Ordinance by complying with the requirements set forth in Article VI of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

A landowner who desires to challenge on substantive grounds the validity of an ordinance or map or any provision thereof, which prohibits or restricts the use or development of land in which he has an interest may submit a curative amendment to the governing body with a written request that his challenge and proposed amendment be heard and decided on as provided in Sections 609.1 and 916.1 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

612 Severability

In the event that any provision, section, sentence, or clause of this Ordinance shall be held to be unconstitutional, such invalidity shall not affect or impair any remaining part of this Ordinance, it being the intent of the Township that such remainder shall be and shall remain in full force and effect.