

2017

# Planning and Zoning Guide



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## Introduction

This document is intended to serve as a guide to City residents, business owners and other decision makers. Although this document provides detailed information on the process for a number of appeals and procedures, the best route is to contact City Staff at 517-651-5374 directly before filing a petition or application.

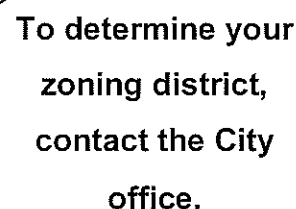
The City of Laingsburg is governed by ordinances and plans that propose the orderly development of land, capital improvements and concentration of different land uses. The City is granted these privileges under State's Municipal Planning Act, Public Act 207 of 1921. In general, planning and zoning are closely related and regulate development – from residential to industrial. Zoning controls the intensity and type of development allowed in specific areas of the City.

It is important that prior to purchasing, developing or altering property, that City Zoning Codes and Plans are referenced. Before changes can take place, a site plan or other request may have to be made to the City Planning Commission or a variance may be required from the Board of Appeals on Zoning. City staff acts as the liaison between residents and the City Planning Commission and Board of Appeals on Zoning. Many residents and developers find it helpful to meet with City Staff prior to any improvements in order to determine if the City's zoning code or the State's building code will require any modifications or improvements.

## What is Zoning and How is it Used?

Zoning regulates the use and development of land. The zoning ordinance districts and the uses they allow are based on the City's adopted Master Plan and its amendments. The city is divided into three basic zoning districts: residential (R), commercial (C), and industrial (I).

The three basic categories are further subdivided into lower, medium and higher density residential, commercial and industrial districts, manufactured housing districts, and planned unit developments (PUD).



**To determine your zoning district, contact the City office.**

Each zoning district regulates:

- permitted uses;
- the size (bulk) of the building permitted in relation to the size of the lot;
- the required open space for residential uses on the lot, or the maximum amount of building coverage allowed on the lot;
- the number of dwelling units permitted on the lot;
- the distance between the building and the street;
- the distance between the building and the lot line;
- the amount of parking required; and
- other requirements applicable to specific residential, business or manufacturing activities

The City of Laingsburg has eleven (11) distinct zoning districts, which each allow for varying types and intensities of development. Each of the zoning districts is briefly described below. For a complete description and regulations for each district, please refer to the City's Zoning Ordinance.

## **RO, Residential Open Space**

This district is intended to encourage the continuation of open space activities and low density residential uses in areas of the community not served by public sanitary sewer or areas that are not conducive to intensive residential development.

Uses permitted by right include, single family dwellings, and private kennels. Uses permitted after a special use approval include campgrounds, veterinary clinics, and nurseries.

Minimum Lot Size: 43,560 square feet

Minimum Lot Width: 200 feet

Maximum Lot Coverage: 25%

Minimum Front Yard Setback: 50 feet

Minimum Side Yard Setback: 20 feet

Minimum Rear Yard Setback: 35 feet

Maximum Height: 35 feet

## **RL, Residential District**

This district is established to preserve quiet, low density, single family detached homes free from other uses, except those that are compatible and convenient to the district.

Uses permitted by right include single family dwellings, and family day care homes.

Uses permitted after a special use approval include churches and religious institutions, and golf courses.

Minimum Lot Size: 15,000 square feet

Minimum Lot Width: 100 feet

Maximum Lot Coverage: 25%

Minimum Front Yard Setback: 25 feet

Minimum Side Yard Setback: 10 feet

Minimum Rear Yard Setback: 35 feet

Maximum Height: 35 feet

### **RL-1, Residential District**

This district is intended to allow low to moderate density single family residential development.

Uses permitted by right include single family dwellings, and adult foster care homes.

Uses permitted after a special use approval include churches and golf courses.

Minimum Lot Size: 12,000 square feet

Minimum Lot Width: 90 feet

Maximum Lot Coverage: 25%

Minimum Front Yard Setback: 25 feet

Minimum Side Yard Setback: 10 feet

Minimum Rear Yard Setback: 35 feet

### **RM, Residential District**

This district is provided to permit quiet moderate density of one and two-family homes.

Uses permitted by right include adult foster care homes, two-family dwellings, and single-family dwellings. Uses permitted after a special use approval include adult group homes and bed and breakfasts.

Minimum Lot Size: 8,000 square feet

Minimum Lot Width: 80 feet

Maximum Lot Coverage: 25%

Minimum Front Yard Setback: 25 feet

Minimum Side Yard Setback: 7 feet

Minimum Rear Yard Setback: 35 feet

Maximum Height: 35 feet

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**RH, Residential District**

This district is provided to permit quiet moderate density of one and two family homes.

Uses permitted by right include two family dwellings and multiple family dwellings with three (3) to six (6) units per structure. Uses permitted after a special use approval include multiple family dwellings with seven (7) or more units per structure, day care centers, and recycling facilities.

- Minimum Lot Size: 5,000 square feet
- Minimum Lot Width: 50 feet
- Maximum Lot Coverage: 35%
- Minimum Front Yard Setback: 25 feet
- Minimum Side Yard Setback: 7 feet
- Minimum Rear Yard Setback: 35 feet
- Maximum Height: 40 feet

**MH, Manufactured Housing Community District**

This district is provided to allow for manufactured housing developments. Uses permitted by right include public and private recreation centers. Uses permitted after a special use approval include day care centers and recycling facilities.

Minimum Lot Size: 871,200 square feet (per community)

**C-1, Commercial**

It is the purpose of this district to establish and preserve commercial and general office areas that are convenient to customers, both pedestrian and vehicular, while preserving the general residential character of the community.

Uses permitted by right include retail establishments, mixed-use developments, professional services and restaurants. Uses permitted after special use permits include churches, bars and taverns, and minor product fabrication and assembly.

Minimum Lot Size: None

Minimum Lot Width: None

Maximum Lot Coverage: None

Minimum Front Yard Setback: None

Minimum Side Yard Setback: None, except when adjacent to a residential district

Minimum Rear Yard Setback: None

Maximum Height: 35 feet

### **C-2, General Commercial District**

This district is designed to establish and preserve general office and commercial areas outside of the downtown area.

Uses permitted by right include drive-thru establishments, professional offices, and financial and business service establishments. Uses permitted after a special land use include open air businesses, private schools, and communication towers.

Minimum Lot Size: 20,000 square feet

Minimum Lot Width: 80 feet

Maximum Lot Coverage: 25%

Minimum Front Yard Setback: 35 feet

Minimum Side Yard Setback: 10 feet

Minimum Rear Yard Setback: 20 feet

Maximum Height: 35 feet

### **I, Industrial**

This district is designed to establish and preserve areas of for general industrial and related uses of such a nature that they do not create serious problems of compatibility with other uses.



Uses permitted by right include production, storage or distribution of materials without retail activity and public utilities structures and substations. Uses permitted after special land use include vehicle repair and storage, mini-storage facilities and junk yards.

Minimum Lot Size: 30,000 square feet

Minimum Lot Width: 100 feet

Maximum Lot Coverage: 25%

Minimum Front Yard Setback: 35 feet

Minimum Side Yard Setback: 20 feet

Minimum Rear Yard Setback: 50 feet

Maximum Height: 35 feet

### **IN- Institutional District**

This district is intended to establish and appropriately identify areas publicly owned and used for public purposes.

Uses permitted by right include but are not limited to public schools and municipal buildings. Communication towers are currently permitted by a special land use approval.

Minimum Lot Size: 10,000 square feet

Minimum Lot Width: None

Maximum Lot Coverage: 25%

Minimum Front Yard Setback: 20 feet

Minimum Side Yard Setback: 5 feet

Minimum Rear Yard Setback: 20 feet

Maximum Height: 35 feet

## PUD- Planned Unit Development

This district is intended to encourage the use of land in accordance with its natural characteristics and adaptability; conserve natural features; manage the expenditure of energy; encourage innovation in land use planning to bring about compatibility in design and of use; provide for usable and functional open space; provide enhanced housing, employment, shopping, traffic circulation and recreational opportunities for the current and future citizens of the City.

**Zoning District Quick Reference Chart**

District/ Regulation	RO	RL	RL-1	RM	RH	MH	C-1	C-2	I	IN
Min. Lot Size (In Square Feet)	43,560	15,000	12,000	8,000	5,000	871,200	None	20,000	30,000	10,000
Min. Lot Width	200'	100'	90'	80'	50'	N/A	None	80'	100'	None
Max. Lot Coverage	25%	25%	25%	25%	35%	N/A	None	25%	25%	25%
Min. Front Yard Setback	50'	25'	25'	25'	25'	N/A	None	35'	35'	20'
Min. Side Yard Setback	20'	10'	10'	7'	7'	N/A	None*	10'	20'	5'
Min. Rear Yard Setback	35'	35'	35'	35'	35'	N/A	None	20'	50'	20'
Max. Height	35'	35'	None	40'	40'	N/A	35'	35'	35'	35'

\*Side yard setbacks are applicable if a C-1 property is adjacent to a residential district. See the City Zoning Administrator.

## **Making a Zoning Inquiry**

Prior to purchasing property, beginning construction or opening a business, it is important to verify the zoning of the property.

City Staff can help determine what your property is zoned and what zoning requirements you may need to meet. In order to provide accurate information; please have the following information ready when you call:

- Exact address of the property or properties
- What your intended use of the property is? (a dentist office, a retail business, please be as specific as possible)
- Will you occupy an existing structure or build new?
- Approximate square footage you will occupy or build
- Will you make any structural changes to the building?

## **Conceptual Meeting Procedures**

The purpose of the conceptual meeting is to allow the City of Laingsburg the opportunity to informally review a development proposal prior to the substantial commitment of time and expense on the part of the applicant in preparing a site plan. To set up a conceptual meeting please contact City Staff at 517-651-5512.

During a conceptual meeting, the applicant will meet with City Staff and have their proposal reviewed by the Zoning Administrator, consultants working on behalf of the City, and the Department of Public Works (DPW) director. The parties listed above may not be in attendance of the conceptual meeting but will review the applicant's proposal and comment appropriately.

If you wish to setup a conceptual meeting with City Staff please follow the following steps:

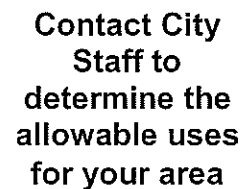
- Know the location of your project.
- Develop a clear vision for the project (what do I want and how will I do it?).

P.O. Box 178 | 114 Woodhull St. Laingsburg, MI 48848 | Ph. (517) 651-5374 | Fax. (517) 651-5512

- Create a rough sketch of the property where your project is to be located showing:
  - Accurate lot dimensions, including lot width, length, and area calculations of the subject property.
  - Parking areas accurately depicting location, size, and number (**if applicable**).
  - The location and dimensions of all structures, including height, and setbacks from other structures and property lines.
- Call the City of Laingsburg to set up a meeting.

## Residential Development

Different areas of the City allow for different intensities of residential development, and each zoning district has different requirements. Prior to purchasing property for residential development, converting a single family home into apartments, or developing apartments above a business contact City staff to determine if your zoning district allows the use you are proposing.



**Contact City Staff to determine the allowable uses for your area**

City Staff can help determine what your property is zoned and what zoning requirements you may need to meet. The following lists the different residential districts in the City and provides basic information regarding development requirements. This is intended to be a guide. Prior to purchasing property or converting a home, please contact City Staff.

### Items and Material Needed for New Home Construction Approval

- Completed zoning permit and approval for connection to sanitary sewer.
- Approved and signed, well permit from the Environmental Health Department.
- A recorded land contract or deed with a legal description of the property.
- An acceptable, legible plot plan that shows property dimensions including all setbacks. Setbacks from other structures on the property. Also show all other overhead wires, drains, water edges, etc.

- A soil erosion permit from the Shiawassee County Drain Commission if 100 feet from water or 500 feet from the drain.

## **Opening or Expanding a Business**

### **Call Early and Often**

If you are considering developing a business, building an apartment or constructing a new home within the City of Laingsburg call the City to discuss your proposed project at 517-651-5374. Early coordination will save both time and money.

### **Information You Should Have When You Call**

- The address of the property you would like to develop
- The specific use you want to pursue for that property
- If you are building a new structure or using an existing building
- If you are planning to use an existing building, you should know :
  - the previous use of the structure
  - the length of time of the previous use
  - if the structure is vacant, for how long has it been vacant
- Your timeline for development

With this information, City Staff will be able to advise you of the feasibility of your proposed project, given the zoning district in which it is located. If the project appears to be feasible, request a meeting with the Zoning Administrator.

# The City Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is comprised of seven (7) members. The Commission reviews and approves site plans, requests for special uses, and makes recommendations to City Council on street and alley vacations and requests for changes in zoning. Special Uses are specific types of development that must meet detailed standards in order to be allowed. An example of a Special Use is a hospital, which is allowed if the Planning Commission finds it meets the established criteria as identified in the Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Commission typically meets the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall. All applications and associated fees must be filed in advance and coordinated with City Staff. See the table below for a list of meeting dates.

<b>Planning Commission Meeting Schedule</b>	
<b>2018</b>	
January 29	July 16
February 19	August 20
March 19	September 17
April 16	October 15
May 21	November 19
June 18	December 17

# The Rezoning Process

A citizen or landowner can petition for the City to amend the text of the Zoning Ordinance or to rezone property by amending the official zoning map.

When requesting the rezoning of property, the petitioner should be aware that in most cases existing zoning boundary districts are considered to be appropriate. The basis for rezoning property is typically contained in the City's Master Plan and Future Land Use Map, both adopted by the City Planning Commission and City Council. It is important to City staff prior to submitting a petition to discuss the merits of the rezoning. When completing the application please be mindful that the request is not particular to a use proposed, but to the entire zoning district.

Applications for Language Amendments can be found at <http://www.laingsburg.us/building-zoning/>

## Rezoning Request Notes:

- **Fees are \$250.**
- An application must meet requirements of Article 9 and Section 306 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- Staff will accept requests to rezone up to 15 days prior to a Planning Commission meeting provided agenda space is available, the application is complete, and public noticing requirements are still able to be met.
- To appeal a decision by City Council, an applicant may file suit with Shiawassee County Circuit Court.

\*The timeline noted on the flow chart of page fourteen (14) is approximate and depends on the response time of the applicant.

Conduct a Conceptual Meeting to determine rezoning is necessary.

Applicant submits a formal request for rezoning with ten (10) copies of the application and pays the appropriate fees.  
**(Day 1)**

The Staff determines the application is complete, then develops a staff report, sets a public hearing for the Planning Commission and notices the public and affected parties.  
**(Day 5\*)**

The Planning Commission holds a public hearing, votes for or against the request, and forwards their decision to City Council.  
**(Day 20\*)**

City Council then acts on the request, to either approve, deny, or table the rezoning for a later meeting date.  
**(Day 45\*)**

# The Special Land Use Process

Each zoning district contains special land uses. Special land uses are uses of land, which are not appropriate as a permitted use in the particular zoning district, but may be allowable under certain conditions. A site plan is required to be submitted in conjunction with a Special Land Use Permit.

Applications for Special Land Use Permit can be found at <http://www.laingsburg.us/building-zoning/>

## Special Land Use Request Notes:

- **Fees are \$250.**
- An application must meet requirements of Article 7 and Section 306 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- The application, fee and site plan may be submitted with all requested documentation and supporting materials at least 15 days prior to the next Planning Commission meeting provided agenda space is available, the application is complete, and public noticing requirements are still able to be met.
- The Planning Commission Meets on the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Monday of each month, refer to the schedule above for specific dates.
- If requested and/or required, revised drawings and plans must be submitted before permits are issued.

\*The timeline noted on the flow chart of page fifteen (15) is approximate and depends on the response time of the applicant.

Conduct a Conceptual Meeting to determine a Special Land Use is necessary.

Submit the application and Site Plan to City Staff. Applicable fees are also paid.  
(Day 1)

City Staff evaluates the application/ plan for completeness and notifies the applicant of needed additional information.  
(Day 5)

The applicant submits additional information.  
(Day 12)\*

A staff report is prepared, a public hearing set, and properly noticed.  
(Day 15)\*

A public hearing is held, the Planning Commission reviews and approves, denies or approves with conditions the Special Land Use.  
(Day 30)\*



## Change of Use for a Structure

Many structures in the City of Laingsburg are used for different purposes today than they were 50 years ago, such as residences that are now used for offices. The process for transforming the use a structure is called a Change of Use.

**Changing the use of a building may require a Site Plan Review and a building inspection.**

**See Section 601.C.10 of the Zoning Ordinance.**

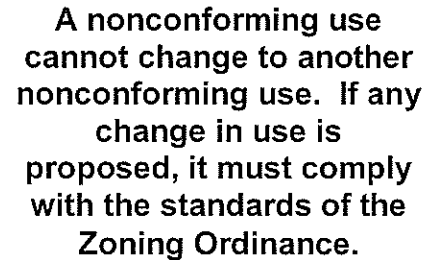
Prior to changing the use of a building, it is important to contact the City at 517-651-5374 to determine if the use is allowed. You will need the following information:

- The address of the property
- The previous use and the proposed use of the property/building
- The length of time of the previous use
- The length of time the building has been vacant
- The number of available parking spaces

In addition, before purchasing a building and/or converting its current use, it is important to contact the City. Barrier free access may now be required, along with electrical upgrades and other potentially high-cost improvements. These requirements may add a substantial amount of cost to the project. Early coordination with City Staff can help to identify improvements prior to the start of the project.

## Non-Conforming Uses and Structures

When the City is informed of a nonconforming use, records are checked to determine when the use was established so a determination can be made as to whether the use was legally established and “Grandfathered in” as a legal, nonconforming use, or if it was illegally established and in violation of the Zoning Ordinance.



**A nonconforming use cannot change to another nonconforming use. If any change in use is proposed, it must comply with the standards of the Zoning Ordinance.**

Conversions of single family homes to two or more unit dwellings and rooming houses are the most common nonconforming uses in the City.

City Staff will:

- Check to see if the use is shown in any records in the City's Office which show the use as legal, nonconforming
- Check Board of Appeals on Zoning files to see if a variance had been granted to the property

# The Site Plan Review Process

When a citizen or landowner proposes new development within the City a site plan review is typically required. Site plan review provides the City an opportunity to review a development proposal in relation to the City's Zoning Ordinance and Master Plan. It also provides the City an opportunity to review the relationship of the proposed development with surrounding uses, public utilities, natural features and other relevant factors which have an impact on the public health, safety and general welfare of those within the City.

**Applications for Site Plan Review can be found at**  
<http://www.laingsburg.us/building-zoning/>

Site Plan Review is required for:

- All Special Land Uses
- Proposed single-family residential development consisting of more than one (1) lot or parcel where road frontage and access is to be provided by a proposed shared drive, service road, private or public road.
- Any use requiring more than five (5) parking spaces.
- Other circumstances listed in Section 601.C of the Zoning Ordinance.

Site Plan Review Notes:

- **A \$750 deposit is required, unused funds will be returned to the applicant.**
- An application must meet requirements of Article 6 and Section 306 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- The application, fee and site plan may be submitted with all requested documentation and supporting materials at least 15 days prior to the next Planning Commission meeting provided agenda space is available, the application is complete, and public noticing requirements are still able to be met.
- If requested and/or required, revised drawings and plans must be submitted before permits are issued.
- **If the application is tabled by the Planning Commission the applicant must supply any information requested and restart the process at Step D. This will extend the process by a minimum of fifteen (15) days.**
- The applicant must receive building permits and commence construction within one hundred and eighty (180) days of site plan approval.

\*The timeline noted on the flow chart of page eighteen (18) is approximate and depends on the response time of the applicant.

**A) Conduct a Conceptual Meeting to determine Site Plan Review is necessary.**

**B) The applicant submits ten (10) copies of a completed and signed application, all associated materials, and has paid applicable fees.**  
**(Day 1)**

**C) Staff reviews application/plan for completeness.**  
**D) Staff sets Public Hearing for the Planning Commission, sends out required notices and places an ad in the newspaper.**  
**(Day 5\*)**

**E) Staff sends out a staff report with recommendations to the Planning Commission.**  
**(Day 13\*)**  
**F) A public hearing is held and the Planning Commission either approves, denies, or tables the request.**  
**(Day 20\*)**  
**G) If tabled, refer to the "Site Plan Review Notes" table on page 16.**

**H) If approved, the site plan is sent to the Zoning Administrator for compliance review. An official copy is then sent to the applicant to commence development.**  
**(Day 30\*)**

# Administrative Site Plan Review

An administrative site plan review is a site plan review that can be accomplished without action by the Planning Commission. This allows for a much faster site plan approval process, however only minor site plans can be accomplished administratively.

**Applications may be found at**  
<http://www.laingsburg.us/building-zoning/>

Administrative Site Plan Review is allowed for:

- Any use, structure or addition in a non-residential zoning district less than four hundred (400) square feet shall require administrative site plan review.
- Single-family developments where road frontage and access is to be provided by a proposed shared drive, service road, private or public road for two (2) lots or parcels planned or proposed.
- Other circumstances described in Section 601.C

Site Plan Review Notes:

- **A \$750 deposit is required, unused funds will be returned to the applicant.**
- An application must meet requirements of Article 6 and Section 306 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- The application, fee and site plan may be submitted with all requested documentation and supporting materials at least 15 days prior to the next Planning Commission meeting provided agenda space is available, the application is complete, and public noticing requirements are still able to be met.
- If requested and/or required, revised drawings and plans must be submitted before permits are issued.
- The applicant must receive building permits and commence construction within one hundred and eighty (180) days of site plan approval.

\*The timeline noted on the flow chart of page nineteen (19) is approximate and depends on the response time of the applicant.

**A) Conduct a Conceptual Meeting to determine Site Plan Review is necessary.**

**B) The applicant submits a completed and signed application, all associated materials, and has paid applicable fees.**  
**(Day 1)**

**C) Staff reviews application/plan for completeness.**

**D) Staff then requests additional information as needed.**  
**(Day 5\*)**

**E) Staff may determine that Final Site Plan review is necessary. If so, the applicant follows the process outlined on the flow chart on Page 16, beginning with Step D. (Day 10\*)**  
**F) Staff determines the site plan meets necessary criteria for approval as outlined in Article 6 and approves the application. (Day 10\*)**

**G) Once approved, the Zoning Administrator preforms a compliance review. An official copy is then sent to the applicant to commence development.**  
**(Day 14\*)**

## The Zoning Board of Appeals

**A)** Conduct a Conceptual Meeting to determine variance is necessary.

**B)** The applicant submits a Zoning Board of Appeals ("ZBA") application.

**(Day 1)**

**C)** Staff reviews application/plan for completeness and requests additional information, as necessary.

**(Day 5\*)**

**D)** Staff sets ZBA Public Hearing, sends out required notices and places an ad in the newspaper.

**(Day 5\*)**

**E)** Staff develops and sends out a staff report with recommendations to the ZBA.

**(Day 13\*)**

**F)** Applicant attends the public hearing and a decision to approve or deny the request is made.

**(Day 20\*)**

This Board is composed of a total of five (5) members; three at large members, one council member and one planning commission member. They consider requests for variance from the strict application of the City's Zoning Ordinance. The majority of requests received by the Board of Appeals on Zoning are for dimensional variances, such as an accessory building (garage) to close to a property line.

The Board of Appeals on Zoning meets on an as needed basis.

Applications for variance request can be found at <http://www.laingsburg.us/building-zoning/>

### Variance Request Notes:

- **Fees are \$250.**
- An application must meet requirements of Article 10 and Section 306 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- Per the State of Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, requested variances must demonstrate a practical difficulty, which is defined as
  - Unique circumstances applying to the property.
  - No adverse effect upon adjacent properties.
  - Need for the variance was not self-created.
  - Request is not of a general or recurrent in nature.
- To appeal a decision by the ZBA, an applicant may file suit with Shiawassee County Circuit Court.

\*The timeline noted on the flow chart of page twenty (20) is approximate and depends on the response time of the applicant.

## Building Permit Information

For specific requirements of new homes, accessory structures and other developments requiring a building permit please contact City Staff. Building permit applications and checklists can be found <http://www.laingsburg.us/building-zoning/>

Any interested party applying for a building permit within the City should know:

- The size of the property (where the desired development is to be constructed)
- The type of structure to be built.
- The proposed use of the structure (personal storage, storage for commercial purposes, agricultural storage, etc.)
- The distance of the proposed structure from other existing structures (house, existing pole barns, etc.)
- Distance of the proposed structure from all lot lines
- Square footage of existing structures (house, pole barns and any other existing structures)
- Size of the structure to be built (height, width, length)
- Foundation type (if applicable)
- Roof type
- Siding type

## Common Zoning Issues & FAQ

### FENCES

All fences shall consist of materials commonly used in conventional fence construction, such as wood or metal. If, because of design or construction, one side of the fence has a more finished appearance than the other, the side of the fence with the more finished appearance shall face the exterior of the lot.

- Fencing, walls or other non-living screening must be four (4) feet in height or lower when it is located in the front yard.

- Fencing, walls or other non-living screening must be six (6) feet in height or lower when it is located in a side or rear yard.
- Fencing can be located on the property line.
- If constructing a fence on a corner lot please contact City Offices to ensure that the proposed fence will not obstruct visibility for street traffic.

## **SHEDS, CARPORTS, GARAGES AND “OUT BUILDINGS”**

Garages, sheds, carports, and other buildings, even swimming pools, are considered accessory structures. There two basic types of accessory buildings – attached or detached. Attached accessory buildings are those which are physically attached to the home. A typical example is an attached garage or an attached carport. Detached accessory structures are sheds, or other such structures which are not physically attached to the dwelling. All accessory structures require a building permit and zoning permit.

- All attached accessory buildings, including carports, shall be treated just like the main building or dwelling
- All detached accessory buildings shall be at least ten (10) feet to any other structure on the lot.
- All accessory buildings shall be at least ten (10) feet from a side or rear lot line.
- No accessory building can occupy more than 25% of the rear of any yard; no accessory building or structure can exceed the floor area of the principal building.
- Detached accessory structures in residential districts cannot exceed one story or 17 feet. Detached accessory structure in nonresidential districts are permitted to whatever the permitted height is in the district.
- No accessory building is permitted in the front yard.
- Except for agricultural buildings, no accessory building is permitted prior to the establishment of a principal structure.

- On corner lots, accessory buildings placed in the rear yard area must be setback from the property line at least as far as the required front yard setback for the district. There are exceptions to this if an adjacent house is closer or further away than the district setback.

## **OUTSIDE STORAGE OF INOPERABLE VEHICLES**

Outside storage of inoperable vehicles is prohibited in the City of Laingsburg. Section 419 of the City's Zoning Ordinance states that it "shall be unlawful to have, possess, or maintain junk or inoperable or abandoned motor vehicles on any property within the City."

## **SWIMMING POOLS**

Swimming pools are considered an accessory building for the purposes of complying with the zoning ordinance. This means that the pool will have to meet all applicable regulations that a garage would – such as sideyard and rear yard setbacks and maximum lot coverage. This items below are intended to be used as a guide and checklist prior to seeking a building and/or zoning permit.

- The pool must meet all applicable side yard and rear yard setbacks for the zoning district in which it is located. Pools are not permitted in the front yard. No pool is permitted in an easement.
- Service drop conductors an any other open overhead wiring shall not be installed above a swimming pool

### **All yard areas with pools are to be fenced as follows:**

- Fencing must be at least 4 feet and equipped with a self-closing and self-latching gate. Latching devices must be at least 3 feet above the ground.
- Fencing may be omitted where building walls without doorways abut the pool area, provided that the entire perimeter of the pool is secured



- No lights shall be erected, operated or maintained in connection with a swimming pool in such a manner as to create a disturbance to surrounding properties.
- All pools shall be kept clean and the water used there shall be filtered and sterilized by chlorination and in general in conformance with any State, County or local health standards.

When seeking a permit, you should bring the following information:

- A legible plot plan showing the proposed location of the pool, fencing, gates and all other existing structures on the site
- The manner of supervision of the pool.

## **How to File a Zoning Complaint**

To file a complaint, contact City Staff at 517-651-5374. The complaint will normally be investigated within 10 days.

When calling to file a complaint, please have the following information ready:

- the address of the subject property
- details of the complaint, being as specific as possible

## **Special Meeting Requests**

To request a Special Meeting please contact City Staff at 517-651-5374. The meeting must meet all applicable noticing requirements pursuant to Section 306 of the Zoning Ordinance. The applicant must also pay any applicable fees, as determined by the Zoning Administrator.

## **Financial Assistance Tools**

Applicants seeking financial assistance are encouraged to request funds from the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). The DDA is designed to be a catalyst for development in the City's downtown and uses its budget to do so. The Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership (SEDP) may also be an asset for those seeking financial assistance. Further information from the DDA is available upon request at 517-651-5374. Those interested in assistance from the SEDP can go to <http://sedpweb.org/incentives/> for more information.

## **Design Guidelines**

New development within the C-1 district is highly encouraged to maintain a brick façade with a minimum of 70% window transparency. Development within the C-2 district is highly encouraged to maintain a brick façade, to install sidewalks a minimum of twelve (12) feet in width. Further design standards are forthcoming within Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance. Any questions related to design standards should be directed towards City Staff.