

*Township of Plainfield, PA
Monday, August 31, 2020*

Chapter 27. Zoning

Part 3. ZONING DISTRICTS AND USE REGULATIONS

§ 27-301. Establishment of Zoning Districts.

[Ord. 275, 2/9/2000, § 301]

1. For the purpose of this Chapter, zoning districts are hereby established as follows:

FF	Farm and Forest
SR	Suburban Residential
PR	Planned Residential
VR	Village Residential
VC	Village Center
HI	Highway Interchange
GC	General/Commercial
CI	Commercial/Industrial
I-BP	Industrial/Business Park
GI	General Industrial
SW	Solid Waste Processing and Disposal
BMC	Blue Mountain Conservation

2. For the purposes of this Chapter, the zoning districts named in Subsection 1 shall be of the number, size, shape and location shown on the Official Zoning Map.

§ 27-302. Application of District Regulations.

[Ord. 275, 2/9/2000, § 302]

1. Unless otherwise provided by law or specifically in this Chapter, no land or building or structure shall be used or occupied except for a use permitted in the zoning district within which the land or building or structure is located.
2. The regulations set by this Chapter shall apply uniformly to each class or kind of structure or land, except as provided for in this Chapter.
3. No building, structure, or land shall hereafter be erected, constructed, reconstructed, moved, or structurally altered and no building or structure or part thereof shall hereafter be used or occupied unless it is in conformity with the regulations herein specified for the use and district in which it is located.
4. No part of yard, or other open space, or off-street parking or loading space required about or in connection with any building for the purpose of complying with the chapter, shall be included as part

of a yard, open space, or off-street parking or loading space similarly required for any other building.

5. No yard or lot existing at the time of passage of this Chapter shall be reduced in dimension or area below the minimum requirements set forth herein. Yards or lots created after the effective date of this Chapter shall meet at least the minimum requirements established by this Chapter.
6. Any territory which may hereafter be annexed to the Township shall be classified as the zoning district of the Township most similar to the zoning of such territory before annexation (as determined by the Zoning Hearing Board) until otherwise classified.

§ 27-303. Zoning Map.

[Ord. 275, 2/9/2000, § 303]

1. A map entitled "Zoning Map for the Township of Plainfield" accompanies this Chapter and is declared a part of this Chapter.
2. The Official Zoning Map shall be identified by the signature of the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, attested by the Township Secretary, and shall bear the adoption date of this Chapter and the seal of the Township under the following words: "This is to certify that this is the Official Zoning Map adopted as part of the Plainfield Township Zoning Ordinance of 2000, as amended."
3. Changes of any nature to the Official Zoning Map shall be made in conformity with the amendment procedures set forth in this Chapter. All changes shall be noted by date with a brief description of the nature of the change.
4. Regardless of the existence of purported copies of the Official Zoning Map which may from time to time be made or published, the Official Zoning Map shall be located in the Township Office and shall be the final authority on boundaries and districts. The Zoning Officer shall have a certified copy of the Official Zoning Map for official use.
5. Replacement of Official Zoning Map.
 - A. If the Official Zoning Map becomes damaged, destroyed, lost or difficult to interpret because of changes and additions, the Board of Supervisors may, by resolution, adopt a new Official Zoning Map which shall supersede the prior Official Zoning Map.
 - B. The new Official Zoning Map shall be identified by the signatures of the Board of Supervisors, attested to by the Township Secretary, and bearing the following words: "This is to certify that this Official Zoning Map supersedes and replaces the Official Zoning Map, October 2, 1971, as part of the Plainfield Township Zoning Ordinance of 2000."
 - C. Unless the prior Official Zoning Map has been lost or has been totally destroyed, the prior map or any part or parts thereof remaining shall be preserved together with all available records pertaining to its adoption or amendment.

§ 27-304. Rules for Interpreting District Boundaries.

[Ord. 275, 2/9/2000, § 304]

1. Zoning boundaries drawn approximately following the center lines of streams, drainage ways, streets, alleys, railroads or other rights-of-way shall be construed to follow such center lines. In the event of any change in the center line, the zoning boundary shall be construed as moving with the actual center line.
2. Boundaries approximately following property lot lines shall be construed as following such property lot lines.

3. Distances not specifically indicated on the Official Zoning Map shall be determined by the scale of such map.
4. Where physical features existing on the ground vary with those shown on the Official Zoning Map, or in other circumstances not covered by Subsections 1 through 3 above, the Zoning Hearing Board shall interpret the district boundaries.

Select Language ▼

Township of Plainfield, PA
Monday, August 31, 2020

Chapter 27. Zoning

Part 3. ZONING DISTRICTS AND USE REGULATIONS

§ 27-307. Planned Residential District (PR).

[Ord. 275, 2/9/2000, § 307; as amended by Ord. 320, 6/27/2007, § 1; by Ord. 357, 12/12/2012, § 5; and by A.O.]

1. Purposes. To provide for a variety of housing types at a moderate density. To carry out the Pen Argyl-Plainfield-Wind Gap Regional Comprehensive Plan. To assist in meeting obligations under the State Municipalities Planning Code to provide opportunities for all types of housing. To consider areas within the current franchise area that is intended to be served with centralized sewage service using the Wind Gap Municipal Authority wastewater treatment plant. To serve as a receiving area for transfer of development rights in order to direct growth away from important natural and agricultural areas and towards an area where public water and sewage service are more feasible. To seek to minimize the total amount of land consumed by new homes in Plainfield Township by promoting use of transfer of development rights which can result in less land consumed per house.
2. Uses Permitted by Right. Each of the following principal uses and their accessory uses are permitted by right in the Planned Residential District by the Zoning Officer, provided that the use type, dimensional, and all other applicable requirements of this Chapter are satisfied:
 - A. Agriculture.
 - B. Day-care facility/nursery school — minor.^[1]

[1] *Note: Site plan review required. See § 27-316 for additional requirements.*
 - C. Garden apartment.
 - D. Low-rise apartment.
 - E. Mobile/manufactured home on a permanent foundation.^[2]

[2] *Note: See § 27-316 for additional requirements.*
 - F. Non-tower-based wireless communications facilities, as defined by § 27-202, but must be conducted in accordance with the standards set forth in Part 9, Wireless Communications Facilities Regulations.
[Added by Ord. 380, 4/3/2017]
 - G. (Reserved)^[3]

[3] *Editor's Note: Former Subsection 2G, regarding planned residential developments was repealed by Ord. No. 393, 9/11/2019.*
 - H. Public recreation.
 - I. Single-family detached dwelling.
 - J. Single-family to multifamily conversion.^[4]

[4] *Note: See § 27-316 for additional requirements.*

- K. Townhouse.
 - L. Township park.
 - M. Two-family dwelling.
 - N. Timber harvesting.
 - O. No-impact home-based business.
[Added by Ord. No. 388, 6/13/2018]
 - P. Short-term residential rental.
[Added by Ord. No. 388, 6/13/2018]
 - Q. Vineyard.
[Added by Ord. No. 388, 6/13/2018]
3. Special Exception Uses. Each of the following principal uses and their accessory uses may be permitted in the Planned Residential District by the Zoning Hearing Board in accordance with the standards contained in § 27-317 of this Chapter:
- A. Bomb or fallout shelter.
 - B. Cemetery or mausoleum.
 - C. Day-care facility/nursery school-major.
 - D. Fire station, not including social and banquet halls.
 - E. Mobile home park.
 - F. Municipal use.
 - G. Place of worship.
 - H. Public/private school.
 - I. Bed-and-breakfast.
[Added by Ord. No. 388, 6/13/2018]
4. Conditional Uses. Each of the following principal uses and accessory uses may be permitted in the Planned Residential District by the Plainfield Township Board of Supervisors in accordance with the procedures and standards contained in § 27-320 of this Chapter.
5. Accessory Uses.
- A. Each accessory use in the Planned Residential District shall comply with the minimum yard requirements of Subsection 6, except as specifically provided for in this Chapter.
 - B. Each of the following accessory uses shall be permitted in the Planned Residential District only if such use complies with the relevant standards contained in § 27-318 of this Chapter:
 - (1) Bus shelter.
 - (2) Farm pond.
 - (3) Fence and wall.

- (4) Home gardening, nursery or greenhouse.
 - (5) Home occupation.
 - (6) Noncommercial swimming pool.
 - (7) Off-street parking.
 - (8) Recreational vehicle.
 - (9) Residential accessory structure or use.
 - (10) Signs.
 - (11) Solar energy system.
 - (12) Temporary structure or use, pursuant to the special exception use procedures and standards of § 27-317.
 - (13) Tennis court.
 - (14) Wind turbine.
- [Amended by Ord. No. 393, 9/11/2019]

C. Each of the following accessory uses are prohibited in the Planned Residential District:

- (1) Any use which violates a provision of Part 4 or 5.
- (2) Commercial or industrial outdoor storage or display.
- (3) Dump.

6. Lot Area, Width, Building Coverage and Height Regulations. The following provisions shall apply within the PR District, except if:

- A. A more restrictive provision is established by another section of this Chapter.
- B. A less restrictive provision is specifically allowed under the optional transfer of development rights provisions of § 27-411, which typically allows higher densities.^[5]

Principal Use			Minimum Lot Area (square feet) ^[6]		Minimum Lot Width (feet) ^[7]		Maximum Building Coverage		Maximum Building Height, provided that no building shall exceed 3 stories (feet)		
1.	Single-Family Detached Dwelling, (which may include a mobile/ manufactured home)										
	a)	Served by both centralized sewage and centralized water supply systems	a)	25,000	a)	125	a)	25%	a)	38	
	b)	Other	b)	43,560	b)	150	b)	20%	b)	38	
2.	Two-Family Detached Dwelling										

Principal Use		Minimum Lot Area (square feet) ^[6]		Minimum Lot Width (feet) ^[7]		Maximum Building Coverage		Maximum Building Height, provided that no building shall exceed 3 stories (feet)	
a)	Served by both centralized sewage disposal and centralized water supply systems	a)	15,000	a)	100	a)	30%	a)	38
b)	Other	b)	43,560	b)	150	b)	25%	b)	38
3.	Townhouse ^[8]	A minimum average of 10,000 square feet per dwelling unit ^[9]		18, except 24 if parking spaces for 2 or more motor vehicles are located in the front yard or if garage door(s) for 2 more motor vehicles are located along the front of the townhouse.		40%, which may be calculated as an average for all lots upon completion of the development.		38	
4.	Allowed Apartments/ Multifamily Dwellings other than Townhouses ^[10]	A minimum average of 10,000 square feet per dwelling unit ^[11]		150		40%		38	
5.	Mobile (manufactured) Home Park, ^[12] which shall comply with the additional regulations in § 27-316, except that the minimum tract size shall be 5 acres in the PR District and provided that the enclosed walls of dwelling units shall be separated from each other by a minimum of 20 feet, and provided that transfer of development rights shall not be used to increase the density of a mobile home park	5 acre minimum tract size, no minimum size for each dwelling unit		250 feet for the tract		30% for the tract		38	
6.	Other Allowed Principal Use	43,560		150		30		38	

[5] Editor's Note: Former Subsection 6C, regarding planned residential developments, which immediately followed, was repealed by Ord. No. 393, 9/11/2019.

[6] Note: Per dwelling unit for residential uses. For townhouses, the minimum lot width may be a minimum dwelling unit building width, if each townhouse is not on its own fee simple lot.

[7] Note: See § 27-404, Subsection 2B, for the method of calculation of minimum lot width.

[8] Note: Service by both centralized sewage disposal and centralized water supply systems shall be required.

- [9] *Note: A minimum lot area is not required for each individual dwelling. The minimum average minimum lot area provision is intended to allow flexibility in the placement of dwellings and to allow for use of condominium, fee simple lots or rental forms of ownership. The minimum average lot area provision establishes the total number of dwelling units allowed on the tract. The total lot area of a subdivision or land development shall first be calculated, prior to development approval. The land area of existing and any required future/ultimate rights-of-way of preexisting or previously approved streets and alleys shall then be deleted. The resulting land area shall then be divided by the minimum average lot area per dwelling unit to determine the total number of dwelling units allowed on the tract. In calculating this overall density, land area used for proposed new streets and alleys, open space, homeowner association lands or stormwater facilities are not required to be deleted. If this average density calculation is used, up to 25% of the dwelling units in the project may be two-family detached dwellings.*
- [10] *Note: Service by both centralized sewage disposal and centralized water supply systems shall be required.*
- [11] *Note: A minimum lot area is not required for each individual dwelling. The minimum average minimum lot area provision is intended to allow flexibility in the placement of dwellings and to allow for use of condominium, fee simple lots or rental forms of ownership. The minimum average lot area provision establishes the total number of dwelling units allowed on the tract. The total lot area of a subdivision or land development shall first be calculated, prior to development approval. The land area of existing and any required future/ultimate rights-of-way of preexisting or previously approved streets and alleys shall then be deleted. The resulting land area shall then be divided by the minimum average lot area per dwelling unit to determine the total number of dwelling units allowed on the tract. In calculating this overall density, land area used for proposed new streets and alleys, open space, homeowner association lands or stormwater facilities are not required to be deleted. If this average density calculation is used, up to 25% of the dwelling units in the project may be two-family detached dwellings.*
- [12] *Note: See § 27-404, Subsection 2B, for the method of calculation of minimum lot width.*
7. **Minimum Yard Requirements.** Each of the following minimum yard requirements shall apply to each use in the Planned Residential District, except as specified in this Chapter:

Principal Use	Front Yard ^[13] (feet)	Side yard		Rear Yard (feet)
		One	Both	
		(feet)	(feet)	
Any Use				
-With on-lot sewer and/or water	40	15	30	40
-With Both centralized sewer and water	30	10	20	30

[13] *Note: The depth at which the minimum lot width shall be measured.*

8. **Maximum Impervious Coverage.** The maximum impervious coverage in the Planned Residential District shall be 40% of the lot area.

Select Language ▼

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Monday, August 31, 2020*

Chapter 27. Zoning

Part 4. GENERAL REGULATIONS

§ 27-407. Nonconformities.

[Ord. 275, 2/9/2000, § 407]

1. Registration of Nonconforming Uses and Structures. Upon adoption of this Chapter, the Township Zoning Officer shall identify and register nonconforming uses and structures.
2. Continuation. Any nonconforming use, structure, or lot may be continued, maintained, improved, and repaired, provided it conforms to the remainder of this Section.
3. Alteration or Extension.
 - A. Nonconforming Structure.
 - (1) A nonconforming structure may be altered, reconstructed, or enlarged provided that such alteration, reconstruction or enlargement does not increase the nonconformance or the nonconforming part of the structure.
 - (2) In the case of a nonconforming structure, which contains a nonconforming use, such alteration, extension or enlargement shall also meet the requirements of Subsection 3C.
 - B. Nonconforming Lot.
 - (1) A building may be constructed on a nonconforming lot, provided the yard requirements of this Chapter or the yard sizes of the majority of uses in the neighboring area or in the development are observed and all DEP requirements are met.
 - C. Nonconforming Use. Nonconforming uses shall not be altered, reconstructed, extended or enlarged, except in accordance with the following provisions:
 - (1) Such alteration, reconstruction, extension or enlargement shall be permitted only by special exception from the Zoning Hearing Board under the provisions of § 27-804.
 - (2) Such alteration, reconstruction, extension or enlargement shall be only upon the same lot as in existence at the date the use became nonconforming.
 - (3) Any increase in volume or area of the nonconforming use shall not exceed an aggregate of more than 50% (of said volume or floor area) during the life of the nonconformity.
 - (4) In computing the area occupied by any nonconforming use only the portion of the ground area, if any, of any lot upon which the nonconforming use exists shall be considered. The computations for volume and area, both in establishing the extent of the nonconformity, and in determining the limits of its expansion shall be separate.
4. Restoration. A nonconforming structure or any structure containing a nonconforming use destroyed by fire, explosion, flood or other phenomenon, or legally condemned, may be reconstructed and

used for the same nonconforming use, provided that reconstruction of the structure shall be commenced within one year from the date the structure was destroyed or condemned and shall be completed within one year of the date commenced.

5. Ownership. Whenever a nonconforming use, structure, or lot is sold to a new owner, a previously lawful nonconforming use may be continued by the new owner, provided that the new owner shall re-register the nonconforming use with the Zoning Officer within 60 days after final settlement.
6. Abandonment.
 - A. If a nonconforming use of a structure or land is discontinued, razed, removed, or abandoned for 365 consecutive days, subsequent use of such structure or land shall conform with the regulations of the district in which it is located.
 - B. The act of abandonment and the intent to abandon shall be presumed to commence on the date when customary efforts to continue the use (operation, lease, sale, etc.) cease.
7. Changes.
 - A. Once changed to a conforming use, no structure or land shall be permitted to revert to a nonconforming use.
 - B. A nonconforming use may be changed to another nonconforming use only if permitted as a special exception by the Zoning Hearing Board after the following conditions are met:
 - (1) The applicant shall show that the nonconforming use cannot reasonably be changed to a conforming use.
 - (2) The applicant shall show that the proposed change will be equally or less objectionable in external effects than the existing nonconforming use with regard to:
 - (a) Traffic generation and congestion (including truck, passenger car, bicycle and pedestrian traffic).
 - (b) Noise, smoke, dust, fumes, vapors, gases, heat, odor, glare or vibration.
 - (c) Storage and waste disposal.
 - (d) Appearance.
8. District Changes. Whenever the boundaries of a district are changed so as to transfer an area from one district to another district, the foregoing provisions shall also apply to any nonconforming uses or structures existing in the district to which the area was transferred.

Select Language ▼

