

Zoning Ordinance?

Why? What For?

Bloomfield Township will hold a public hearing on its proposed revision of the present zoning ordinance on Monday, May 7.

In the belief that township residents can best judge the value of the revision if they know as much about it as possible, the township is bringing this special section to its residents.

A ZONING ORDINANCE, in a real sense, is the basic law of the land.

It governs the use to which land is put.

Without it a community becomes a hodge-podge, dying at the same time it's supposedly growing. Dying from a sort of building anarchy which allows a grocery store to be built next to a fine home and conceivably a factory next to a school.

BUT A ZONING ordinance is much more.

Defining the areas where homeowners may build, where schools

can be located, where shopping centers and office buildings must go is only a small function of a zoning ordinance.

It also says how big the buildings can or must be, where on a parcel of land a building can be put, how much parking must be provided for the users of the building and what kind of trees and bushes may be put around it.

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP has had a zoning ordinance for several years but officials believe now is an opportune time to revise the present one.

They appointed a planning commission and hired a planning consultant about two years ago when the state—through new enabling legislation—encouraged townships to plan for their future.

They told the planners to draw up a master plan for the best development of the community.

Planners found that to implement the master plan and build the type of community they believe residents want, several changes had to be made in the zoning ordinance.

Township officials decided it was a good time for general revision of the zoning ordinance to update it, so it could better meet some of the present day problems of community development, like where drive-in theaters or go kart tracks or apartments can be built.

They also decided the section of the present ordinance governing commercial is inadequate and they wanted to adjust the minimum requirements for homes in the township.

THE PROPOSED zoning ordinance being presented residents May 7 is the culmination of the work of the planners on the master plan and their subsequent revision of the zoning ordinance.

Townships didn't get the power to enact zoning ordinances until 1943.

SPECIFICALLY THE law allows the township:

To regulate and restrict the location and use of buildings, structures and land for trade, industry, residence for public and semi-public or other specified uses, and to regulate and limit the height and bulk of buildings and other structures, to regulate and to determine the size of yards, courts and open spaces, to regulate and limit the density of population.

Further, it can divide the township into districts and establish their boundaries, define certain terms used in the zoning ordinance, provide for enforcement, establish a Board of Appeals and impose penalties on violators.

ALL OF THIS can be done to provide for, promote and protect the public health, safety, peace, morals, comfort, convenience and

general welfare of the residents by protecting and conserving the character and social and economic stability of the residential, commercial and industrial land in the township.

Under the enabling legislation it can prevent over-crowding of the land and undue congestion of population, provide adequate light, air and reasonable access, and facilitate adequate and economical provision of transportation, water, sewers, schools, recreation and other public requirements, all in accordance with a comprehensive master plan.

THE FIRST TEN pages of the revised zoning ordinance is a dictionary of the zoning terms. The definitions are supplied by township officials and planning and zoning experts.

The next 17 pages outlines the various zoning classifications and what type of use buildings in the districts may be put to.

Following are two short sections on existing buildings that don't conform to the proposed new rules and the proposed new parking requirements.

THE NEXT major section establishes the rules for location and operation of such things as outdoor theaters, television and radio towers, trailer courts, karting tracks, smoke, dust and fly ash, outside storage, glare and radioactive materials, fire and explosive hazards, noise, soil, sand, clay, gravel removal and filling.

The last major section sets the rules on obtaining building permits, getting certificates of occupancy and the procedure for appealing to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a lifting of a part of the zoning ordinance on a given parcel of land.

Chronological Development Of Township's Zoning

- First Zoning Ordinance No. 10 Passed: June 18, 1940 Population: 1,771
- Revised Zoning Ordinance No. 21 Passed: January 30, 1952 Population: Approximately 4,000
- Master Plan Study Started January 25, 1960 Population: 22,530
- Planning Commission Appointed October 10, 1960 Population: 22,530
- Hearing on Proposed Ordinance No. 67. May 7, 1962 Population: 24,000

Bloomfield: Young Suburb With Deep Roots

How old is Bloomfield Township? Ask most township residents and they probably couldn't tell you.

Ask Arno L. Hulet, Bloomfield Township Supervisor and vice chairman of the Oakland County Board of Supervisors, one of the three most powerful jobs in the county, and he'll tell you . . .

Or ask Homer W. Case, township treasurer, or Mrs. Deloris V. Little, township clerk, and they'll tell you . . .

Township 143 Years Old

Bloomfield Township is older than the state of Michigan, 143 years old to be exact.

Despite its age, Bloomfield Township suffers the plight of most suburban communities—the majority of its residents don't know the basic facts of its history.

The reason is obvious. Most Bloomfield Township residents didn't arrive until after the war. The township's building boom came in the mid-1950's.

The township's population has multiplied nearly six times in the last 12 years from 3,851 in 1950 to almost 24,000 this year.

The first land transaction took place in what is now Bloomfield Township in 1819 during the second term of President James Monroe. Three years earlier Oakland County had been formed by the splitting of Macomb County.

First Land Transaction in 1819

The first land owner of record was Col. Benjamin H. Pierce, brother of the 17th president of the United States, Franklin Pierce.

The first settler in Bloomfield Township was John W. Hunter. He settled in what today is Birmingham and opened a tavern. He was quickly followed by John Hamilton and Elijah Willits who also built taverns.

The township was formed in 1820 when Oakland County was divided into two townships—Bloomfield in the south and Oakland in the north.

Soon after the settlement around the three taverns became known as "Piety Hill."

First Township Meeting in 1827

The first township meeting was held on May 25, 1827. The first township supervisor was Lemuel Castle. Other officers were Ezra S. Parke, John Todd, Joseph Park, Abraham Crawford, John Ellinwood, John W. Hunter, William Lee, Wilkes Durkee, Apollo Dewey, Oliver Torrey and Erastus Burt. The meeting was held at Hamilton's home.

The year before the first store was built in the township to compete with the taverns. It was located at Fairbanks Corners which is located on Wattles near the eastern city limits of Bloomfield Hills.

In 1864 Birmingham incorporated as a village. It became a city in 1933. Bloomfield Hills, the other incorporated area in the township, became a village in 1927 and a city in 1932.

The first industry in the township was a potash works near the Fairbanks Corners store.

Purpose Of Tabloid Explained

This special section of The Birmingham Eccentric was prepared by the Bloomfield Township Planning Commission to explain the Township's new comprehensive zoning ordinance.

Full discussion of the proposed ordinance will be held at a public hearing at 8 p.m. Monday, May 7 at the Bloomfield Hills High School, 4200 Andover Road, west of Telegraph near Long Lake Road.

ANOTHER FEATURE of this section is several stories and diagrams highlighting the Bloomfield Township Master Plan which has been under study since January, 1960.

Studies from this plan have been useful to the Planning Commission in drafting the new comprehensive zoning ordinance which will effect the entire township.

WHILE EVERY effort has been made to explain the various segments and benefits of the new zoning ordinance, material in this section should not be considered or interpreted as the actual ordinance text. Maps are available for examination in the Township Clerk's office during regular business hours.

Edward A. Proctor, Chairman Bloomfield Township Planning Commission

Many Worked On Ordinance, Master Plan

There were many men and women behind the formation of Bloomfield Township's master plan and the proposed zoning ordinance.

It took the joint efforts of the Planning Commission, the Township Board and Vilcan-Leman & Associates, Inc., planning consultants.

MEMBERS OF the township board include Arno L. Hulet, supervisor; Homer W. Case, treasurer; Deloris V. Little, clerk; and trustees Henry M. Hogan Jr., Samuel J. Reeve, Robert A. Reid and Frank Swindell.

PLANNING COMMISSION members include Edward A. Proctor, chairman; Howard L. Preston, vice chairman; Robert C. Boyer, secretary; and Frederick A. Chapman, Robert A. Reid, Stewart Schultz and Andrew Snively.

The township's legal advisor is Thomas J. Dillon Jr. of the firm of Bond & Dillon.

VILCAN-LEMEN Associates have been plan consultants for more than 100 communities in Michigan, Ohio and Illinois during the past eight years.

Acknowledgements:

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