

TCRPC

Planning Toolkit Fact Sheet

Zoning Ordinances

INTRODUCTION

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (PAMPC) Act 247 as reenacted and amended authorizes municipalities to prepare zoning ordinances.

The most common form of zoning used in the Commonwealth is typically referred to as Euclidean-style zoning. This arrangement is simply accomplished through segregating land use types into group-identified districts. Permitted uses in each district are then subject to general and/or specific requirements.

BENEFITS

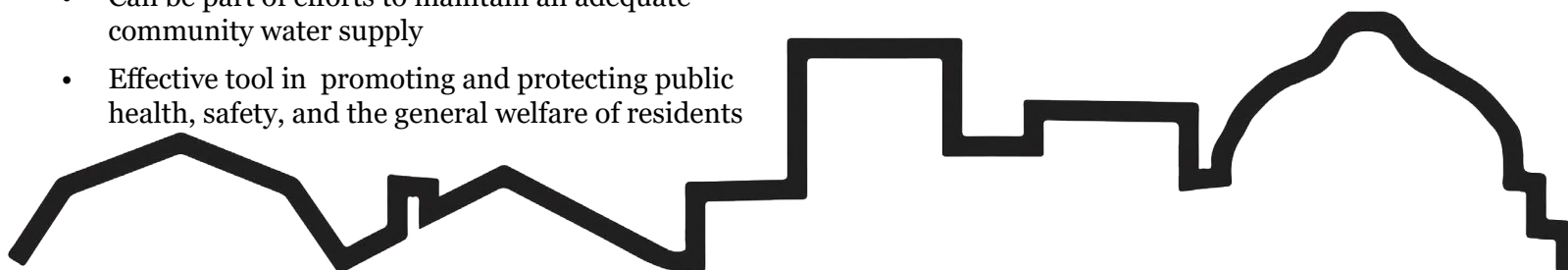
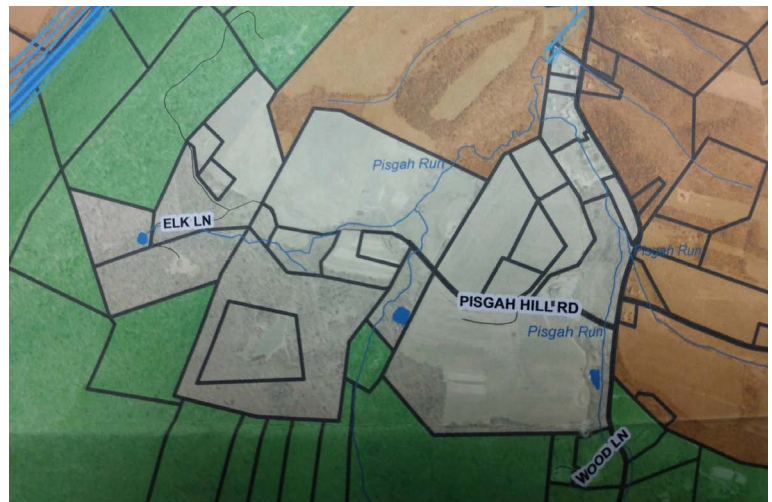
- Can protect areas containing natural, scenic and historic values in the environment as well as preservation of forests, wetlands, aquifers, and floodplains
- Can be used as a preventative tool to deal with issues like overcrowding of land, area blight, hazards avoidance or minimization, highway congestion other transportation issues
- Can be an effective tool in protecting prime agriculture and farmland considering topography, soil type and classification, and present use
- Provides the public with information pertaining to the municipality's efforts for accommodating reasonable growth accounting for all legally required land use types
- Creates opportunities for housing diversity
- Increases prospects for land use compatibility
- Can minimize problems associated with excessive off-street parking
- Protection of property values and existing landowner investments
- Manages impervious coverage, thereby minimizing stormwater impacts
- Can be part of efforts to maintain an adequate community water supply
- Effective tool in promoting and protecting public health, safety, and the general welfare of residents

DRAWBACKS

- Restricts the range of development types allowable in designated districts
- Significant effort to enforce
- Costs associated with ordinance development and enforcement
- Some landowners may object to restrictions
- Can increase the cost of development

PRACTICAL TIPS

- At a minimum, have a comprehensive plan containing a future land use plan and focus on the compatibility between the plan and zoning ordinance
- Seek public input throughout the ordinance development process
- Coordinate with the county planning commission and adjacent municipalities
- Funding and/or technical support may be available through the county or PA DCED



RESOURCES

Tools

- **TCRPC Model Zoning Ordinance**

Optional Plug-Ins

- **Floodplain Overlay Regulations (FPO)**
- **Planned Residential Development (PRD)**
- **Riparian Buffer**
- **Steep Slope Protection District (SSPD)**

Resources

- **Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code**
- **Land use planning in PA**
- **PA DCED “The Library”**
 - Zoning**
 - Zoning Hearing Board**
 - Zoning Officer**
 - Zoning Hearing Board Procedures**
 - Zoning Amendment Procedures**
- **Funding**

RELATED TOOLKIT FACT SHEETS

- **Form Based Codes**

