



## Mechanicsburg Borough Planning Commission Member Job Description

### Planning Commission Purpose

The Planning Commission (PC) is an independent advisory body to Borough Council, Borough staff, other Borough boards and committees, and the public on issues relating to land use, development, infill, reuse, revitalization, and future growth through the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan and other community development related plans and studies; reviews, recommendations, and limited approval of applications for new development; reviews and recommendations on subdivision/land development, zoning, and other land use and development related ordinances; and reviews and recommendations of public projects.

### PC Duties and Responsibilities

- Community Planning – Develop and recommend the Comprehensive Plan and other community development related plans and studies to the Borough Council for adoption; update the Comprehensive Plan, and other plans and land use ordinances periodically; and review infrastructure and other public improvement plans for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Implement Comprehensive Plan – Develop and recommend implementation programs, procedures, and tools, such as land use ordinances to Borough Council for adoption.
- Subdivision / Land development Review / (Limited Approval) - Review plans for certain proposed subdivision, land development and public projects and recommend action to Borough Council; in limited circumstances, review and take final action on certain other subdivision / land development projects.
- Conditional Use Applications Review - Review conditional use (zoning) applications and recommend action to Borough Council.
- Public Involvement – Involve the public in planning and decision-making, ensure public access to information and meetings, create opportunities for public input and influence.
- Legal Compliance – Be informed of and implement laws related to open meetings and public records, ethical conduct, meeting conduct, and state and federal laws regarding community planning and land use including the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) (Act 247, as reenacted and amended).
- Intergovernmental Cooperation – Cooperate with state, municipal and regional planning agencies and other groups for coordinated planning.
- Continuing Education – Attend training sessions to understand current trends and information and the PC role in municipal governance.
- Preparations – Read, review, and consider plan related documents, background materials, staff presentations, and, public comments.
- Other – Duties as set forth in Section 209.1 of the MPC.

### Special Duties

Officers (chair, vice-chair, secretary) are elected annually by the PC and members may be assigned special reviews or assignments as a result of special projects.

## **Time Commitments**

The PC has a business meeting once a month for approximately two (2) hours, depending on the size and complexity of its agenda. A workshop session is typically held once a month for approximately two (2) hours to develop or review special projects. One hour of preparation time is typical for each hour of meeting time. There may be special meetings as required.

## **Desired Attributes and Skills**

The following skills, traits, and characteristics are important:

- Good communicator, detail oriented, willing to learn, critical and objective thinker, open minded;
- Concern for serving the public interest, willingness to prepare for and attend meetings, obtain continuing education, good record of civic involvement;
- Skills and expertise to broaden the collective knowledge, including an understanding of the planning process, land use issues or law, construction or development practices, natural and economic resources, and policy development;
- Strong analytical skills, ability to read ordinances, maps and plans;
- Uphold ethical standards, not be perceived to have conflicts of interest, protect the public interest, strive for honest and independent decision-making; and
- Reflect the Borough's diversity - social, cultural, economic and other interests, geographic and jurisdictional, demographic, economic and professional.

## **Supervision**

The PC receives direction from, and is responsible to, the Borough Council and operates within the MPC. The PC is supported by the Borough Codes and Zoning Officer and Codes and Zoning Secretary, Borough Engineer, Borough Solicitor, County Planning Department / Commission representative, and contracted consultants as approved by Borough Council.

## **Working Conditions**

The PC conducts ninety-five (95) percent of its work indoors in an intellectual capacity, but will periodically visit outdoor sites for information gathering, inspection, or special projects.

## **Term of Appointment**

Members shall be residents of Mechanicsburg Borough and are appointed by Borough Council for a term of four (4) years, or during a vacancy to fill the unexpired portion of a term. Members may be removed from office by Borough Council "for cause" (unlawful acts in office, failure to perform duties of office) after notice and a hearing in accordance with Section 206 of the MPC.

## **Benefits**

This is a voluntary position, traditionally with no stipend for meetings. Funding for related continuing education purposes may be available.

## **Indemnification**

Appointed officials are protected from personal liability claims when performing duties within the scope of their appointment.