

Commonly Used Planning Agenda Terms

Meeting format

Citizen Comments – The portion of the meeting agenda offering an opportunity for the public to provide comment to the Planning Commission on any items not scheduled as public hearing items.

Public Hearing– A specific type of agenda item, required by State law, which incorporates public comment as a part of that item prior to Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors action. Public hearings are held for items such as: Comprehensive Plan policies and amendments; Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance amendments; and Rezoning and Conditional Use Permit applications. Following the Public Hearing, the Planning Commission will take action on the item (see below).

Action Item–There are both public hearing and non-public hearing items on which the Planning Commission takes action. Depending on the actual item, the Planning Commission may approve, deny, table, or forward a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors regarding the agenda item. *No public comment is accepted during the Action Item portion of the agenda.*

Information/Discussion Item– The portion of the meeting agenda where items are presented to the Planning Commission for information and discussion. The Planning Commission may offer comments and suggestions, but does not take action on the agenda item. *No public comment is accepted during the Information/Discussion Item portion of the agenda.*

Planning Terminology

Urban Development Area or **UDA** – The UDA is the county’s urban growth boundary identified in the Comprehensive Plan in which more intensive forms of residential development will occur. The UDA is an area of the county where community facilities and public services are more readily available and are provided more economically.

Sewer and Water Service Area or **SWSA** – The SWSA is the boundary identified in the Comprehensive Plan in which public water and sewer is or can be provided. The SWSA is consistent with the UDA in many locations; however the SWSA may extend beyond the UDA to promote commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses in area where residential land uses are not desirable.

Land Use – Land Use is the nomenclature which refers to the type of activity which may occur on an area of land. Common land use categories include: agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial.

Zoning District - Zoning district refers to a specific geographic area that is subject to land use standards. Frederick County designates these areas, and establishes policies and ordinances over types of land uses, density, and lot requirements in each zone. Zoning is the main planning tool of local government to manage the future development of a community, protect neighborhoods, concentrate retail business and industry, and channel traffic.

Rezoning – Rezoning is the process by which a property owner seeks to implement or modify the permitted land use activities on their land. A rezoning changes the permitted land use activities within the categories listed above under Land Use.

Conditional Use Permit or CUP - A CUP allows special land uses which may be desirable, but are not always appropriate based on a location and surrounding land uses. The CUP requested use, which is not allowed as a matter of right within a zoning district, is considered through a public hearing process and usually contains conditions to minimize any impacts on surrounding properties.

Ordinance Amendment – The process by which the County Code is revised. Often the revisions are the result of a citizen request with substantial justification supporting the change. Amendments ultimately proceed through a public hearing prior to the PC forwarding a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

County Bodies Involved

Board of Supervisors or BOS - Frederick County is governed by an elected Board of Supervisors composed of seven members, one from each magisterial district, and one chairman-at-large. The Board of Supervisors is the policy-making body of the county. Functions of the Board of Supervisors related to planning include making land use decisions, and establishing growth and development policies.

Planning Commission or PC - The PC is composed of 13 members, two from each magisterial districts and one at-large, appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The Planning Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors which then takes final action on all planning, zoning, and land use matters.

Comprehensive Plans and Programs Committee or CPPC – The CPPC is a major committee of the PC whose primary responsibility is to formulate land use policies that shape the location and timing of development throughout the County. Included in the work are studies of specific areas to develop guidelines for future land use within those areas. The CPPC also considers requests for amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. Decisions by CPPC are then forwarded to the PC for consideration.

Development Review and Regulations Committee or DRRC – The DRRC is the second major committee of the PC whose primary responsibilities involve the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan in the form of Zoning and Subdivision ordinance requirements. Requests to amend the ordinances to the DRRC are made by the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, local citizens, businesses, or organizations. DRRC decisions are also forwarded to the PC for consideration.