



City of Saint Paul, Minnesota
ZONING PRINCIPLES & PROCESS
Community Input on Zoning Decisions

There are 3 main venues for public input on decisions related to zoning:

- **Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)**

The Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) has seven members (including one alternate) who are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. They make decisions on zoning variances and review appeals of Zoning Administrator decisions. The BZA's decisions can be appealed to City Council.

- **Planning Commission**

The Planning Commission is a group of 21 members appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council to advise them on planning issues. They make zoning decisions on conditional use permits, nonconforming use permits, and (less frequently) determinations of similar use. The Zoning Committee, a seven-member committee of the full commission, holds public hearings on these cases and then makes recommendations for the full commission's action. The commission's decisions can be appealed to City Council

- **City Council**

The City Council's main role in zoning is to review and adopt zoning text and map amendments and to approve plats. The City Council also acts in a quasi-judicial role as the primary jurisdiction to hear appeals of BZA and Planning Commission decisions. Requests to change the zoning of individual properties have public hearings before the Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission and the City Council. The City Council makes the final decision.

Additionally, there are 2 venues for input for certain development activities:

- **Site Plan Review Committee**

Site Plan Review consists of staff from the Departments of Safety & Inspections, Public Works and Planning & Economic Development. This group provides technical reviews of the site plan—a drawing of the property showing the key elements such as buildings, parking lots, sidewalks, driveways, landscaping, grading, storm water drainage utilities, fences, and lighting—for proposed development. Staff reviews plans to ensure they meet requirements to move forward with construction. They may either approve the plans, reject them or return them to the applicant for revision.

- **Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC)**

The Heritage Preservation Commission consists of community members appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. The HPC serves as an advisory body to the Mayor and City Council on heritage preservation matters. The HPC makes decisions regarding the designation of historic districts and sites and reviews proposals for construction, demolition and exterior alterations occurring in those districts/sites. HPC decisions may be appealed to the City Council



City of Saint Paul, Minnesota
ZONING PRINCIPLES & PROCESS
Variance Standards and Findings of Fact

The Zoning Code allows for variances to be issued from the following standards in the zoning code:

- Minimum lot area
- Density of dwelling units
- Floor area ratio
- Height of building
- Lot coverage
- Setbacks from property lines (yards)
- Separations from specific uses
- Design standards
- Off-street parking
- Signage

In issuing a variance, the Board of Zoning Appeals and Planning Commission may only consider input that concerns the "Findings of Fact":

- The variance is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the zoning code.
- The variance is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
- The applicant has established there are practical difficulties in complying with provision(s) and that property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the provision.
- The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property.
- The variance will not permit a use that is not allowed in the zoning district where the affected land is located.
- The variance will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood.



City of Saint Paul, Minnesota

ZONING PRINCIPLES & PROCESS

Steps In The Process Of Zoning Decisions

Applying

Pre-Application



Applicant consults with city staff

AND



Applicant consults with neighbors + district council

Submit Application \$

Safety & Inspections:

- Variance
- Appeal

Planning & Economic Development

- Rezoning
- Conditional Use Permit
- Nonconforming Use Permit
- Any of the above + Variance or Appeal



Starts the "60 Day Rule" Clock



Application Complete?



Clock Reset If Applicant Is Notified of Incomplete Application Within 15 Days

Key

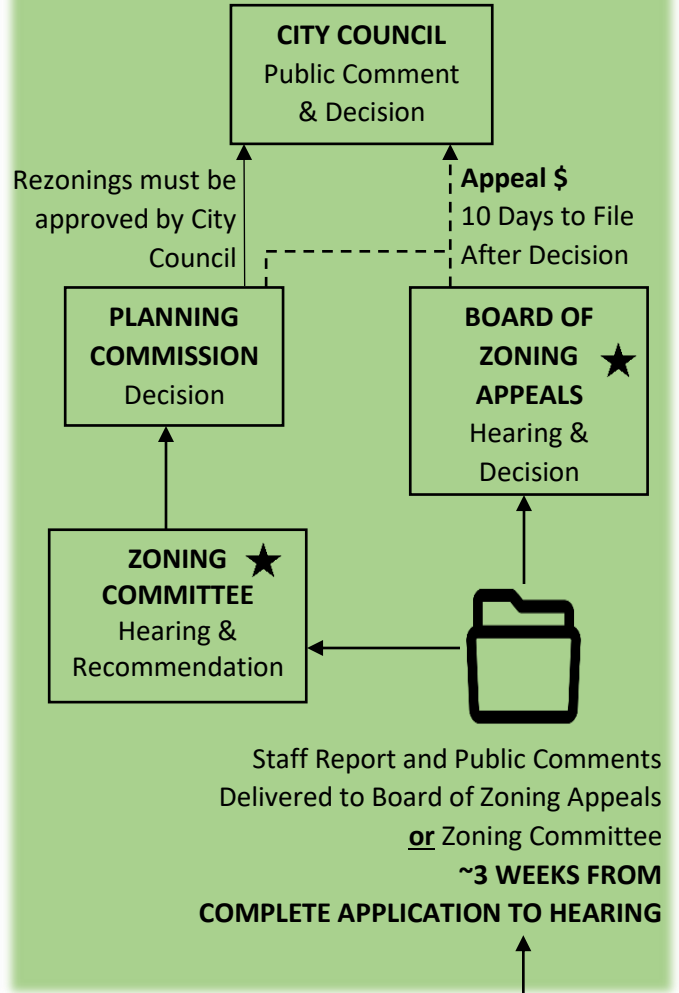
★ - Opportunity for Public Input

\$ - Fee Required

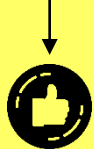
--- Optional Step

This is a general description of the process. Changes can occur for many reasons.

Decision Making



Reviewing Proposal



ENS Notice Sent to District Councils



Public Notice Published in Legal Ledger



Mail Notification to Neighbors



Neighborhood Deliberation and Public Comment



Staff Reviews Application to Develop Report