Planning Commission or Department

Board of Supervisors

Commissioners

Council

Zoning Hearing Board

Municipal Meetings

presented by:

Amy Hopkins, PLS

January 26, 2022

Preparing for & Attending Municipal Meeting

When we use the word "municipal", we're including Boroughs, Townships, Cities, Towns, Municipalities and County review boards. Per the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code Act 247 of 1968, or the MPC as its commonly referred to, a municipality is defined as:

> *"Municipality," any city of the second-class A or third class, borough, incorporated town, township of the first or second class, county of the second class through eighth class, home rule municipality, or any similar general purpose unit of government which shall hereafter be created by the General Assembly.*

The purpose of the MPC is to give municipalities guidance in planning their development and to govern that development by zoning, subdivision, and land development ordinances.

pennsylvania DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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How is the Municipality's Government setup?

Questions to ask your self: ask these questions early, during the proposal stage preferably.

1. Do they have a Planning Commission? If not, who is the reviewing agency?
2. Do they have a Council, Board of Supervisors, or Board of Commissioners?
3. When do these Boards meet? And how often?
4. When do you have to submit the package to get on the next meeting agenda?
5. Do they have a "complete application package" review and acceptance process?
6. Do they have workshops available prior to final submittal?
7. Will this be a Minor Subdivision or a Major Subdivision?
8. Does the Township have zoning?
9. Is so, what is the property zoned?
10. What are the allowable uses in this zone?
11. What is the minimum lot size and width?

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How is the Municipality's Government setup?

1. Do they have a Planning Commission? If not, who is the reviewing agency?

Rural townships and boroughs often don't have their own planning commission or department.
They defer to the County Planning department to review subdivision plans.
The County should have a list of townships that are subject to the county SALDO.
How does the review process work?
When do I need to submit and to whom?
Can I submit electronically, or do I have to submit hard copies?
Do I have to attend meetings?
Is there an application I need to fill out?
Is there a fee?

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How is the Municipality's Government setup?

2. Do they have a Council, Board of Supervisors, or Board of Commissioners?

The size and class of the governing body determines who many elected officials sit on the board.
Smaller townships may only have 3 members.
Councils may have 7members.
Also attending these public meetings will be the planner, township engineer, township solicitor.
This may help you decide who should represent the plan at the meeting. You might want someone more experienced to attend.
If you've never attended a municipal meeting, start by attend the ones in the township you live in.
Or attend when someone with a lot of experience is presenting. Watch how they conduct themselves, how they handle questions from the board.
Remember: these are elected officials, not surveyors or engineers (typically)

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How is the Municipality's Government setup?

3. When do these Boards meet? How often?

Timing is everything!
Boards typically meet once a month.
Check their website or call and ask.
Planning Commission is the review meeting you need to focus on.

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How is the Municipality's Government setup?

4. When do you have to submit the package to get on the next meeting agenda?

Timing is everything!
20 days prior to meeting?
30 days prior to meeting?
3 days prior to meeting?
Work this into your schedule.
You have to get the boundary survey, drafting and design done first.

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How is the Municipality's Government setup?

5. Do they have a "complete application package" review and acceptance process?

Timing is everything!

Review the Subdivision Application Checklist.

6. Do they have workshops available prior to final submittal?

Take advantage of workshops. You can ask questions in an unofficial capacity before you submit the plan. This can save you and your client time and money.

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How is the Municipality's Government setup?

7. Will this be a Minor Subdivision or a Major Subdivision?

Look up the definition of each in the township's SALDO

Do I have to submit a Preliminary Plan or I can go straight to Final Plan Submittal

Minor Subdivisions can usually be submitted as Final. Check the ordinance.

Check Appropriate Box(es)					
Land Development Plan		Subdivision Plan		Conditional Use Plan	
Minor Subdivision		Major Subdivision		Open Space Plan	
Preliminary Plan Submission		Final Plan Submission			

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How is the Municipality's Government setup?

8. Does the Township have zoning?

9. Is so, what is the property zoned?

10. What are the allowable uses in this zone?

11. What is the minimum lot size and width?

TABLE 201 A: PERMITTED USES, CONDITIONAL USES, YARD AND AREA REQUIREMENTS

DISTRICT	S-1 SPECIAL CONSERVANCY	S. CONSERVANCY	R-1 SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	R-2 SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
PERMITTED USES	- Agriculture - Cemetery - Nature Preserve - Parks & Recreation - Accessory Uses	- Agriculture - Cemetery - Nature Preserve - Single-Family Residential - Parks & Recreation - Accessory Uses	- Agriculture -Single-Family Residential -Parks & Recreation Accessory Uses	- Agriculture -Single-Family Residential -Parks & Recreation - Accessory Uses
CONDITIONAL USES	- Golf Course - Municipal Waste - Landfills - Major Excavation - Major Timbering and Logging Operation - Public Building - Stable - Utility Substation	- Church & School - Golf Course - Group Dwelling A - Heliport - Major Excavation - Major Timbering and Logging Operation - Public Building - Public School - Stable - Utility Substation	-Church & School -Dependent Dwelling -Golf Course -Group Dwelling A -Major Excavation -Major Timbering and Logging -Public Building -Public School -Recreation Club -Utility Substation	-Church & School -Dependent Dwelling -Golf Course -Group Dwelling A -Major Excavation -Major Timbering and Logging -Public Building -Public School -Recreation Club -Utility Substation
PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS			Planned Residential Development	Planned Residential Development
MINIMUM LOT AREA	20,000 sq. ft	20,000 sq. ft	12,000 sq. ft	7,500 sq. ft
MINIMUM LOT WIDTH	100 feet	100 feet	75 feet	60 feet
MINIMUM LOT FRONTAGE	60 feet	60 feet	50 feet	40 feet
MINIMUM FRONT YARD	30 feet	30 feet	30 feet	30 feet
MINIMUM SIDE YARD	15 feet	15 feet	15 feet	10 feet
MINIMUM REAR YARD	40 feet	40 feet	40 feet	40 feet
MAXIMUM HEIGHT	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet

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How is the Municipality's Government setup?

1. **Do your Due Diligence before you quote the job.**
2. **Research the municipal requirements and ordinances before you submit the plan.**
3. **Timing is everything!**

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A Minor Subdivision

Scenario: Client wants to subdivide a 1-acre parcel into 2 buildable, single family lots. Public water & sewer are available.

Township: South Fayette
County: Allegheny

Does it qualify as a Minor Subdivision?

Article III Approval Procedure for Minor Subdivision

214-11 Applicability

This article shall apply only to consolidations, resubdivisions or replatting, as defined herein, and to those subdivisions which propose no more than four lots, including the residual lot or parcel, if any, all of which have frontage on an improved public street and not involving the construction or improvement of any public street and which may or may not involve the extension or creation of any other public improvements.

What is the property zoned?

Refer to the Zoning Map

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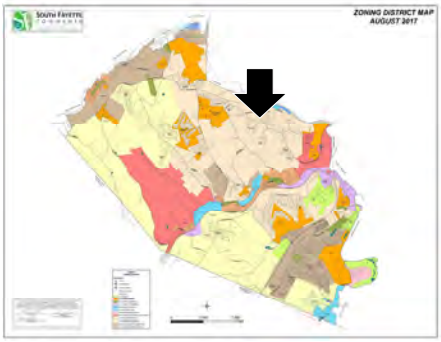

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The Zoning Map Legend

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Zoning Restrictions

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Zoning Restrictions

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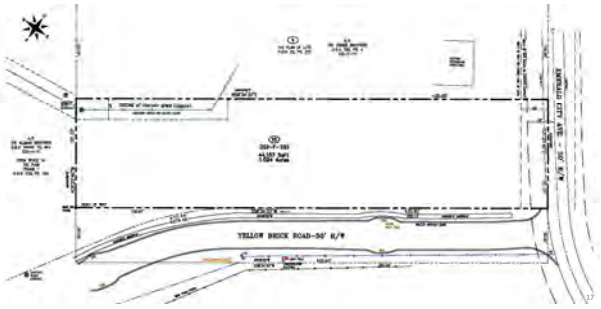
A Minor Subdivision

It's a boundary survey first and foremost.

Minimum Lot Area = 20,000 sqft

Minimum Lot Width = 95' with public sewer



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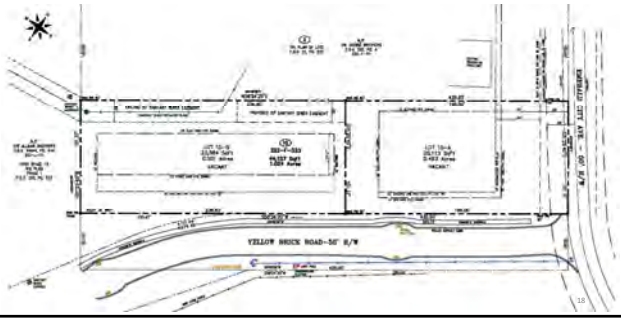
A Minor Subdivision

It's a boundary survey first and foremost.

Minimum Lot Area = 20,000 sqft

Minimum Lot Width = 95' with public sewer



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The Submittal

- Refer to the SALDO for requirements on a Minor Subdivision.
- Signature Clauses
- Property information and notes
- Available utilities
- Table of Acreage

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The Submittal

The Plan or Plat is only a portion of the submittal package.

❑ Start with the application checklist

Required

1. Formal Application
2. Review and Escrow Fees
3. Evidence of Ownership
4. Agent Authorization Form
5. Location Map
6. Property Boundary Survey
7. Subdivision Plat

Maybe Required

1. Waivers or Modifications
2. Approved Variances
3. Evidence to submission to Conservation District
4. Utility Service Availability Letters
5. Proof of Application for other permits.

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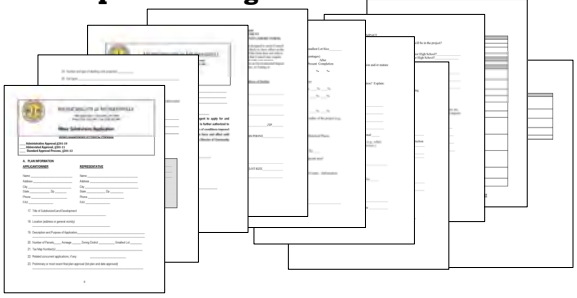
The Complete Package



Minor Subdivision Packet

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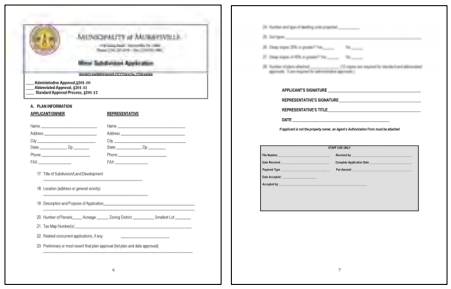
The Complete Package - Application



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The Complete Package – Agent Authorization Form

Municipality of Murrysville
Agent Authorization Form

Name of Property Owner(s) _____

Application Title _____

Tax Map Number(s) _____

The above named property owner hereby appoints _____

_____ as its agent, and authorizes said agent to apply for and process the above mentioned development plan on his/her behalf. Agent is further authorized to sign all necessary documentation for such purposes, including acceptance of conditions imposed by Council upon approval of the plan. This authorization shall remain in force and effect until written notice of revocation is delivered to the Municipality of Murrysville's Director of Community Development.

SIGNED AND SEALED, intending to be legally bound on this date of _____.

(SEAL) _____

Owner(s) Signature

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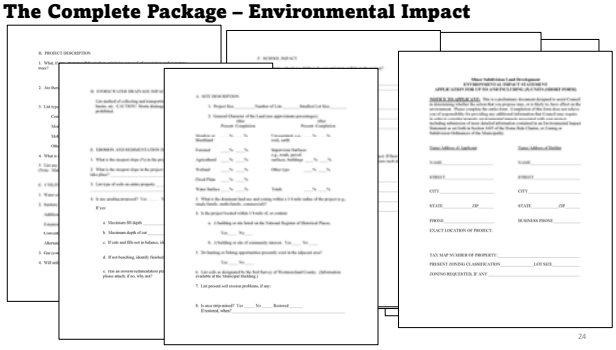
The Complete Package – Environmental Impact



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The Complete Package – Environmental Impact

MINOR SUBDIVISION APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Plan Name:

Required Elements	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Notes
Required Copies				
Digital Copy				
Power Scale (1"=50' Max. 1"=100' Min.)				
Plan Requirements				
Title block				
The Name, the Municipality, county, and state.				
The names and addresses of the owner or owners, developer, surveyor, engineer, and architect.				
The North point, map and graphic scale.				
The seal and signature/date the surveyor, engineer, or architect.				
Key plan showing location of the tract.				
Lot lines, dimensions and bearings of the proposed lot and also those of the remaining in the original parcel.				
Existing and proposed streets, easements, or rights of way on or adjacent to the tract.				
Available utilities				
The names of abutting property owners.				
Topology and displayed of impact				

Minor Subdivision 2006 1 of 2

MINOR SUBDIVISION APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Plan Name:

Required Elements	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Notes
Compliance with the Parks and Recreation Ordinance				
Other data requested by Planning Commission				
Floodplain and Related Requirements				
Fee				
Bonds				

Minor Subdivision 2006 2 of 2

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The Complete Package - Application Fee & Escrow

Determine these fees upfront

1. Your client should be told this at the start, so they're not blindsided.
2. Review fees are typically a set amount based on the type of plan
3. Escrow fee can be a wild card.
   - Used to cover township engineer's review fee
   - Used to cover external and in-house review fees
4. Separate Engineer review fees
   - May be billed directly to the landowner or developer.
5. Separate Checks are often required.
6. These fees can often deter a residential landowner from subdividing. These municipal fees can sometimes be more than your survey cost.
7. Commercial Developers are aware of these fee and anticipate the expense.

Plan Name:

Required Elements	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Notes
Preliminary meeting with the Parks and Recreation Commission				
Review recommended by Planning Commission, Developers and Township Reports				
Fee				
Escrow				

Minor Subdivision 2006 2 of 2

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Submittal as been determined complete, now what?

Who determines the package is complete?
- Community Planner
- Code Enforcement Officer
- Administration, Township Secretary
- Township Engineer

Next it goes to the Township Engineer for review.
- Township Engineer may be external
- May be a full-time employee of the municipality.

SOUTH FAYETTE TOWNSHIP

Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance
Application Submission Requirement Checklist

Project Name:

Submitted Initial Plan: Resubmit #/Date:

Submission Requirements	Minor Subdivision Application	Major Subdivision Preliminary Plan	Major Subdivision Final Application	Land Development Preliminary Submission	Land Development Final Application	Applicant to Initial & Date	Township Use Only Initial & Date
1 Further Acknowledgement	●	●	●	●	●	✓	
2 Applicable Trees & Riparian Corridor Easements	●	●	●	●	●	✓	
3 Statement of Ownership	●	●	●	●	●	✓	
4 Deed/Title Report Authenticated/Current	●	●	●	●	●	✓	
5 Transitional Site Assessment		○	○	○	○		
6 Copy of approved Preliminary Plan			●		●		
7 Project Narrative/Site Analysis/Impact Report		●	●	●	●		
8 Copies of Request of Waivers and/or Modifications	○	○	○	○	○		
9 Copies of Approved Variances or Filed Applications	○	○	○	○	○		
10 Location Map	●	●	●	●	●	✓	
11 Existing Conditions/Property Boundary Survey	●	●	●	●	●	✓	
12 Subdivision Plat	●	●	●				
13 Overall Master & Phasing Plan		○	○	○	○		
14 Proposed Site Plan		●	●	●	●		
15 Proposed Grading Plan		●	●	●	●		
16 Proposed Utility Plan		●	●	●	●		
17 Cut & Fill Plan		●	●	●	●		
18 Road Cross Sections			●				
19 E & S Plan with Report		●	●	●	●		
20 Evidence of Submission to Conservation District	○	●	●	●	●		
21 Stormwater Management Plan & Report		●	●	●	●		
22 Storm & Sanitary Sewer Profile(s)		●	●	●	●		
23 Lighting Plan				●	●		
24 Landscape Plan			○	●	●		
25 Construction Details			●	○	●		
26 Utility Relocation Location Plans				●	●		
27 Utility Service Availability Letters							
28 (Water, Gas, Electric, Sanitary, Communication)	○	●	●	●	●		
29 Sewage Facilities Planning Module			●		●		
30 Traffic Impact Study		○	○				
31 Wetland Report		●	●	●	●		
32 Geotechnical Report & Slope Analysis		●	●				
33 Proof of Application for Other Permits (Township, State, Federal)	○	●	●	●	●		

Notes: ● = REQUIRED ○ = WAIVER REQUIRED, DETERMINED BY ZONING OFFICER

1) The applicant is to include the items listed below the relevant application type with in their submission packet
2) The referenced items will be subject to a more in depth review based upon the requirements of the township Ordinances once the application has been formally accepted and the official filing date established.
3) The applicant is to complete their respective column and include this document with the submission.
4) The township staff is to complete the final column as referenced items are verified to be within submission packet.

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The Review Letter

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The Review Letter
The Plat as submitted

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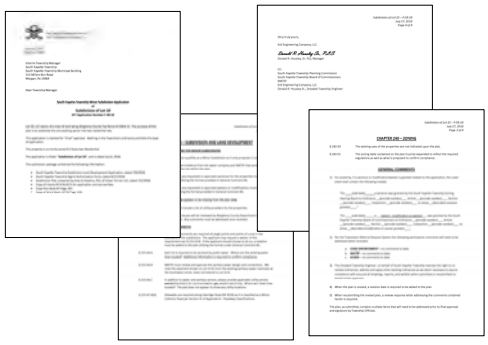

The Review Letter
Township Engineer

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South Fayette Township Minor Subdivision Application
of
Subdivision of Lot 10

Lot 10 owner of a tract of land being Allegheny County Tax Parcel # 258-K-11. The purpose of this plan is to subdivide the one existing parcel into two residential lots.

This application is marked for "Final" approval. Nothing in the Township's ordinance prohibits this type of application.

The property is currently zoned R-2 Suburban Residential.

The application is titled: "**Subdivision of Lot 10**"

The submission package contained the following information:

- South Fayette Township Subdivision-Land Development Application, dated…
- South Fayette Township Agent Authorization Form, dated….
- Subdivision Plat, prepared by Amy Jo Hopkins, PLS, of Urban Terrain LLC, dated …..
- Copy of checks #574 & #575 for application and escrow fees.
- Copy Plan Book 87 Page 187.
- Copy of Deed Book 13756 Page 528.

The Review Letter
Township Engineer

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South Fayette Township Minor Subdivision Application
of
Subdivision of Lot 10

CHAPTER 215 – SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE III APPROVAL PROCEDURE FOR MINOR SUBDIVISIONS

§ 215-10 This application qualifies as a Minor Subdivision as it only proposes 2 Lots.

§ 215-13.F Provide written evidence from the water company and MATSF that service is available to the lots within the plan.

§ 215-13.J If applicable, any requested or approved variances for the properties must be noted on the plat utilizing the format provided in General Comment #1.

§ 215-13.K If applicable, any requested or approved waivers or modifications must be noted on the plat utilizing the format provided in General Comment #1.

§ 215-13.L(2) A North arrow appears to be missing from the plan view.

§ 215-13.L(9) The plat must include a list of utility providers for the properties.

§ 215-13.L(13) Certification clauses will be reviewed by Allegheny County Department of Economic Development. Any comments must be addressed once received.

The Review Letter
Township Engineer

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South Fayette Township Minor Subdivision Application
of
Subdivision of Lot 10

CHAPTER 215 – SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE VII REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS

§215-63 Concrete monuments are required at all angle points and points of curve in the boundary of the subdivision. The applicant may request a waiver of this requirement per § 215-63.B. If the applicant should choose to do so, a notation must be added to the plat utilizing the format under General Comment #1.

§ 215-64.A Each lot is required to be serviced by public water. Where are the existing water lines located? Additional information is required to confirm compliance.

§ 215-64.B MATSF must review and approve the sanitary sewer design and connections. We note the easement shown on Lot 10-B ,from the existing sanitary sewer manholes at the Southwest corner, does not extend to Lot 10-A.

§ 215-64.C In addition to water and sanitary service, please provide applicable utility service availability letters for communication, gas, and/or electricity. Where are these lines located? The plat does not appear to show any utility locations.

§ 215-67.A(3) Sidewalks are required along Oakridge Road (SR 3029) as it is classified as a Minor Collector Road per Section VI of Appendix A – Roadway Classifications.

The Review Letter
Township Engineer

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South Fayette Township Minor Subdivision Application
of
Subdivision of Lot 10

CHAPTER 215 – SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 240 – ZONING

§ 240-50 The existing uses of the properties are not indicated upon the plat.

§ 240-51 The zoning table contained on the plat must be expanded to reflect the required regulations as well as what is proposed to confirm compliance.

ZONING INFORMATION

PROPERTY IS ZONED "R-2" SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

	ZONING	PROPOSED LOT 10-A	PROPOSED LOT 10-B	P.B.V. 87, PG. 187
MINIMUM LOT AREA (SQFT):	20,000	20,175	23,984	
MINIMUM LOT WIDTH WITH PUBLIC SEWER	90'	101.37'	236.60'	
MINIMUM FRONT YARD:	35'	40'	20'	40' ALONG OVERALL CITY RD 20' ALONG YELLOW BRICK AVE
MINIMUM SIDE YARD: MIN. 10' ON ONE SIDE	25'	20'/10'	15'/10'	
MINIMUM REAR YARD:	30'	30'	30'	
MAX. BUILDING HEIGHT:	2½ STORIES OR 35 FEET			
MAX. LOT COVERAGE:	25%			

The Review Letter
Township Engineer

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The Surveyor's Response

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CHAPTER 215 – SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE III APPROVAL PROCEDURE FOR MINOR SUBDIVISIONS

The Surveyor's Response

§ 215-10 This application qualifies as a Minor Subdivision as it only proposes 2 Lots.

§ 215-13.F Provide written evidence from the water company and MATSF that service is available to the lots within the plan.

Email received from MATSF dated 7/23/2018
Letter requested from PA American Water on 7/23/2018, received _____

§ 215-13.J If applicable, any requested or approved variances for the properties must be noted on the plat utilizing the format provided in General Comment #1.

§ 215-13.K If applicable, any requested or approved waivers or modifications must be noted on the plat utilizing the format provided in General Comment #1.

§ 215-13.L(2) A North arrow appears to be missing from the plan view.

North Arrow added.

§ 215-13.L(9) The plat must include a list of utility providers for the properties.

Utility provider list added to the plan.

§ 215-13.L(13) Certification clauses will be reviewed by Allegheny County Department of Economic Development. Any comments must be addressed once received.

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CHAPTER 215 – SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE VII REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS

The Surveyor's Response

§ 215-63 Concrete monuments are required all angle points and points of curve in the boundary of the subdivision. The applicant may request a waiver of this requirement per § 215-63.B. If the applicant should choose to do so, a notation must be added to the plat utilizing the format under General Comment #1.

We will request a waiver to set capped 5/8" rebar at property corners in lieu of concrete monuments.

§ 215-64.A Each lot is required to be serviced by public water. Where are the existing water lines located? Additional information is required to confirm compliance.

Water line has been added to the plan as requested.

§ 215-64.B MATSF must review and approve the sanitary sewer design and connections. We note the easement shown on Lot 10-B, from the existing sanitary sewer manholes at the Southwest corner, does not extend to Lot 10-A.

A 20' sanitary sewer easement has been proposed extending from the existing easement on Lot 10-B to Lot 10-A.

§ 215-64.C In addition to water and sanitary service, please provide applicable utility service availability letters for communication, gas, and/or electricity. Where are these lines located? The plat does not appear to show any utility locations.

Location of additional utilities have been shown.

§ 215-67.A(3) Sidewalks are required along Emerald City Ave. as it is classified as a Minor Collector Road per Section VI of Appendix A – Roadway Classifications.

We request a waiver for the sidewalk along Emerald City Ave. There is not a sidewalk currently in front of any of the residences along Oakridge. There is an existing sidewalk along Yellow Brick Rd.

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CHAPTER 240 – ZONING

§ 240-50 The existing uses of the properties are not indicated upon the plat.

Property is currently vacant and has been noted as such on the plan.

§ 240-51 The zoning table contained on the plat must be expanded to reflect the required regulations as well as what is proposed to confirm compliance.

Zoning table has been expanded to show both required and proposed.

GENERAL COMMENTS

4) When the plan is revised, a revision date is required to be added to the plan.

A revision date has been added to the plan.

5) When resubmitting the revised plan, a review response letter addressing the comments contained herein is required.

Submitted.

The Surveyor's Response

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Revised Submittal

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This all happens before you even step foot in front of the Planning Commission

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The Planning Commission Public Meeting

Public Meetings: open to the public, televised, recorded, typically after hours.
Check meeting time.
Get copy of the agenda in advance to you know when you present.
Virtual Meetings since the pandemic, still considered public.

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Board of Supervisors Public Meeting

Public Meetings: open to the public, televised, recorded, typically after hours.
Check meeting time.
Get copy of the agenda in advance to you know when you present.
Virtual Meetings since the pandemic, still considered public.
Much more formal than planning commission.
Various topics affecting the Township will be discussed.

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Contact Information

- Amy Hopkins, PLS
- Urban Terrain LLC
- 412-744-4520
- ahopkins@urbanterrain.net

URBAN TERRAIN
a land surveying company · LLC

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