



## Ferguson Township, Centre County, Pa. A Guide to Subdivision and Land Development



*This fact sheet is designed to answer common questions about subdivision and land development plans, such as: When are plans required? What is the plan approval process? What costs are involved in plan approval?*

### **When you need a subdivision plan**

Subdivision plans are mandatory when:

1. A lot, tract or parcel of land is divided or re-divided into two or more lots, tracts or parcels, including changes in existing lot lines for the purpose of lease, petition by the court for distribution to heirs or devisees, transfer of ownership or building or lot development. Examples of subdivision are when one lot is divided into several smaller lots, or when a lot line is replotted between existing lots.
2. Several lots held in common ownership are consolidated into one lot. A lot consolidation plan may be approved by the Zoning Administrator. Call the Zoning Administrator at (814) 238-4651.

### **When you need a land development plan**

Land development plans are mandatory for:

1. The improvement of one lot or two or more contiguous lots involving a group of two or more residential or non-residential buildings or a single non-residential building.
2. The improvement of one lot or two or more contiguous lots involving the division or alteration of space or land between two or more occupants for the purpose of streets, common areas, leaseholds, condominiums, building groups, or other features.
3. Any commercial or industrial uses are proposed.
4. A proposed use or structure is located in or within 100 feet of a flood plain.
5. A proposed use or structure is to be located on steep slopes (25 percent or greater).
6. The zoning ordinance requires the proposed use to include a parking lot.
7. Any development which proposes the location of two or more primary uses or structures on a single lot.
8. A portable water well pump station facility is proposed.
9. Major alterations are proposed to a previously approved land development plan. Major alterations are when:
  - a) a change of use is proposed (for example, office use to retail use)
  - b) a change to stormwater management controls is proposed.
  - c) any motor vehicle access to the property is added, deleted, are relocated by more than 50 percent of its width.
  - d) The landscaping plan is changed in more than 10 percent of the total previous coverage area.
  - e) The building coverage is increased by more than 10 percent.
  - f) The impervious coverage is increased by more than 10 percent of the ground floor area.
  - g) The location of a proposed structure is changed by more than 10 percent of the ground floor area.

## Minor Alterations to the Plan

Minor alterations to a previously issued zoning permit may be made by the applicant submitting a revised application and land development plan, if applicable, to the Zoning Administrator for approval. [§27-1003.3.A&B](#)

## Preparing the Plan

The Township requires you to engage a professional engineer or registered landscape architect to prepare your land development plan and a professional surveyor to prepare your subdivision plan. You may request a preapplication conference with Township staff and the Township Planning Commission to discuss your proposals for the site. You may also submit a sketch plan for review by the Planning Commission and Township staff. The preapplication conference and sketch plan are strongly recommended but are not mandatory; they are not considered to be part of a formal plan application.

## Estimating the Cost of a Plan

To estimate the cost of a permit, be sure to consider the following expenses:

1. Engineering fees to produce the plans.
2. Plan submission fee.
3. Township escrow fees (used to pay for review by Township consultants).
4. Municipal sewage enforcement officer's review fee (applicable only where a site has or is proposed to have an on-lot septic system). Note: Township officials will not sign a plan until all review fees are paid.
5. Lighting Plan application fee.
6. Zoning Permit fee.
7. Development Review Sign rental fee.

## Submitting the Plan

At the Planning Commission's next regular meeting, provided such application was made at least 28 days prior to the meeting, or at a special meeting called for that purpose after receipt of the plan, the Planning Commission may review the plan to determine its conformance to the provisions contained in these regulations. Plans submitted after this deadline may be scheduled for later review. (The submission deadline and meeting date are subject to change. Be sure to check on all required deadlines *before* preparing your plan.)

## Getting Your Plan Approved

When a subdivision or land development plan is filed, the Township Supervisors are legally required to take action on it within 90 days after the next regularly scheduled Township Planning Commission meeting, or 120 days from the date of submission if the Planning Commission meeting should not occur for more than 30 days from the date the application is filed. Subdivision and land development plans may be submitted in two stages: preliminary and final. Approval of a preliminary plan permits you to lay out lots and construct streets, utility facilities, and public facilities, but no parcel or lot may be recorded or sold until final plan approval. Approval of a final plan permits lots to be sold and recorded. Financial surety must be posted prior to final plan approval in lieu of the completion of any public facilities such as streets, sewer and water mains, and sidewalks.

**Note: Other agencies may need to approve components of your plan. For example, Sewer Authority approval is needed for sewage planning modules or Centre County Conservation District approval is required for an Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan. You must ensure that any other agency approvals are obtained.**

## The Application Process

1. The applicant submits 10 copies of the plan, plus one copy of all required documents, such as application form, agent letter, ownership papers, stormwater management plan, completed sewage planning modules, and an erosion and sedimentation control plan. The plans, fees, and required documents must be submitted to the Township Community Planner.
2. Township staff reviews the plans for compliance with basic submission requirements. Plans will be rejected if the basic submission requirements are deficient.
3. The Township's Solicitor, Engineer, Zoning Administrator, Sewage Enforcement Officer, Centre Regional Planning Agency staff, Centre Region Fire Chief, CR Recycling Coordinator, and others review the plans and provide written review comments to the Community Planner within 14 days after the submission date.
4. The Community Planner forwards review comments to the applicant's engineer or surveyor.
5. Before the Township Planning Commission meeting, the applicant's engineer or surveyor must address the review comments, make any necessary revisions, and then provide documentation of the revisions. If any review comments are not addressed, the plan may not appear on the Planning Commission's agenda until the next meeting. After the plan is submitted, any change to the plan will result in a new 90-day time period being established.

6. The applicant or an authorized representative presents the plan at the Township Planning Commission meeting, held on the second and the fourth Monday of each month. The Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for the plan approval or denial. The Planning Commission may also delay action on the plan until another meeting if any review comments are not yet addressed.
7. Once the Township Planning Commission makes a recommendation for approval or denial, the applicant or an authorized representative presents the plan to the Board of Supervisors. The Supervisors must take action on the plan within the time period previously described above. If the plan is rejected, your project cannot be built unless a revised plan or a new plan is approved. If the plan is approved, you must secure all necessary permits before beginning construction.
8. After the Supervisors have approved and signed a subdivision or land development plan, the plan must be recorded within 90 days in the office of the Recorder of Deeds of Centre County.

**Note:** *The above dates and time schedules are subject to change.*

### **Plan Validity**

Subdivision and Land Development plans are valid for five years from the date the plan received preliminary approval to provide for the completion of public improvements.

### **Securing Your Permits**

Subdivision and Land Development plans are valid for five years from the date the plan received preliminary approval. An approved plan and any necessary permits must be obtained prior to construction of any site improvements. Please refer to **[A Guide to Zoning Approval](#)**.

### **For More Information**

This guide does not replace the adopted Zoning or Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances. These ordinances may be found at the Ferguson Township website: [www.twp.ferguson.pa.us](http://www.twp.ferguson.pa.us)

If the information contained in this fact sheet is inconsistent with or contradicts the ordinances, the ordinances shall prevail.



**For more information, contact the Ferguson Township  
Department of Planning and Zoning:**

**3147 Research Drive, State College, PA 16801  
(814) 238-4651  
[rstolinas@twp.ferguson.pa.us](mailto:rstolinas@twp.ferguson.pa.us)**