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Newsletter of the Pa. Association of Zoning Officials

June 2021

The Zoning Official Is Now Monthly!

The Pennsylvania Association of Zoning Officials (PAAZO) is committed to giving you timely information so has converted *The Zoning Official* to a digital format that will be emailed monthly.

Look for quick bites about latest news and trending topics, recent legal decisions, educational opportunities, and other interesting items.

We would love to hear what you think about the new format, plus any suggestions you may have. Send us an email at paazo@psats.org or call Editor Brenda Wilt at (717) 763-0930, ext. 123, or PAAZO Program Manager Kathy Kronicz at (717) 763-0930, ext. 154.

Latest News

PSATS Regional Forums Provide Great Educational Opportunities for Zoning Officials

PSATS will be hosting a series of one-day Regional Forums around the state this summer and fall. The forums are intended for smaller, more interactive audiences and will cover a variety of topics, including many zoning/planning related issues. For example, the Lehigh Valley Regional Forum on July 28 in Breinigsville will have a session on “quality of life” ordinances and review how to manage short-term rentals, property maintenance issues, and more. For more information on the Regional Forum schedule and agendas, go to regionalforum.psats.org.

PSATS Looking for Speakers at Upcoming Events

If you are interested in presenting to an audience of your fellow zoning officials or other township officials and staff at an upcoming PSATS in-person event or webinar, please contact Kathy Kronicz at kkronicz@psats.org.

Proposed Federal Plans to Impact Single-Family Only Zoning?

In a recent blog post — “Uncle Sam Giving You More Chances to Love More New Neighbors?” —

Chris Knarr of McNees Wallace & Nurick examined the growing trend toward providing additional housing opportunities through revised planning and zoning regulations. He noted that President Biden's proposed American Jobs Plan would include \$5 billion in competitive grants that would include requirements that multi-family housing be allowed in areas traditionally zoned for single-family dwellings. To read more, click [HERE](#).

Training Opportunities

[Using Open Space to Deliver Economic, Social, and Environmental Benefits \(Webinar\) – 7/14/21](#)

Demand for open space is on the rise, and many have moved out of the cities to relieve stress and socially distance outdoors. At the same time, communities are facing significant challenges related to equity, public health, economic activity, and environmental sustainability.

This presentation will discuss how planners and community leaders can meet the increased demand for open space while addressing broader social, environmental, and economic needs. It will also provide strategies for rural and suburban leaders looking to attract remote workers on the move and strategies for urban leaders looking to retain their population through nature-based placemaking.



[Basic Parliamentary Procedure for Local Government \(Webinar\) – 7/15/21](#)

NOTE: This would be a great share with your zoning hearing board members!

Parliamentary procedure may not seem the most exciting topic, but it is the absolute foundation for running an efficient township meeting and instilling confidence in your residents that the township is being effectively governed. In this virtual class, you will learn the basics of parliamentary procedure and ways to improve your public meetings. We will cover a variety of the most common procedural tasks, including developing agendas, making and amending motions, following the order of voting, and much more.



[In the Hot Seat: Handling Tough Situations as the Chair of the Board \(Webinar\) – 7/22/21](#)

NOTE: This would be a great share with your zoning hearing board chairs!

Whether you have been the chair of your township board for a long time or are relatively new to the game, there are many situations during township meetings where it is critical that the chair resolve them in an effective manner. This includes



addressing challenging residents during public comment, defusing disagreements between board members, and navigating the complexities of parliamentary procedure during difficult votes. In this virtual class, you will learn best practices for tackling these situations and making yourself a better board chair.

PAAZO Fall Seminars

The agendas for these events are being built out and will be sent to PAAZO members once finalized. In the meantime, here are the dates and registration information:

- [October 19, 2021 \(PSATS, Cumberland County\)](#)
- [October 21, 2021 \(Monroeville, Allegheny County\)](#)
- [November 9, 2021 \(Exton, Chester County\)](#)



Legal Update

Commonwealth Court Issues Significant Decision on Municipal Regulation of Shooting Ranges

In *Barris v. Stroud Twp.*, ___ A.3d ___, 2021 WL 2177376 (Pa.Cmwth. May 28, 2021), the Commonwealth Court ruled that a township ordinance regulating shooting ranges violated the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution but provided valuable guidance regarding what steps a municipality might permissibly take without violating its residents' constitutional rights. To read more, click [HERE](#).

Borough's Complete Ban on Digital Billboards Fails

In *Adams Outdoor Advertising, Ltd. v. Zoning Hearing Bd. of Borough of Stroudsburg*, No. 392 C.D. 2020, 2021 WL 1961925 (Pa.Cmwth. May 17, 2021), the Commonwealth Court affirmed an order granting site-specific relief for placement of a 60-foot high, 1,344-square-foot electronic billboard that would be visible to motorists on Interstate 80 because the borough failed to justify its total ban on electronic billboards. To read more, click [HERE](#).

Legislative Update

House Passes Open Space Legislation

The House recently unanimously passed HB 221 which would amend the Local Tax Enabling Act (Act 511 of 1965) to authorize local governments to use up to 25% of revenue from the open space tax for maintenance and development regardless of the method of acquisition or purchase. HB 221 is now in the Senate.

House Approves Subdivision and Land Development Bill

Last week, the House passed HB 141 which would mandate that all subdivision and land development ordinances contain a non-building waiver provision. This legislation would enable property owners to create nonbuilding lots which would be exempt from the normal subdivision process until they are ready to develop the property. HB 141 is now in the Senate. PSATS is opposed to HB 141 as currently written and will continue to work with members of the General Assembly on this proposal.



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