

ZONING

27 Attachment 1

Township of Cambria

Appendix 27-1

A Reader's Guide to the Organization and Applicability of this chapter

This chapter regulates all land uses, lots, and structures within Cambria Township. Every regulated land use, lot or structure must either conform to the rules of this chapter or be a nonconforming use, nonconforming lot, or nonconforming structure. A nonconformity is defined as a use, lot or structure that: (1) was legally established before the effective date of this chapter's enactment (See Part 1, § 27-110, "Effective Date"), and (2) does not conform to the substantive requirements of this chapter. Because property owners could not have known what the regulations of this chapter were going to be in advance, they have a legal and ethical right to continue the previously legal use of their property as they had prior to enactment of this chapter. However, all nonconformities, except nonconforming signs, are subject to the regulations of Part 3, "Nonconforming Buildings and Land Uses." Special regulations for nonconforming signs are provided in Part 7, "Signs." All regulated land uses, lots and structures that are neither in conformance with the controls of this chapter or are nonconformities do not meet the requirements of the Chapter and subject to the enforcement procedures and penalties specified in Part 2, § 27-207, "Enforcement."

Zoning ordinances are always complex due to the complex nature of modern communities. However, this chapter is organized to be simple and to minimize the amount of reading required determining how a property or project is restricted.

The first three Parts of this chapter contain specifications that affect Cambria Township land owners on a daily basis, and apply to all properties within the Township.

Part 1, "General Provisions," titles and enacts the Chapter, explains what the general purposes of this chapter are and what its basic rules are.

Part 2, "Administration," explains, among other things, 1) when zoning permits are needed, 2) what a variance is 3) what a special exception use is, 4) illustrates the procedures for obtaining permits and/or scheduling hearings for various uses. It also lists the standards that the Township Board of Supervisors is to employ in determining whether or not to grant permission for certain uses, how the Chapter will be enforced, how landowners may contest the Zoning Officer's determinations, and how landowners may dispute the validity of this chapter. Administrative provisions that are relevant to the Zoning Officer, Township Officials, Township Board of Supervisors, and the Zoning Hearing Board are also contained in Part 2.

Part 3, "Nonconforming Buildings and Land Uses," explains what nonconformity is and what extra regulations apply to nonconforming uses. In summary, anyone who has a question concerning how this chapter regulates all property should review Parts 1, 2, and 3.

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However, many of the regulations in the Chapter should not be applied to all areas of the Township due to the differing statutes and goals for each area. So Part 4, “Designation of Zones,” divides the Township into 10 different “zoning districts”-each of which is composed of areas with present-day statutes and goals. Therefore, Part 5 sets forth provisions that differ from one zoning district to another to accomplish these goals. This Part also contains some general zone provisions that apply to a number of land uses.

Part 5, “Zone Provisions-Permitted Uses,” then provides sets of regulations for each zoning district, addressing specific subjects for the district such as permitted land uses and special requirements found in Part 7, “Signs.” Within each zoning district in Part 5, “Zoning Provisions-Permitted Uses,” are subsections titled “Off-Street Parking” that address the off-street parking requirements for specific land uses within the zones including general requirements, facilities required, and loading and unloading space. A general rule of thumb is that readers who have a question concerning how the Chapter regulates a property need to read the parts of Part 5 that concern the zoning district of that property.

Part 6, “Supplementary Regulations,” constitutes policies that involve and affect all or a majority of zoning districts.

Part 7, “Signs,” contains the majority of the Chapter’s sign regulations including those that apply to all residential districts, portable signs, billboards, and business identification.

Part 9, “Definitions,” provides a glossary of the terms used throughout this chapter. The Sections in Parts 1, 2 and 3 apply to every regulated land use, lot, and structure in the Township. Because they address each of the Cambria Township’s 10 zoning districts, the Sections in Part 4 also apply to every regulated land use, lot, and structure in the Township. However, the Sections of Parts 5-7 apply only when a provision of Parts 1, 2 and 3 explicitly says so. Township officials should be familiar with the entire Chapter, as well as the Central Cambria Coalition Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan.