

Introduction to the...

CITY OF NEW BERN PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD

Why Plan?

Citizens demand a wide array of public services, from garbage collection to good roads to clean air. Most communities have found that to efficiently provide these services, forethought and a road map that clearly outline the rights and responsibilities of citizenship are necessary, along with a vision of a well maintained, livable, safe and healthy place in the future. The goal of good planning is to get out in front of potential problems and prepare for quality growth, not to stifle it or remove any individual's rights.

Planning Boards are the advocates of the general public interest

The unique role of the Planning and Zoning Board is to represent the general public interest and not the interest of a specific group or point of view as it makes recommendations and decisions regarding public policy that will affect the future development of our community. This may require board members to make decisions that may not be advantageous individually or for the group that some members most closely associate with (neighborhood advocates, business interests, environmental interests, etc.) but are best for the most citizens. Their role is to buffer the influence of politics in the decision making process, and to apply rational, forward-thinking analysis to the everyday business of building our community. Though political pressure is an inescapable part of all public deliberation, the Planning and Zoning Board must advocate for the good of the *community at large*, despite the shifting political winds.

Organization of the New Bern Planning and Zoning Board

The New Bern Planning and Zoning Board is a volunteer advisory board appointed by the Board of Aldermen. The Planning Board consists of ten members chosen from citizens living within the City and the City's extraterritorial planning area. Board members serve up to two successive three-year terms. All members must have demonstrated special interest, experience, or education in banking, economics, environmental and land use policy, housing, or industry.

The Planning and Zoning Board meets the first Tuesday of each month in the second floor courtroom at City Hall. Since the Planning and Zoning Board has only advisory authority, it need not conduct its meetings strictly in accordance with the quasi-judicial procedures. However, it must conduct its meetings so as to obtain necessary information and to promote the full and free exchange of ideas.

Powers and Duties

The Planning and Zoning Board's major responsibilities are to make recommendations concerning conditional use and special use permit requests, subdivision general plans, zoning amendment proposals, and make studies and recommend to the Board of Aldermen plans, goals and objectives relating to the growth, development and redevelopment of the City of New Bern.