

**MERCER COUNTY
ZONING ORDINANCE**

Adopted 1975
Republished 1981
Updated 1994
Updated 2000
Updated 2009
Updated 2014
Updated 2015
Updated 2018
Updated 2019
Updated 2020
Updated 2022
Updated 2023
Updated 2024

By

The Board of Mercer County Commissioners

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**MERCER COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE POLICY PLAN**

Adopted 1975

Republished 1986

Updated 1994

Updated 2000

By

The Board of Mercer County Commissioners

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ENABLING ACT

COUNTY ZONING

CENTURY CODE
SECTION

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- 11-33-01 County power to regulate property. For the purpose of
promoting health, safety, morals, public convenience,
general prosperity, and public welfare, the board of
county commissioners of any county may regulate and
restrict within the county, subject to Section 11-30-20
and Chapter 54-21.3, the location and the use of
buildings and structures and the use, condition of use,
or occupancy of lands for residence, recreation, and
other purposes. The board of county commissioners shall
establish zoning requirements for solid waste disposal
and incineration facilities before July 1, 1994. The
board of county commissioners may impose tipping or
other fees on solid waste management and incineration
facilities. The board of county commissioners may not
impose any fee under this section on an energy
conversion facility or coal mining operation that
disposes of its waste onsite.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 1; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3301; S. L. 1979, ch. 548, § 7; 1993, ch. 111, § 1; 1993, ch. 112, § 1.

11-33-02 Board of County Commissioners to designate districts. For any or all of the purposes designated in Section 11-33-01, the board of county commissioners may by resolution divide all or any parts of the county, subject to the provisions of Section 11-33-20, into districts of such number, shape, and area as may be deemed necessary, and may likewise enact suitable regulations to carry out the purposes of this chapter. These regulations shall be uniform in each district, but the regulations in one district may differ from those in other districts. No regulation or restriction, however, shall prohibit or prevent the use of land or buildings for farming or any of the normal incidents of farming. The provisions of this chapter shall not be construed to include any power relating to the establishment, repair, and maintenance of highways or roads.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 2; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp. § 11-3302.

11-33-03 Object of regulations. These regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan and designed for any or all of the following purposes:

1. To protect and guide the development of nonurban areas.
2. To secure safety from fire, flood, and other dangers.
3. To regulate and restrict the erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, or use of buildings and structures, the height, number of stories, and size of buildings and structures, the percentage of lot that may be occupied, the size of courts, yards, and other open spaces, the density of population, and the location and use of buildings, structures, and land for trade, industry, residence or other purposes.
4. To lessen governmental expenditures.
5. To conserve and develop natural resources.

These regulations shall be made with a reasonable consideration, among other things, to the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses. The comprehensive plan shall be a statement in documented text setting forth explicit goals, objectives, policies, and standards of the jurisdiction to guide public and private development within its control.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 3; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3303; S.L. 1981, ch. 148, § 1.

11-33-04 County planning commissions authorized-Membership. The board of county commissioners of any county desiring to

avail itself of the powers conferred by this chapter, shall establish, by resolution, a county planning commission to recommend the boundaries of the various county zoning districts and appropriate regulations and restrictions to be established therein. In counties with three-member boards of county commissioners, the planning commission consists of seven members, of whom at least one must be appointed from the governing body of the city that is the county seat, and of whom at most one may be appointed from the board of county commissioners. In counties with five-member boards of county commissioners the planning commission consists of nine members, of whom at least two must be appointed from the governing body of the city that is the county seat, and of whom at most two may be appointed from the board of county commissioners. The term of an ex officio member is coterminous with the member's term in the underlying office. The remaining members shall be appointed from the county at large. In counties that elect county commissioners from districts, at least one at-large member of the planning commission must be appointed from each district. When appointments to said commission are first made, three members at-large shall be appointed for a two-year term and two members-at-large for a four-year term, after which all subsequent appointments for members-at-large shall be for a four-year term. All appointments to fill vacancies shall be for the unexpired portion of the term. All appointments to the county planning commission shall be made by the board of county commissioners.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 4; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., §11-3304; S.L. 1985, ch. 167, § 1.

11-33-05 Meetings-Officers.-The commission shall meet within thirty days after its appointment and elect a chairman and other necessary officers from its membership. The commission may adopt rules and bylaws not inconsistent with the provisions of this chapter. A majority of the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum. Members of the commission may be compensated for their actual expenses in the same manner as members of the board of county commissioners. The county auditor shall serve as secretary to the commission and shall keep all of the records and accounts of the commission.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 5; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3305; S. L. 1969, ch. 138, § 1.

11-33-06 Investigations.-The county planning commission in conjunction with the township boards of the affected areas shall investigate and determine the necessity of establishing districts and prescribing regulations therefore, as herein provided; and, for that purpose, shall consult with residents of affected areas, and with federal, state, and other agencies concerned. State,

county, township, and city officials, departments, or agencies are hereby required to make available, upon request of the county planning commission, such pertinent information as they may possess, to render technical assistance, and to cooperate in assembling and compiling pertinent information.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 6; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3306.

11-33-07 County planning commission to prepare plan.-After investigation, as herein provided, the county planning commission shall prepare a proposed resolution to be submitted to the board of county commissioners establishing districts and prescribing regulations therefore, as herein provided, which shall be filed in the office of the county auditor.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 7; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3307.

11-33-08 Hearings.-After the filing of the proposed resolution, the county planning commission shall hold a public hearing thereon, at which the proposed resolution shall be submitted for discussion, and parties in interest and citizens shall have an opportunity to be heard. Notice of the time, place, and purpose of the hearing shall be published once each week for two consecutive weeks in the official newspaper of the county, and in such other newspaper published in the county as the county planning commission may deem necessary. Said notice shall describe the nature, scope, and purpose of the proposed resolution, and shall state the times at which it will be available to the public for inspection and copying at the office of the county auditor.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 8; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3308; S. L. 1977, ch. 110, §1.

11-33-09 Publication of resolutions-Effective date.-Following the public hearing, the board of county commissioners may adopt the proposed resolutions or any amendments thereto, with such changes as it may deem advisable. Upon adoption of any resolution or any amendment thereto, the county auditor shall file a certified copy thereof with the register of deeds. Immediately after the adoption of any such resolution or any amendment thereto, the county auditor shall cause notice of the same to be published for two successive weeks in the official newspaper of the county and in such other newspapers published in the county as the board of county commissioners may deem necessary. Said notice shall describe the nature, scope, and purpose of the adopted resolution, and shall state the times at which it will be available to the public for inspection and

copying at the office of the register of deeds. Proof of such publication shall be filed in the office of the county auditor. If no petition for a separate hearing is filed pursuant to Section 11-33-10, the resolution or amendment thereto shall take effect upon the expiration of the time for filing said petition. If a petition for a separate hearing is filed pursuant to Section 11-33-10, the resolution shall not take effect until the board of county commissioners has affirmed such resolution or amendment in accordance with the procedures of Section 11-33-10. Any such resolution may, from time to time, be amended or repealed by the board of county commissioners upon like proceedings as in case of the adoption of a resolution.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 9; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3309; S. L. 1977, ch. 110, §2; 1977 ch. 111, §1.

11-33-10 Separate hearings.-Any person aggrieved by any provision of a resolution adopted hereunder, or any amendment thereto may, within thirty days after the first publication of such resolution or amendment, petition for a separate hearing thereon before the board of county commissioners. The petition shall be in writing and shall specify in detail the ground of the objections. The petition shall be filed with the county auditor. A hearing thereon shall be held by the board no sooner than seven days, nor later than thirty days after the filing of the petition with the county auditor, who shall notify the petitioner of the time and place of the hearing. At this hearing the board of county commissioners shall consider the matter complained of and shall notify the petitioner, by registered or certified mail, what action, if any, it proposes to take thereon. The board of county commissioners, at their next regular meeting, shall either rescind or affirm such resolution or amendment. The provisions of this section shall not operate to curtail or exclude the exercise of any other rights or powers of the board of county commissioners or any citizen.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 10; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3310; S. L. 1977, ch. 111, §2.

11-33-11 May adjust enforcement.-The board of county commissioners is authorized to adjust the application or enforcement of any provision of a resolution hereunder in any specific case where a literal enforcement of such provision would result in great practical difficulties, unnecessary hardship, or injustice, so as to avoid such consequences, provided such action shall not be contrary to the public interest or the general purposes hereof.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 11; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp.,

§ 11-3311.

11-33-12 Appeals to district court.-Any person, or persons jointly or severally, aggrieved by a decision of the board of county commissioners under this chapter, and may appeal to the district court in the manner provided in Section 28-34-01.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 12; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3312; S.L. 1989, ch. 83, § 7.

11-33-13 Not to affect use.-The lawful use or occupation of land or premises existing at the time of the adoption of a resolution hereunder may be continued, although such use or occupation does not conform to the provisions thereof, but if such nonconforming use or occupancy is discontinued for a period of more than two years, any subsequent use or occupancy of the land or premises shall be a conforming use or occupancy. If the state acquires title to any land or premises, all further use or occupancy thereof shall be a conforming use or occupancy.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch 119, § 13; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3313.

11-33-14 Nonconforming uses regulated.-The board of county commissioners, may, by resolutions, as herein provided, prescribe such reasonable regulations, not contrary to law, as it deems desirable or necessary to regulate and control nonconforming uses and occupancies.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 14; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3314.

11-33-15 Board of county commissioners to make complete list.- Repealed by S. L. 1969, ch. 138, § 2.

11-33-16 Enforcement.-The board of county commissioners shall provide for the enforcement of this chapter and of resolutions and regulations made there under, and may impose enforcement duties on any officer, department, agency or employee of the county.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 16; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3316.

11-33-17 Violation of zoning regulations and restrictions- Remedies.-If any building or structure is erected, constructed, reconstructed, altered, repaired, converted, or maintained, or if any building, structure, or land is used in violation of this chapter, the proper county authorities or any affected citizen or property

owner, in addition to other remedies, may institute any appropriate action or proceedings:

1. To prevent such unlawful erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, conversion, maintenance or use.
2. To restrain, correct, or abate such violations.
3. To prevent the occupancy of the building, structure, or land.
4. To prevent any illegal act, conduct, business, or use in or about such premises.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 17; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3317.

11-33-18 Power of board of county commissioners to issue permits - Notification of director of the department of transportation - Power of board to appropriate money.

1. The board of county commissioners may authorize and provide for the issuance of permits as a prerequisite to construction, erection, reconstruction, alteration, repair, or enlargement of any building or structure otherwise subject to this chapter.
2. If a board of county commissioners provides for the issuance of permits, the board shall require the applicant to state whether the structure is reasonably anticipated to have a significant impact on the transportation system. A structure is deemed to have significant impact on the transportation system if, over a period of one year, it will have an average daily usage of at least ten motor vehicles whose gross weight exceeds sixty thousand pounds [27,215.54 kilograms]. The board shall require that, if the structure will have a significant impact on the transportation system, the director of the department of transportation be notified and be given an opportunity to comment on the application. However, approval of the director of the department of transportation of the proposed structure is not required.
3. The board may establish and collect reasonable fees for permits issued under this section. The fees so collected must be credited to the general fund of the county.
4. The board of county commissioners may appropriate, out of the general funds of the county, such moneys as may be necessary for the purposes of this chapter.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 18; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3318; S.L. 1987, ch. 157, § 1.

11-33-19 Joint planning commission may be established.-Where the area to be regulated and restricted is situated in two

or more counties a joint planning commission may be established. Membership of such a joint planning commission shall consist of five members from each county planning commission to be appointed by the chairman of the respective county planning commissions. Each joint commission shall make a preliminary report and hold public hearings thereon as is provided in the case of county planning commissions before submitting its final report and recommendations to the respective county planning commissions of each county concerned.

Source: S. L. 1955, ch. 119, § 19; R. C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3319.

11-33-20 Township zoning not affected - Township and city may relinquish powers - Joint zoning authority over solid waste disposal facilities. This chapter does not prevent townships from making regulations as provided in sections 58-03-11 through 58-03-15, but such townships may relinquish their powers, or any portion thereof, to enact zoning regulations to the county by resolution of the board of township supervisors. This chapter may not be construed to affect any property, real or personal, located within the zoning or subdivision authority of any city of this state, except that any city by resolution of its governing body may relinquish to the county its authority, or any portion thereof, to enact zoning regulations under chapter 40-47 or subdivision regulations under chapter 40-48, in which case the property is subject to this chapter. A solid waste disposal or incineration facility must meet the zoning requirements of both the county and township where the facility is located unless the township has relinquished zoning authority to the county.

Source: S.L 1955, ch. 119, § 20; R.C. 1943, 1957 Supp., § 11-3320; S.L. 1975, ch. 385, § 1; 1977, ch. 112, § 1; 1993, ch. 111, § 2.

11-33-21 General penalties for violation of zoning regulations and restrictions.-A violation of any provision of this chapter or the regulations and restrictions made there under shall constitute the maintenance of a public nuisance and shall be a class B misdemeanor.

Source: S. L. 1973, ch. 103, § 1; 1975, ch. 106, § 94.