

Neighborhood Services FAQ

Schedule of Meetings:

Planning Commission meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers in City Hall.

Property Maintenance Board of Appeals meets the 4th Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. as necessary in the City Commission Chambers in City Hall.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) meets the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. as necessary in the City Commission Chambers in City Hall.

Q: I want to construct a fence on my property, do I need a permit?

A: Yes, you need to fill out a fence permit for any fence that is constructed on your property. http://www.ci.big-rapids.mi.us/pdfs/fence_permit.pdf

Q: Do I need a permit to build an addition or garage?

A: Yes, you will need to first obtain a zoning permit, and then you can apply for a building permit from the Mecosta County Building Department. http://www.ci.big-rapids.mi.us/pdfs/zoning_permit.pdf

Q: I want to add a parking area on my property, do I need a permit?

A: Yes, you will need to receive a zoning permit to receive approval from the Neighborhood Services Department. If the property is a multi-family dwelling the plan shall be submitted to the Plan Board for review and approval based on the procedures established for site plan review. http://www.ci.big-rapids.mi.us/pdfs/zoning_permit.pdf

Q: I own a rental and want to advertise that, do I need to obtain a sign permit?

A: No, there is no sign permit required for a temporary sign. There are restrictions however, that sign may not be affixed to the home or be placed on the interior of any windows on the property. Signs should be removed after the unit has been rented.

Q: Our house does not have enough parking for the number of cars we have, can we just park on the grass?

A: No, parking is not allowed on the grass and you can be ticketed for parking there.

Q: I want to operate a business out of my home, do I need a permit?

A: Yes, you need to apply for a home occupation permit. This application will be heard by the Plan Board and then recommended to the City Commission for approval.

Q: How do I rezone my property?

A: In order to rezone a piece of property, please send a zoning request application to the City of Big Rapids Zoning Department. Please provide a legal description of the property. Provide a written description of reasons for rezoning and proposed new zoning classification. Address the requirements set forth in Section 14.2:4 of the City of Big Rapids Zoning Ordinance as well as providing a location map of the property.

The request will be handled by the City Planning Commission who will either deny or recommend to the City Commission for approval to rezone. All property owners within 300 feet of the subject parcel will be notified of this public hearing. There is a non-refundable application fee of (\$75). Please call the Zoning Administrator at 231-592-4057 if you have questions whether your property would be a good candidate to be rezoned.

Q: How do I obtain a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)?

A: If you would like to erect a fence in your front yard or build an addition or garage closer to your property line than the zoning ordinance will allow, you can fill out an application for zoning variance and submit the form with the \$75 fee to the Zoning Department. The ZBA will consider granting a variance to allow construction otherwise prohibited by the Zoning Ordinance. The application needs to be submitted 21 days prior to the next ZBA meeting to be heard; otherwise it will be heard at the following months meeting.