West Whiteland
TOWNSHIP

Property Owners' Rights and Township Regulations

Frequently Asked Questions

Why isn't West Whiteland saying no to all this construction underway?
Because legally we can't. Property owners decide if and when to sell, develop or renovate their properties, although changes must meet applicable regulations.

So developers can build whatever they want?
No, there are limits. While the Township can't prohibit a property owner from developing their property, we can regulate how the property is developed. The property owner will not receive permission to construct until they demonstrate that the development will comply with all applicable regulations.

What kind of limits or requirements can the Township adopt and enforce?
The Township has zoning and development regulations that specify:

- the way a property may be used (e.g. houses or apartments or office…),
- how big buildings can be (e.g. no taller than x feet high), both height and floor area,
- how much buffer, green space and landscaping there must be on a property,
- requirements for the provision of or funding for open space,
- the need for traffic impact assessment and funding,
- requirements for managing stormwater runoff on the property,
- protections for historic structures and
- many other features that address the scale of development on a property.

The regulations also list information that developers must submit to demonstrate compliance.

How do we know developers are following the rules?
Township staff and consultants review and comment on proposed plans. The reviews are provided to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to inform their discussions with developers about the proposed plans at public meetings. Areas of review include:

- Zoning
- Stormwater management
- Traffic
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Historic preservation
- Community safety (police and fire)
- Construction codes/building safety

Do I have a say about what can be developed on someone else's property?
Yes, for commercial development or redevelopment or plans for new residential developments that must receive land development approval from the Board of Supervisors before building permits can be issued or construction can start. Those plans are discussed at the Planning Commission's and Board of Supervisors' public meetings at the Township Building. Their meeting schedules for the year are on the website. On the Friday before each of their meetings, the agenda and meeting packet also is posted on the website.

Neighboring property owners are mailed a notice before the first public meeting when a proposed plan is on a Planning Commission agenda. Residents can receive notifications about subsequent meetings for developments they are interested in by emailing the Township at jweller@westwhiteland.org.

Construction of or renovations to a single-family home only requires building permits, not public land development review, and therefore there is not an accompanying public input process.

For any type of construction project, if the project does not comply with all zoning regulations, the property owner can seek a variance from the Township's Zoning Hearing Board to permit the requested regulatory relief. Neighboring property owners are mailed a notice prior to the first public meeting when a project is on the Zoning Hearing Board agenda.

Where can I go for more information?
The Township's website has information about the development process, plans and projects.
https://www.westwhiteland.org/155/Planning-Zoning

All of the Township's ordinance regulations are codified at:
https://ecode360.com/WE2141

The Township's Code includes an interactive zoning map that makes it easier to find regulations for each property.
https://we2141.zoninghub.com/zoningmap.aspx

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https://www.westwhiteland.org/225/Public-Information

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