

**INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING OBTAINING  
A WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP ZONING PERMIT**

1. When a zoning permit is required. According to Article 2 of the Whitehall Township zoning ordinance, a zoning permit is required and shall be obtained prior to the use, construction, enlargement, alteration, conversion or moving of any building or part thereof, except under the following two circumstances:

A. Exception #1: No zoning permit is required for the erection and/or placing of a temporary portable structure used during a construction operation, as long as the temporary portable structure conforms to the setback and height requirements of the zoning district in which it is located.

B. Exception #2: No zoning permit is required for repairs of a minor nature such as painting and general maintenance and upkeep, which do not change the use, occupancy, or area of a structure or sign.

2. Applying For Zoning Permits and Building Permits. Zoning permit applications may be obtained and filed at the law offices of Rose & Novak, at 8787 Ferry Street, Montague, MI. That office is open between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Building permits may be applied for at the White Lake Area Building Authority, which is located at Montague City Hall, at 8778 Ferry Street, Montague, MI. That office is open between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. **A zoning permit must be obtained before a building permit is issued.** The White Lake Area Building Authority will not issue a building permit until it has been presented with a zoning permit issued by the Whitehall Township Zoning Administrator. In some cases agricultural buildings or structures may not require building permits; however, agricultural buildings and structures still require zoning permits (even though a building permit might not be required). Whether a building permit is required or not is determined by the White Lake Area Building Inspector, and not by the Whitehall Township Zoning Administrator.

3. Other Permits. A zoning permit only confirms that the applicant has complied with the Whitehall Township Zoning Ordinance. It does not imply that the applicant will be granted a building permit, or that the applicant has complied with any other provision of law, such as state laws applicable to natural rivers, flood plains, wet lands or soil erosion control; Health Department approval; Drain Commission approval, Muskegon County Road Commission approval, or approval by any other governmental entity under any other law or statute. Further, a zoning permit granted by the Whitehall Township Zoning Administrator is **not** an approval to split or to divide a parcel of land into two or more parcels, under the Michigan Land Division Act. A separate permit must be obtained for a land division.

4. Filling Out the Application for a Zoning Permit. In order for a zoning permit to be granted, an application must first be obtained. The application must be completed. It has two parts.

A. The applicant must fill out the zoning permit application form. All questions must be answered. The application form must be signed by one of the **owners** of the property for which the zoning application is filled out, and/or by the applicant.

B. The applicant must also prepare a site plan. Instructions for the site plan are attached.

5. Fee. There is a zoning permit application fee. Please pay by cash, check or money order made payable to "Whitehall Township." This fee does not include variances, special use permits, or other types of zoning applications.

6. Zoning Permit Approval. The zoning permit cannot be approved until a completed and signed application is submitted, along with the site plan and the required zoning permit application fee. Additionally, once the permit is submitted, the Zoning Administrator may determine that the application cannot be granted without a special use permit (submitted to and reviewed/approved by the Planning Commission and then referred to subject to the approval by the Township Board), variance (submitted to and subject to review/approval by the Zoning Board of Appeals), or zoning amendment request (submitted to and subject to review/approval by the Planning Commission and then referred to subject to approval by the Township Board). Additionally, site plan review by the Planning Commission may be required.

7. Site Plan Review. Site plan review is set forth in Article 16 of the Whitehall Township zoning ordinance. Site plan review is a separate process, and involves review of the applicant's proposed plan by the Planning Commission. It requires that the applicant complete additional forms. Site plan review is intended to allow the Whitehall Township Planning Commission to have the opportunity to review commercial, industrial and other more intensive land uses within the Township, to ensure compliance with the Township zoning ordinance. Site plan review is required for all zoning permit requests except:

A. Exception #1: Site plan review is not required for a single family dwelling or two (2) family dwelling.

B. Exception #2: Site plan review is not required for any accessory structures requiring no new or additional means of access thereto from adjoining streets and not higher or larger than existing structures on the site, and complying with all Zoning Ordinance requirements. Site plan review may be required by the Zoning Administrator.

C. Exception #3: Site plan review is not required for projects involving the expansion, remodeling, or enlargement of existing structures which comply with all Zoning Ordinance requirements, involve no new or additional means of access thereto from adjoining streets, do not involve a change in the use of the premises, and do not involve increasing the height of existing structures nor an increase in the area thereof by more than one-fourth (1/4). Site plan review may be required by the Zoning Administrator.

8. **Common Mistakes**. Please avoid these common mistakes:

A. Be sure that the application is complete and that the site plan map complies with the instructions.

B. Be sure to include cash, check or money order made payable to "Whitehall Township" for the applicable zoning fee.

C. Leave enough time. It may take a day or two to obtain a zoning permit. Moreover, if a special use permit, variance, zoning amendment, or site plan review is required; it will take upwards of 60 days, maybe even more in certain circumstances.

9. Copies of Whitehall Township Zoning Ordinance Book. Copies of the Whitehall Township Zoning Ordinance book may be inspected, free of charge, at the offices of Rose & Novak, at the Whitehall Township Hall located at 7644 N. Durham Road in Whitehall during their hours of operation. Copies may be purchased from the Township. Please make your checks or money orders payable to "Whitehall Township".