

COMMON ZONING TERMS

Abutting. Properties having a common property line or easement

Adjacent. Properties that are nearby, but do not necessarily share a common boundary

Accessory use/structure. Subordinate to and supporting the primary use/structure

Board of Appeals. A commission appointed by the Mayor and City Council authorized with hearing and deciding special exceptions, variances and administrative reviews.

By-right. Permitted without requiring action by the Planning Commission, City Council or Board of Appeals.

Concept site plan. The first step in approving a project, which includes such things as permitted uses, tentative proposed locations and dimensions of buildings and streets, and number of dwellings units and square footage of commercial/office development. This is then followed by preliminary and final site plan.

Conditional use. Conditional uses are those uses designated as permitted within a certain zone, but because of their nature, activities and potential effects, require additional regulations and specific approval by the City Council.

Density. A measure of development on a property, usually expressed as the maximum number of dwelling units per acre or as commercial square footage.

Dwelling Unit. A building that includes sleeping, living, bathroom, and cooking facilities. Examples include a single family house, an apartment unit, a condominium unit, or a townhouse unit.

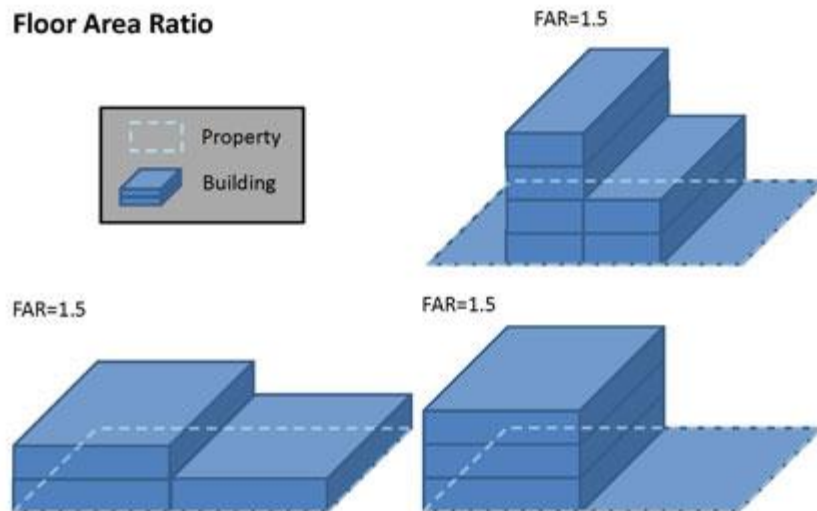
Easement. A recorded document that creates a limited right to use another person's property for a specific purpose, such as installing a utility service line or providing access to an adjacent property. Easements may include language regarding construction, maintenance, cost sharing, liability, and other rights and responsibilities.

Euclidean Zoning. zones that specifies which uses are allowed as well as the required height, bulk and density of development.

Final site plan. The last step in approving a project. A site plan showing full engineering and details, including things such as building and street locations and dimensions, site topography, utility locations, stormwater management features and architectural elevations.

Floating Zone. A zone that defines conditions rather than standards, namely projects reflecting a mix of uses in agreement with the Master Plan. The purpose of floating zones is to encourage creativity in design and permit specialized land development that typically includes a mix of uses. Floating zone uses, layouts, and densities are established for each individual project and approved through findings.

Floor area ratio (FAR). The ratio of the total floor area of all buildings to the total area of the lot which the buildings are on. This figure is determined by dividing the gross floor area of all buildings by the area of that lot or parcel. The following video provides a good explanation of FAR. www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGJSI4enoSY



Historic District Commission. Board appointed by the Mayor and City Council that safeguards the heritage of the City by preserving sites, structures or districts that reflect Gaithersburg's history.

Historic Designation. A property the City Council determines by resolution to possess historic, archaeological, architectural, or cultural significance.

Lot/Parcel/tract. Division of land into properties

Lot coverage. The total lot area covered by buildings.

Master Plan. A document composed of various elements, such as Land Use and Transportation, that acts as a guide to public and private actions and decisions to ensure the development of public and private property in appropriate ways.

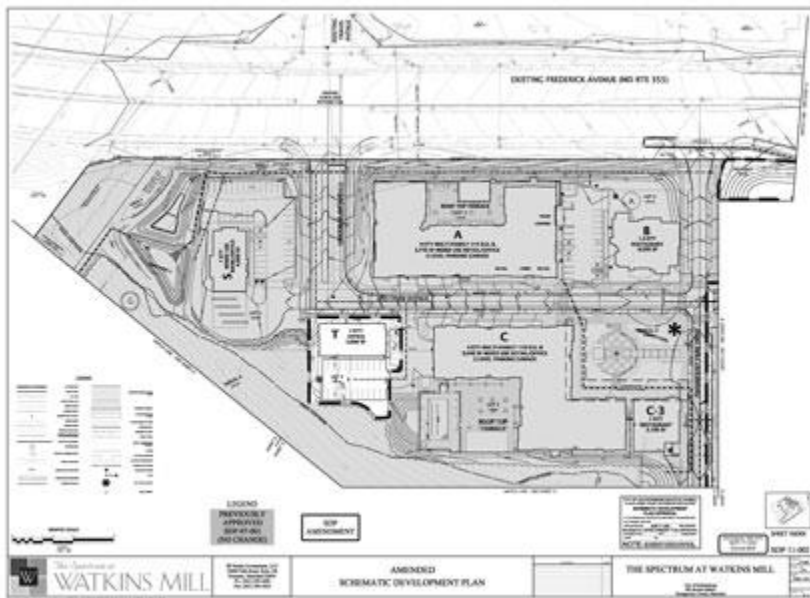
Mayor and City Council. The Mayor & City Council is the City's elected legislative body. They have approval authority over many planning and development decisions, including master plans, zoning map amendments, zoning text amendments, annexations, sketch plans, and schematic development plans.

Legally Nonconforming. A use of a building or land that was lawfully existing at the time of the previous zoning ordinance, but does not conform to the current zoning ordinance.

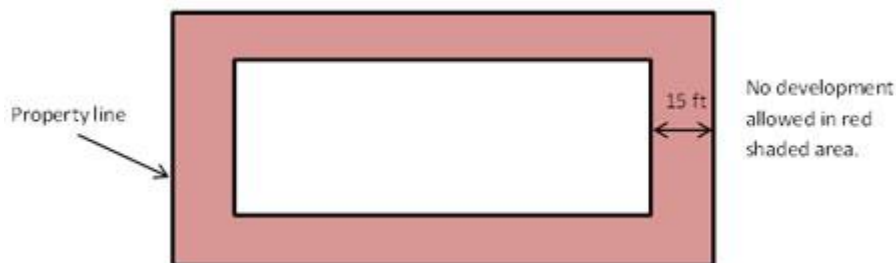
Planning Commission. A commission appointed by the Mayor and City Council authorized to review all Master Plans, zoning, and development applications.

Preliminary site plan. The second step in approving a project. A site plan showing all requirements of a concept site plan, but in more detail (things like permitted uses, tentative proposed locations and dimensions of buildings and streets, and number of dwellings units and square footage of commercial/office development) plus preliminary affordable housing and stormwater management plans.

Schematic development plan. A site plan showing the majority of site engineering and details, including things such as building and street locations and dimensions, site topography, utility locations, stormwater management features and architectural elevations. This is then followed by final site plan.



Setback, Yard, and Building Restriction Line. How far away a building must be from a property line. For instance, a 15 foot setback means that all buildings on the lot must be at least 15 feet away from the lot boundary.



Sketch Plan. A sketch plan is the first step in the development process for properties zoned MXD (Mixed Use Development) and must be approved by the Mayor & City Council. A

