



City of Wooster
Planning and Zoning Division
2018 Annual Report

January 14, 2019

Summary

The City of Wooster Planning and Zoning Division continued to facilitate and guide development in 2018. The division worked to efficiently review and process permits, assist various boards and commissions, enforce the regulations of the Planning and Zoning Code, and effectively conduct significant planning projects. Highlights for the Planning and Zoning Division in 2018 include:

- The adoption and implementation of a complete update of the Planning and Zoning Code and Zoning Map.
- The processing, assistance and evaluation of numerous property owner initiated amendments to the Zoning Map.
- The coordination of a number of significant projects reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission, Board of Building and Zoning Appeals and Design and Review Board, including:
 - An 81,000 sq. ft. new Western Reserve Group office building on Benden Drive
 - A 26,100 sq. ft. event center building and a 14,000 agricultural building at the Wayne County Fairgrounds
 - A 98 room Holiday Inn Express and reoccupation of the former Greenbriar event center on Riffel Road
 - A 7,500 sq. ft. Commercial and Savings Bank (CSB) building on East Liberty Street
- Continued assistance to the Planning Commission, Board of Building and Zoning Appeals and Design and Review Board in their review of applications.
- The allocation of significant staff time to the enforcement of the Planning and Zoning Code.
- The attainment of the majority of the division's Goals for 2018.

Planning Projects

The Planning and Zoning Division worked on the following significant planning projects in 2018:

1. **Planning and Zoning Code Update** – In 2017, the division initiated the process of completely updating the City's Planning and Zoning Code and Zoning Map. Such a process, which is commenced every ten years, is a significant undertaking. Due to the scale of the project, the City employed a consultant, Compass Point Planning, to develop the updated Planning and Zoning Code and Map.

For the project, a Steering Committee was created to guide the process and provide input. The Committee met nine times and provided valuable insight and recommendations on changes to the Planning and Zoning Code and Map. In addition, multiple meetings were with City Council's Laws and Ordinances Committee, the Planning Commission, and the public to gather input on changes and receive feedback on draft chapters.

The Division worked with the Planning Commission and City Council in 2018 to adopt the new Planning and Zoning Code and Zoning Map. From start to finish, the update took over a year and included the Planning Division's coordination with the project consultant, the Steering Committee, City Staff, the Planning Commission, City Council, and the public.

2. **Downtown Parking** – The Planning and Zoning Division and Building Standard Division worked to evaluate parking downtown, improve downtown parking permit regulations and move the parking permit application process online. A parking study was conducted in the summer of 2017 which identified that there was sufficient public parking downtown and public lots were being underutilized, in part due to extensive reserved parking spaces.

The Planning and Zoning Division worked with the Building Division, Engineering Division, and Police Department to implement a more flexible permit parking program. The program included the issuance of permit tags which authorized permitted vehicles to park in public lots, the removal of nearly all reserved parking spaces and other minor adjustments.

Permitting for downtown parking was transferred to an online system on ViewPoint Cloud in March. The system provided access to permits and applications at any time, allowed the printing of temporary parking permits and incorporated an automated renewal process.

An updated parking study was conducted in the summer of 2018 which indicated that the changes to downtown parking were effective and beneficial.

3. Rezoning Applications – In 2018, there were three Zoning Map Amendment applications submitted by property owners which had significant impacts on future development in the City of Wooster. The Planning and Zoning Division worked extensively with applicants and consulted other City divisions to evaluate, revise, and guide the following significant Zoning Map Amendment applications:

- 162 acres on Friendsville Road and West Smithville Western Road from R-1 (Suburban Single Family Residential) to R-3 (Attached Residential), R-4 (Multi-Family Residential), C-2 (Community Commercial), and C-3 (General Commercial)
- 53 acres at the northeast corner of Burbank Road and West Smithville Western Road from AG (Agricultural) to C-3 (General Commercial)
- 32 acres on West Milltown Road from C-1 (Office/Institutional) to R-4 (Multi-Family Residential)

The noted 162 and 53 acre Zoning Map Amendment applications were unanimously approved by City Council based on unanimous recommendations of approval from the Planning Commission. The 32 acre application was unanimously recommended for approval by the Planning Commission and will be heard by City Council in early 2019.

Development Projects

There were a number of significant residential, commercial and industrial developments initiated in the City of Wooster in 2018. The following projects were assisted by the Planning and Zoning Division and approved by one or more of the aforementioned Boards and Commissions:

- 1. Western Reserve Group** – A Final Development Plan was approved for an 81,000 sq. ft. office building on Benden Drive. Construction of the project is anticipated to commence in early 2019.
- 2. Wayne County Fairgrounds** – A Final Development Plan was approved for 26,100 sq. ft. event center building and a 14,000 agricultural building. Construction of the project is anticipated to commence in early 2019.
- 3. Holiday Inn Express and Event Center** – A Rezoning and Final Development Plan were approved for a 98 room hotel and reoccupation of the Greystone Event Center on Riffel Road. The event center is currently occupied and the hotel project is anticipated to commence in early 2019.
- 4. West View Manor Expansion** – A Final Development Plan was approved for an additional 15 assisted living units, 20 nursing units and a senior wellness center on Mechanicsburg Road. The project is currently under construction.
- 5. Aldi Burbank** – A Final Development Plan was approved for a 23,000 sq. ft. grocery store on Burbank Road. The project was completed in late 2018.

6. Warehouse Facility – A Final Development Plan was approved for a 120,000 sq. ft. warehouse and the occupation of an existing underutilized industrial building on Old Mansfield Road. The project was completed in 2018.

7. Downtown Projects

- Construction of a new 7,500 sq. ft. Commercial and Savings Bank (CSB) building on East Liberty Street
- Demolition of a building and construction of a new parking area on the southwest side of the Cornerstone Elementary property.
- Facade Renovations to Friendtigue and adjacent buildings on West Liberty Street.
- The location of a number of new businesses including Lynch’s Irish Imports, JK Gift Shop, Kitch Co, Instruments of Freedom, Flamingo Jack’s, Cloud 9 Playspace, and Operation Fandom.

Projects approved in 2017 that were under construction in 2018 include a Daisy facility expansion, a new AEP facility on Long Road, a tennis court facility on Venture Blvd., a multi-tenant retail building in the Shoppes at Burbank development, and the expansion of St. James Episcopal Church on North Market Street.

Zoning Certificates and Sign Permits

A total of 230 Zoning Certificates were issued in 2018, which was similar to the 229 issued in 2017. Of the issued Certificates, the majority were related to single family residential projects. Zoning Certificates were issued for 34 new residential units in 2018 including 15 new single-family homes and 19 condominium and apartment units. A total of \$6,475 in Zoning Certificate fees was collected in 2018.

In 2018, 75 Sign Permits were issued in the City of Wooster and a total of \$7,655 in Sign Permit fees was collected. There were 100 Sign Permits issued in 2017.

A further breakdown of Zoning Certificates and Sign Permits can be found in the appendix section at the end of this document.

Board of Building and Zoning Appeals

The Board of Building and Zoning Appeals (BZA) heard 42 requests in 2018 encompassing a variety of topics. In 2017, the BZA heard 56 requests. Of the 42 applications in which a decision was made, the BZA approved 33 applications, denied 7 applications and 2 applications were withdrawn. There were 37 area variance requests and 9 use variance requests heard by the BZA in 2018 (some applications included both an area and a use variance).

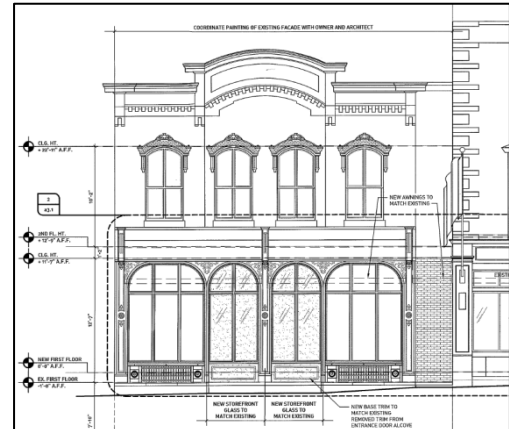
A further breakdown of BZA applications can be found in the appendix section at the end of this document.

Design and Review Board

The City of Wooster Design and Review Board heard 37 requests in 2018. In 2017, the Board heard 41 requests. The Design and Review Board approved all requests, at times with modifications or conditions.

Of the 37 requests heard by the Board in 2018, 24 were for signs. The remainder of the applications included considerations such as building demolitions, new building construction, exterior changes to building facades, and miscellaneous changes to features such as lighting, windows, doors, and awnings.

A further breakdown of Design and Review applications can be found in the appendix section at the end of this document.



Planning Commission

The City of Wooster Planning Commission heard 27 requests in 2018, up from 25 in 2017. Planning Commission applications included:

- 15 Development Plan applications
- 6 Zoning Code or Map Amendment applications
- 3 Conditional Use applications
- 3 Major Subdivision application

The Planning Commission approved, or recommended approval, of 25 applications and denied, or recommended denial, of 2 applications.

A further breakdown of Planning Commission applications can be found in the appendix section at the end of this document.

Zoning Enforcement

Through the majority of 2018, the Property Maintenance/Zoning Inspector focused on enforcement of the Property Maintenance Code and the Planning and Zoning Code. However, in August of 2018, the City's inspector position became vacant and was not filled for the remainder of 2018. The position is projected to be filled in January of 2019.

A total of 118 Planning and Zoning Code violations were addressed in 2018, which was 47 less than in 2017. The majority of the issues addressed were parking on lawns, illegal or unpermitted signs, commencing projects without a Zoning Certificate, and parking of recreational vehicles or trailers.

In addition, the inspector also removed numerous signs located in the public right of way. As there was no formal notification or inspection in such instances, the removal of signs in the public right of way was not captured in the above figures.

A further breakdown of Zoning Enforcement can be found in the appendix section at the end of this document.

Status of 2018 Goals and Objectives

The following indicates the status of the Planning and Zoning Division's goals and objectives established for 2018:

Goal 1 – Attend available training and meet AICP certification requirements throughout the year

- Objective 1A – Complete training to meet half of the AICP maintenance requirements for the current two-year session by the end of the year.
- Objective 1B – Attend training throughout the year including the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conference and training provided by the Ohio and Akron Sections of the American Planning Association.

Status – Half of the AICP maintenance credit hours were completed. The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conference was attended and various other training opportunities were completed.

Goal 2 – Become proficient utilizing the updated Planning and Zoning Code By June

- Objective 2A – Thoroughly review all proposed chapters of the updated code prior to the anticipated adoption in June.
- Objective 2B – Test various mock applications prior to the adoption of the code.
- Objective 2C – Become proficient at utilizing and applying the code prior to the adoption of the code.

Status – The Planning and Zoning Code was thoroughly reviewed and vetted prior to its adoption in May. Planning Division staff has become proficient utilizing and applying the new code throughout 2018.

Goal 3 – Complete an update to the Planning and Zoning Code by June

- Objective 3A – Complete Steering Committee meetings by March.
- Objective 3B – Initiate the adoption process by bringing an amendment to the Planning Commission by April.
- Objective 3C – Adopt the updated Planning and Zoning Code by June.

Status – The adoption process for the Planning and Zoning Code was initiated in March and adopted by City Council on May 7th. The Planning and Zoning Code was adopted by City Council and was effective in June.

Goal 4 – Complete revisions to twenty percent of the city's Ohio Historic Inventory Forms by the end of the year

- Objective 4A – Send out an RFP for the project by April.
- Objective 4B – Select a consultant and initiate the form update process by July.
- Objective 4C – Complete twenty percent of the revised forms by the end of the year.

Status – The City of Wooster was not awarded a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant for the project, therefore the project was not undertaken.

Goal 5 – Work with the Building Standards Division and Police Department to shift permit parking to ViewPoint Cloud

- Objective 5A – Create a process and workflow for online permitting by February.
- Objective 5B – Train staff on the permit parking processes by February.
- Objective 5C – Transition expiring permits and new permits to ViewPoint Cloud by the end of the year.
- Objective 5D – Conduct a parking survey to assist in evaluating the parking permit program by August.

Status – A process and workflow were created and staff was trained on the new process by the end of February. Permit parking was moved to ViewPoint Cloud in March including the transition of all existing permits. A parking survey was conducted over the summer to evaluate the new parking regulations. The study identified many positive effects of changes to parking regulations.

2019 Goals and Objectives

In 2019, the Planning and Zoning Division will continue to guide development and sensibly regulate land use. The following goals and objectives for 2019 and in the next five years through 2023 will allow the division to better serve citizens and business owners, operate more efficiently, refine responsibilities, and update planning documents.

One Year Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 – Attend the American Planning Association (APA) National Conference, other available training and meet AICP certification requirements throughout the year

- Objective 1A – Complete training to meet all of the AICP maintenance requirements for the current two-year session by the end of the year.
- Objective 1B – Attend training throughout the year including the APA National Conference and training provided by the Ohio Section of the American Planning Association.

Goal 2 – Create bylaws for the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals, Design and Review Board and Planning Commission

- Objective 2A – Work with a consultant to create draft bylaws.
- Objective 2B – Incorporate feedback from Board and Commission members.
- Objective 2C – Adopt bylaws by the end of May.

Goal 3 – Evaluate the updated Planning and Zoning Code and bring necessary changes and revisions to the Planning Commission and City Council for adoption

- Objective 3A – Maintain a list of all needed changes and revisions to the code.
- Objective 3B – Draft a documenting including all necessary amendments to the code.
- Objective 3C – Adopt amendments of the Planning and Zoning Code by the end of the year.

Goal 4 – Transition the anticipated new Zoning Inspector with little interruption in efficiency

- Objective 4A – Work with the new Zoning Inspector to ensure they are aware of their duties and comfortable in the workplace.
- Objective 4B – Communicate with the Building Standards Division to refine responsibilities and coordinate efforts.

Goal 5 – Work with the Building Standards Division and Police Department to evaluate public parking downtown

- Objective 5A – Conduct a parking survey to assist in assessing the parking permit program by July.
- Objective 5A – Evaluate current public parking need, restrictions and signage.
- Objective 5B – Implement any necessary changes by the end of September.

Five Year Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 – Continue attendance at training and certification opportunities

- Objective 1A – Maintain AICP certification, which includes yearly training requirements in specific areas such as Law and Ethics.
- Objective 1B – Attend training including regional, state, and national conferences.

Goal 2 – Coordinate with other agencies

- Objective 2A – Work with other area governmental agencies to forward city goals, share resources, and facilitate intergovernmental coordination.
- Objective 2B – Work with non-governmental agencies and nonprofits agencies to benefit the community.

Goal 3 – Refine responsibilities of division staff

- Objective 3A – Work with the Administrative Assistant, Planning and Zoning Enforcement Inspector and Residential Zoning Inspector to refine responsibilities based on workload and changing conditions.
- Objective 3B – Incorporate the use of the ViewPoint Cloud permitting system in future matters, when advantageous. Incorporate input from staff regarding the use of ViewPoint Cloud and possible improvements or revisions.

Goal 4 – Conduct a detailed land use analysis report by the end of 2023

- Objective 4A – Select a consultant to conduct a land supply and demand analysis.
- Objective 4B – Work with the consultant, city staff, area agencies, and the public to identifying current land supply, demand for residential and nonresidential land uses, and forecast future growth.
- Objective 4C – Create a land use analysis report by the end of 2023.

Goal 5 – Initiate an update of the Comprehensive Plan by the end of 2023

- Objective 5A – Determine if a full update or a revision of the plan is necessary.
- Objective 5B – Select a consultant for the project with the assistance of other City Staff.
- Objective 5C – Initiate an update of the plan by the end of 2023.

Appendix – Tables and Charts

Table 1: Planning and Zoning Applications 2018

Month	Zoning Certificates	Sign Permits	Minor Subdivisions	Building & Zoning Appeals	Design & Review	Planning Commission	Total
January	4	8	0	4	3	4	23
February	11	1	2	4	4	1	23
March	20	6	1	3	1	5	36
April	20	11	2	3	4	3	43
May	40	8	1	3	1	1	54
June	20	8	0	4	8	3	43
July	25	5	2	5	5	2	44
August	27	6	3	3	2	4	45
September	26	4	1	7	1	2	41
October	19	8	3	0	3	1	34
November	10	5	6	3	2	2	28
December	8	5	1	3	3	1	21
2018 Applications*	230	75	22	42	37	29	435
2018 Fees	\$6,475	\$7,655	\$500	\$4,100	\$0	\$3,050	\$21,780
2017 Applications	229	100	35	56	41	25	493
2017 Fees	\$7,085	\$7,200	\$875	\$5,800	\$0	\$2,550	\$23,510

**Some applications were heard at multiple meetings*

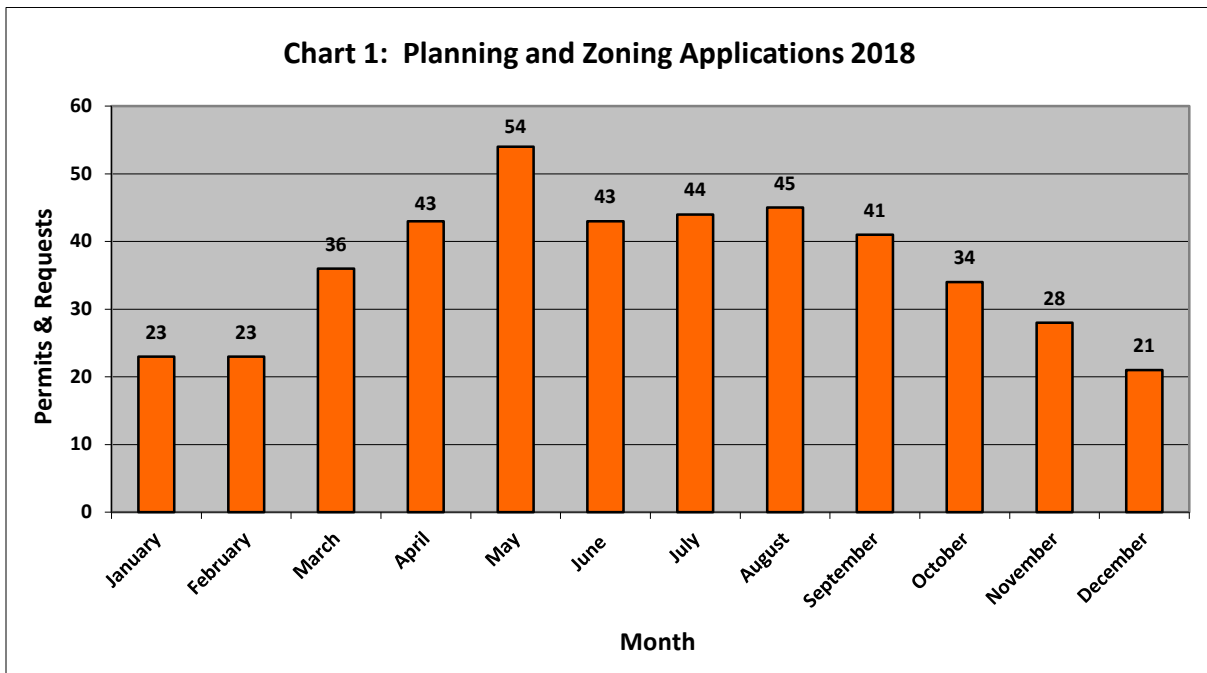


Table 2: Planning and Zoning Applications 2009-2018

Year	Zoning Certificates	Sign Permits	Minor Subdivisions	Building & Zoning Appeals	Design & Review	Planning Commission	Boards & Commissions	Total
2009	160	58	-	12	16	10	38	256
2010	219	92	-	20	31	16	67	378
2011	169	90	-	24	35	17	76	335
2012	161	68	-	19	25	24	68	297
2013	187	58	-	33	25	26	84	329
2014	208	104	15	29	49	40	118	445
2015	207	73	14	37	38	24	99	393
2016	216	102	26	42	60	31	133	477
2017	229	100	35	56	41	25	122	486
2018	230	75	22	42	37	29	108	435
Total	1,756	745	90	272	320	213	913	3,396
Average	176	75	23	27	32	21	91	340

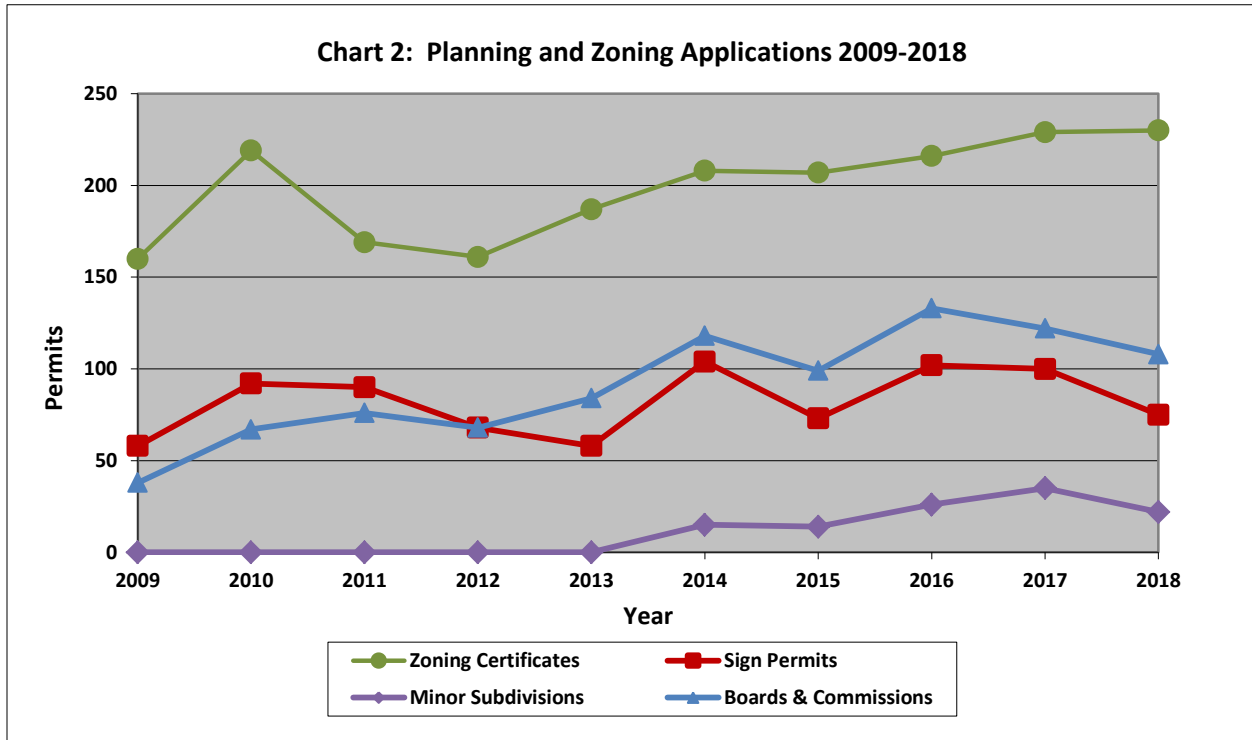


Chart 3: Board and Commission Requests 2009-2018

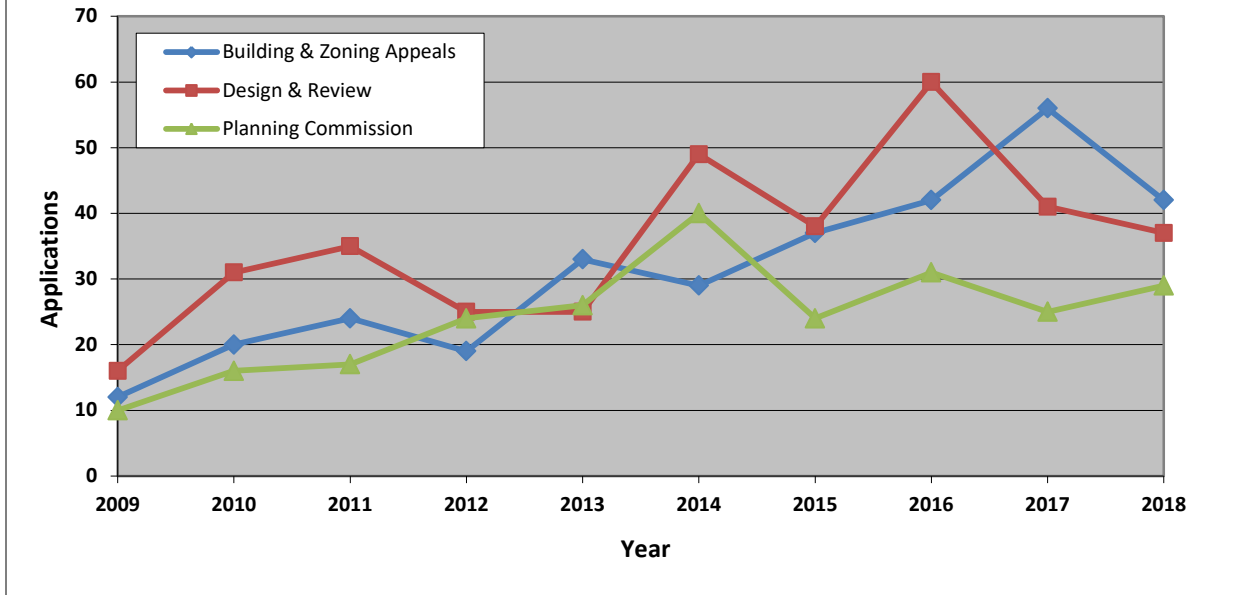


Table 3: Zoning Violations 2018

Violation	Number
Parking on Lawn	35
Signs	31
Zoning Cert. Required	21
Recreational Vehicle/Trailer	13
Accessory Structure	5
Nuisance	4
Parking Lot Surface	3
Other	6
Total	118

Chart 4: Zoning Violations 2018

