



Staff Report – Urbana Township Zoning Amendment

Applicant:	Urbana Township Zoning Commission c/o Sean Tullis 2564 St. Rt. 54 Urbana, OH 43078 zoning@urbanatownship.com
Request:	The Urbana Township Zoning Commission initiated an amendment to the text of the Zoning Resolution. The proposal amends Article II Definitions by adding the definitions of “Small Off Site Battery Energy Storage System” and “Data Center”, updates dwelling related definitions, adds solar energy related definitions and amends the definition of “Public Service Facility”. It also proposes to amend Article V Administration by changing public notice requirements, amend Article VI Amendments by changing public notice requirements and general procedures, amends Section 900 Compliance With Regulations by clarifying prohibited uses, removes mobile home park as a conditional use in the U-1 and R-3 districts, and updates text in Article XIII and throughout the entire text as it relates to Mobile and Manufactured Homes.
Location:	Urbana Township is in south-central Champaign County and contains part of the City of Urbana. The Township shares its southern boundary with Clark County.
Staff Analysis:	Small Off-Site Battery Energy Storage System The Township is proposing to adopt a definition for “Small Off-Site Battery Energy Storage System”, which has been used in several recent township zoning amendments. The Township is electing not to list it as a permitted or conditional use in any zoning district, meaning it is not a permissible use in the Township and is effectively prohibited. Data Center The Township is proposing to adopt a definition for “Data Center”, which has been used in several recent township zoning amendments. The Township is electing not to list it as a permitted or conditional use in any zoning district, meaning it is not a permissible use in the Township and is effectively prohibited. Public Service Facility The Township is proposing to amend the definition of Public Service Facility based on old model text and makes clearer uses specified elsewhere like principal solar energy are not included in the definition.



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BZA Public Notices

The Township is modifying several sections in Article V Administration. The change eliminates specific public notice requirements, and instead references the relevant ORC language. This is similar to recent changes by other Townships.

- Staff recommends adding “from time to time” to the end of the first sentence of Section 547.

Zoning Amendments

The Township is modifying Article VI Amendments. Instead of listing out the entire process, it leaves in place application and initiation information, but then references ORC 519.12 for the remainder of the process. This is similar to recent changes by other Townships.

District Regulations

The Township is adding additional text to their District Regulations which clarifies that uses not listed in the zoning code are prohibited. It also clarifies that if a use is specifically defined in the zoning resolution, it cannot be construed as being included within the definition of any other defined use.

Manufactured and Mobile Homes

Throughout the entire Resolution, text is modified in regards to Manufactured and Mobile Homes. This language is standardized language that has been previously recommended to other Townships by LUC in the past. This makes a clear distinction between manufactured homes that are permanently sited, manufactured homes that are not permanently sited, mobile homes, and other dwellings.

- Staff recommends removing the definition of “Building, Manufactured”.

Solar Energy Systems

Urbana Township has existing language in the Zoning Resolution regarding solar panels, which is Section 1061 Solar Panels. The Township is proposing to completely replace the language of Section 1061 with Version 1 of the LUC model text for Solar Energy Systems, which permits and creates standards for accessory solar energy systems and prohibits principal solar energy systems less than 50MW.

Official Schedule of District Regulations

The Township is proposing to remove “Mobile Home Park” as a conditional use in the Rural District (U-1) and the Medium Density Residential District (R-3).

There are already several mobile home parks located in Urbana Township. While it is unclear to LUC Staff if there are any located in the U-1 District, there are several that appear to be located in



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the R-3 District. This proposal would mean that mobile home parks likely become non-conforming uses.

The purpose of the U-1 District, is to “...provide land which is suitable or used for agriculture, conservation, very low density residential and public and quasi-public purpose. Very low density residential land use refers to farm housing units and isolated residential developments not requiring a major plat under the County's Subdivision Regulations (Resolution, pp. 30). The purpose of the R-3 District is to “...permit the establishment of high-density multi-family dwellings not to exceed 16 dwelling units per gross acre . Single-family and manufactured dwellings are also permitted in this district (Resolution, pp. 30).

While the use does not appear to make sense in the U-1 District, LUC Staff feel that it is an appropriate use in the R-3 District based on the existing uses and the purpose of the R-3 District. The Township has not shared the basis behind the removal, so LUC Staff recommends that the Township carefully state its reasoning at the public hearings and be able to support the decision with documentation.

If the Township wishes to limit the new development or expansion of manufactured and/or mobile home parks, it can utilize the conditional use standards and process, and the Champaign County Comprehensive Plan to thoroughly review each application. The Comprehensive Plan addresses where new development would be most appropriate, an example being “Encourage development in urbanized areas with public utilities” (County Plan, pp.134).

- Staff recommends not removing “mobile home parks” as a conditional use in the MD/R-3 District.
- Staff recommends changing the row title of the MD/R-3 District to “MD/R-3 Medium Density Residential District”.
- Staff recommends adding an asterisk to the end of “Single-Family Dwelling” in the permitted uses column of the MD/R-3 District.
- Staff recommends specifying that the “R District” the asterisk is referring to in column 23 of the B-1 District is the R-1 District.

Relationship to Comprehensive Plan

The Champaign County Comprehensive Plan (2020) is intended as a policy guide (not legislation) for decisions about the physical development of the County (County Plan, pp.5).

Given the varying level of access to both electrical and water infrastructure throughout the County, it may be prudent for Township to carefully plan for utility needs and any future development associated with newly available or increased utility



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	capacity should they wish to permit a large utility user. The Plan has goals and objectives of: • “Promote land use decisions which recognize and address the impact of development on the County’s drainage system, roads, streams, groundwater, natural areas, prime agricultural land, and public services” (County Plan, pp. 178). • “...preventing overburdening of existing utility services or expansive expansion, while protecting natural assets and scenic qualities of the County’s rural landscape” (County Plan, pp.178). Prosecutor’s Office A copy of this proposal was forwarded to the County Prosecutor’s Office for consideration and comment. At the time of the writing of this report, the Prosecutor’s Office has not provided any comments. ○ Staff recommends incorporating any comments that come from the Prosecutor’s Office.
Staff Recommendations:	Staff recommends APPROVAL WITH MODIFICATIONS of the proposed zoning text amendment. The modifications are: ○ Add “from time to time” to the end of the first sentence of Section 547. ○ Remove the definition of “Building, Manufactured”. ○ Staff recommends changing the row title of the MD/R-3 District to “MD/R-3 Medium Density Residential District”. ○ Staff recommends adding an asterisk to the end of “Single-Family Dwelling” in the permitted uses column of the MD/R-3 District. ○ Staff recommends specifying that the “R District” the asterisk is referring to in column 23 of the B-1 District is the R-1 District. ○ Incorporate any comments that come from the Prosecutor’s Office. Staff recommends DENIAL of the removal of “Mobile Home Parks” as a conditional use in the MD/R-3 District
Z&S Committee Recommendations:	<i>Options for action:</i> • <i>Approval</i> • <i>Approval with Modifications (state modifications)</i> • <i>Denial</i>