



STREET RENAMING PROCEDURES

Section 16.400 – Street Names and House Numbers

The purpose of the following is to establish standardized procedures pursuant to Section 16.400 of the Howard County Code, by providing written guidelines to follow for the naming or renaming of public or private streets, roads or highways for requests initiated by County residents or County/State governmental agencies. The Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) is responsible for processing all street naming or renaming petition requests.

I. PUBLIC STREET RENAMING REQUEST INITIATED BY COUNTY RESIDENT(S)

A. Street Renaming Requirements

The Howard County Planning Board is authorized to name or rename any public street or highway at the request of one or more residents of such street or highway provided that:

- 1) The name change does not cause a duplication of street names; and
- 2) Ninety percent (90%) of the residents living on or owning property on such street or highway agree in writing with the proposed street name change. Without such written agreement, no street or highway name shall be changed.

B. Application Procedure

Applications for petitioning the Howard County Planning Board for renaming of a street or highway shall be submitted, by appointment, at the DPZ Public Service Desk. The following items are required to initiate processing:

- 1) Completed Application Form
The formal submission must include a completed application form and petition with three (3) copies of the plot plan drawing to assure acceptance for processing. Applications found to be incomplete will not be processed.
- 2) Petition
The application shall include a list of all the current fee-simple property owners, by name and mailing address, adjoining the street or highway affected by the proposed name change, along with their signatures on a petition attesting to their approval of the street name change. The applicant/petitioner must obtain the signature approval of ninety percent (90%) of the property owners before the application can be submitted to the County for processing.

3) Application Fee

The application fee shall be in accordance with the fee schedule adopted each year by Resolution of the County Council and is available at the DPZ Public Service Desk. Additional costs necessary to process the Street Renaming Petition include mailing expenses, Planning Board hearing advertising expenses, and new street name sign(s) at the location(s) of the existing street name sign(s). An estimate of this entire expense will be completed and made known to the applicant(s) before the petitioning process will start.

4) Proposed Street Names

The applicant shall submit at least three street name selections, numbered in order of preference, on the application form. The proposed names will be forwarded to the U.S. Post Office, the County Department of Fire and Rescue Services and the 9-1-1 Center for their review and approval of the street names to avoid name duplication.

5) Plot Plan Drawing

The items listed on the checklist sheet are required to be indicated on the plot plan drawing submitted. The plot plan must accompany the application and petition form. The plot plan must be accurate and complete for the entire length of the street or highway proposed for renaming.

Processing of the Street Renaming Petition will be withheld until all the required information is submitted. Providing this information at the initial submission will expedite the review and processing of the Street Renaming Petition.

C. Review Procedure by DPZ

The street renaming petition is presented to the Chief, Division of Land Development, for a determination to initiate processing.

- Step 1. The DPZ staff will review the petition application using County land ownership records and documents and visit the site to verify the information submitted is accurate and complete.
- Step 2. A form letter with the proposed street names is sent to the U.S. Post Office, the County Department of Fire and Rescue Services and the 9-1-1 Center for their review and approval for acceptability and to avoid name duplication.
- Step 3. An internal memorandum is sent to several County and State agencies informing them of the street renaming petition and requesting their comments relating to the street name change.
- Step 4. When name approval is received from the U.S. Post Office, the Department of Fire and Rescue Services and the 9-1-1 Center, the street name with the highest ranking in order of preference as indicated on the application form is selected for use as the new street name.
- Step 5. The Planning Director will set a hearing date before the Planning Board for the street renaming request. DPZ shall notify the applicant(s) by certified mail of the selected street name, the Planning Board hearing date, time and location and any further responsibilities such as advertising requirements.
- Step 6. DPZ staff will prepare the newspaper advertisements and contact the applicant or community representatives to pick up the ads for placement in two local newspapers to be published 30 days prior to the hearing date.

Step 7. Once the review period is completed, the DPZ staff will prepare a staff report recommendation for presentation to the Planning Board at the public hearing.

D. Planning Board Hearing Procedure

1) Order of Presentation

The Planning Board chairperson will open the public hearing for the street renaming request. DPZ will present the street renaming request and relevant information to the Planning Board with respect to the location, petition accuracy and ownership verification as best determined by available information resources and findings. All evidence, petitions, testimony and other matters shall be submitted at the time of the hearing. The applicant/community representative or the requesting governmental agency will be responsible to present any testimony or additional information and justifications for the Street Renaming request as required by the Planning Board at the hearing.

The Planning Board shall decide on all Street Renaming Petitions at the time of the hearing, unless the hearing is continued to another hearing date to receive additional testimony and information.

2) Record of Hearing

The Department of Planning and Zoning shall keep a public record of the Planning Board hearing.

3) Decision and Order

The decision to grant or deny a petition properly brought for a street renaming request shall be made by the Howard County Planning Board. Once a decision is rendered by the Planning Board, the applicant/petitioner and all affected property owners will be notified by certified mail of the Planning Board's decision within 15 days. If the decision is affirmative, the DPZ will notify all affected property owners of the new street or highway name change at least 30 days in advance of the effective date of the change. The DPZ will also notify all the County and State government agencies of the official street address change for all of those affected property owners at least 30 days prior to the effective date of the street or highway name change.

E. Implementation Procedure

The applicant and/or other property owners will be required to pay for the installation of the new street signs at the locations of the present signs for resident initiated requests only. Once the Planning Board has approved the new street name, the DPZ will notify the Department of Public Works/ Bureau of Highways or State Highway Administration to place an order for the new street sign(s). The applicant and/or other property owners will then be billed for these signs and when payment has been received, they will be erected shortly thereafter (resident initiated requests only).

F. Appeal Procedure

Any person specially aggrieved by any decisions of the Department of Planning and Zoning or the Planning Board may file an appeal to the Howard County Board of Appeals in accordance with Section 501 of the Howard County Charter. Copies of the Departmental Appeal application forms are available at the DPZ Public Service Desk and the application fee shall be in accordance with the adopted fee schedule. Such appeal shall be filed no later than thirty (30) days from the action date of the Planning Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning or the Planning Board. If the appellant continues to

be aggrieved by the decision rendered by the Board of Appeals, then they may appeal the decision to the Circuit Court for Howard County. In any case, no further administrative appeal will be accepted on the original petition after the action date decision by the Planning Director or the Planning Board.

II. PUBLIC STREET RENAMING REQUEST INITIATED BY COUNTY/STATE GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY

A. Street Renaming Requirements

The Howard County Planning Board has the power to correct mistakes in names of streets or highways and to rename the streets and highways at the request of the DPZ provided that the change is for a valid governmental purpose such as:

- 1) Construction of new streets or highways
- 2) Realignment of streets or highways
- 3) Discontinuities in existing streets; and
- 4) Elimination of duplicate street names.

B. Application Procedure

Submission of a formal application and plans is not required for government initiated street naming or renaming requests. The requesting governmental agency must submit a letter of request to the DPZ to initiate the process for the naming or renaming of a public street or highway.

C. Review Procedure by DPZ

The street naming or renaming request is presented to the Chief, Division of Land Development, for a determination to initiate processing.

Step 1. The DPZ staff will review the County land ownership records and documents to ascertain the extent of the street naming or renaming project and to compile a list of the residents owning property along the subject street or highway.

Step 2. DPZ staff will visit the site to verify the property ownership information is accurate and complete.

Step 3. A notification letter is sent to the affected residents informing them of the purpose for the street renaming request initiated by the County/State government. In instances where a new street name has not been chosen by the government, the letter will also request the residents to contact each other and to submit a joint or separate list of at least 3 proposed street names in order of preference to DPZ within two weeks from the date of the letter.

Step 4. An internal memorandum is sent to several County and State agencies informing them of the street renaming project and requesting their comments relating to the street name change.

Step 5. When the list(s) of the proposed street names are received from the resident(s), DPZ will send a form letter to the U.S. Post Office, the County Department of Fire and Rescue Services and the 9-1-1 Center for their review and approval for acceptability and to avoid name duplication.

Step 6. When name approval is received from the U.S. Post Office, the Department of Fire and Rescue Services and the 9-1-1 Center, a letter is sent to the affected residents notifying them of the street name approvals and to select one name on a ballot, if more than one name is available.

Step 7. Once DPZ receives all the street name ballots from the residents, the Planning Director will set a hearing date before the Planning Board. DPZ shall notify the affected residents by certified mail of the selected street name, the Planning Board hearing date, time and location.

Step 8. DPZ staff will prepare the newspaper advertisements and deliver the ads to the Purchasing Office for placement in two local newspapers to be published 30 days prior to the hearing date.

Step 9. Once the review period is completed, the DPZ staff will prepare a staff report recommendation for presentation to the Planning Board at the public hearing.

D. Planning Board Hearing and Implementation Procedures

See Section I.D and E (Renaming Requests Initiated by County Residents) of the Street Renaming Procedures for a complete explanation of the Planning Board hearing and implementation procedures.

E. Appeal Procedure

See Section I.F (Renaming Requests Initiated by County Residents) of the Street Renaming Procedures for a complete explanation of the appeal procedure.

III. PRIVATE ROAD NAMING AND RENAMING REQUESTS

A. Street Naming or Renaming Requirements

In accordance with Section 16.400(g) of the Howard County Code, the DPZ may require signs to be placed on the site indicating the name(s) of the private street(s) and/or house number range signs identifying the residential structures. The adoption and implementation of this private street addressing policy will not affect the County's current policy for not providing trash collection, snow removal, maintenance or other Department of Public Works services on privately owned and maintained roads. The naming or renaming of private roads can be processed and approved by DPZ by administrative action without the necessity for Planning Board review and approval.

B. Application Procedure

Submission of a formal application and plans is not required for naming or renaming requests for private roads. The requesting government agency or resident must submit a letter of request to the DPZ to initiate the process for the naming or renaming of a private road.

C. Review Procedure by DPZ

The private street naming or renaming request is presented to the Chief, Division of Land Development, for a determination to initiate processing.

Steps 1-6. See Steps 1 through 6 in Section II (Public Street Renaming Request Initiated by Government) of the Street Renaming Procedures for a complete explanation of the process.

Step 7. Once DPZ receives all the street name ballots from the residents, the DPZ prepares follow-up letters to the property owners and the County/State government agencies regarding the approved private road name and the date of its implementation.

D. Implementation Procedure

The applicants and/or property owners will be required to pay for the installation of private street name signs for resident initiated requests. The private street signs will be fabricated using white letters on a russet background. DPZ will notify DPW, Bureau of Highways, to place an order for the street name sign(s). The applicants and/or property owners will then be billed for these signs and when payment has been received, they will be erected shortly thereafter (resident initiated requests only). For County/State initiated requests on private roads, DPZ will notify DPW, Bureau of Highways, for street sign installation.

E. Appeal Procedure

See Section I or II (Renaming Requests Initiated by Residents or County/State Agencies) of the Street Renaming Procedures for complete explanation of the appeal procedures.