

**GENERAL INFORMATION**  
**BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS (BZA)**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Loudoun County Board of Zoning Appeals, frequently referred to as the BZA, was established pursuant to the provisions of Article 7, Chapter 22, Title 15.2, of the Code of Virginia. The BZA's powers, duties, and procedures are set forth in broad terms in the State Code, and are further detailed in the Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance. Such powers and duties include, but are not limited to:

- Hearing and deciding appeals of administrative decisions made pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance.
- Hearing and deciding on applications for variances as authorized by the Zoning Ordinance.
- Hearing and deciding on appeals from decisions of the Zoning Administrator regarding interpretation of the official Zoning Map where there is uncertainty as to the location of a zoning district boundary.
- Hearing and deciding on special exceptions for errors in building location in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance.

The BZA consists of five (5) members and two (2) alternates appointed by the Circuit Court for staggered terms of five years. All members of the BZA are private citizens and are required to be residents of Loudoun County. They serve only as a Board, and not as County employees. They do not have County office space nor are they available by telephone in the County Government. The Zoning Administration Division of the Department of Planning and Zoning provides the principal administrative support for the BZA. The Department of Planning and Zoning is located at 1 Harrison Street, S.E., 3<sup>rd</sup>. floor, in Leesburg, Virginia, telephone (703) 777-0246.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Normally, the public hearing on an application (appeal, variance, or special exception) will be held within approximately ninety (90) days of acceptance of the application. There are advertisement and public notification procedures required by law for all public hearings, as outlined in Section 6-600 of the Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance. Prior to the public hearing a staff report will be prepared by staff and forwarded to the BZA members for review. Board packets are made available for public review on the Monday prior to the public hearing at Planning and Zoning's Front Counter.

Public hearings are open to the public, and the BZA welcomes comments from the public. (The BZA members are unable to review written documentation/evidence at the time of the public hearing. Any documents related to an application before the BZA should be submitted to the Zoning Office at least ten (10) working days prior to the public hearing.) At the public hearing, both staff and the appellant present their position and then the Chairman will open the floor to public speakers. The public hearing will be closed after all speakers have addressed the Board. At that time, the Board will begin deliberations and vote to grant, deny or defer the subject application.

### **ACTION OF THE BZA**

Although the BZA may occasionally find it necessary to defer its decision on an application, it usually renders a decision immediately following the public hearing. The BZA may affirm or reverse, wholly or in part, or may modify any order, requirement, decision or determination of the Zoning Administrator or any other administrative officer in the administration or enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance. Such action requires the concurring vote of three (3) members of the BZA.

The State Code provides that any person aggrieved by a decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals may, within thirty (30) days of that decision, file a petition with the Circuit Court to review its decision.