

Chapter 5: Housing

The 2000 Census provides a good statistical profile of housing for any local jurisdiction. Since the Census data for Shawnee Township include a count within the Village of Fort Shawnee, the tables in this chapter have largely been developed by subtracting the Village’s numbers from the Township total. Thus the following data largely describe the unincorporated portion of the Township.

Housing Profile: Within the Township, the Census counted 3,183 total housing units. The largest number (1,538) had three bedrooms, but 833 had four, 556 had two, 147 had five or more, and 109 had one bedroom. There were 2,658 owner-occupied units and 398 rental units among those counted as occupied, for a ratio of 87 percent owner-occupied and 13 percent tenant-occupied. This varies quite a bit from the County-wide ratio of 72 percent owner-occupied and 28 percent renter-occupied; Shawnee Township tends more toward homeownership and fewer rental alternatives than the county as a whole.

Age of Housing Units: Table 5-1 presents data on the age of housing units in Shawnee Township and other jurisdictions.

TABLE 5-1 HOUSING UNITS BY AGE IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS						
Year	Bath	American	Shawnee	Perry	Auglaize	Allen County
Total	4,058	5,215	3,183	1,492	891	44,245
Prior to 1940	7.2%	3.3%	232 7.3%	17.3%	24.5%	24.0%
1940 to 1959	22.7%	18.5%	767 24.1%	25.5%	15.9%	26.9%
1960 to 1969	17.7%	21.1%	583 18.3%	11.5%	6.4%	13.8%
1970 to 1979	27.7%	29.5%	871 27.4%	16.8%	19.8%	16.9%
1980 to 1989	13.5%	13.3%	332 10.4%	14.1%	11.7%	8.1%
1990 to 1994	5.5%	5.8%	216 6.8%	2.7%	13.0%	4.6%
1995 to 2000	5.7%	8.4%	182 5.7%	12.1%	8.8%	5.7%

Shawnee is quite similar to the other townships listed, very closely paralleling Bath Township. Some townships, such as Perry and Auglaize (and the County as a whole) show a much higher percentage of older housing built prior to 1940. Indeed, much of Shawnee Township’s residential growth took place during the 1950’s and later, when its suburban subdivisions were developed. Its older housing is likely to be largely located in the agricultural areas in the southern and western portions of the Township. Shawnee Township also shows that growth was most pronounced in the 1970’s, with 871 units – over one-fourth of the Township’s total housing stock – constructed during that single decade.

Recent Housing Construction: In the two most recent years for which information is available, the Shawnee Township zoning office reports that there were 27 single family homes or condominium units built in 2006, with a total value of \$7,076,472 (or average value of \$262,092 per home), another 19 built in 2007 (with a total value of \$4,633,000, or average value of \$243,842), and 12 in 2008 (average value \$278,397; see table 5-8, page 5-7).

Vacancy Status: Vacancy status provides some measure of the viability of the local housing market. Table 5-2 provides the number of vacant units by jurisdiction over time, from the 1980 to the 2000 Census.

TABLE 5-2 VACANCY STATUS BY POLITICAL SUBDIVISION 1980-2000					
Political Subdivision	1980 Census	1990 Census	2000 Census	Change 1980-2000	
				Amount	Percent
Allen County	2,698	3,350	3,599	901	33.40%
Amanda Township	36	24	27	-9	-25.00%
American Township*	243	212	326	83	34.16%
Auglaize Township*	36	39	50	14	38.89%
Bath Township	227	168	243	16	7.05%
Jackson Township*	34	31	36	2	5.88%
Lima City	1,572	2,355	2,221	649	41.28%
Marion Township*	79	103	152	73	92.41%
Monroe Township*	43	32	23	-20	-46.51%
Perry Township	51	54	75	24	47.06%
Richland Township*	67	79	130	63	94.03%
Shawnee Township*	230	192	224	-6	-2.61%
Spencer Township*	63	42	70	7	11.11%
Sugar Creek Township	17	19	22	5	29.41%

* Includes Incorporated villages and Delphos City (pt.).

The Shawnee Township numbers have only slightly diminished between 1980 and 2000, indicating a fairly steady number of vacant properties over time. Among the twelve townships, Shawnee Township, with 224, ranks third in the number of units.

Subtracting the units in Fort Shawnee, the unincorporated portion of Shawnee Township had 127 vacant units in the 2000 Census, of which 36 were for rent, 34 were for sale, 22 were rented or sold but not yet occupied, 18 were considered seasonal, recreational, or occasionally occupied, and 17 were of some other status. Thus, of the 3,183 housing units in the Township, 1.1 percent were vacant and for rent, and another 1.1 percent were vacant and for sale.

Units in Structure: Shawnee Township's housing units are largely owner-occupied, as quantified earlier, and they are mainly detached single family units, as indicated in the following table depicting units per structure.

As shown in Table 5-3 (next page), compared to Allen County as a whole, Shawnee Township is somewhat more prone to development of single family, detached houses, with a slightly smaller proportion of multi-unit structures overall, especially with regard to duplex (2-unit) structures. Also, while mobile homes account for one in every twenty housing units County-wide, there are only nineteen in total (less than one percent) counted in Shawnee Township.

Units in Structure	Number Units	Percentage – Shawnee Twp.	Percentage-Allen County
1-unit, detached	2,709	85.1	74.6
1-unit, attached	78	2.5	1.9
2 units	48	1.5	5.3
3 or 4 units	161	5.1	4.2
5 to 9 units	20	0.6	3.0
10 to 19 units	34	1.1	1.8
20 or more units	114	3.6	4.0
Mobile home	19	0.0	5.1
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0	0.1
Total	3,183	100.0	100.0

Year Householder Moved In: Analyzing the year householders moved into their current units helps describe the nature of the Township’s residents and their stability – whether there is a predominance of long-time residents, or an influx of newer residents. Table 5-4 presents the information on this factor.

Year	Number Shawnee Twp.	Percent Shawnee Twp.	Percent Allen County
1999 to March 2000	368	12.0	16.2
1995 to 1998	850	27.8	25.0
1990 to 1994	550	18.0	17.1
1980 to 1989	619	20.3	15.7
1970 to 1979	401	13.1	12.1
1969 or earlier	268	8.9	13.9

In relation to the County, the Township has a smaller proportion of residents who moved into their housing prior to 1970 (8.9% vs. 13.9%). The most significant larger proportion for the Township was during the 1980’s, when over one-fourth moved in. In all, six in ten have been in their current home since 1990 or earlier.

Heating Source: By far, the most common heating source for Township homes is utility gas, used by 2,341 homes, or over three fourths of all homes (76.6%). The next most common fuel is electricity, used in 504 homes (16.5%). This is followed by fuel oil or kerosene (94 homes), Bottled, tank, or LP gas (72), wood (39) and other fuels (6).

Occupants per Room: The number of occupants per room is sometimes used as a proxy for measuring poverty, when an inordinate percentage of households lives in overcrowded conditions exceeding 1.5 persons per room. In Shawnee Township, of 3,056 units counted, 3,022 (or 98.9 percent) claimed 1.00 persons per room or less, 12 units had 1.00 to 1.50 persons per room, and 22 had 1.51 or more – reflecting a relatively small number of overcrowded units.

Value of Owner-Occupied Units: A comparison of the stated value of specified owner-occupied units in Shawnee Township with those County-wide reveals a relatively high-value

housing stock in Shawnee Township. However, there are a relatively large number of units (772) in the \$50,000-\$99,000 range, reflecting a sizeable pool of affordable housing units.

Table 5-5 indicates that Shawnee Township has a limited supply of the most affordable units in the “under \$50,000” range, relative to the County and State, and higher percentages of housing for every value range from the \$100,000-\$149,999 range on up, aside from the very highest range of houses valued at over \$1 million.

Value	Shawnee #	Shawnee %	Allen Co. %	Ohio %
Less than \$50,000	30	1.2	19.4	8.5
\$50,000 - \$99,999	772	32.1	47.4	39.3
\$100,000 - \$149,999	777	32.3	21.7	28.0
\$150,000 - \$199,999	430	17.9	7.4	12.9
\$200,000 - \$299,999	207	8.6	2.7	7.8
\$300,000 - \$499,999	172	7.1	1.2	2.8
\$500,000 - \$999,999	19	0.8	0.2	0.7
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0.0	0.0	0.2

While a median housing value is not available for the unincorporated portion of the Township, the median for the Township including Fort Shawnee was \$108,400 in the 2000 Census (reflecting values in 1999, or approximately one decade prior to this plan). For comparative purposes, the median value for Fort Shawnee alone was \$89,300, for all of Allen County was \$81,800, and for Ohio was \$103,700. The relatively high value of housing in Shawnee Township reflects its relatively newer construction, and corresponds to the relatively high median income of Township households.

Gross Rent: Table 5-6 presents comparative percentages for gross rent in Shawnee Township, Allen County, and Ohio.

Gross Monthly Rent	Shawnee #	Shawnee %	Allen Co. %	Ohio %
Less than \$200	0	0.0	8.7	6.8
\$200 to \$299	6	1.6	7.3	5.9
\$300 to \$499	156	40.5	44.6	32.0
\$500 to \$749	168	43.6	28.2	36.1
\$750 to \$999	26	6.8	4.3	10.3
\$1,000 to \$1,499	0	0.0	1.3	3.0
\$1,500 or more	18	4.7	0.6	1.0
No cash rent	11	2.9	5.0	4.8

As it has with owner-occupied housing, Shawnee Township has a very limited supply of the most affordable apartments with rents under \$200. However, the vast majority (84.1 percent) have rents in the range between \$300 and \$749 monthly.

The median rent for Shawnee Township (including Fort Shawnee) was \$528 in the 2000 Census, compared to \$446 in all of Allen County, and a relatively similar \$515 for Ohio.

Thus, rental housing is somewhat more expensive in Shawnee Township than throughout the County in general.

Housing Sales

LACRPC provided a list of residential properties that sold throughout the Township in 2005, 2006, and 2007. There were 142 sales in 2005, 144 sales in 2006, and 143 sales in 2007, indicating a very steady pattern of sales over those three years.

Looking at the purchase price reveals the following frequency by price range. It is assumed that prices under \$75,000 are largely lot sales in undeveloped subdivisions.

Price Range	2005	2006	2007
\$0 - \$75,000	19	10	17
\$75,001 - 100,000	10	22	12
\$100,001 - 150,000	39	33	43
\$150,001 - 200,000	33	42	28
\$200,001 - 300,000	21	17	24
\$300,001 - 400,000	13	12	13
\$400,001 - 500,000	4	5	3
Over \$500,000	3	3	3

The sale prices are fairly steady over these three years, with the higher-cost homes (\$300,000 and over) remaining relatively stable, and the largest number of homes falling in the \$100,000-\$150,000 range in 2005 and 2007, and the slightly higher \$150,001-\$200,000 range in 2006.

The geographic distribution of these homes is depicted on map 5-1 on the next page. Housing sales are scattered throughout the Township, with concentrations in a large number of newly developing subdivisions.

Future Housing Demand in Shawnee Township

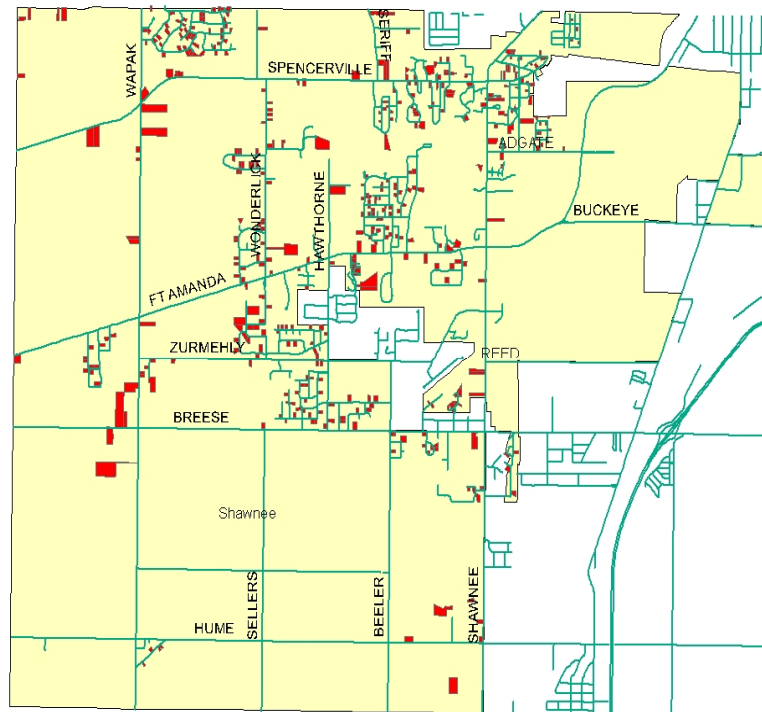
The current national downturn in new housing starts notwithstanding, Shawnee Township continues to be an attractive location for new housing in a suburban setting that combines rural aesthetics with close proximity to shopping and employment destinations. There is no reason to expect these attractors to diminish.

It is likely, however, that some characteristics of the future housing stock may vary from the present, to meet the shifting needs of a changing population. Most notably, the Township's population is aging and household sizes are shrinking to accommodate the needs and desires of the retiree and "empty nest" segments. This is likely to lead to greater demand for smaller and more accessible housing units, and possibly for more housing in condominium associations, where property maintenance is provided.

The population projection for the unincorporated portion of the Township forecast an increase from the 2000 Census population of 8,365 to a 2030 projection of 9,845. This represents an increase of 1,480 people over this thirty-year period. An average household size of 2.04 is forecast for 2030; LACRPC projects that the increase of 1,480 people could lead to an increase of some 1,728 new housing units, averaging approximately 58 new units per year. Of course, with changing needs as the population ages, many of these new units will likely be apartments or multi-unit condominiums.

MAP 5-1

HOUSE SALE LOCATIONS IN SHAWNEE TOWNSHIP:
2005 - 2007



New Housing Permits

The Shawnee Township Zoning Department has maintained data on housing and related permits for construction over the past several years. The following table presents information from that office pertaining to housing construction permits and the value of new construction.

TABLE 5-8 CONSTRUCTION PERMITS 2006-2008						
Building Type	2006		2007		2008	
	No.	Ave. Value	No.	Ave. Value	No.	Ave. Value
Single family homes/condos	27	\$262,092	19	\$243,842	12	\$278,397
Residential additions/pools	22	40,916	25	47,385	16	31,724
Residential garages/pole bldg	16	12,691	19	32,747	18	18,233
Non-residential buildings	0	0	0	0	1	4,000
Commercial buildings	1	1,700,000	3	901,667	7	609,286
Commercial additions	0	0	1	300,000	1	310,000
Ponds	5	7,300	1	20,000	1	-
Rezoning/variance applications	6	0	3	0	0	0
Signs/awnings	11	8,145	5	1,760	3	-
Demolition	7	-	1	-	2	2,750
Conditional use	2	-	4	-	5	-
Total	97	-	81	-	66	-

Source: Shawnee Township Zoning Dept.

Building activity has followed national trends in declining over the past three years. In 2006, permits were issued for 27 housing units, with construction costs totaling \$7,076,472. In 2007, this decreased to 19 units totaling \$4,633,000 in construction activity, and in 2008, it decreased further to 12 units totaling \$3,340,768. However, the cost per unit was maintained in the upper \$200,000 bracket.

Residential additions also decreased, from 22 projects totaling \$900,150 in 2006 to 16 projects totaling \$507,580 in 2008. There was a noticeable increase in commercial building activity, with one building valued at \$1,700,000 in 2006, three buildings totaling \$2,705,000 in 2007, and seven building permits totaling \$4,265,000 in 2008.

In total, there were 97 permits, representing \$10,005,772 in activity in 2006, falling to 81 permits representing construction valued at \$9,473,617 in 2007, and falling further to 66 permits valued at \$8,761,048 in 2008.

Goals and Objectives

Goal A: Protect and preserve the established and desired residential character through zoning enforcement, and with inspections and rehabilitation of multi-family housing, where necessary.

1. Encourage procedures that encourage and enforce housing quality and responsiveness to needs and expectations. It is evident that Township residents place a high value on the quality and appearance of their neighborhoods and housing stock. Thus, it is of interest to the Advisory Committee and the Trustees that the quality and diverse needs for housing be addressed. This can be done through a variety of means. To this end, the Lima Allen RPC recommended consideration of several options within another Township's comprehensive plan, and they are included here for consideration:
 - Accessibility standards for new development
 - Standardized exterior maintenance codes
 - Standardized residential building codes
 - Landlord training and occupancy permits

It would be important for any new initiative such as those itemized above, which may become codified into Township legislation, to strike a balance between serving a recognized public purpose and improving housing quality, appearance, value, and safety without becoming overly burdensome to housing developers and homeowners. However, an initiative to establish an exterior maintenance code should be viewed as an effort to maintain and protect property values and thus the residents' investments in their homes. In turn, it will help protect the local property tax base.

A residential building code would help protect property buyers with inspections of major structural systems, insuring a minimum standard of safety and uniformity of quality. One potential code worth consideration is the Building Officials and Code Administrators' (BOCA) Property Maintenance Code. The Report from the County-wide Allen 2020 Visioning Project Task Force recommended the adoption of county-wide, comprehensive standards for building and property maintenance with consistent enforcement. (LACRPC and other County offices, Township Trustees and Zoning officials)

2. Identify areas and properties where housing conditions or values are declining or unstable and develop an appropriate response to improve the environment. This may include identifying and inventorying existing code violations and safety concerns. (County officials, LACRPC, Allen County Health District, Township Trustees and officials)
3. Promote and encourage traditional neighborhood developments. Such design elements, often discussed within the rubric of "new urbanism", follows practices that were commonplace in early 20th century villages and neighborhoods. Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND's) are typically designed on a walkable scale, with a

five to ten minute walk from core to edge. There is typically a discernable community center or core area, with a mix of residential and non-residential land uses. Housing density is moderate to high, with 8 units per acre being common. Streets are part of a dense, interconnected pattern, permitting multiple routes to diffuse traffic and shorten walking distances. Buildings are oriented toward the street, with buildings within the core area placed close to the street, and all lots and sites having pedestrian connections. Sidewalks should be on both sides of the street, with continuous pedestrian network adjacent to streets, and connected to alternative trails and pathways where feasible. Curb cuts should be minimized to reduce conflicts with pedestrians.

TND's do not need to be superimposed on all parts of the Township. Established areas can have a range of living environments to capture different segments and interests. Compact housing for seniors, singles, and others for which it is especially suited, but larger lot housing should also be made available, possibly closer to the edge of the TND. (LACRPC, Township Trustees and Zoning officials, developers)

4. Encourage the redevelopment, renovation, or adaptive reuse of existing structures to bring alternative housing options to the Township's residents. (Township officials, LACRPC, property owners and Realtors)
5. Enhance the appeal of Shawnee Township's housing and neighborhoods by encouraging and supporting neighborhood programs, events, and service projects that foster neighborhood pride. Support and publicize clean-up days, planting and landscaping programs and projects, festivals and block parties, and holiday-related programs. (Township Trustees and other officials, neighborhood association leadership)
6. Encourage the historic preservation of the Township's older, more historic housing stock. (Township Trustees and Zoning officials, historic preservation organizations)

Goal B: Maintain a balance of housing options to meet the needs of all residents.

1. Ensure that zoning and subdivision regulations in place do not discourage or impede the development of affordable housing. For example, impediments which artificially increase housing costs without improving public health, safety, or welfare should be disallowed. (LACRPC, Township Trustees and zoning officials)
2. Encourage efforts to increase new homeownership, when financially prudent, through down payment assistance and housing counseling programs. Support efforts undertaken through the County's Comprehensive Housing Improvement Strategy and finance programs. (Allen County Commissioners and Housing officials, Community Action Agency, local lenders, LACRPC)
3. Facilitate the development of housing for special needs groups when a need is identified within the township. This may include elderly-assisted housing, discussed elsewhere in this section, physically disabled residents, and independent living options for mentally disabled residents (See Goal F, below). (County and Township officials, MRDD Board and associated agencies, senior advocacy groups, developers, local partnering agencies)

Goal C: Ensure that housing growth is slowed and controlled to a manageable pace.

1. There is some concern about the continuing growth of residential land use within the Township, at the expense of open space and agricultural land. As noted elsewhere in this plan, some 300 acres of productive farmland has been taken out of production and converted to residential land over the 1990's. In an effort to minimize the impact of the Township's inevitable growth on agricultural land uses, the following practices should be encouraged and employed (LACRPC, Township Trustees and Zoning officials):
 - a. Protect prime farmland for agricultural production, through consideration of agricultural district zoning and Agricultural Protection Districts – with large lot agricultural protection zoning to minimize urban encroachment on agricultural ground, conflicting land use activities, and nuisance lawsuits.
 - b. Educate property owners and others about funding and options to promote farmland preservation, including land trusts and land conservancy districts.
 - c. Minimize encroachment on agricultural acreage by encouraging development in areas contiguous to existing public utilities and developments, limiting new water and sanitary sewer extensions to these contiguous areas, guiding controlled residential development into areas served by public utility systems, and reviewing and revising (as necessary) existing zoning regulations governing required utilities and improvements based on density and land use.
 - d. Consider implementing a Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system, so conversion of agricultural land is based on need as well as proximity to existing development, existing infrastructure and soil characteristics. Within this system, prime agricultural land should be identified and preserved.

Goal D: Call for the development of housing that is well planned, organized, and within the constraints of available or planned water, sewer, and roadway infrastructure.

1. Encourage housing development that is adjacent to existing utility lines (water and sewer) and that do not require significant extension of distribution lines (also included in Goal C recommendations). (LACRPC, Township officials, utility providers)
2. Monitor the Township's plan review, permitting, and inspection processes to ensure they are efficient and timely, while making sure they address the critical issues of site development and compatibility with adjoining land uses. (LACRPC, Township officials)

Goal E: Maintain and update, when necessary, the Township's zoning code, as a tool that can guide development.

1. Conduct a periodic review of the Township's zoning code. (Township zoning officials and boards, with LACRPC assistance).

2. Review the zoning code for compatibility with this comprehensive plan. Ensure that the requirements of the zoning code are supportive of the goals of the comprehensive plan.

Goal F: Encourage housing development that meets the needs of elderly and disabled residents, allowing them to “age in place”, including exclusively senior housing developments with related amenities. Also, encourage the location of such developments in areas (such as near schools) that promote intergenerational integration.

1. Consider accessibility standards for new development, as noted above under Goal A. Shawnee Township’s median age, at 40.6, exceeds the median for the County and State, and is expected to continue to increase. The 35-64 age cohort in Shawnee Township is proportionately greater than that for the County and State, and points toward a significantly greater elderly population in the future. The development of accessibility standards, to encourage smaller floor plans and single level housing, should be considered. (LACRPC, Township Trustees and officials, developers, senior advocacy groups)
2. With the increase in the elderly population will also come a change in the need for housing, regardless of the use of accessibility standards. The trend will likely be to smaller, more accessible, single story housing units. This change will further lead beyond the design of single units, to the possible development of such alternatives as accessible independent living condominiums, assisted living housing development, continuing care facilities, housing units built at a higher density of two to four units per acre, and multi-unit subsidized senior housing. Such alternatives, blended into the Township’s neighborhoods to present intergenerational housing choices, should be encouraged as an ongoing effort to allow the Township’s seniors to age in place, in proximity to their friends and families. Facilitate new developments targeted to the elderly through provision of information on area demographics and market, advocacy for housing developments, and support for proposals requesting senior housing funds or tax credits. (Township Trustees, LACRPC, Allen County Commission on Aging, developers)
3. Housing designed to accommodate seniors should be accompanied by services to promote their independence. This may include (but not be limited to) home delivered meals, senior center activities with socialization and activity choices, and public transportation for the elderly. (Allen Co. Commission on Aging, Allen Co. Regional Transit Authority, County and Township officials)
4. Make information available to elderly and disabled households on programs and resources that can assist them in maintaining and adapting their homes to remain independent. Programs may include the county-wide CHIP rehabilitation and repair program, USDA Section 502 and 504 programs, and other resources that can provide accessibility, including handicap ramps. (Township officials, senior and disabled population advocacy agencies, Allen County Commission on Aging)

Goal G: Encourage the development of nearby amenities and mixed but compatible land uses through Planned Unit Developments and other means.

1. Allow for higher and mixed densities in housing, to accommodate varied demands and needs. Encourage clustered residential development and open or green space offsets, especially when it is used to protect environmentally, culturally, or topographically sensitive areas. (LACRPC, Township Trustees and Zoning officials)
2. Promote mixed use Planned Unit Developments (PUD's) when their composition is supported by market studies and known demand. The zoning code should be reviewed to ensure that the design and development of PUD's is not inhibited. (LACRPC, Township Trustees and Zoning officials)