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Summary of the Buffalo County Zoning Ordinance

- I. Zoning Ordinance adopted in April, 1965 by Buffalo County Board of Supervisors.
 - a. Ammended in 1971 to include Shoreland and Subdivision Ordinances.
 - b. Ammended in 1978 to include Floodplain Ordinances.
 - c. Ammended in 1980 to include Sanitary Ordinances.
- II. County Zoning is in effect in the whole county, except incorporated areas:
 - a. Mondovi, Nelson, Alma, Buffalo City, Fountain City, Cochrane
- III. Land is zoned in five districts
 - a. Agricultural, Residential, Commercial, Recreational, Industrial.
 - b. Uses in each district are spelled out in the Zoning Ordinance.
 - c. Minnimum lot sizes are derived from the Buffalo County Soil Survey.

Some major provisions of the Zoning Ordinance are as follows:

Cases where zoning permits are required:

- 1) Where any building or other structure, except farm structures meeting setback requirement, is erected, moved or structurally altered so as to change its use or increase its' floor area.
- 2) Where any land is substantially altered.
 - a. Shoreland Zoning-grading/filling more than w/n 300' of navigable water.
- 3) Where 50% or more of the equalized value of the structure is destroyed and is being repaired or altered.
- 4) Where any building or other structure located in the Floodplain or Shoreland District, is erected, moved or structurally altered so as to change its' use or increase its' floor area.
- 5) Where any mobile home is not located in an approved mobile home park.

Cases where zoning permits are not required:

- 1) For any accessory building costing \$500.00 or less, provided such building conforms to all the setback, yard, and open space requirements of this ordinance.
- 2) For any improvements or alterations to an existing building in the amount of \$1,500.00 or less, which shall not affect a structural change in use or encroach upon any open space.
- 3) For any maintenance repairs, regardless of cost.
- 4) For permanent farm buildings and structures, except farm homes, which are located so as to meet the setback requirements of highways, adjacent property lines, and navigable streams and lakes.
- 5) For the construction of any fence.
- 6) Mobile homes in zoned and licensed mobile home park.

Cases where sanitary permits are required:

- 1) Where work on change or use of a structure or facility requires private sewage disposal facilities.

- 2) For the installation, extension, enlargement, conversion, or structural alteration of any septic tank and/or absorption area.

Highway setback restrictions:

Class A- State and Federal Roads: 110 feet from centerline or 50 feet from the right-of-way, whichever is greater (the WIDOT must review any parcel split along a state or federal highway).

Class B- County Trunks: 63 feet from the centerline or 30 feet from the right-of-way, whichever is greater.

Class C- Town Roads: 50 feet from the centerline or 17 feet from the right-of-way, whichever is greater.

Other setback restrictions:

- 1) Side yard for a residence is 10 feet.
- 2) An accessory building (example: garage) is 5 feet the Residential District and 10 feet in the Agricultural District.
- 3) Rear yard of residence is 40 feet.
- 4) Livestock building is 200 feet from adjacent property.
- 5) Maximum height for an accessory farm building, including silos, shall be the setback from the highway right-of-way, a distance equal to the height of the structure as well as meeting all other setback requirements of this ordinance.

Lot size for a residence with on-site sewage disposal (Varies depending on soil type)

- 1) Residence on Suitable Sandy Soils requires 12,000 square feet and 75 feet of width.
- 2) Residence on Suitable Medium Textured Soils requires 24,000 square feet and 100 feet of width.
- 3) Residence on Suitable Clayey Soils require 36,000 square feet and 125 feet of width.
- 4) Residence in the Steep Soils Overlay District require 10 acres and 1,000 feet of width.

Classifications of soils are listed in the Zoning Ordinance and are based on soil types designated in the Soil Survey of Buffalo County.

Shoreland Requirements

The Shoreland and Floodplain Ordinances have restrictions within 300 feet of a stream and 1,000 feet of a lake. All construction within 75 of the ordinary high-water mark of a stream is prohibited. All buildings within 300 feet of a stream or 1,000 feet of a lake require a permit (including farm buildings).

Zoning Permits

A zoning permit is a permit issued by the Zoning Administrator after an application is submitted and where the ordinance allows the proposed use and all requirements are met. Where applicable, a sanitary permit must be issued prior to issuing a zoning permit.

Sanitary Permits

A sanitary permit is a permit issued by the Zoning Administrator for the installation of a private sewage system. Soil tests are required prior to issuance of a sanitary permit. State approval for alternate private sewage systems is required prior to county issuance of a sanitary permit.

Variance or Special Exception (Conditional Use) Permits

A special exception permit is a one issued by the Zoning Administrator following a public hearing and approval from the Board of Adjustment. These are required for all conditional uses as listed in the Zoning Ordinances or where the literal enforcement of the provisions of the ordinance will result in unnecessary hardship. All public hearings require two weeks of official public notice of the hearing in a newspaper, (Class II Notice) followed by a week waiting period after the last publication.

Land Use Rezone

A land use change from one district to another requires a public hearing, (Class II Notice) before the Zoning Committee, and action by the Board of Supervisors to permit or deny the land use change, eg Agricultural to Commercial Use.

Applications for zoning permits, special exception, and variance permits and land use changes are available from the Zoning Office.

Subdivision Ordinance

Subdivision-The division of a lot, parcel or tract by the owner thereof, or his agent, for the purpose of transfer of ownership or building development where the act of division creates five (5) or more parcels or building sites of 1 ½ acres each or less in area by successive division within a five year period.

Administrative Fees:

1. Ordinance Copies	\$ 6.00
2. Zoning Permit	\$ 40.00
3. Uniform Address Number (\$60.00 for 2 nd sign)	\$ 45.00
4. Sanitary Permits (Mound, At-Grade, Conventional, etc)	\$250.00
5. Non-Plumbing Sanitary Permits (Privies, Comp Toilets, etc)	\$125.00
6. Variance, Special Exception, Conditional Use	\$200.00
7. Appeals to Board of Adjustment	\$200.00
8. Rezone Permit	\$300.00
9. Ordinance Amendment	\$300.00
10. Plat Review	\$300.00

If you have any questions, please contact the Buffalo County Zoning Department at (608) 685-6218 or (608) 685-6217, or direct all correspondence to Buffalo County Zoning, PO Box 492, Alma, WI 54610. Our email addresses are:

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