

The Planning Commission and the Tree Commission had an information booth at the recent Corn Festival. The purpose for being there was to inform citizens we actually have specific commissions under the auspices of village government and that those commissions fulfill a specific purpose. In past columns, I have often written about the Tree Commission, so my subject today is the Planning Commission.

Communities create and administer a set of codes and rules as part of their Codified Ordinances to classify and control the use of land, buildings, and other structures for the betterment of the entire community. The codes are used as a set of instructions to provide for the public health, safety, convenience, comfort, prosperity and general welfare of the Village. Codes regulate residential densities, separation of residential, commercial and industrial land uses, size of structures and how they relate to the parcels on which they are placed. Codes also define setbacks for new construction, fences, and population density. Without these codes we could have industrial property mixed in with residential lots, along with commercial and high density apartments intermingled, resulting in many conflicts in usage and reduced property values.

The Zoning Code is intended to protect the character and values of residential, institutional, public, business, commercial, and manufacturing uses ensuring orderly and beneficial development. It also provides for open space for light, air, and outdoor use and overcrowding of land. It limits the crowding of the land and concentration of population. Additionally, the codes regulate the size and location of certain structures to maintain public health and lessen the impact of excess traffic to public streets.

The Planning Commission is the body that administers the zoning code, recommends corrections and updates to Council, and addresses requests for variances. They are responsible for the review of land use for new construction and verify compliance. They are advisors to Council. Village Council is the legislative and enforcement body. In the Village of Swanton, the Planning Commission consists of five voting members which are the Mayor, one council member, and three at large village residents. Each has a term six years and may be reappointed for additional terms. Meetings are open to the public and held regularly the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM in Council chambers.

As I have often written in past articles, I hope you appreciate this information and share it with those who may not be aware of it. This information is available at village hall and also on the village website at [www.villageofswantonohio.com](http://www.villageofswantonohio.com) under codified ordinances. Over the next several weeks, I will be writing about the various ordinances to continue this conversation and keep citizens abreast of the codes that are in force in the Village of Swanton.

Lastly, congratulations to the Corn Festival committee for such a wonderful event and a fun filled day of activities. We were so blessed with the weather, and the parade was terrific with probably a record amount of spectators. I know I look forward to next year's Corn Festival.