

UPPER DARBY TOWNSHIP



BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND COMMISSIONS HANDBOOK



Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION 3

 A Message from Mayor Ed Brown 3

 The Appointment Process 4

 Meeting Schedules 5

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES 6

 UDT & Sellers Memorial Free Library Board 6

 Zoning Hearing Board 7

 Planning Commission 8

 Shade Tree Commission 9

 Environmental Advisory Committee 10

 Civil Service Commission 11



A Message from Mayor Ed Brown



Thank you for expressing interest in shaping the future of Upper Darby Township by serving on one of our many boards, commissions, and committees (from here on referred to simply as “boards”)! In this handbook, you will find detailed information on each of our Township’s boards, including a brief overview of the boards’ roles and responsibilities, the current makeup of the boards, term limits, ideal candidate characteristics, and more.

Serving on one of these boards is a great way to actively contribute to the growth and development of our community. Each board offers a unique opportunity to engage with fellow residents, share your expertise, and work collaboratively to enhance the quality of life for all who live, visit, and work in Upper Darby. Whether your interests lie in planning, recreation, public safety, or environmental issues, your involvement will help guide important decisions that impact our Township’s future.

To apply for one of our Township’s boards, you must fill out the Board Appointment Application Form. You can download the form online from the Township web page located at:

upperdarby.org/boards



The Appointment Process

Members of the Township's Boards are appointed by the Mayor and, in most cases, approved by the Township Council. Appointments requiring Council approval will be reviewed and approved via a Resolution at a regularly scheduled Council Meeting. The Mayor selects candidates based on their qualifications, experience, and commitment to the mission of the Board. This process ensures that Board members are well-qualified and reflective of the community's diverse needs and interests.

It is important to note that applicants wishing to be appointed are not required to already meet the "ideal" candidate requirements; they will be provided with ample opportunity to develop their skills and guidance from existing members as a part of the appointment process. You simply need to be willing to learn!

Boards requiring Township Council approval:

1. Zoning Hearing Board
2. Planning Commission
3. Shade Tree Commission
4. Civil Service Commission
5. Friends of the Tower Theater District

Boards which do not require Township Council approval:

1. Upper Darby Township & Sellers Memorial Free Library Board
2. Environmental Advisory Committee

Mayor's Appointment Guidelines:

Clarified by Ordinance No. 3065, amended by Ordinance No. 3085

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Meeting Schedules

The Boards and Commissions of Upper Darby Township meet at varying times and frequencies depending on their specific responsibilities and needs. Meeting schedules may change throughout the year, so it's important to stay informed. For the most up-to-date information on upcoming meetings, please visit the Township website homepage (upperdarby.org), where the official calendar displays all scheduled board meetings.

Clicking on “meetings” on the Township calendar will give you information on not only the dates and times of the meeting, but provide directions to the meeting location and links to YouTube livestreams for online viewing (if applicable). All livestreamed meetings are archived on the Township's YouTube channel.

2025 Meeting Times:

(Meeting schedules may change, please refer to the website.)

Library Board: 7:00PM on the third Monday of every month.

Zoning Hearing Board: 7:00PM on the fourth Tuesday of every month.

Planning Commission: 7:00PM on the second Monday of every month.

Shade Tree Commission: 7:00PM on the first Thursday of every month (except July).

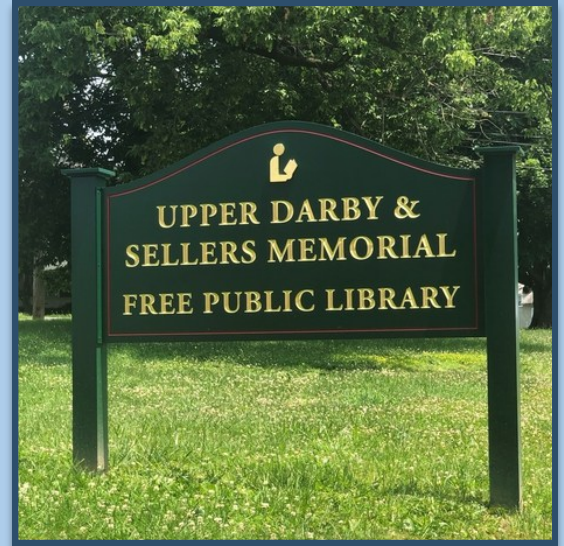
Environmental Advisory Committee: 7:00PM on the second Tuesday of every month (January, March, May, July, September, November).

Civil Service Commission: Meets as-needed.



Upper Darby Township & Sellers Memorial Free Public Library Board

The responsibility of the Upper Darby Township & Sellers Memorial Free Public Library Board is to hire and assist the Library Director in the management, maintenance, and funding of the library so that the library may live its mission: to serve the community without exception by providing access to books, materials, and programs to support lifelong education, personal growth, and creativity. The Board is currently planning for the library's 100th anniversary season, 1930-1935 to 2030-2035. Board members volunteer their time and service; there is no financial compensation for serving on the Board.



Number of Members: 9

Term Length: 3 years, staggered (members can serve up to three consecutive terms)

Meeting Frequency: 10 meetings a year

Staff Liaison: Director of Leisure Services

A strong Library Board candidate should be passionate about libraries and committed to serving the community, with a clear understanding of the library's role in education, accessibility, and public service. They should possess leadership and governance skills, including financial oversight, strategic thinking, and effective communication, while advocating for diversity, equity, and inclusion.



Zoning Hearing Board

The Upper Darby Township Zoning Hearing Board functions as a quasi-judicial body that hears cases and renders decisions regarding the Upper Darby Zoning Code. This includes appeals against the decision(s) or determination(s) made by the Zoning Officer. The board also hears requests for use variances, dimensional variances, and requests for special exceptions. The board may also hear challenges to the validity for the zoning code or zoning map. The board is accompanied at each meeting by the Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor, a stenographer, and the Township Zoning Officer and/or their designee. All hearings held by the board give the public a chance to participate through public comment or, if deemed appropriate by the Zoning Hearing Board, as a party to the case. ZHB members receive an annual stipend of \$2,000 and ZHB alternates receive a stipend of \$167 per voting meeting.

Number of Members: 3 (with 1 alternate)

Term Length: 3 years, staggered

Meeting Frequency: Monthly

Staff Liaison: Director of Community & Economic Development

The Zoning Hearing Board hears approximately 50-60 applications a year. A qualified Zoning Hearing Board candidate should have a strong understanding of land use regulations, zoning laws, and the community's development goals. All zoning regulations can be found in our online codified ordinance <https://ecode360.com/33161971>. They must possess sound judgment, the ability to interpret legal and technical documents, and the capacity to make fair, impartial decisions. Additionally, a good candidate should be detail-oriented, able to listen to diverse viewpoints, and committed to ensuring that zoning decisions are made in the best interest of the community's growth and well-being.

Bylaws and Governance:

Adopted by Ordinance No. 2984

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Planning Commission

The Upper Darby Township Planning Commission acts as an advisor to the administration and Council on matters concerning subdivision and land development planning. The Commission reviews applications submitted pursuant to the Township's zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances and provides recommendations regarding approval. Development plans are reviewed according to standards set in the Delaware County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and the Upper Darby Comprehensive Plan. The Commission receives technical support from the Upper Darby Planning Department and the Township Engineer. The Planning Commission guides the redevelopment and updating of the Upper Darby Comprehensive Plan on a periodic basis according to state law and presents it to the Council for consideration and approval.

Number of Members: 5 (with 2 alternates)

Term Length: 4 years, staggered

Meeting Frequency: Monthly

Staff Liaison: Planning & Zoning Manager / CED Director

A strong Planning Commission candidate should have a solid understanding of urban planning, land use policies, and community development. They should possess the ability to think strategically, evaluate complex development proposals, and balance community needs with long-term growth goals. Additionally, they must demonstrate strong communication skills, a commitment to sustainability, and a willingness to collaborate with other stakeholders to shape the future of the community.

Bylaws and Governance:

Adopted by Ordinance No. 3101

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Shade Tree Commission



The Shade Tree Commission's purpose is to conserve the biodiversity of Upper Darby Township's urban forest while also maximizing the ecosystem services provided by trees to improve public health, safety, beautification, and economic value throughout the township.

Number of Members: 3

Term Length: 5 years, staggered

Meeting Frequency: Monthly

Staff Liaison: Director of Leisure Services

A qualified Shade Tree Commission candidate should have a strong appreciation for urban forestry, tree preservation, and environmental sustainability. They should be knowledgeable about local tree ordinances and committed to enhancing the community's green spaces while balancing ecological and aesthetic considerations.

Bylaws and Governance:

Adopted by Ordinance No. 2498

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Environmental Advisory Committee

The Upper Darby Environmental Advisory Committee is a group of residents who serve at the pleasure of the Mayor, giving recommendations to the Mayor and Administration on a wide range of environmental policies. The work of the committee has included initiatives related to sustainable transportation, waste reduction, recycling, and composting. They also offer recommendations to promote environmentally responsible practices in local land development projects. The committee facilitates many different environmentally focused events, from electric vehicle ownership information sessions to pollinator garden workshops. As a group, they are very interested in planting and encouraging the planting by the township and residents of pollinator gardens in as many places as possible in the township.



Number of Members: Currently 9 (no set number of members)

Term Length: No term limits

Meeting Frequency: Every 2 months (6 times a year)

Staff Liaison: Director of Community & Economic Development

An ideal Environmental Advisory Committee candidate should have a strong understanding of environmental issues, sustainability practices, and local natural resources. They should be passionate about promoting conservation, reducing environmental impact, and advocating for policies that protect and enhance the community's natural surroundings. Additionally, they should be able to collaborate with other stakeholders to develop practical solutions that support sustainable growth and environmental stewardship.



Civil Service Commission

The Civil Service Commission of Upper Darby Township plays a crucial role in ensuring fairness and transparency in the hiring and employment practices within the Township's Police and Fire Departments. It hears and makes decisions on appeals brought by Township Police and Fire employees, as well as candidates for positions governed by civil service laws. These appeals typically involve matters of discipline, layoff, bypass, and examination results, along with classification issues affecting all Police and Fire employees. The Commission's primary function is to ensure that personnel actions, such as disciplinary measures or promotional decisions, comply with established rules and regulations. It acts as an impartial body that safeguards the rights of employees and candidates, providing them with a fair avenue to challenge decisions that may affect their careers or employment status.



Number of Members: 3

Term Length: 6 years, staggered

Meeting Frequency: As-needed

Staff Liaison: Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Police

A qualified Civil Service Commission candidate should have a solid understanding of Police and Fire employment practices, civil service rules, and the principles of fair and equitable hiring. They should be able to make objective, impartial decisions regarding personnel matters, ensuring compliance with regulations while fostering a fair and transparent process for both Police and Fire Officers and the community.

Bylaws and Governance:

Adopted by Ordinance No. 2955

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