

CHAPTER 335

COUNTY ZONING

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335.1 Where applicable.

The provisions of this chapter shall be applicable to any county of the state at the option of the board of supervisors of any such county.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.1]

C93, §335.1

335.2 Farms exempt.

Except to the extent required to implement section 335.27, no ordinance adopted under this chapter applies to land, farm houses, farm barns, farm outbuildings or other buildings or structures which are primarily adapted, by reason of nature and area, for use for agricultural purposes, while so used. However, the ordinances may apply to any structure, building, dam, obstruction, deposit or excavation in or on the flood plains of any river or stream.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, S81, §358A.2; 81 Acts, ch 117, §1070; 82 Acts, ch 1245, §16]

C93, §335.2

335.3 Powers.

Subject to section 335.2, the board of supervisors may by ordinance regulate and restrict the height, number of structures, and size of buildings and other structures, the percentage of lot that may be occupied, the size of yards, courts, and other open spaces, the density of population, and the location and use of buildings, structures, and land for trade, industry, residence, or other purposes, and may regulate, restrict, and prohibit the use for residential purposes of tents, trailers, and portable or potentially portable structures. However, such powers shall be exercised only with reference to land and structures located within the county but lying outside of the corporate limits of any city.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, S81, §358A.3; 81 Acts, ch 117, §1071]

C93, §335.3

335.4 Areas and districts.

For any and all of said purposes the board of supervisors may divide the county, or any area or areas within the county, into districts of such number, shape, and area as may be deemed best suited to carry out the purposes of this chapter; and within such districts it may regulate

and restrict the erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, or use of buildings, structures or land. All such regulations and restrictions shall be uniform for each class or kind of buildings throughout each district, but the regulations in one district may differ from those in other districts.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.4]
C93, §335.4

335.5 Regulations and comprehensive plan — considerations and objectives — notice, adoption, distribution.

1. The regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan and designed to preserve the availability of agricultural land; to consider the protection of soil from wind and water erosion; to encourage efficient urban development patterns; to lessen congestion in the street or highway; to secure safety from fire, flood, panic, and other dangers; to protect health and the general welfare; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; to promote the conservation of energy resources; to promote reasonable access to solar energy; and to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements. However, provisions of this section relating to the objectives of energy conservation and access to solar energy shall not be construed as voiding any zoning regulation existing on July 1, 1981, or to require zoning in a county that did not have zoning prior to July 1, 1981.

2. The regulations shall be made with reasonable consideration, among other things, as to the character of the area of the district and the peculiar suitability of such area for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such county.

3. The regulations and comprehensive plan shall be made with consideration of the smart planning principles under section 18B.1 and may include the information specified in section 18B.2, subsection 2.

4. a. A comprehensive plan recommended for adoption by the zoning commission established under section 335.8, may be adopted by the board of supervisors. The board of supervisors may amend a proposed comprehensive plan prior to adoption. The board of supervisors shall publish notice of the meeting at which the comprehensive plan will be considered for adoption. The notice shall be published as provided in section 331.305.

b. Following its adoption, copies of the comprehensive plan shall be sent or made available to neighboring counties, cities within the county, the council of governments or regional planning commission where the county is located, and public libraries within the county.

c. Following its adoption, a comprehensive plan may be amended by the board of supervisors at any time.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, S81, §358A.5; 81 Acts, ch 125, §1; 82 Acts, ch 1245, §17]

C93, §335.5

2010 Acts, ch 1184, §21

[T] Section amended

335.6 Procedure — hearings — notice.

The board of supervisors shall provide for the manner in which the regulations and restrictions and the boundaries of the districts shall be determined, established, and enforced, and from time to time amended, supplemented, or changed. However, the regulation, restriction, or boundary shall not become effective until after a public hearing, at which parties in interest and citizens shall have an opportunity to be heard. Notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be published as provided in section 331.305. The notice shall state the location of the district affected by naming the township and section, and the

boundaries of the district shall be expressed in terms of streets or roads if possible. The regulation, restriction, or boundary shall be adopted in compliance with section 331.302.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.6]

87 Acts, ch 31, §1; 87 Acts, ch 43, §12

C93, §335.6

335.7 Changes — protest.

The regulations, restrictions, and boundaries may be amended, supplemented, changed, modified, or repealed. Notwithstanding section 335.4, as a part of an ordinance changing land from one zoning district to another zoning district or an ordinance approving a site development plan, a board of supervisors may impose conditions on a property owner which are in addition to existing regulations if the additional conditions have been agreed to in writing by the property owner before the public hearing required under this section or any adjournment of the hearing. The conditions must be reasonable and imposed to satisfy public needs which are directly caused by the requested change. In case, however, of a protest against the change signed by the owners of twenty percent or more either of the area included in the proposed change, or of the area immediately adjacent to the proposed change and within five hundred feet of the boundaries of the proposed change, the amendment shall not become effective except by the favorable vote of at least sixty percent of all of the members of the board of supervisors. The provisions of section 335.6 relative to public hearings and official notice shall apply equally to all changes or amendments.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.7]

85 Acts, ch 9, §1

C93, §335.7

335.8 Commission appointed — powers and duties.

1. In order to avail itself of the powers conferred by this chapter, the board of supervisors shall appoint a commission, a majority of whose members shall reside within the county but outside the corporate limits of any city, to be known as the county zoning commission, to recommend the boundaries of the various original districts and appropriate regulations and restrictions to be enforced therein. Such commission shall, with due diligence, prepare a preliminary report and hold public hearings thereon before submitting its final report; and the board of supervisors shall not hold its public hearings or take action until it has received the final report of such commission. After the adoption of such regulations, restrictions, and boundaries of districts, the zoning commission may, from time to time, recommend to the board of supervisors amendments, supplements, changes or modifications.

2. The zoning commission may recommend to the board of supervisors for adoption a comprehensive plan pursuant to section 335.5, or amendments thereto.

3. The zoning commission, with the approval of the board of supervisors, may contract with professional consultants, regional planning commissions, the Iowa department of economic development, or the federal government, for local planning assistance.

[C50, 54, 58, §358A.8; C62, 66, 71, 73, §358A.8, 373.21; C75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.8]

C93, §335.8

2010 Acts, ch 1184, §22

[T] Section amended

335.9 Administrative officer.

The board of supervisors shall appoint an administrative officer authorized to enforce the resolutions or ordinances adopted by the board of supervisors. The administrative officer may be a person holding other public office in the county, or in a city or other governmental subdivision within the county, and the board of supervisors is authorized to pay to the officer compensation as it deems fit.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.9]

83 Acts, ch 123, §161, 209

C93, §335.9

335.10 Board of adjustment — review and remand.

The board of supervisors shall provide for the appointment of a board of adjustment, and in the regulations and restrictions adopted pursuant to the authority of this chapter shall provide that the said board of adjustment may, in appropriate cases, and subject to appropriate conditions and safeguards, make special exceptions to the terms of the ordinances or regulations in harmony with its general purpose and intent and in accordance with the general or specific rules therein contained, and provide that any property owner aggrieved by the action of the board of supervisors in the adoption of such regulations and restrictions may petition the said board of adjustment direct to modify regulations and restrictions as applied to such property owners.

The board of supervisors may provide for its review of variances granted by the board of adjustment before their effective date. The board of supervisors may remand a decision to grant a variance to the board of adjustment for further study. If remanded, the effective date of the variance is delayed for thirty days from the date of the remand.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.10]

89 Acts, ch 55, §1

C93, §335.10

335.11 Membership of board.

The board of adjustment shall consist of five members, a majority of whom shall reside within the county but outside the corporate limits of any city, each to be appointed for a term of five years, excepting that when the board shall first be created one member shall be appointed for a term of five years, one for a term of four years, one for a term of three years, one for a term of two years, and one for a term of one year. Members shall be removable for cause by the appointing authority upon written charges and after public hearing. Vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term of any member whose term becomes vacant.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.11]

C93, §335.11

335.12 Rules.

The board shall adopt rules in accordance with the provisions of any regulation or ordinance adopted pursuant to this chapter. Meetings of the board shall be held at the call of the chairperson and at such other times as the board may determine. Such chairperson, or in the chairperson's absence, the acting chairperson, may administer oaths and compel the attendance of witnesses. All meetings of the board shall be open to the public. The board shall keep minutes of its proceedings, showing the vote of each member upon each question, or if absent or failing to vote, indicating such fact, and shall keep records of its examinations and other official actions, all of which shall be immediately filed in the office of the board and shall be a public record.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.12]

C93, §335.12

335.13 Appeals to board.

Appeals to the board of adjustment may be taken by any person aggrieved or by any officer, department, board or bureau of the county affected by any decision of the administrative officer. Such appeal shall be taken within a reasonable time, as provided by the rules of the board of adjustment, by filing with the officer from whom the appeal is taken and with the board of adjustment a notice of appeal specifying the grounds thereof. The officer from whom the appeal is taken shall forthwith transmit to the board of adjustment all the papers constituting the record upon which the action appealed from was taken.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.13]

C93, §335.13

335.14 Stay of proceedings.

An appeal stays all proceedings in furtherance of the action appealed from, unless the officer from whom the appeal is taken certifies to the board of adjustment after the notice

of appeal shall have been filed with the officer that by reason of facts stated in the certificate a stay would, in the officer's opinion, cause imminent peril to life or property. In such case proceedings shall not be stayed otherwise than by a restraining order which may be granted by the board of adjustment or by a court of record on application on notice to the officer from whom the appeal is taken and on due cause shown.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.14]
C93, §335.14

335.15 Powers of board.

The board of adjustment shall have the following powers:

1. To hear and decide appeals where it is alleged there is error in any order, requirement, decision or determination made by an administrative official in the enforcement of this chapter or of any ordinance adopted pursuant thereto.

2. To hear and decide special exceptions to the terms of the ordinance upon which such board is required to pass under such ordinance.

3. To authorize upon appeal, in specific cases, such variance from the terms of the ordinance as will not be contrary to the public interest, where owing to special conditions a literal enforcement of the provisions of the ordinance will result in unnecessary hardship, and so that the spirit of the ordinance shall be observed and substantial justice done.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.15]
C93, §335.15

335.16 Decision.

In exercising the above mentioned powers such board may, in conformity with the provisions of this chapter, reverse or affirm, wholly or partly, or may modify the order, requirement, decision, or determination appealed from and may make such order, requirement, decision, or determination as ought to be made, and to that end shall have all the powers of the officer from whom the appeal is taken.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.16]
C93, §335.16

335.17 Vote required.

The concurring vote of three members of the board shall be necessary to reverse any order, requirement, decision, or determination of any such administrative official, or to decide in favor of the applicant on any matter upon which it is required to pass under any such ordinance or to effect any variation in such ordinance.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.17]
C93, §335.17

335.18 Petition to court.

Any person or persons, jointly or severally, aggrieved by any decision of the board of adjustment under the provisions of this chapter, or any taxpayer, or any officer, department, board or bureau of the county, may present to a court of record a petition, duly verified, setting forth that such decision is illegal, in whole or in part, specifying the grounds of the illegality. Such petition shall be presented to the court within thirty days after the filing of the decision in the office of the board.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.18]
C93, §335.18

335.19 Review by court.

Upon the presentation of such petition, the court may allow a writ of certiorari directed to the board of adjustment to review such decision of the board of adjustment and shall prescribe therein the time within which a return thereto must be made and served upon the relator's attorney, which shall not be less than ten days and may be extended by the court. The allowance of the writ shall not stay proceedings upon the decision appealed from, but the

court may, on application, on notice to the board and on due cause shown, grant a restraining order.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.19]
C93, §335.19

335.20 Record advanced.

The board of adjustment shall not be required to return the original papers acted upon by it, but it shall be sufficient to return certified or sworn copies thereof or of such portions hereof as may be called for by such writ. The return shall concisely set forth such other facts as may be pertinent and material to show the grounds of the decision appealed from and shall be verified.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.20]
C93, §335.20

335.21 Trial to court.

If upon the hearing which shall be tried de novo it shall appear to the court that testimony is necessary for the proper disposition of the matter, it may take evidence or appoint a referee to take such evidence as it may direct and report the same to the court with the referee's findings of fact and conclusions of law, which shall constitute a part of the proceedings upon which the determination of the court shall be made. The court may reverse or affirm, wholly or partly, or may modify the decision brought up for review.

Costs shall not be allowed against the board unless it shall appear to the court that it acted with gross negligence or in bad faith or with malice in making the decision appealed from.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.21]
C93, §335.21

335.22 Precedence.

All issues in any proceedings under sections 335.18 through 335.21 shall have preference over all other civil actions and proceedings.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.22]
C93, §335.22
2009 Acts, ch 133, §127

335.23 Restraining order.

In case any building or structure is erected, constructed, reconstructed, altered, repaired, converted, or maintained; or any building, structure, or land is used in violation of this chapter or of any ordinance or other regulation made under authority conferred thereby, the board of supervisors, in addition to other remedies, may institute any appropriate action or proceedings to prevent such unlawful erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, conversion, maintenance, or use, to restrain, correct, or abate such violation, to prevent the occupancy of said building, structure, or land, or to prevent any illegal act, conduct, business, or use in or about such premises.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.23]
C93, §335.23

335.24 Conflict with other regulations.

If the regulations made under this chapter require a greater width or size of yards, courts or other open spaces, or require a lower height of building or less number of stories, or require a greater percentage of lot to be left unoccupied, or impose other higher standards than are required in any other statute or local ordinance or regulation, the regulations made under this chapter govern. If any other statute or local ordinance or regulation requires a greater width or size of yards, courts or other open spaces, or requires a lower height of building or a less number of stories, or a greater percentage of lot to be left unoccupied, or imposes other higher standards than are required by the regulations made under this chapter, the other statute or local ordinance or regulation governs. If a regulation proposed or made under this chapter relates to any structure, building, dam, obstruction, deposit, or excavation in or on

the floodplains of any river or stream, prior approval of the department of natural resources is required to establish, amend, supplement, change, or modify the regulation or to grant any variation or exception from the regulation.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §358A.24; 82 Acts, ch 1199, §67, 96]

C93, §335.24

2003 Acts, ch 108, §69

335.25 Zoning for family homes.

1. It is the intent of this section to assist in improving the quality of life of persons with a developmental disability or brain injury by integrating them into the mainstream of society by making available to them community residential opportunities in the residential areas of this state. In order to implement this intent, this section shall be liberally construed.

2. a. “*Brain injury*” means brain injury as defined in section 135.22.

b. “*Developmental disability*” means a disability of a person which has continued or can be expected to continue indefinitely and which is one of the following:

(1) Attributable to mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, or autism.

(2) Attributable to any other condition found to be closely related to mental retardation because the condition results in impairment of general intellectual functioning or adaptive behavior similar to that of persons with mental retardation or requires treatment and services similar to those required for the persons.

(3) Attributable to dyslexia resulting from a disability described in either subparagraph (1) or (2).

(4) Attributable to a mental or nervous disorder.

c. “*Family home*” means a community-based residential home which is licensed as a residential care facility under chapter 135C or as a child foster care facility under chapter 237 to provide room and board, personal care, habilitation services, and supervision in a family environment exclusively for not more than eight persons with a developmental disability or brain injury and any necessary support personnel. However, family home does not mean an individual foster family home licensed under chapter 237.

d. “*Permitted use*” means a use by right which is authorized in all residential zoning districts.

e. “*Residential*” means regularly used by its occupants as a permanent place of abode, which is made one’s home as opposed to one’s place of business and which has housekeeping and cooking facilities for its occupants only.

3. Notwithstanding the optional provision in section 335.1 and any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, a county, county board of supervisors, or a county zoning commission shall consider a family home a residential use of property for the purposes of zoning and shall treat a family home as a permitted use in all residential zones or districts, including all single-family residential zones or districts, of the county. A county, county board of supervisors, or a county zoning commission shall not require that a family home, its owner, or operator obtain a conditional use permit, special use permit, special exception, or variance. However, new family homes owned or operated by public or private agencies shall be dispersed through the residential zones and districts and shall not be located within contiguous areas equivalent in size to city block areas. Section 135C.23, subsection 2, shall apply to all residents of a family home.

4. A restriction, reservation, condition, exception, or covenant in a subdivision plan, deed, or other instrument of or pertaining to the transfer, sale, lease, or use of property in a county which permits residential use of property but prohibits the use of property as a family home for persons with a developmental disability or brain injury, to the extent of the prohibition, is void as against the public policy of this state and shall not be given legal or equitable effect.

83 Acts, ch 11, §1

CS83, §358A.25

C93, §335.25

93 Acts, ch 90, §2; 94 Acts, ch 1023, §107; 94 Acts, ch 1170, §8; 96 Acts, ch 1129, §113

335.26 Reserved.

335.27 Agricultural land preservation ordinance.

If a county adopts an agricultural land preservation ordinance under this chapter which subjects farmland to the same use restrictions provided in section 352.6 for agricultural areas, section 6B.3, subsection 1, paragraph “f”, and sections 352.10 to 352.12 shall apply to farms and farm operations which are subject to the agricultural land preservation ordinance.

[82 Acts, ch 1245, §15, 20]

C83, §358A.27

C93, §335.27

335.28 and 335.29 Reserved.**335.30 Manufactured and modular homes.**

A county shall not adopt or enforce zoning regulations or other ordinances which disallow the plans and specifications of a proposed residential structure solely because the proposed structure is a manufactured home. However, a zoning ordinance or regulation shall require that a manufactured home be located and installed according to the same standards, including but not limited to, a permanent foundation system, set-back, and minimum square footage which would apply to a site-built, single family dwelling on the same lot, and shall require that the home is assessed and taxed as a site-built dwelling. A zoning ordinance or other regulation shall not require a perimeter foundation system for a manufactured home which is incompatible with the structural design of the manufactured home structure. A county shall not require more than one permanent foundation system for a manufactured home. For purposes of this section, a permanent foundation may be a pier footing foundation system designed and constructed to be compatible with the structure and the conditions of the site. When units are located outside a manufactured home community or mobile home park, requirements may be imposed which ensure visual compatibility of the permanent foundation system with surrounding residential structures. As used in this section, “*manufactured home*” means a factory-built structure, which is manufactured or constructed under the authority of 42 U.S.C. § 5403 and is to be used as a place for human habitation, but which is not constructed or equipped with a permanent hitch or other device allowing it to be moved other than for the purpose of moving to a permanent site, and which does not have permanently attached to its body or frame any wheels or axles. This section shall not be construed as abrogating a recorded restrictive covenant.

A county shall not adopt or enforce construction, building, or design ordinances, regulations, requirements, or restrictions which would mandate width standards greater than twenty-four feet, roof pitch, or other design standards for manufactured housing if the housing otherwise complies with 42 U.S.C. § 5403. A county shall not adopt or enforce zoning or subdivision regulations or other ordinances which mandate width standards for a single modular or manufactured home which is sited upon land otherwise zoned as agricultural land. However, this paragraph shall not prohibit a county from adopting and enforcing zoning regulations related to transportation, water, sewerage, or other land development.

84 Acts, ch 1238, §1

C85, §358A.30

C93, §335.30

93 Acts, ch 154, §3; 94 Acts, ch 1110, §1; 97 Acts, ch 86, §1; 2001 Acts, ch 153, §16

335.30A Land-leased communities.

A county shall not adopt or enforce zoning or subdivision regulations or other ordinances which disallow or make infeasible the plans and specifications of land-leased communities because the housing within the land-leased community will be manufactured housing.

“*Land-leased community*” means any site, lot, field, or tract of land under common ownership upon which ten or more occupied manufactured homes are harbored, either free of charge or for revenue purposes, and shall include any building, structure, or enclosure used or intended for use as part of the equipment of the land-leased community. The term “*land-leased community*” shall not be construed to include homes, buildings, or other

structures temporarily maintained by any individual, educational institution, or company on their own premises and used exclusively to house their own labor or students. A manufactured home located in a land-leased community shall be taxed under section 435.22 as if the manufactured home were located in a mobile home park.

97 Acts, ch 86, §2; 98 Acts, ch 1107, §10, 33

335.31 Elder family homes. Repealed by 2004 Acts, ch 1101, § 95.

335.32 Homes for persons with disabilities.

A county board of supervisors or county zoning commission shall consider a home for persons with disabilities a family home, as defined in section 335.25, for the purposes of zoning, in accordance with chapter 504C.

93 Acts, ch 90, §3; 94 Acts, ch 1023, §108; 2010 Acts, ch 1079, §14

[T] Section amended

335.33 Elder group homes.

A county board of supervisors or county zoning commission shall consider an elder group home a family home, as defined in section 335.25, for purposes of zoning, in accordance with section 231B.4, and may establish limitations regarding the proximity of one proposed elder group home to another.

93 Acts, ch 72, §7; 2005 Acts, ch 62, §22

[P] Similar provision, see §414.31

335.34 Home and community-based services waiver recipient residence.

1. A county, county board of supervisors, or county zoning commission shall consider the residence of the recipient of services under a home and community-based services waiver as a residential use of property for the purposes of zoning and shall treat the use of the residence as a permitted use in all residential zones or districts, including all single-family residential zones or districts, of the county.

2. A county, county board of supervisors, or a county zoning commission shall not require that the recipient, or the owner of such a residence if other than the recipient, obtain a conditional use permit, special use permit, special exception, or variance. A county, county board of supervisors, or county zoning commission shall not establish limitations regarding the proximity of one such residence to another.

3. This section applies to the residence of a recipient of services under a home and community-based services waiver if the residence meets any of the following conditions:

a. The residence is a single-family dwelling owned or rented by the recipient.

b. The residence is a multifamily dwelling which does not hold itself out to the public as a community-based residential provider otherwise regulated by law, including but not limited to a residential care facility, and which provides dwelling units to no more than four recipients of services under a home and community-based services waiver at any one time.

4. For the purposes of this section, “home and community-based services waiver” means “waiver” as defined in section 249A.29.

2007 Acts, ch 218, §130, 132

[P] Similar provision, see §414.32