

New Jersey Professional Planner Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. What is the maximum charge for obtaining a property owner list?**
 - A. \$0.10 per name**
 - B. \$0.25 per name or \$10**
 - C. \$0.50 per name**
 - D. \$5**
- 2. What is the purpose of the Municipal Zoning Code?**
 - A. To restrict buildings and structures to specified districts**
 - B. To regulate the height and bulk of buildings**
 - C. To establish conditional uses in certain zones**
 - D. All of the above except I**
- 3. When is an application for site plan review considered complete?**
 - A. All checklist items are filled out**
 - B. 45 days have passed without certification**
 - C. The board has reviewed the application**
 - D. The punch list has been finished**
- 4. As a licensed professional planner, can you hold elective office?**
 - A. Yes, but only with the state board's permission**
 - B. No, that is not permitted**
 - C. Yes, it is allowed**
 - D. Yes, as long as it doesn't conflict with the planner's duties**
- 5. What is the majority vote needed by the full authorized governing body membership to reverse or remand the final action of the zoning board?**
 - A. Simple majority**
 - B. Supermajority**
 - C. Unanimous vote**
 - D. Majority vote**

- 6. Which of the following best describes the purpose of zoning?**
- A. To control the amount of taxes collected by municipalities**
 - B. To regulate land use and promote orderly development**
 - C. To enhance the aesthetic appearance of communities**
 - D. To restrict building heights in urban areas**
- 7. What is the maximum number of regular members authorized on a historic preservation commission?**
- A. 5**
 - B. 7**
 - C. 9**
 - D. 11**
- 8. Which of the following is a key purpose of zoning regulations?**
- A. To enhance property values**
 - B. To ensure public safety and order**
 - C. To promote uniform aesthetic designs**
 - D. To diversify land usage**
- 9. Which elements must a municipal comprehensive master plan include?**
- A. Land use, circulation, housing, and description of floodplains**
 - B. Land use and housing elements only**
 - C. Land use, circulation, and housing, excluding a description of floodplains**
 - D. All of the above**
- 10. Which entity adopts the Comprehensive Master Plan?**
- A. The governing body by ordinance**
 - B. The governing body by resolution**
 - C. The planning board by ordinance**
 - D. The planning board by resolution**

Answers

SAMPLE

- 1. B**
- 2. A**
- 3. B**
- 4. C**
- 5. D**
- 6. B**
- 7. D**
- 8. B**
- 9. C**
- 10. D**

SAMPLE

Explanations

SAMPLE

1. What is the maximum charge for obtaining a property owner list?

- A. \$0.10 per name
- B. \$0.25 per name or \$10**
- C. \$0.50 per name
- D. \$5

The maximum charge for obtaining a property owner list is set at either \$0.25 per name or a maximum fee of \$10. This pricing structure is established to ensure that access to public property records is affordable, facilitating transparency in real estate and property transactions. This option acknowledges both a per-name charge and a cap on total cost, allowing for flexibility and for bulk requests, which can enhance access to information for planners, developers, and the public. It reflects a balance between the need to cover administrative costs for maintaining these lists and ensuring that they remain accessible to those who need them for planning and development purposes. Understanding this pricing model is crucial for professionals engaged in property planning, as it directly affects budget considerations for obtaining necessary data.

2. What is the purpose of the Municipal Zoning Code?

- A. To restrict buildings and structures to specified districts**
- B. To regulate the height and bulk of buildings
- C. To establish conditional uses in certain zones
- D. All of the above except I

The purpose of the Municipal Zoning Code encompasses various regulatory functions that guide land use and development within a municipality. While the answer indicates that the purpose is to restrict buildings and structures to specified districts, this is just one component of the broader objectives of zoning codes. Zoning codes serve to delineate specific areas where different types of uses can occur—residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural—ensuring that incompatible land uses are separated to promote harmony and safety within communities. This restriction helps maintain the character of neighborhoods and outlying areas. Additionally, zoning regulations include provisions for regulating the height and bulk of buildings, which is crucial for ensuring that structures do not overwhelm surrounding properties and adhere to community aesthetics. They also establish conditional uses, meaning that certain uses can be permitted in specific zones but only under particular circumstances, allowing for flexibility in land use while still protecting community interests. While the answer identifies an important aspect of zoning, it does not account for the full scope of the Municipal Zoning Code, which includes all the aforementioned purposes, making it essential for comprehensive urban planning and development regulation.

3. When is an application for site plan review considered complete?

- A. All checklist items are filled out**
- B. 45 days have passed without certification**
- C. The board has reviewed the application**
- D. The punch list has been finished**

An application for site plan review is considered complete when 45 days have passed without certification. This rule helps to ensure that applications are processed in a timely manner and that there is an accountability mechanism for municipal boards. According to New Jersey's Municipal Land Use Law, if the reviewing authority does not certify the application as complete within that timeframe, it is automatically deemed complete. This provision is essential for applicants because it prevents undue delays in the review process, allowing them to move forward with their projects without being held up indefinitely. The options mentioned provide different aspects of the review process, but the 45-day timeframe establishes a clear standard for determining completeness. Thus, the focus on this particular period underscores the importance of efficiency in municipal planning and the right of applicants to receive timely evaluations of their proposals.

4. As a licensed professional planner, can you hold elective office?

- A. Yes, but only with the state board's permission**
- B. No, that is not permitted**
- C. Yes, it is allowed**
- D. Yes, as long as it doesn't conflict with the planner's duties**

Holding elective office as a licensed professional planner is indeed allowed, which aligns with the rationale that a professional planner can engage in civic duties and participate in governance without compromising their professional responsibilities. This involvement can enhance their understanding of community needs and public policy, which can be beneficial to their role as a planner. Elective office positions can provide planners with valuable insights into the planning process and local governance, contributing positively to their professional practice. It's important for planners to ensure that their responsibilities as elected officials do not conflict with their professional obligations or create potential conflicts of interest, but overall, being in an elective office does not inherently restrict their ability to practice as a planner. This understanding promotes the idea that planners can participate in shaping the communities they serve directly while still adhering to ethical standards expected in their professional capacity.

5. What is the majority vote needed by the full authorized governing body membership to reverse or remand the final action of the zoning board?

- A. Simple majority**
- B. Supermajority**
- C. Unanimous vote**
- D. Majority vote**

In New Jersey, the standard procedure for reversing or remanding the final action of a zoning board requires a majority vote of the full authorized governing body membership. This means that more than half of the members who are authorized to vote must agree in order to take such an action. It reflects the principle that a simple majority is sufficient for routine legislative decisions, unless otherwise stated in specific statutes. A simple majority means that the number of votes in favor must exceed the number of votes against. This allows for efficient decision-making while still providing a necessary level of support from elected officials. In contrast, concepts like supermajority and unanimous votes require higher thresholds, which can be more challenging to achieve and are not applicable in this context. Therefore, the correct answer accurately represents the required voting standard for this situation.

6. Which of the following best describes the purpose of zoning?

- A. To control the amount of taxes collected by municipalities**
- B. To regulate land use and promote orderly development**
- C. To enhance the aesthetic appearance of communities**
- D. To restrict building heights in urban areas**

Zoning is primarily intended to regulate land use and promote orderly development within a community. This system is established through local government ordinances that designate specific zones for residential, commercial, industrial, and other uses. The fundamental goal of zoning is to ensure that land is used in a manner that is beneficial to the community as a whole, facilitating compatible uses and preventing conflicts between different types of development. By providing a structured framework for land use, zoning helps to manage population density, protect property values, and ensure that necessary public services, such as roads, schools, and utilities, are adequately planned and provided for. This orderly development fosters sustainable growth while addressing the diverse needs of a community, ensuring that various uses can coexist harmoniously. Other options, while they may relate in some capacity to zoning, do not capture its fundamental purpose. For instance, aspects like enhancing aesthetic appearance or controlling building heights can be outcomes or components of zoning regulations, but they do not encapsulate the broader goal of effective land use regulation and community planning.

7. What is the maximum number of regular members authorized on a historic preservation commission?

- A. 5**
- B. 7**
- C. 9**
- D. 11**

In New Jersey, the maximum number of regular members authorized on a historic preservation commission is 11. This reflects the state's commitment to having a robust and diverse group when it comes to preserving historical sites and landmarks. By allowing up to 11 members, the commission can benefit from a variety of perspectives, expertise, and skill sets, which are vital for making well-rounded decisions regarding historic preservation. Having a larger commission can facilitate more extensive discussions and a broader representation of community interests in preserving the heritage of an area. This approach aligns with the goals of many municipalities to engage the community in protecting its historical resources and ensuring that preservation efforts are comprehensive and inclusive. This structure supports active participation and helps ensure that decisions made reflect the values and needs of the community effectively.

8. Which of the following is a key purpose of zoning regulations?

- A. To enhance property values**
- B. To ensure public safety and order**
- C. To promote uniform aesthetic designs**
- D. To diversify land usage**

Zoning regulations primarily serve to ensure public safety and order within a community. They are designed to manage land use in a way that protects the health, safety, and general welfare of the public. Through zoning, municipalities can regulate the type of activities that occur in certain areas, minimizing conflicts between incompatible land uses—such as separating industrial zones from residential neighborhoods—to reduce hazards and nuisances. This regulatory framework helps to create a predictable and sustainable environment that prioritizes the safety and well-being of the residents, promoting orderly development and land use, and facilitating improved quality of life. While enhancing property values, promoting uniform aesthetic designs, and diversifying land usage can be secondary benefits or goals related to zoning, the fundamental intent behind zoning regulations is to safeguard public safety and maintain order within the community.

9. Which elements must a municipal comprehensive master plan include?

- A. Land use, circulation, housing, and description of floodplains**
- B. Land use and housing elements only**
- C. Land use, circulation, and housing, excluding a description of floodplains**
- D. All of the above**

A municipal comprehensive master plan must include essential components that address the community's development and land use strategy comprehensively. The inclusion of land use, circulation, and housing elements is critical as they form the backbone of community planning. Land use elements provide insights into how the land in the municipality will be used, guiding decisions about zoning, development, and preservation. Circulation elements outline transportation systems, ensuring that there are adequate pathways for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists, which is vital for mobility and accessibility within the community. Housing elements address the community's housing needs, identifying the types and quantities of housing required to fulfill the population's demands and enhance the quality of life. The option indicating that a municipal comprehensive master plan must include these three elements, while excluding a description of floodplains, reflects the minimum requirements set forth by planning regulations in New Jersey. While information about floodplains might be beneficial, it is not a mandatory component of every master plan, as it can be included in other planning documents or considerations. Thus, the correct answer effectively captures the essential elements required in a municipal comprehensive master plan while clarifying that not every detail, such as floodplain descriptions, is necessary for fulfilling the statutory obligations of the planning framework.

10. Which entity adopts the Comprehensive Master Plan?

- A. The governing body by ordinance**
- B. The governing body by resolution**
- C. The planning board by ordinance**
- D. The planning board by resolution**

The correct answer is that the planning board adopts the Comprehensive Master Plan by resolution. In New Jersey, the Comprehensive Master Plan is a strategic document that outlines a municipality's vision for development and land use. This document is pivotal because it helps guide future growth and development in a way that aligns with community goals and state regulations. The planning board is specifically tasked with preparing and adopting the master plan. The process for adopting the plan involves a resolution, which is a formal statement of decision or expression of intent. This method ensures that the plan is publicly acknowledged and recorded for future reference, which is critical for its implementation and for guiding zoning and other regulatory decisions. It's important to note that while the governing body of the municipality has a significant role in the overall approval and legislative adoption of various planning documents and ordinances, the initial adoption of the Comprehensive Master Plan by the planning board ensures that it mainly reflects professional planning input, public participation, and complies with state planning guidelines. Therefore, the role of the planning board as the adopting body through a resolution is key in maintaining the integrity and focus of the planning process.