



**HELENA TOWNSHIP
ADVOCACY GROUP, NFP**
Email: HTAG@Groupmail.com
Website: www.HTAGroup.org

SYNOPSIS of Helena Township Ordinance History **Recreational Vehicles & Trailers**

As Helena Township, once again, begins the process of revising our Zoning Ordinance as it relates to **Recreational Vehicles and Trailers** including the extent to which they will be allowed on private property, HTAG wanted to offer a detailed Synopsis of our Ordinance's history. Our Helena Township Planning Commission ("HTPC") has indicated they will be looking at Ordinances currently in place with surrounding Townships, so we have provided information on several of them as well for your convenience.

HTAG encourages all HT residents to review the information below and, if compelled to share your ideas, questions and/or concerns, be sure to send them in writing ASAP to the Planning Commission at PlanningComm@HelenaTownship.com and Supervisor@HelenaTownship.com as well as to the Helena Township Board at Trustee@HelenaTownship.com and Clerk@HelenaTownship.com. In case you are unable to attend the upcoming important meetings, submitting your thoughts will allow your voice on the matter to be heard! If you'd like to send HTAG a copy of your correspondence to them, we'd be happy to retain it in our archives for reference.

CURRENT ZO Language 4.04.01 – Uses Permitted by Right (Eff: 6/28/2024) (Page 34)

"Property owners with a permanent residence in Helena Township may use recreational vehicles or trailers for camping purposes on a temporary basis, provided such trailer or recreational vehicle is maintained in a sanitary, moveable, and legally registered condition. Such vehicles cannot be used as a rental."

Sequence of Events – Ordinance Development

11/07/1978 – INITIAL Zoning Ordinance

The only time a Trailer/Motor Home was mentioned in this Ordinance was when it was to be used in whole or in part for dwelling purposes for a period not to exceed (6) months **but upon application to and approval of a permit for occupancy by the Zoning Administrator when specific conditions existed:**

- The permanent dwelling of a resident applicant has become uninhabitable due to damage...
- Undue hardship, the applicant is unable to obtain another dwelling unit as a temporary residence; or
- Adequate provision is made for temporary public or private water supply and sewage disposal to and from said structure.

Subsequent Decisions, Changes and Ordinances:

07/06/2011 – HTPC agreed RVs allowed “**no more than 30 days**”.

05/02/2012 – HTPC asked Zoning Administrator to enforce 30-day limit.

ZO Eff: 06/09/2012 – 4.04.01 – Uses Permitted by Right (Page 34).

Ordinance Language CHANGED to DEFINE “temporary basis” as “not exceeding 30 days”.

05/01/2013 to 06/02/2016 – Concerns posed to HTPC about multiple RVs and 30-day limit not being enforced.

06/02/2016 – HTPC agreed to REMOVE “not exceeding 30 days” – revert to “**on a temporary basis**”.

09/08/2016 – HTPC agreed “**RVs cannot be used as rentals**”.

ZO Eff: 12/17/2016 – 4.04.01 – Uses Permitted by Right (Page 34).

Ordinance Language CHANGED to REMOVE “not exceeding 30 days”; ADD “cannot be used as a rental.”

Note: A NEW Definition for “Temporary Basis” still was not developed.

04/05/2018 – HTPC agreed Ordinance **must** read: “Owners with a permanent residence in Helena Township...

09/06/2018 - Zoning Admin emphasized need to develop DEFINITION of “Temporary Basis”.

01/03/2019 - Zoning Admin urged the PC to develop DEFINITION of “Temporary Basis”.

ZO Eff: 11/26/2020 – 4.04.01 – Uses Permitted by Right (Page 34):

Ordinance Language CHANGED to “*Property owners with a permanent residence in Helena Township”*

Note: A NEW Definition for “Temporary Basis” still was not developed.

NO CHANGES were made to this Section in this Ordinance Amendment.

8/3/2023 – Public Hearing – PROPOSED CHANGES to 4.04.01 – Uses Permitted by Right:

Proposed Ordinance language changes, approved by the HTPC during its 8/3/2023 Public Hearing, were later RESCINDED due to inconsistencies in information provided to the Public. As a result, the proposed language is not a part of the current Zoning Ordinance Eff: 06/28/2024 but will be reviewed in upcoming discussions.

NEW Section 4.04.01.I (Uses Permitted by Right).

1. *Helena Township property owners with undeveloped land may use recreational vehicles motor homes, tents, travel trailers on a temporary basis for a period not to exceed 180 days in a twelve-month period (12-month period) provided such a trailer or recreational vehicle is maintained in a sanitary, moveable, and legally registered condition. Such vehicles cannot be used as a rental.”*

Gurr made a motion; Schafer seconded. Carried

ZO Eff: 6/28/2024 – 4.04.01 – Uses Permitted by Right (Page 34):

NO CHANGES were made to this Section in this Ordinance Amendment.

***Note*: A Definition for “Temporary Basis” was still not developed.**

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What is the Trailer & RV Ordinance in neighboring Townships?

CLEARWATER TOWNSHIP

13.02.H

Travel trailers, motor homes, camping or recreational vehicles may be stored in a Residential District, as long as they are stored in a manner that meets the district's setback. Such vehicles may be used as temporary housing while a permanent dwelling is being built on the property. Such vehicles must be self-contained with respect to waste, which must be transported to an approved septic disposal system for removal. Storage is not permitted on a commercial or rental basis, and vehicles shall have tires mounted and not be skirted.

13.02.I

Mobile homes shall be in a place not longer than forty-five (45) days without being affixed to a permanent foundation with wheels and tongue removed and skirting attached so that the undercarriage is enclosed. A mobile home must be connected to an approved electric, water, and sewage system within the stated forty-five (45) days.

MILTON TOWNSHIP

117.313 Recreational Vehicles

The parking of recreational vehicles, as well as other such vehicles or craft (including, but not limited to boats, all-terrain vehicles, personal watercraft, etc.) in a residential zoning district is permissible if the following standards are met:

- A. The vehicle must be owned by the land owner or occupant of the land upon which it is stored; and
- B. The vehicle may be used in an accessory use for up to thirty (30) days on said parcel in and twelve (12) month period; and
- C. Provided that such storage or use shall not under any circumstances be undertaken on a commercial or rental basis; and
- D. The vehicle shall be parked at least five (5) feet from the property line and access to all sides of the building for emergency purposes shall be maintained.

TORCH LAKE TOWNSHIP

2.22 RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

A. The unoccupied storage of a recreational vehicle on any residential property by the owner thereof shall be allowable as a permitted accessory use where a permitted principal use is established, provided such storage is confined to the rear yard when the rear yard is accessible. If the rear yard is not accessible, then storage in the side yard is permissible, if no nuisances, hazards, or blocking of views are created for the adjoining property. The unoccupied storage of a motor home or travel trailer shall comply with the applicable district setbacks.

B. Temporary occupancy of one (1) travel trailer, motor home and other similar vehicle shall not exceed thirty (30) days in any calendar year and shall not be connected to utility, water supply and sanitary sewer. A zoning permit shall be required for temporary occupations exceeding 30 days. This shall be for personal use and not rented or leased to an occupant.

FOREST HOME TOWNSHIP

Section 218 "R"

Recreational Vehicle (or Recreational Unit): A vehicle or vehicular-type unit, primarily designed as temporary living quarters for recreational camping or travel use, which either has its own motor power, or is mounted on or drawn by another vehicle. Recreational units shall include travel trailers, camping trailers, motor homes, truck campers, slide-in campers and chassis-mounted campers.

Section 220 "T"

Travel Trailer, RV: Any vehicle, whether self-propelled or non self-propelled used or adapted to be used or so constructed as to permit its being used as a conveyance upon the public streets or highways and for occupancy or sleeping place for one or more persons, office, or other business use, and whether or not the same has a foundation thereunder if said foundation is designed to permit the removal of such house trailer and its re-adaptation to use upon the public streets or highways.

Section 304 Standards for Dwellings.

C.8. Occupancy of trucks, recreation vehicles, motor homes, tents or travel trailers outside a licensed campground facility shall be prohibited, except as set forth herein.

a. Developed Land Up to Fifteen Days. Temporary occupancy of trucks, recreation vehicles, motor homes, tents or travel trailers shall be allowed without permit in the AG, WFR, RR and VR districts for periods not to exceed fifteen (15) days in a calendar year, provided that such occupancy shall only occur on a parcel with an occupied dwelling and with the permission of the property owner or occupant an such trucks, recreation vehicles, motor homes, tents or travel trailers shall be located in accordance with the applicable setback standards of the zoning district and such occupancy shall be limited to not more than four (4) trucks, recreation vehicles, motor homes, tents or travel trailers.

b. Undeveloped Land. Temporary occupancy of trucks, recreation vehicles, motor homes, tents or travel trailers may be allowed by permit on undeveloped sites in the AG and RR districts for periods not to exceed fifteen (15) days upon approval of the Zoning Administrator. Applications for approval of such occupancy shall be submitted by the property owner or with the permission of the property owner and such application shall specify the starting and ending dates which shall become a condition of the permit approval. Such trucks, recreation vehicles, motor homes, tents or travel trailers shall be located in accordance with the applicable setback standards of the zoning district. Such temporary occupancy shall at all times be in accordance with any conditions established by the Zoning Administrator to assure that such is not disruptive to neighboring properties and not more than four (4) such trucks, recreation vehicles, motor homes, tents or travel trailers shall be permitted on site at any given time.

We hope you find this information helpful in addressing your questions about this topic and encourage you to reach out to us should you have any questions. Looking forward to seeing you soon!

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