



TOWN OF STOUGHTON

Massachusetts
MA 02072

TOWN PLANNER

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Planning Board Application Procedures

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The following explains the application procedure, deadlines and timelines for applications to the Planning Board for Preliminary Subdivisions, Definitive Subdivisions, Special Permits, Site Plan Approval and Approvals Not Required (ANR). Town staff works closely with the applicants and their representative(s) as well as the Planning Board to help expedite the review process as much as possible. Cooperation by the applicant and their representative(s) in being aware of the procedures and adherence to them will also help to expedite the review process.

Any questions regarding the processes for these applications can be directed to the Town Planner, John Charbonneau, at (781)-341-9201 or jcharbonneau@stoughton-ma.gov.

Pre-Application Contact and Meeting

Prior to preparing an application for a project, the applicant should contact the Town Planner to receive guidance on the proper procedure for the type of application that will be submitted. In the case of Special Permits and Site Plan Approval, a zoning review letter from the Building Commissioner needs to be obtained to explain the type of approval that is required. No such letter is required for a Preliminary Subdivision, Definitive Subdivision, or Approval Not Required (ANR) application. Once obtained, the applicant will provide the letter to the Town Planner to begin the application process.

The Town Planner will then schedule a pre-application meeting of department heads with the applicant and their representative(s) to review the conceptual plan for the project. They will ask questions and provide guidance on their areas of expertise. The meeting includes the Town Planner and representatives from the Building Department, Engineering Department, Board of Health, Conservation Commission, Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works Department and Assessor's Department. This meeting is not a public meeting and normally lasts for approximately 45 minutes to one (1) hour. Following the meeting and any necessary changes made to the plans pursuant to comments received, the applicant may submit an application at any time. Although this meeting is intended to raise issues that need to be addressed with a given

project, additional issues may arise during the application review process by Town staff and the Planning Board and the public during the public hearing process.

Application Submittal and Distribution

The application forms can be obtained on the Planning Board's web page under "Forms & Applications". The Fee Schedule for the various types of applications is also located on this web page. All application submittals for the Planning Board must be made to the Program Administrator, Kristen O'Brien. Applicants must contact the Assessor's Department to obtain a certified copy of the abutters' list for the project.

Note: Although electronic (.pdf) submittals of application materials are helpful to initiate discussion and preliminary review and are required as part of the formal application, they alone DO NOT constitute official filing of the application. The proper number of copies of ALL submission items must be submitted in order to constitute an official filing and begin the formal review process.

Note: It is STRONGLY recommended that applicants file applications with the Conservation Commission prior to or at the time of application with the Planning Board in order to expedite the review process, if applicable. Not doing so may cause a delay in the Planning Board's approval.

For Definitive Subdivision, Special Permit and Site Plan Approval applications, the applicant shall submit the following copies in the submittal packet:

- 1 One (1) application containing an original signature of the applicant and/or owner and two (2) copies;
- 2 One (1) original abutters' list certified by the Assessor's Office and two (2) copies;
- A brief narrative describing the scope of the proposed project;
- A copy of the zoning review letter that was obtained from the Building Commissioner;
- A letter containing ALL waivers being sought from submission requirements and zoning and design regulations;
- A check made out to the Town of Stoughton for ALL applicable application and review fees in the proper amount;
- A check made out to Gatehouse Media for the publication of the legal advertisement in the Journal-Sun in the amount of \$25.70.
- Six (6) full-sized (24" x 36") copies of the site plan(s);
- Nine (9) copies of scaled-down (11" x 17") copies of the site plan(s);
- Eight (8) copies of the Development Impact Report (DIR);
- Three (3) copies of the Stormwater and/or Drainage Report;
- Three (3) copies of the Traffic Study/Report, if applicable; and
- .pdf copies of all plans on thumb drive, link or via email.

Notes:

1. *If the applicant and owner are different entities, then they should both sign the application OR provide a letter from the owner authorizing the applicant to proceed with the application on their behalf.*
2. *For Site Plan Approval or Definitive Subdivision, notifications shall be sent to abutters by the applicant via certified mail.*

The procedure for submission of Approval Not Required (ANR) applications is described in Section IV.A of the Land Subdivision Regulations.

The procedure for submission of a Preliminary Subdivision Plan is described in Section IV.B of the Land Subdivision Regulations.

Once received and stamped in by the Program Administrator, the plans and documents will be distributed to the appropriate departments for review and comment.

Application Review

Once the Town Planner receives copies of the application submittals from the Program Administrator, they will be reviewed for completeness within one (2) week of receipt unless circumstances prohibit it. The Town Planner will contact the applicant and/or the applicant's engineer and/or representative with a list of missing items that need to be addressed. If the application is deemed incomplete by the Town Planner, the applicant and their representative(s) will be notified of the missing items needed for completion. Once the application is complete, the Town Planner will prepare a legal advertisement to be published in the Journal-Sun on each of the two (2) Wednesdays prior to the scheduled public hearing date, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws. A copy of the legal advertisement will be sent to all parties in interest (abutters) and contains all of the necessary information to alert abutters to the date, time and location of the public hearing. It also contains the general subject matter for the hearing. The abutters' notifications shall be sent a minimum of 10 days prior to the public hearing and any receipts from certified mailings shall be returned to the Town Planner a minimum of one (1) week prior to the public hearing date.

Public Hearings

The Planning Board meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month. Exceptions are usually in November, December, July and August. As stated above, the legal advertisements for public hearings are published on each of the previous two (2) Wednesdays prior to the public hearing date and the deadline for submission of legal ads to the Journal-Sun is the Thursday prior to the first advertisement date. Therefore, there is a period of three (3) weeks between submission of the legal advertisement and the opening of the public hearing. The following is an example of a typical timeline:

For a public hearing to open on Thursday, February 25th, the legal advertisement would be published in the Journal-Sun on Wednesday, February 17th and Wednesday, February 10th. The deadline for submission of the legal advertisement would be Thursday, February 4th.

The first public hearing will proceed as follows:

- Introduction of applicant and their representative(s);
- Presentation of the project by the applicant's representative(s);
- Comments and/or questions from Town staff;
- Comments and/or questions from the Planning Board; and
- Comments and/or questions from the public.

Most projects require multiple public hearings prior to approval in order to address all comments and questions. During the public hearing, ANY information to be considered by Town staff and the Planning Board (ex. revised site plans) must be submitted a minimum of one (1) week prior to the meeting at which the information is to be considered. This allows time for Board members and staff to adequately review the information have prepared comments for the next meeting. At the discretion of the Board, information not received before this deadline may be taken under consideration and may not be considered for the next meeting. It may also necessitate a continuation without testimony of the public hearing to the next available meeting date.

Approval and Close of the Public Hearing

When all comments and questions from Town staff, the Board and the public have been successfully addressed, the Planning Board will authorize the Town Planner to draft a decision for approval to be reviewed and have a vote taken at the next available meeting date. Applicants should also be aware that the Board has a policy of not rendering a decision on a project prior to the completion of the review by the Conservation Commission, if applicable. This ensures that no modification(s) will be made to the site plans pursuant to the Conservation Commission's review that will impact the site plans approved by the Planning Board. This would require the applicant to present said modification(s) to the Board for additional review and approval.

Once the decision has been voted upon, the public hearing is closed by the Planning Board.

Endorsement of Decision and Appeal Period

Following the decision and vote, the decision will be endorsed by the Planning Board Chair. The Board typically votes to authorize the Chair to endorse the decision on its behalf. This is done in the days following the meeting at which the Board voted to issue the decision. The decision is then filed with the Town Clerk's office, which will initiate the 20-day appeal period, pursuant to the Massachusetts General Laws. The following is an example of a typical timeline for the appeal period:

The Planning Board approved the decision at a meeting on Thursday, February 25th. The Chair endorsed the decision on Monday, March 1st and the decision was filed with the Town Clerk on that day. The 20-day appeal period began on Tuesday, March 2nd and expired on Sunday, March 21st. Since the appeal period ends at the end of business on the 20th day, the Applicant can obtain a copy of the decision from the Town Clerk beginning on the opening of business on the 21st day after filing and apply for any necessary permits from other Town departments.

Post Approval

Following the expiration of the 20-day appeal period without any appeals received by the Town Clerk, the applicant may then move forward with obtaining any necessary local permit(s). Any application for a building permit or certificate of occupancy is reviewed by the various Town departments prior to issuance to ensure conformance with the various standards, regulations and conditions of approval.

Minor field changes that result from such reviews or from circumstances encountered on the site during construction may be considered minor in nature. However, more significant changes will be brought before the Planning Board for a determination as to whether the change(s) is minor or major in nature. Minor changes can be approved by the Planning Board at a public meeting without holding a public hearing. Major changes would require approval at a public hearing by the Board.

Fees

The following schedule applies to the types of applications to the Planning Board set forth below:

Category	Application Fee
Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans	\$100, plus \$100 for each resulting lot
Preliminary Subdivision Plan	\$750 or \$2/linear ft of roadway, whichever is less
Definitive Subdivision Plan	\$2,500 when no Preliminary Plan is submitted, \$1,500 when Preliminary Plan is submitted
Modification to Definitive Plan	\$500 plus \$100 for each new or modified building lot, not to exceed \$1,500
Special Permit Application (SCMOUD)	1. \$500 plus \$.10/ square foot of gross building area as determined by zoning by-law.
Special Permit Application (Sign Only)	\$500
Site Plan Review	1. \$500 plus \$.10/ square foot of gross building area as determined by zoning by-law.
	2. Minor Modification to previously approved site plan, \$250.00 plus \$0.10 per square foot of total building gross floor area, not to exceed \$1,500
Scenic Road Application	\$250

In addition to an Application Fee, the Planning Board shall impose a Project Review Fee on those applications which require, in the judgment of the Planning Board, a technical review by the Engineering Department, a private engineering firm or any other consultants due to the size, scale or complexity of a proposed project, the project's potential impacts. In hiring consultants, the Board may engage engineers, planners, lawyers, designers, or other appropriate professionals able to assist the Board and to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, ordinances, by-laws and regulations.

SITE PLAN REVIEW/SPECIAL PERMIT – PROJECT REVIEW FEES		
A. Residential Use	Units	Review Fee
	0-10	500
	10-20	750
	20-50	1,500
	50-100	2,000
	>100	2,500
B. Building Size	Gross Floor Area (GFA)	Review Fee
	0-5,000	500
	5,000 - 10,000	750
	10,000 - 30,000	1000
	30,000 - 50,000	1250
	50,000-100,000	1,500
	>100,000	2,000
C. Required Parking Spaces	# Spaces	Review Fee
	0-10	500
	10-20	750
	20-50	1000
	50-100	1500
	100-300	2,500
	>300	3,000
D. Drainage Analysis Required	Required	Review Fee
	Yes	500
	No	0
E. Drive-thru Facility	Proposed	Review Fee
	Yes	1,000
	No	0
SUBDIVISION -PROJECT REVIEW FEES		
Approval Not Required (ANR)	\$100/resulting lot	
Preliminary Plans	\$750 minimum or \$100/lot whichever is greater	
Definitive Plans w/ no Preliminary Approval	\$1,000 plus \$5.00/ linear foot of roadway, or \$3,000 whichever is less	
Definitive Plans w/ Preliminary Approval	\$1,000 plus \$3.00/ linear foot of roadway, or \$3,000 whichever is less	
OTHER - PROJECT REVIEW FEES		
Minor Modification to Site Plan	\$500 plus \$0.10 per square foot of building	
Scenic Road Application	\$250	
Sign Special Permit Only	\$250	