

# Building Department Frequently Asked Questions

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## **NH State Building Code (Effective as of July 1, 2022)**

International Building Code 2018

International Energy Conservation Code 2018

International Existing Building Code 2018

International Mechanical Code 2018

International Plumbing Code 2018

International Residential Code 2018

International Swimming Pool and Spa Code 2018

National Electrical Code 2020 (The Electrical Code is available on the NFPA website – not the ICC website)

State Fire Code Saf-C 6000

## **What types of work require permits?**

- New construction with an area over 100 square feet
- New or upgraded electrical, plumbing, & mechanical
- New or upgraded gas piping & gas tanks
- New or replacement wells.
- Building demolition or remodeling/renovating
- Solar arrays and generators
- Septic designs require Building Inspector review prior to state submittal.

## **Why do I need a permit?**

- The Town of Dunbarton has adopted the International Code Council's International Building Code 2018 in accordance with RSA 155-A:10, 2020 National Electric Code, and N H State Fire Code. **All work must be done to Code standards.**
- Code standards are designed to give reasonable assurance that a home is safe from structural failure, fire hazards from electrical and heating systems, electrical shock, and health risks.
- The permits provide a permanent record of the work performed and inspections conducted on the project.

## **What is required for a building permit application?**

- Basic lot and home information such as address, tax map/block/lot, lot size, zoning district, description of work to be done, and who will be doing the work.

- A sketch of the property showing the new construction location and distances from all property lines. The setback (distance required from property line NOT the edge of pavement!!) regulations can be found in the Town's Zoning Ordinance, Article 4, Section B (Table of Dimensional Regulations).
- Construction detail plans for new homes, additions, decks, porches, sheds, barns, garages, or major renovations.
- Verification of size of existing septic system if you are increasing the number of bedrooms or increasing sewage loading
- Location of wetlands in area of the new construction.

#### **What if my project does not meet the local Zoning Ordinance regulations?**

- You have the option to file an "Appeal" with the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a Variance. The appeal process requires an application, fees, and public hearings.
- Depending on the type of project, you may need further approvals from the Planning Board. (The Table of Uses can be found in the Town's Zoning Ordinance, Article 4.)

#### **What kinds of inspections are involved in the building permit process?**

- Inspections are done by the Building Inspector by appointment; a 72-hour notice is preferred.
- Footing & foundation
- Framing
- Electrical, plumbing and mechanical
- Insulation
- Final inspection for the Certificate of Occupancy if required.
- Solar & trade permit inspections
- Some projects may require further inspections by the Fire Chief for Life Safety Codes or by the Road Agent if a new driveway or access road is proposed.

#### **What if I only want to renovate or remodel my existing home?**

- Even if a building permit is not required, there may be other concerns with renovating an existing or older home. Safety issues such as lead paint rules, asbestos concerns, change of use, or heating appliance inspections should be considered and discussed with the Building Inspector or Fire Chief.
- Your project may not require a permit but it may require an inspection.

#### **How much do permits cost?**

- Application fee of \$30.00
- Minimum square footage fee of \$40.00
- Square footage over the minimum is additional, based on the type and size of construction
- Trade permits: electrical, plumbing, mechanical, gas, well – fee of \$50.00 each
- The fee schedule can be found on our website: [www.dunbartonnh.org](http://www.dunbartonnh.org)

#### **What if my property is in Current Use (for tax purposes)?**

- "Curtilage" means the land upon which a structure stands and the land immediately surrounding the structure, including the following: (a) A yard contiguous to the structure; (b) Land groomed and maintained around the structure; and (c) Land necessary to the support and service of the structure (driveway, septic, well, etc.)
- If the new construction is within the curtilage area of your existing home, there will be no Land Use Change Tax (LUCT).
- If you wanted to build outside the curtilage area, the building area would have to be removed from current use status and a LUCT assessed for that area.

### **Do I need a permit to change or add a driveway?**

- Yes, a driveway permit is required in either situation. State of NH driveway permit may be required depending on location.
- An application for the driveway permit can be obtained at the Building Department.
- Driveway permits are issued by the Road Agent who will inspect the area of the proposed access.
- The Road Agent will determine if a culvert will be required, if the access meets recommended sight distance, and the required grade of the driveway slope.

### **Does the Town have different Zoning Districts?**

- Yes, the Town has four different districts.
- Village District (VD) is the immediate area around Barnard Hill Road, the Town Hall and Library.
- Low Density Residential (LDR) makes up most of the area in Town.
- Medium Density Residential (MDR) surrounds the Stark Highway area.
- Multi-Family Residential Housing District (MFD) is an overlay zone situated parallel to both sides of Routes 13 and 77.
- A description and detailed location of each district can be found under Article 3 of the Town's Zoning Ordinance.
- Each district has a Table of Uses that can be found under Article 4 (I) in the Town's Zoning Ordinance.
- Each district also has a Table of Dimensional Regulations (minimum lot size and frontage, required setbacks, maximum building height and lot coverage) that can be found under Article 4 (B) of the Town's Zoning Ordinance.
- Exceptions for non-conforming lots can be found under Article 4 (C) of the Town's Zoning Ordinance.

### **Can I have an apartment within my home?**

- An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), an independent living unit with its own sleeping, cooking, eating, and sanitation facilities, is permitted in all districts.
- One ADU is allowed on lots where one single family home is present.
- The ADU shall be attached to either the principal structure (home) or an accessory structure (barn or garage) on the lot. A new septic design may be required.
- ADU requirements and regulations can be found under Article 4 (E) of the Town's Zoning Ordinance.
- If an ADU does not meet your intentions, there may be other options based on location, acreage, and zoning regulations. Please contact the Building Department with any questions.

### **What if I want to build a structure for business use or add a business use to my existing structure?**

- A site plan approval from the Planning Board would be required if the use of the structure is to be something other than residential.
- A site plan includes an application, fees, plans, and public hearings.
- The Table of Uses under Article 4 (I) of the Town's Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed for details.

**It is best to contact the Building Department for more information to avoid any misunderstandings or possible violations.**