



**** FREQUENTLY ASKED ZONING QUESTIONS ****

(what you need to know about permits for your building project in Bolton, Vermont)

Do I Need a Zoning Permit?

The Bolton Land Use & Development Regulations requires permits and approvals for development activities. A Zoning Permit **is required** for any development that involves:

- New Buildings
- Building Additions
- Porches, decks, and similar structures
- Ponds and swimming pools
- Accessory Dwellings
- Home Occupations & Signs
- Changes of Use
- Projects that increase total finished floor area, including height
- Projects that need increased septic treatment capacity (i.e. additional bedrooms in a house)
- Driveways
- Major re-grading

A Zoning Permit **is not** required for the following:

- The normal maintenance and repair of existing structures, utilities and infrastructure which does not result in any change to the footprint or height of a building, nor result in a change of use.
- Residential entry stairs (excluding decks and porches), handicap ramps, walkways, and fences or walls less than six (6) feet in height which do not obstruct public rights-of-way, or interfere with corner visibility or sight distances for vehicular traffic.
- Minor grading and excavation associated with road and driveway maintenance (including culvert replacement and resurfacing), and residential lawn and yard maintenance (e.g., for gardens or landscaping).
- Outdoor recreational facilities which do not involve or require the development, construction or use of structures or parking areas (e.g., walking, hiking, cross-country skiing and/or snow mobile trails).
- Up to two (2) accessory structures per lot, provided that each structure does not exceed eighty (80) square feet in floor area and 10 feet in height and meets all setback distances for the district in which it is located.
- Transit or bus stop shelters which do not exceed two hundred (200) square feet in area and twelve (12) feet in height, are set back at least five (5) feet from edge of the travel lane, and do not otherwise interfere with corner visibility or sight distances for vehicular traffic.
- Signs specifically exempted from the regulations under Section 3.14.
- Garage sales, yard sales, auctions or related activities not exceeding three (3) consecutive days, nor more than twelve (12) days in any calendar year.
- A home office within a principal dwelling or attached garage which is carried on by a resident of that dwelling, and which involves no signs, public access or outdoor storage or displays.

Can I build as soon as I obtain my zoning permit?

State law says your permit can be appealed up to 15 days after the permit is granted. If you start building before the appeal period expires, it's at your own risk. You should also check with the Zoning Administrator if any other permits from the town and/or state are required (e.g. curb cuts to a town or state road; state septic permits).

What is a Site Plan? Is a Site Plan Required?

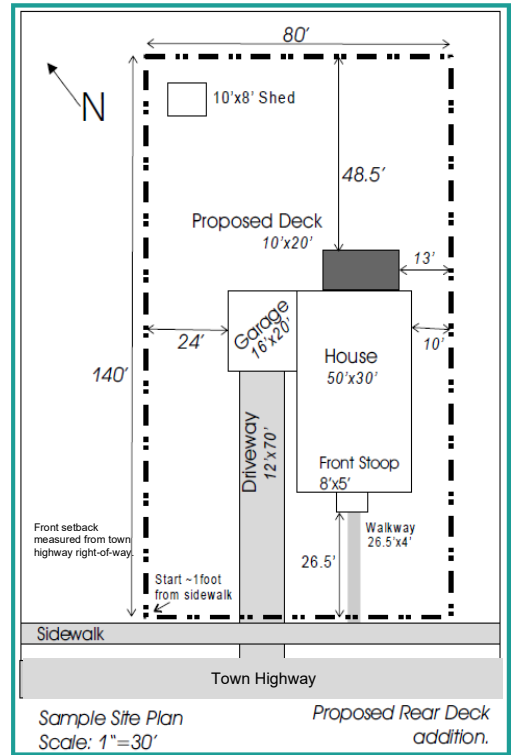
A Site Plan is a bird's eye view of a property drawn as if you were looking down at it from above. A Site Plan shows everything that is currently existing on the property, including footprints of all buildings (house, garage,

shed, decks, patios, etc.) and other improvements such as driveway, walkways, fences, pools, etc. A Site Plan should also show any proposed buildings or improvements. Dimensions should be included, and the drawing should be done to scale (i.e. one inch on the site plan is equal to 30 feet on the ground.) See example at right.

A Site Plan is required for any development involving new buildings, building additions, driveway or parking changes, construction or enlargement of decks, patios, porches, etc. The level of detail required for a Site Plan depends on the type of project proposed. Smaller projects, such as a house addition or construction of a shed or deck, don't necessarily need the same level of detail as larger projects.

At minimum, your Site Plan should include:

- The dimensions of the lot, including existing & proposed property boundaries;
- The location, footprint, & height of all existing and proposed structures & additions;
- The location and dimensions of existing & proposed accesses (curb cuts), driveways, and parking areas;
- The location of existing and proposed easements, rights-of-way, and utilities;
- Setbacks from property boundaries, road rights-of-way, surface waters, & wetlands;
- The location of existing and proposed water (wells) & wastewater systems.



How Do I Determine My Property Boundaries?

One problem that can arise is determining the exact location of property boundaries. With many projects the tax map boundaries are accurate enough to obtain the required permits. In other cases, more accurate property locations are needed when the minimum setbacks are being proposed. In these cases, survey-quality mapping of a property may be needed. Sources of survey-quality mapping may be available from:

- The property owners records when the property was purchased;
- The Town Office, if a property survey has been recorded;
- The Town Office, if your property is part of a subdivision;
- The zoning files at the Town Office, if a previous permit is on file that used a survey.

Occasionally, property boundaries can be determined in the field from existing survey pins or monuments. However, property owners should be cautious of using pins or monuments to determine boundaries unless they know for certain that they indicate boundaries. Not all survey pins indicate a property boundary, and pins may have been moved. Unfortunately, an applicant may sometimes need to obtain a survey in order to proceed with a project. A survey completed by a registered surveyor is almost always the best source of property boundary information. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain accurate property boundary information to complete a zoning permit application.

What Is a Setback?

A “setback” (front, side and rear) is the horizontal distance from the property line to any structure or site improvement. The front yard setback is typically measured from the road right-of-way. When the location of the road right-of-way is unknown, the front yard setback can be measured 25 feet from the centerline of the road. The town’s zoning regulations also require setbacks from streams and wetlands.

What is Lot and Building Coverage?

Lot Coverage refers to the total percentage of lot area which is covered by buildings, structures and other improvements, including parking and loading areas, access roads, service areas, and other impermeable surfaces which prevent the infiltration of storm water.

Building Coverage, as specified by zoning district, means either: 1) that portion (percentage) of a lot area which is covered by buildings and other structures, to be calculated as the sum of all building or structure footprints divided by the lot area: $(\text{total building footprint}/\text{lot area}) \times 100 = \% \text{ building coverage}$, or 2) the maximum total building footprint allowed per lot, to be calculated based on the sum of all building and structure footprints on that lot.

To calculate Lot and Building Coverage, add the total square footage of all buildings (footprint only) and other site improvements such as walkways, driveways and decks; multiply by 100, and then divide by the total square footage of your lot. Lot & Building Coverage requirements vary for each zoning district.

Do I Need Any State Permits?

Permit Specialists are available in the VT Agency of Natural Resources Regional Offices to answer your questions about the State permit process. The Permit Specialist will advise you about needed state permits, and will prepare a Project Review Sheet (PRS). The PRS is a preliminary determination of environmental and other state permits your project may need. It lists the agencies and departments and provides contact information. To contact the Permit Specialist serving the Town of Bolton, please visit: <http://dec.vermont.gov/ps-essex>

PERMIT FEE SCHEDULE

| Permit Type | Applic. Fee | Addl. Fees | Recording Fee |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Single, Two-Family, Multi-family Dwelling (New Construction/Addition <2000 SF) | \$75 + | 0.20/SF | \$15 |
| Single, Two-Family, Multi-family Dwelling (New Construction/Addition ≥2000 SF) | \$125 + | 0.25/SF | \$15 |
| Accessory Dwelling | \$75 + | 0.20/SF | \$15 |
| Accessory Structure (e.g. shed, deck, garage) | \$75 + | 0.25/SF | \$15 |
| Commercial Buildings (≤3,000 SF) per SF over 3,000 SF | \$150 + | 0.25/SF .20/ft | \$15 |
| Certificate of Occupancy/Compliance | \$60 + | | \$15 |
| Home Occupation / Signs (each) | \$35 + | | \$15 |
| Lot Line / Boundary Adjustment | \$75 + | | \$15 + \$25/sheet |
| Administrative Amendment/Extension | 50% of original fee | | |

Note: Projects which require public hearings and a decision by the Bolton Development Review Board have a separate application process. Contact the Zoning Administrator for information, forms & fees.

DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

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|----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Resort Village: | Setbacks: | Max. Building Coverage: 50% |
| | Front: 15 ft | Max. Lot Coverage: 75% |
| | Sides: 10 ft | |
| | Rear: 10 ft | |
| Resort Residential: | Setbacks: | Max. Building Coverage: 40% |
| | Front: 15 ft | Max. Lot Coverage: 65% |
| | Sides: 25 ft | |
| | Rear: 25 ft | |
| Rural I: | Setbacks: | Max. Building Coverage: 30% |
| | Front: 35 ft | Max. Lot Coverage: 50% |
| | Sides: 35 ft | |
| | Rear: 35 ft | |
| Rural II: | Setbacks: | Max. Building Coverage: N/A |
| | Front: 35 ft | Max. Lot Coverage: N/A |
| | Sides: 50 ft | |
| | Rear: 50 ft | |

See Tables 2.1, 2.6, and 2.7 for dimensional requirements of the Village, Forest, and Conservation Zoning Districts.

The Bolton Land Use and Development Regulations (BLUDRs) can be downloaded at <http://boltonvt.com>

To find out what zoning district your parcel is in, please visit <http://map.ccrpcvt.org/boltonmapviewer>
For specific questions, please contact the Zoning Administrator at 434-5075 x 225 or by email at zoningbolton@gmavt.net