

## **FAQ's for Building Department/Code Enforcement/Land use**

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

- You need a permit for any **new** construction, demolished, renovations, alter or change of use, and septic. For more information, please see our Weare building permit ordinance which is on this web site.

### **Do I need a sign permit?**

- If you wish to post a business sign you will need an approved sign permit. Some businesses are allowed in your zoning district. You would first want to check to see if the business is allowed or if it may require further approvals. The sign ordinance is our Zoning Ordinance which is on the web site.

### **What are the setbacks for a new building?**

- Each zoning district may have its own setback requirement or if it is a non-conforming use. The review of the plans will determine the correct setback requirements. The general setbacks are 50' from the front and 25' from all sides in the residential and rural district. In our zoning ordinance you will find the area requirements; Residential and Rural under Article 18, Village District is Article 22, Commercial District is Article 24 and Industrial is Article 25.

### **Am I allowed to have an apartment (Accessory Dwelling Unit) in my home?**

- Yes, in most cases. The use requires a Special Exception from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. There are restrictions for having an Accessory Unit within or attached to your home. There is a limit to size of area, only 2 bedrooms, one door connecting, etc. Please see Article 19.1.10 in our Zoning Ordinance.

### **If I want to finish my basement, do I need a permit?**

- Yes. We would need to know the new use, if any new electrical and plumbing is being done. Also any change of use would require updates in the assessment of your home.

### **What is a CO?**

- A **CO** is a Certificate of Occupancy. The certificate allows you to occupy the new constructed area. Once the building permit has had all the required inspections and has been approved by the Building Inspector, you will be able to occupy that area.

### **What is the process to obtain a permit?**

- The permit applications are on this web site. There are two types (minor or major) for construction and other permit types such as electrical, mechanical or plumbing. Once you complete the application and provide all the documentation needed, the review process will usually take about 3 days (legally the Town has up to 30 days to approve or deny a permit). The permit is good for one year if substantial construction has started. If **no** construction has started you may have a one-year renewal at no cost. The building permit includes an inspection form which is required to be signed, as the applicant is responsible to call for the inspections during the construction phases.

### **How many cars am I allowed to store in my yard?**

- The Town has a junk definition which is: *JUNK: Shall mean old or scrap copper, brass, rope, rags, batteries, paper, trash, rubber, debris, waste, or junked, dismantled or wrecked automobiles, or parts thereof, iron steel and other old scrap ferrous or nonferrous material.* It may not be just the numbers of cars, but how much is “junk” that is being stored, that may be considered a junkyard, which is not allowed in any district.

### **What if my neighbor is building a deck without a permit?**

- The Town has a complaint policy; which is a written complaint form must be submitted before the Code Official can investigate. Once the form is completed, an investigation can begin to see if a permit has been applied for. A letter or phone call will be made to the property owners to obtain more information. If there is a code violation, the owners will be notified by certified letter on how to correct the violation and hopefully the issue will be resolved.

### **Can I have a business office in my home?**

- The Zoning Ordinance addresses this question by listing the permitted uses of each district. For example: under Article 17.2.4, Residential District - Home based business or home occupations including but not limited to lawyer, doctor, realtor, accountant, or notary is permitted. You would need to know your district and then check the zoning for your type of “use”.

### **I am looking a parcel of land and want to know if I can build a home?**

- This is the million-dollar question! We have concerns with a proposed question like this because we need all the information, documentation, plans, etc. to review and start the permit process. However, if asking over the phone, a general question about a lot - mostly it has to conform to our zoning ordinance. IE: if you have an approved lot with required frontage, if you are able to construct the proper septic system, provide a well, meet the setbacks, the use is allowed, you can obtain a driveway permit or you away from wetlands. These and other requirements are researched when we process an application. It is best to provide a plan for us to review in detail to avoid missing some information or communication.