PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Frequently Asked Questions

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Where can I obtain a copy of my plot plan?

If the parcel was subdivided in the past, or has had a site plan approved, the Planning Department will typically have a copy of the approved plan. All recorded plans are available at the Hillsborough County Registry of Deeds.

Plans or lots of record contained in the Planning Department files are available to the public for a fee (photocopies). Subdivision and Site Plans are available in the Planning Department Office. Septic plans may be available through the Building Inspector.

What Zoning District is my lot in?

The Town of Brookline has two different zoning districts: a Residential/Agricultural District and a Commercial/Industrial District. The Town's zoning map is available on the Town website.

What are the zoning requirements for my parcel?

The requirements for each of the districts vary. There are different permitted uses, setbacks and other dimensional requirements can be found under Sections 500.00 and 600.00 of the Brookline Zoning Ordinance.

Can I subdivide my parcel?

In general, it is difficult to tell if a parcel can be subdivided based on acreage alone. There are minimum frontage requirements to be met as well. Contact the Planning Department Office to ask specific questions about your parcel. You will need to hire the services of a Licensed Land Surveyor in order to subdivide your parcel. Any proposed subdivision is subject to Planning Board approval in accordance with the Town of Brookline Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations.

Where can I obtain a copy of the Town Maps?

For hard copies of the Town maps, please contact the Assessors' Office.

Where can I find Flood Maps?

Flood Maps are available for review at the Planning Department's Office.

What is the subdivision or site plan process?

The Town of Brookline Planning Office prides itself on being business friendly. The Town Planner is available to answer questions or to meet with you to discuss subdivision or site plan proposals in advance of submission to the Planning Board. The Planning Office is available to provide guidance and to identify any potential issues that could arise. The Town of Brookline recommends that all state permits be in hand prior to submission to the Planning Board. All the proposals go through technical review by the Town Planner. Then, the applicant submits the application to the Planning Board for public hearing. This allows other Town Departments concerns to be addressed during the Town Planner review process (Fire Department, Emergency Management, Building Inspector, Road Agent, and if applicable, Conservation Commission, Public Health, and Police Department).

What is the difference between the Planning Board and the Planning Department?

The Planning ***Board*** is a 10 member board appointed by the Selectboard that meets on the third Thursday of the month. The membership is made up of 4 regular members, 1 ex-officio from the Selectboard and 5 alternates. The Planning Board is charged with specific duties and responsibilities as set forth by New Hampshire State Law. These duties include the preparation and amendment of a Master Plan, and review of subdivision and site plans. The Planning Board also prepares and recommends proposed zoning and regulations changes and additions/amendments to the Capital Improvement Plan.

The Planning ***Department*** supports the Planning Board in its duties and is the day to day contact for the public. The Planning Office consists of the Town Planner and the recording Secretary. The Town Planner facilitates the subdivision and site plan review process.

How can I join and be a member of the Planning Board?

Contact the Planning Department or attend the meetings and ask if there are any current openings on the Board. Members and alternates serve three year terms, unless someone is appointed to fill a vacancy due to a resignation, in which case the term is for the unexpired portion of the original member's term.

What are the Planning Board deadlines and schedules?

The Planning Board meets on the third Thursday of the month. Deadlines and public meeting policies can be found on the Board's home page on the Brookline website.

Can anyone attend a Planning Board meeting?

Planning Board meetings are open to the public, including workshops. People are encouraged to attend and ask questions or provide comment.

What do I do if I receive an abutter notice?

A Notice of Public Hearing advises you that your property is abutting a proposed subdivision or site plan application. The Notice will advise the date of the public hearing, the parcel under consideration and a general description of the project. At the public hearing, you will be given an opportunity to comment on the project. If you wish to ask questions or see the application prior to the date of the public hearing, contact the Planning Department. Generally, only one Notice is provided and you would need to attend the meeting to find out if the meeting has been continued, or if there will be any site walks.

If you are unable to attend the hearing, the local cable access channel (Ch. 192) broadcast the meetings. Also the town is running a program that streams the video feed of public meetings broadcast on Channel 192 and on the town website. This allows residents (including those who do not have cable) to view the meetings via the internet. You can also obtain a copy of the approved minutes on the Board's home page.

Where can I find Planning Board minutes?

Planning Board minutes are drafted and are available by request in a draft form five (5) business days following the date of public hearing. Minutes are approved at the next scheduled meeting of the Planning Board and then are posted on the Town website. The Planning Board page also contains minutes from the prior years. If you require draft minutes, please contact the Planning Department.

How can interested citizens raise concerns about a project to the Planning Board?

Abutters and interested citizens are encouraged to contact the Planning Office with questions or concerns, view plans on file in the Planning Office prior to the scheduled meeting, submit written comments to the Planning Board, attend the public hearings, or watch the meetings on the local cable access channel or on their computer (streamed videos).

Do I need Planning Board approval for my project?

Approval from the Planning Board is required for all subdivisions, lot line adjustments, voluntary mergers, new non-residential developments (site plans), and any changes in use

and/or expansions of existing non-residential buildings and sites. Contact the Planning Office to discuss changes in use and expansions of use of existing sites.

I am opening a business in Brookline. Do I need a business license or special permit?

The Town of Brookline does issue business licenses. If your business involves the sale or preparation of food goods, contact the Heath Officer. If you are opening a business in an existing building/storefront, contact the Planning Office. Review of the information you provide will determine if Planning Board review is required for your proposed business. It may be that the particular use you are proposing requires a special exception or variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment; review of the *change in use* will assist the Code Enforcement Officer in making that determination.