

TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE

PERMITTING GUIDEBOOK



JANUARY 2011

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**TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE
PERMITTING GUIDEBOOK**

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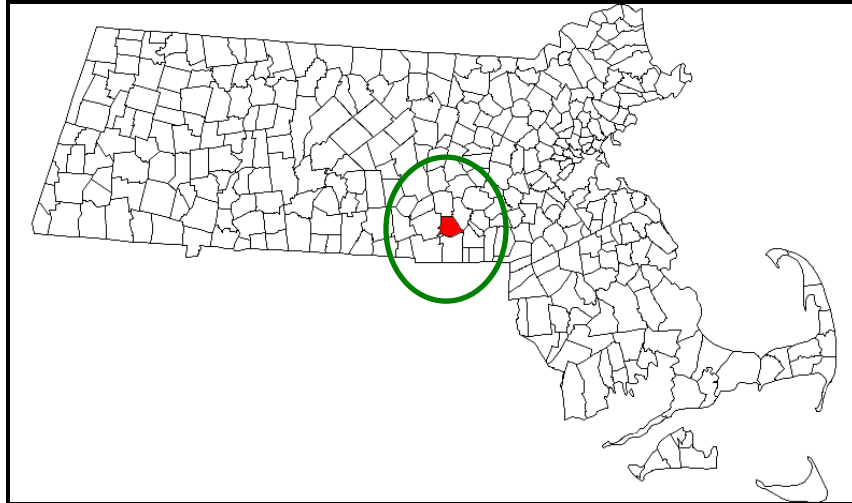
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Introduction & General Overview

The Town of Northbridge is a rural community of approximately 13,900 residents located in the heart of the Blackstone River Valley within the southeast corner of Worcester County. Located near the junction of Interstate 90 –Massachusetts Turnpike and Route 146 (via Exit 10A) Northbridge is situated 13 miles south of Worcester, MA and 30 miles north of Providence, RI offering an ideal location for business, industry & residence.



Once a thriving mill town, today many well-established and valued businesses call Northbridge home. Northbridge is part of the Blackstone Valley Economic Target Area (ETA), includes a number of Economic Opportunity Areas (EOA) and designated Priority Development Sites (PDS).

Funded through the State's Expedited Permitting initiatives (MGL CH 43D), this Guidebook is designed to facilitate that permitting process for developers, business owners and homeowners within the Town of Northbridge. The Guidebook provides a summary of various staff persons, departments and boards involved in the permitting process. As there are a wide variety of permits, approvals and licenses for nearly every development project, only the most common ones related to land-based development are summarized in this Guidebook. If at any time, before/during your application process you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate staff person, who will be more than happy to assist.

We hope this Guidebook assists you as you move through the various stages of permitting. For more detailed information, please contact the appropriate staff person, or if in doubt as to where to start, contact the **Town Planner** and/or **Inspector of Buildings** first to review your project, they will help direct you to the appropriate department(s).

Disclaimer: *The General Bylaw, Zoning Bylaw, Wetlands Regulations and Subdivision Rules & Regulations of Northbridge, as applicable, take precedence over any information contained within this Guidebook in any conflict between them. This Permitting Guidebook was created as a guide to assist in the process of permitting in Northbridge and offers summary information only –town departments should be contacted for more detailed information and verification on specific permitting.*

Development Guide

New Single Family/ Multi-family and Commercial Buildings

1. Building permit applications shall be obtained from the Building Department.
2. Two (2) sets of building plans shall accompany the application. Structures that fall under “*controlled construction*” require that an Engineer/Architect stamp the plans.
3. Submission of an engineered site plan shall include the following:
 - Existing & proposed grades;
 - Location of the building, deck, porch, bulkhead, chimney & any accessory structures;
 - Location and proposed grade of driveway;
 - Flood Plain determination must be shown on the site plan; and
 - Location of all proposed utilities

The above shall be reviewed by the Building Inspector to verify compliance with Zoning.

4. Compliance with Massachusetts State Energy Code and Workers Compensation Insurance documentation must be included in the permit application. Applications for one and two-family structures must also include a wall bracing analysis.
5. Obtain building authorization and permits from the following Departments & Offices:

A. Sewer Department

When there is a connection to the *Municipal Sewer System* the applicant shall take the building permit application to the DPW -Sewer Division. The application will be reviewed and the applicable connection fee will be annotated on the connection permit. The Sewer Division representative will sign the application to indicate that the fee is correct and if the permit is approved.

B. Water Department

When there is a connection to the *municipal water system* the applicant shall take the building permit application to the DPW Highway Division. The water connection application will be reviewed and the applicable connection fee will be annotated on the connection permit. The Public Works representative will sign the application to indicate that the fee is correct and the permit is approved. The application must also be signed by the Whitinsville Water Company.

Fees must be submitted to the Town Treasurer prior to the issuance of the building permit.

C. Board of Health

Where a *septic system* is being utilized there must be an engineered design which has been approved by the Board of Health. For a single-family building permit application the Board of Health will need to review the set of house plans prior to signing the permit application.

Authorization from the Board of Health is required when a *well* is utilized on property. A plan showing the location of the well on the lot and the testing showing quantity and quality results shall be submitted to the Board of Health. Authorization from the Board of Health is required for any commercial kitchen or food sales.

D. Conservation

Any activity which alters the area within 100-feet of a wetland, flood zone or other protected areas or within 200-feet of a river requires a filing with the Conservation Commission.

E. Department of Public Works

Authorization from the DPW is required for Road Opening Permits and curb cuts. They are also responsible for administering the Excavation & Trench Safety Regulations under 520 CMR 14.00.

F. Fire Department

Permits are required for the following:

- Blasting
- Cooking Suppression Installation
- Cutting and Welding
- Open Burning
- Propane Storage
- Oil Burners
- Fire Alarm Installation
- Sprinkler Installation
- Tank Removal

G. Planning Board

Site Plan review by Planning Board (Section 173-49.1 –Zoning Bylaw) shall apply to the following types of structures and uses (excluding subdivisions for detached single-family dwellings): (a) Any new structure or group of structures under the same ownership on the same lot or contiguous lots with at least 6,000 square feet of gross floor area or requiring the provision of 10 or more parking spaces under § 173-27, Off-Street parking, loading and landscaping standards; (b) Any improvements, alteration or change in use which either

results in an increase of 6,000 square feet of gross floor area or requires an addition of 10 or more parking spaces to the amount required by § 173-27 prior to such improvement, alteration or change in use; and (c) Any new structure, group of structures, improvement, alteration or change in use, as defined above, which either results in the increase of 4,000 square feet of gross floor area or requires the provision of seven or more parking spaces, when any portion of the lot or parcel of land on which said structure or use is located lies within 200 feet of a residential district.

Applicants are encouraged to review the Northbridge Zoning Bylaws and contact the Town Planner and/or Inspector of Buildings for a proposed activity regarding the review and approval requirements.

H. Community Planning & Development

Upon receipt of a Site Development Plan application or at the request of the applicant/engineer the Town Planner shall coordinate a Technical Review meeting. A technical review is an informal meeting which offers an opportunity for the applicant and or his/her engineers to meet with various municipal department staff to review a development proposal.

The Technical Review Committee is comprised of the following town staff: Inspector of Buildings, Town Planner, Fire Chief, the Director of Public Works, Highway Superintendent, Sewer Superintendent, and representatives for the Conservation Commission, Board of Health & Whitinsville Water Company.

As part of the Planning Board Site Development Review Process applicants are also directed to present development proposals to the Northbridge Safety Committee, an advisory committee of the Board of Selectmen for recommendation.

6. Prior to the Building Department review; each department noted above must sign the permit application where applicable.
7. Notify Dig Safe at 1-800-322-4844 (72 hours before beginning construction).
8. The Building Permit Signature Card must be present on the job site at all times.
9. It is the applicants' responsibility to call for the required inspections. Contact the appropriate department(s) if you are unsure of the inspection schedule.
 - Electrical inspections after rough wiring and finish wiring;
 - Plumbing inspections after rough plumbing and after finish plumbing;
 - Building Inspector inspections required after excavation, after foundation pour, after framing, (after rough plumbing and rough wiring inspections have passed) after insulating, wallboard, and when finished;
 - Fire Department inspections after fire/smoke alarms and furnace are installed; and

- Board of Health inspections when the septic system is excavated, components are in place, grading and stabilization. Certifications and an as-built plan must be provided by the system designer and the installer prior to the final issuance of Certificate of Compliance.

10. A certificate of occupancy will be issued when all the work has been completed in accordance with the provisions of the approved permits and of the applicable codes for which a permit is required. A certified as-built must be submitted prior to occupancy.

Residential – Additions & Garages

Additions to your dwelling including an attached garage must conform to front, rear, and side setback requirements for the zoning district in which you are located. Unattached garages are considered accessory buildings. A complete set of plans for the proposed addition including a site plan showing the location of all existing buildings and proposed structures, indicating distances from all property lines and the location of your septic system and well (if applicable) must accompany your building permit application.

For properties served by an on-site septic system, you will be required to obtain Board of Health approval for the proposed addition. The Board of Health will review your building permit application to determine compliance with Title 5 regulations governing setback requirements as well as determining whether the existing system meets minimum design criteria for the proposed addition.

Accessory Buildings – Sheds & Pools (& unattached garages)

Your building permit application must specify the size and type of construction proposed and must be accompanied by a site plan showing the location of the proposed pool or shed indicating distances from property lines and the location of the septic system and well, if applicable.

An accessory structure shall not occupy more than 40% of the required rear yard. It shall not be less than 60 feet from any street lot line, except on a corner lot used for garage purposes, then the same distance as the required depth of the front yard for the adjacent lots: it shall not be less than six feet from any lot line; it shall not exceed 25 feet in height. And, if a private in-ground swimming pool, it shall be completely enclosed by a fence at least four feet in height with a maximum height of six feet and secured by a locked gate. Aboveground private swimming pools must be equipped with a suitable safety device limiting direct access to the pool. A separate electrical permit is required for any swimming pool.

A pool affidavit signed by the owner must be included for all pool building permit applications. This affidavit states that the owner has read the pool barrier requirements and will install the necessary fencing upon completion of the pool installation.

Fences

Building Permit not typically required. Exception: A fence that exceeds six (6) feet in height does require a building permit.

Outdoor Wood Burning Furnaces

See Board of Health.

Other

The following items also require that you obtain a permit from the Code Enforcement Department: wood-burning stoves, signs, plumbing, gas and electrical work, and installation of a new roof. The Code Enforcement Department strongly recommends that homeowners utilize licensed contractors for their home renovations to ensure that they are properly licensed and insured.

Licenses & Permits – Delinquent Taxes

In accordance with § 5-108 of the Code of Northbridge Regulations, the town may deny an application for, or revoke or suspend a building permit or any local license or permit, including renewals and transfers issued by any board, officer, department for any person, corporation or business enterprise, who has neglected or refused to pay any local taxes, fees, assessments, betterments or other municipal charges, including amounts assessed under the provisions of MGL C. 40 § 21D, or with respect to any activity, event or other matter which is the subject of such license or permit and which activity, event or matter is to be carried out or exercised on or about real estate whose owner has neglected or refused to pay any local taxes, fees, assessments, betterments or any other municipal charges.

All applications for building permits must be signed off by the Office of the Treasurer/Collector to ensure that there are no outstanding property taxes or other fees associated with the subject parcel that are outstanding.

Municipal Departments & Boards

-ASSESSORS OFFICE

The Assessors Office provides property information for taxation purposes. It functions to provide valuation of all residential, commercial, industrial, and personal property within the community. Property information, including field cards and map & parcel information is contained in this department.

The Assessors office also processes exemptions and abatements on real estate tax, personal property tax, and motor vehicle excise tax. The Board of Assessors is comprised of three (3) members appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Office Staff

Robert Fitzgerald, Principal Assessor
 Sheila Brennan, Assistant Assessor
 Jennifer Cecconi, Property Lister

Phone/Fax/Email

Phone: (508) 234-2740
 Fax: (508) 234-5834
 Email: rfitzgerald@northbridgemass.org

Location/Mailing Address

Northbridge Memorial Town Hall
 7 Main Street
 Whitinsville, MA 01588

Office Hours

Monday: 8:30 AM – 7:00PM
 Tuesday - Thursday: 8:30AM – 4:30PM
 Friday: 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

- Walter Convent, Chairman
- John Gosselin
- Denis LaTour

Web Address: <http://www.northbridgemass.org/assessor/assessor.htm>

Meeting Schedule: The Board of Assessors holds one (1) meeting per month. Contact the Assessors office for meeting schedule.

Overview

The Assessors office prepares & certifies Abutter lists for various permit applications including Notices of Intent, Site Plan & Subdivision reviews, as well as Variances & Special Permit applications. As each department may have unique abutter definitions, your application for a Certified List of Abutters must be obtained from the department for which a permit is being sought. The abutters list shall be prepared by the project applicant and submitted to the Assessor's office for certification.

Upon completion of the Certified Abutters List by the Assessors office, the list shall be filed with the project application submittal to the appropriate department. Please allow 7 to 10 days for the staff to prepare and certify your abutters list.

Municipal Departments & Boards

-BOARD OF HEALTH

The Board of Health is responsible for the enforcement of state and local environmental and health codes including the oversight of private septic systems, well construction and water quality, housing standards, safe food handling practices in food service establishments, solid waste management, barn and animal inspections; including quarantines and rabies testing, body art (tattoo) establishments & practitioners, emergency preparedness planning, recreational camps for children, and communicable disease management.

Office Staff

Jeanne M. Gniadek, Administrator

Phone/Fax/Email

Phone: (508) 234-3272

Fax: (508) 234-0821

Email: jgniadek@northbridgemass.org

Office Location

Aldrich School –Town Hall Annex

14 Hill Street

Whitinsville, MA 01588

Office Hours

Monday: 8:30AM –7:00PM

Tuesday - Thursday: 8:30AM – 4:30PM

Friday: 8:30AM –1:00PM

Please call ahead as Board of Health office may be closed due to site inspections, meetings, etc.

BOARD OF HEALTH

- Paul R. McKeon, Chairman
- Christopher A. Cella, R.Ph.
- Ann Marie Thompson, RN
- Scott Chase
- Steven Garabedian

BOARD OF HEALTH -AGENTS

- James F. Malley, Jr., PE
- Theresa Gilchrist, CFSP

Web Address: www.northbridgemass.org/boh/board_of_health.htm

Meeting Schedule: The Board of Health typically meets the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Aldrich School Town Hall Annex, unless otherwise posted.

Permits Issued: Food Establishment; Frozen Dessert Machines; Disposal Works Construction Permits; Disposal Works Installer Licenses; Soils Evaluation Permits
Tanning Salons; Recreational Camps for Children; Bathing Beaches; Public Pools; Well (Construction, Destruction, Geothermal); Septage Haulers; Trash Haulers; Outdoor Wood Burning Furnaces; and Body Art (Tattoo) Establishments & Practitioners

Process for Obtaining Permit Applications: Applications may be obtained from the office; most applications are available on the Board of Health website under *Applications & Forms*; permit may need Board of Health review at a public meeting

Time Frame for Decision(s):

- Septic system plan reviews – up to 45 days
- Food Establishment plan review – up to 30 days
- Food Permit Application – up to 30 days

When revisions are required, time frame for rendering decision begins anew upon re-submittal.

Appeal Process: In most cases, appeals are not applicable. The Board strives to work with permit applicants to ensure that their project meets the health & safety guidelines mandated by regulation.

Fee Schedule: See Appendix D-1

Applicable Local, State and Federal Statutes: 105 CMR, 310 CMR, & Northbridge Board of Health Regulations

Overview

The Board of Health regulates a wide variety of permit areas from Environmental Health and Housing Inspections, to Public Health and Sanitation. The most common requests to the Board of Health are for approvals of septic systems and the issuance of well permits. Food establishment plan reviews and permits are also required for all restaurants and retail food establishments. Since these are the types of permits most commonly requested, this guide will discuss only those items. Please contact the Board of Health Office if you require additional information.

Septic Systems: Title 5 is the State Code that governs on-site sewage disposal systems, or “septic” systems. The Town of Northbridge also has local regulations in addition to Title 5. If it is determined that public sewer is not available for a project, a soils evaluation (AKA percolation and groundwater testing) must be performed to determine if the naturally-occurring soil will support an on-site septic system. The soils evaluation must be performed by a DEP-approved soils evaluator and witnessed by the Board of Health Agent. Your design engineer will utilize this information in the preparation of your septic design plan. Title 5 dictates minimum design flow criteria based on the type of building proposed, whether it is a residential (typically based on number of bedrooms**) or commercial - See 310 CMR 15.203. It also dictates minimum setback criteria, such as distance from your well and property line. The Board of Health then has up to 45 days to review the septic design plan and approve or return it for revisions. If a plan is returned for revisions, the 45 day review period begins anew upon receipt of the revised plans.

**** Per Title 5 - 310 CMR 15.002: *Definitions – Bedroom* – A room providing privacy, intended primarily for sleeping and consisting of all of the following: (a) floor space of no less than 70 square feet; (b) for new construction, a ceiling height of no less than 7’ 3”; (c) for existing houses and for mobile homes, a ceiling height of no less than 7’ 0”; (d) an electrical service and ventilation; and (e) at least one window. Living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens, halls,**

bathrooms, unfinished cellars and unheated storage areas over garages are not considered bedrooms. Single family dwellings shall be presumed to have at least three bedrooms. Where the total number of rooms for single family dwellings exceeds eight, not including bathrooms, hallways, unfinished cellars and unheated storage areas, the number of bedrooms presumed shall be calculated by dividing the total number of rooms by two then rounding down to the next lowest whole number. The applicant may design a system using design flows for a smaller number of bedrooms than are presumed in this definition by granting to the Approving Authority a deed restriction limiting the number of bedrooms to the smaller number.

For the construction of the septic system, only a licensed installer can be issued a disposal works construction permit. The Board of Health office can provide you with a list of licensed installers. The construction of the system is inspected at four different stages: bottom excavation, component installation, grading, and stabilization. Your installer is required to contact the design engineer and the Board of Health for each of these inspections.

The design engineer will then prepare an “as-built” plan and Certificate of Compliance for the septic system. The as-built plan will show the exact location & elevation of each system component. The Board of Health cannot sign off on an occupancy permit until the Certificate of Compliance is received and reviewed to ensure compliance with Title 5 regulations.

Building Permits for additions or renovations may also require Board of Health review with respect to the on-site sewage disposal system. For additions that change the “footprint” of the building, the applicant will need to show the location of the septic system components – this is done to ensure that setbacks established in Title 5 are being met. If the location of the components is not known, a Title 5 inspection may be required.

As Title 5 regulations dictate minimum design flow criteria, all permits for additions and renovations shall be reviewed to determine if the proposed changes to the dwelling require an upgrade or expansion of the septic system. If an upgrade is required, that upgrade will need to be done prior to the issuance of a signature by the Board of Health on your building permit application.

Wells: If town water is not available for your site, a well construction permit will be required. A well permit can only be issued after your septic system design plan has been approved. Well construction and water quality testing is required prior to the issuance of a signature from the Board of Health on your building permit application.

A well permit is also required for the construction of a Geothermal/Ground Source Heat Pump well. The application must include the Underground Injection Control (UIC) DEP registration number as is required for open loop systems.

Food Establishments: The Federal Food Code of 1999 and Code of Massachusetts Regulations 105 CMR 590.000 regulate any food that is prepared for the public. Prior to beginning any new construction or renovation project for a restaurant, foodservice or retail food service establishment, a Plan Review must be performed. The applicant is required to submit plans for the establishment that show the interior design and layout of the facility. Detail must be given

to the location of the 3-bay sink, food prep sink, grease interceptor, hand-wash sinks, and other food preparation equipment. The plan must make note of the materials intended to be used on the walls, floors, and ceilings of the establishment. Specification sheets for the food equipment are also an integral part of the application. The Board has 30 days to review the submittal and issue its findings. A Food Establishment Plan Review Guidance Document is available in the Board of Health office to guide you through this process.

The number of bathrooms that your establishment will be required to have is regulated by the State Plumbing Code – please contact the Northbridge Plumbing Inspector at (508) 234-6577 for any questions you have regarding bathroom and lavatory facilities.

During the construction or remodeling of your food establishment, you will be required to contact the Board of Health office for construction inspections as well as for a pre-operational inspection. No food products can be brought into the establishment until approval is granted by the Health Inspector.

Any changes to the establishment during construction that differ from the approved plan must be approved by the Board. Any construction that is performed on a food establishment without approval of the Board of Health is subject to denial of a food establishment permit or demolition of any construction that does not meet food code requirements.

All food establishments, except for certain retail enterprises, must have a Serve Safe certified person trained in food safety and sanitation. A list of approved course offerings can be found in the Plan Review Guidance Document or you can contact the Board of Health office for any local course offerings.

Municipal Departments & Boards

-CODE ENFORCEMENT INSPECTIONAL SERVICES

The Code Enforcement Inspectional Services, commonly referred to as the Building Department, is the office responsible for building, plumbing, gas, and electrical permits. It also serves as the Fence Viewer and employs the Sealer of Weights & Measures.

Office Staff

James Sheehan, Inspector of Buildings
Brenda M. Ouillette, Admin. Assistant

Phone/Fax/Email

Phone: (508) 234-6577
Fax: (508) 234-0821
Email: jsheehan@northbridgema.org
bouillette@northbridgema.org

Office Location

Aldrich School –Town Hall Annex
14 Hill Street
Whitinsville, MA 01588

Office Hours

Monday: 8:30AM – 7:00PM
Tuesday - Thursday: 8:30AM – 4:30PM
Friday: 8:30AM –1:00PM

Inspectors

- Larry Wiersma, Plumbing Inspector
- Peter Harper, Assistant Plumbing Inspector
- Richard Wallace, Wiring Inspector
- George Duhamel, Assistant Wiring Inspector
- Louis Sakin, Sealer of Weights & Measures

**Scheduling of inspections must be coordinated through the Building Department*

- Building inspections are typically done from 10:30AM to 11:30AM & 2:30PM to 4:30PM (NO afternoon inspections on Fridays)
- Electrical inspections Monday - Thursday 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM
- Plumbing inspections Monday - Thursday 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Web Address: www.northbridgema.org/Building_dept/Building_dept.htm

Permits Issued: Building Permits; Certificate of Occupancy; Demolition Permits; Sign Permits; Electrical Permits; Gas Permits; and Plumbing Permits

Process for Obtaining Permit Applications: Applications may be obtained from the Department and are also available on the town's web page.

Time Frame for Decision: 30 days for the review and issuance of a building permit – conditional upon receipt of complete building permit application with all required signatures, forms, and plans.

Appeal Process: Applicants whose building permits are denied may seek an appeal through the Northbridge Zoning Board of Appeals.

Fee Schedule: See Appendix D-2.1, D-2.2 & D-2.3

Applicable Local, State and Federal Statutes: Mass. Building Code 780 C.M.R. & Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Northbridge

Overview

This is likely the first department you should visit. The Building Official enforces the Northbridge Zoning Bylaws and some General By-laws, the (CMR 780) State Building Code, (CMR521) Architectural Access Board (Rules & Regulations) and issues building, occupancy, and sign permits. The Building Official's office can assist you in determining your zoning classification and can help you determine the other departments you need to contact. You may access the State Building Code and the Architectural Access Regulations by going to www.mass.gov/bbrs (Massachusetts Department of Public Safety). You must comply with all federal and state laws.

No building or structure shall be erected, altered or demolished without a written permit issued by the Building Inspector. The Building Inspector shall not issue any such permit unless the plans for the building and the intended use fulfill the provisions of the Zoning Bylaw in all respects, except as specifically permitted otherwise by action of the Planning Board, Board of Appeals or the Board of Selectmen. Additionally, the Zoning Bylaw stipulates that all uses other than single family and two family dwellings, nursery, farm, in-home professional office, and accessory uses shall be subject to Site Plan Approval. Many projects will also require approvals of the Conservation Commission prior to the issuance of a Building Permit. Therefore, a building permit can only be issued after all Zoning Bylaw and Wetland requirements are met.

Building Permit Checklist

1. Submit a signed Building Permit application with the following attachments:
 - Two sets of plans, **drawn to scale**, and specifications, showing the proposed work (See Zoning Bylaws for more detailed information).
 - Plot Plan showing the **existing structure, proposed structure** or **addition** with measurements showing the setbacks to the front, side and rear property lines (see Zoning Bylaws for more detailed information).
 - **Completed application and fees** completed by appropriate town boards and/or departments.
2. Where Town sewer is unavailable, a Disposal Works Permit (showing Title 5 compliance), must be obtained from the Board of Health. The Board of Health must

review all plans for additions to homes as well since the Title 5 requirements could change if the number of rooms increases.

3. Where Town water is unavailable, a functioning well must be installed and tested prior to the issuance of a building permit. Contact the Board of Health Office for appropriate approvals.
4. The Department of Public Works (DPW) must review any plans for new construction, addition of bedrooms to dwellings, and changes of use of any building due to potential for change in sewer usage. Tie-in fees for utilities (sewer and water) must be paid prior to the issuance of a building permit. A copy of proof of payment is to accompany the building permit application (application for connection to water/sewer are available at Town Hall or the DPW).
5. A curb cut permit (where applicable) is issued by the DPW. There is a fee for a curb cut permit.
6. The Fire Department must review plans for new construction and any alterations or additions.
7. Copies of Recorded Zoning Permits, Site Plan Approval and Wetlands Permits must be submitted with the building permit application.

Inspections

The following inspections for new construction and as may be applicable for all other construction or renovations:

1. Excavation
2. Footings
3. Foundation & perimeter drains (prior to backfilling)
4. Rough Plumbing and Rough Electrical (prior to rough frame)
5. Rough Frame before insulation (rough plumbing and rough electrical must be endorsed on permit prior to rough frame inspection) All fire stopping and firewalls must be in place
6. Insulation
7. Wallboard inspection
8. Finish Plumbing and Final Electrical Inspections
9. Smoke Detectors and Oil Burner inspections (Fire Department)
10. Final inspection for occupancy – before a Certificate of Occupancy can be issued, a certified tape survey showing compliance with zoning regulations must be submitted to the Building Department. A street number shall be clearly visible from the street or roadway upon which the structure fronts and shall be made of permanent weatherproof materials at least three (3) inches in height. Any structure that is not

visible from the street or roadway shall have the assigned number posted on a suitable support at the entrance to the driveway that services the structure.

Signs

The zoning bylaw regulates the size, location and number of signs you may erect. Most signs cannot be installed without a sign permit from the Building Official's office. You should contact the Building Official's office to determine if you will need a sign permit.

Municipal Departments & Boards

-COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

The Community Planning & Development office provides staff review & offers recommendations on Subdivision and Site Development applications to the Planning Board. The Planning office coordinates municipal department reviews (Technical Review), offers guidance and answers general queries from the public and applicant/engineers.

Office Staff

R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner
Barbara A. Kinney, Planning/Conservation
Secretary

Phone/Fax/Email

Phone: (508) 234-2447
Fax: (508) 234-0814
Email: gbechtholdt@northbridgemass.org
bkinney@northbridgemass.org
planning@northbridgemass.org

Office Location

Aldrich School –Town Hall Annex
14 Hill Street
Whitinsville, MA 01588

Office Hours

Monday: 8:30AM – 7:00PM
Tuesday - Thursday: 8:30AM – 4:30PM
Friday: 8:30AM – 1:00PM

Web Address: www.northbridgemass.org/Planning_board/Planning_board.htm

NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD

- Janet Dolber, Chair (2011)
- Barbara Gaudette, Vice Chair (2013)
- Edward Palmer (2011)
- Richard Griggs, Clerk (2013)
- Kevin Curtin (2012)
- Cindy Key, Associate Member (2011)

Meeting Schedule: The Planning Board typically meets the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Selectmen’s Chambers of the Town Hall (7 Main Street)

Types of Permits Issued: Approval Not Required (81-P plan); Preliminary Subdivision; Definitive Subdivision; Site Development Plan; Special Permit; Common Driveway; Erosion Control; Stormwater Management; and Scenic Road permits (Stone wall / Public shade tree)

Process for Obtaining Approval(s): Application is made to the Planning Board; applicants are encouraged to meet with the Town Planner prior to the submission of any plans. Applications may be found on the town’s website or at the Planning office and Office of the Town Clerk. Abutter's Guide is a helpful handbook for the Planning Review Process; this resource is available for review on the Planning website.

Advertising Requirements: All public hearings and public meetings are to be posted with the Office of the Town Clerk. Applications requiring a Public Hearing shall be published in the local newspaper in each of two (2) successive weeks. Notice to abutters is required for both public hearings and public meetings. The cost associated with publications and abutter notification (mailing) shall be borne by the applicant.

Time Frame for Decision: Preliminary Subdivision (45 days); Definitive Subdivision, preceded by Preliminary Plan (90 days); Definitive Subdivision, where no preliminary plan filed (135 days); Site Development Plan (90 days); Special Permit (w/in 90 days of close of public hearing)

Appeal Process: Within 20 days after decision is filed in accordance with MGL c. 40A, §17

Fee Schedule: See Appendix D-3

Applicable Local, State and Federal Statutes: MGL c. 40A; MGL c.41 §81A - 81GG; Northbridge Subdivision Rules and Regulations (Chapter 222); Northbridge Zoning Bylaws (Chapter 173); Stormwater Management Bylaw; Scenic Road (MGL c.40 §15C); Scenic Road Bylaw (Section 6-200); and Scenic Roadway Rules & Regulations.

Overview

The Planning Board has the responsibility to review proposed development projects and make decisions in accordance with state/local bylaws and regulations related to the physical growth and development of Northbridge. The Planning Board is assisted by the Community Planning & Development office, staffed by Town Planner and Planning / Conservation Secretary.

The Planning Board's official powers and responsibilities are defined in the Northbridge Subdivision Regulations, the Northbridge Zoning Bylaws, and as prescribed in Massachusetts General Laws. These rules and regulations have been enacted to protect the safety, convenience and welfare of the inhabitants of Northbridge by regulating the laying out and construction of ways in subdivisions and providing access to lots therein. In addition to subdivision control, the Planning Board reviews site plan development applications within town. The Planning Board reviews proposals in accordance with Chapter 173 of the Northbridge Zoning Bylaw and considers impacts on traffic, municipal and public services and utilities, environmental quality, and community economics to ensure the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the town.

The Planning Board reviews development proposals from the planning stage through completion of a project. In addition, the Board has the authority to amend the Northbridge Subdivision Rules & Regulations. The specific types of reviews performed by the Planning Board include: a.) Approval Not Required Plans, ANR -the division of land creating new lots on existing roadways; b.) Preliminary and Definitive Subdivision Plans -divisions of land creating lots and new roadways; c.) Site Plans -plans for commercial/industrial developments; d.) Common driveway special permits; and e.) Permits for proposed work that concern public street trees and stone walls along designated Scenic Roads.

-Subdivision Review

The purpose of the Subdivision Control Law is to protect the safety, convenience, and welfare of the inhabitants of Northbridge. It is the intent of the Subdivision Control Law that any subdivision plan filed with the Planning Board only receives approval if it conforms to all town standards; including those of Zoning, Board of Health, DPW, and Conservation Commission. Each Department/Board has a role specified in the appropriate bylaws for review and approval of a plan. An applicant must receive all necessary approvals prior to starting construction of a subdivision.

Subdivision Control Law covers both “*Approval Not Required*” and “*Subdivision of Land*” which are generally described as follows:

1. **Approval Not Required (ANR)** - plans involve lot line adjustments or the subdivision of existing property on established roadways. A registered land surveyor must prepare the plan. The plan needs to be endorsed by the Planning Board to allow the owner to record the lot division at the Worcester Registry of Deeds. ANR plan & applications should be filed at least one (1) week prior to the next scheduled Planning Board meeting.
2. **Subdivision of Land** - subdivision is the creation of new lots by subdividing property that requires the construction of a new roadway to provide access to the lots. The subdivision regulations specify certain design, safety and construction standards that must be followed. The Town Planner and staff from other appropriate departments such as DPW-Highway, DPW -Sewer, Board of Health, Police/Fire departments, and the Conservation Commission review plan for compliance with the regulations and make recommendations.

-Site Development Plan Review

The Town of Northbridge has implemented Site Plan Review for all commercial, industrial and multi-family residential projects. Site plan review is administered pursuant to the Northbridge Zoning Bylaw (Chapter 173).

The zoning within Northbridge includes the following: six (6) Residential zones; three (3) Business zones; two (2) Industrial zones; and one (1) Heritage zone –See Appendix C Zoning Map. The Zoning Bylaws define the requirements of each District. The Bylaws also establish what uses are allowed in each district. Some uses are “**ALLOWED-BY-RIGHT**”, other uses are “**PROHIBITED**” and some may require a “**SPECIAL PERMIT**”.

Site Plan Review –must be conducted for most uses of land (with the exception of single and two family homes) including certain changes of use and expansions and additions to commercial or industrial properties and construction of new commercial and industrial buildings or facilities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the **Inspector of Buildings** to determine what permit approvals may be required.

Site development plans shall be prepared by a professional architect, professional engineer or registered land surveyor and shall be submitted to the Planning office. The plan shall indicate all property boundaries, use and ownership of adjacent land and location of buildings thereon within 200 feet of the property lines, driveways, driveway opening, parking and loading spaces, service area and all facilities for screening, surface, lighting, signs, sewage, refuse and other waste disposal, drainage, dust and erosion control and landscaping.

The site plan review and approval provisions found in Section 173-49.1 of the Zoning Bylaw shall apply to the following types of structures and uses:

- (a) Any new structure or group of structures under the same ownership on the same lot or contiguous lots with at least 6,000 square feet of gross floor area or requiring the provision of 10 or more parking spaces under § 173-27, Off-Street parking, loading and landscaping standards;
- (b) Any improvements, alteration or change in use which either results in an increase of 6,000 square feet of gross floor area or requires an addition of 10 or more parking spaces to the amount required by § 173-27 prior to such improvement, alteration or change in use ;and
- (c) Any new structure, group of structures, improvement, alteration or change in use, as defined above, which either results in the increase of 4,000 square feet of gross floor area or requires the provision of seven or more parking spaces, when any portion of the lot or parcel of land on which said structure or use is located lies within 200 feet of a residential district.

Site development plans are reviewed for specifics of site, layout and building design, parking facilities, landscaping, drainage, lighting, as well as the mitigation of traffic and other potential effects. For all development proposals, the Planning Board may choose to send plans out for an outside review by engineers and/or other consultants to review and provide comments relative to site layout, drainage and traffic impacts.

No building permit can be issued for a proposed development unless an application for site plan review has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw and such application, if so required, has been approved by the Planning Board.

No occupancy permit shall be granted by the Building Inspector until the Planning Board has given its approval that the development and any associated off-site improvements conform to the approved application for site plan review and approval, including any conditions imposed by the Planning Board. A temporary occupancy permit may be granted with the approval of the Planning Board subject to conditions for completion of work imposed by the Planning Board.

-Special Permit Review

Special permits are discretionary and are not granted automatically. The Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA) may grant a special permit, after consideration of all of the criteria set forth in Section 173-47 of the Zoning Bylaw, where it determines that the benefits of the proposed use outweigh the detriments to the neighborhood and the town. This determination is different from a variance request because it does not involve the hardship standard.

As described in the Zoning Bylaw, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals are designated as special permit granting authorities (SPGA) for certain uses -see Section 173-12 Table of Use Regulations.

For proposals requiring the issuance of a **Special Permit** and **Site Development Plan Review** by the Planning Board, such applications shall be considered concurrently at a Public Hearing. The SPGA must hold the Public Hearing for a Special Permit request within sixty-five (65) days of the date of submission and must render a decision within ninety days (90) or agreed upon extended time after the Public Hearing. Typically, Public Hearings are scheduled for the next available meeting provided required notification and publication requirements are satisfied.

-43D Expedited Permitting

At the 2008 Spring Annual Town Meeting, Northbridge approved three (3) Priority Development Sites (PDS). Subsequent to this action the State Interagency Permitting Board – Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development approved two (2) of the sites within town.

NORTHBRIDGE SITES

670 Linwood Avenue –Linwood Cotton Mill

Assessors Map 5 Parcel(s) 39 & 47

1164 Main Street (Assessors Map 1 Parcel 113); **1110 Main Street** (Assessors Map 1 Parcel 114); **1096 Main Street** (Assessors Map 1 Parcel 115); **1160 Main Street** (Assessors Map 1 Parcel 185); & **Vacant Parcel/Main Street** (Assessors Map 1 Parcel 199)

Pursuant to MGL Ch. 43D, priority development sites may be a privately or publicly owned property that is (1.) commercially or industrially zoned, (2.) eligible under local zoning provisions for the development or redevelopment of a building of at least 50,000 square-feet and (3.) designated as a priority development site by the State Interagency Permitting Board. For more information concerning Northbridge’s PDS please contact the Planning office.

Chapter 43D, expedited permitting provides a transparent and efficient process for municipal permitting, guaranteeing local permit decisions on Priority Development Sites (PDS) within 180 days. The Town Planner shall serve as the Single Point of Contact for the purpose of coordinating and facilitating the MGL Ch 43D land use permitting process. It shall be the

applicant's responsibility to contact the Town Planner in order to initiate a pre-application process. Reference is made to the [Town of Northbridge Expedited Permitting \(Chapter 43D\) Regulations](#) and [43D Priority Development Site Application Form](#), both of which may be viewed online or obtained through the Community Planning & Development office.

Technical Review - A Technical Review Committee (TRC) consisting of the Inspector of Buildings, Director of Public Works, Town Planner, Fire Chief, Highway Superintendent, Sewer Superintendent, Whitinsville Water Company, and representatives for the Board of Health & Conservation Commission shall meet with the applicant/engineer to informally review proposal in an attempt to avoid unnecessary deficiencies and promote efficiency in the formal review and hearing process. TRC may request the applicant's engineer (or other appropriate representative) be present for the review in order to address potential concerns, answer questions or provide insight as may facilitate the review process.

The purpose of the TRC review is to help applicants and potential applicants through the development review and permit process by identifying regulations that apply to the project, identifying site design issues that may be of concern and discussion of possible solutions, and to clarify procedures.

Best Development Practices Guidebook – To improve the quality of development and expedite the local permitting process a [Best Development Practices Guidebook](#) was prepared for the Town of Northbridge. The Guidebook describes the required and preferred design, construction and maintenance practices relating to Site Planning, Landscape Design, Stormwater Management, and Erosion & Sediment Control. The guidebook may be viewed online from the town's website (www.northbridgemass.org) or reviewed at the various permitting offices.

Municipal Departments & Boards

-CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Conservation Commission is the official agency charged with the protection of Northbridge's natural resources and administration of the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act (WPA), Northbridge Wetland Protection Bylaw and respective regulations.

Any activity which alters the area within 100 feet of a wetland, flood zone or other protected areas or within 200 feet of a river requires a filing with the Conservation Commission. The Commission will evaluate the activity to determine if it is permitted under the WPA and the local Wetland Bylaw and issue conditions for permitted activities.

Office Staff

Barbara A. Kinney, Conservation/Planning
Secretary

Phone/Fax/Email

Phone: (508) 234-0817

Fax: (508) 234-0814

Email: conservation@northbridgemass.org
bskinney@northbridgemass.org

Office Location

Aldrich School –Town Hall Annex
14 Hill Street
Whitinsville, MA 01588

Office Hours

Monday: 8:30AM – 7:00PM

Tuesday - Thursday: 8:30AM – 4:30PM

Friday: 8:30AM – 1:00PM

Web Address: www.northbridgemass.org/Conservation/Conservation.htm

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

- Wyatt J. Mills, Chairman
- Cheryl Peckham
- Andrew Chagnon, Vice Chair
- Gina Calitri
- Roger Jewell
- Terence Bradley, Clerk
- William Freer

Meeting Schedule: The Conservation Commission meets the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Conservation office (Aldrich School Town Hall Annex). Pursuant to Mass General Laws notice of meetings must be posted with the Office of the Town Clerk 48 hours prior to meeting. All meetings are open to the public.

Permits Issued: Determination of Applicability; Order of Resource Area Delineation; Order of Conditions; Notification of Non-Significance; Extension Permit for Order of Conditions; Certificate of Compliance; & Enforcement Order

Process for Obtaining Permit Applications: Applications may be viewed and copied from the State's website or through a link from the Northbridge Conservation Commission website. Hardcopies may also be obtained at the Conservation office.

Requests for Determination of Applicability, Notice of Intent, Abbreviated Notice of Intent, or Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation must be filed at least two (2) weeks prior to the next Conservation Commission meeting.

Requests for Extensions to an Order of Conditions or an Order of Resource Area Delineation must be made in writing at least two (2) business days before the next Conservation Commission meeting.

Request for a Certificate of Compliance must be filed at least two (2) business days before the next Conservation Commission meeting.

Advertising Requirements: All Public Hearing Legal notices must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the town once at least five (5) business days prior to the date of the Public Hearing and notification sent to abutters as required

Time Frame for Public Hearing: A Public Hearing will be scheduled within 21 calendar days from receipt of a completed application. Applicants can waive this right to coincide with the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Conservation Commission

Time Frame for Decision: Twenty-one (21) days after the close of the public hearing. If no appeal is filed within 10 days of issuance of the permit, the applicant may proceed with the project.

Appeal Process: An appeal can be made by hand delivery or certified mail by the applicant, an aggrieved party, an abutter, by any 10 residents of the Town, or by the Department of Environmental Protection within ten (10) business days of the issuance of the permit. Appeals are made to the Superior Court in accordance with MGL Ch. 249 § 4.

Fee Schedule: See Appendix D-4

Applicable Local, State and Federal Statutes: M.G.L. Chapter 131, Section 40; Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act & Rivers Protection Act (310 CMR 10.00); Northbridge Wetlands Protection Bylaw § 7-700; and Northbridge Wetland Regulations

Overview

The Conservation Commission administers the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L Chapter 131 Section 40) and associated regulations (310 CMR 10.00), and the Town of Northbridge Wetland Bylaw and Regulations. The Conservation Commission also reviews projects within areas of protected rare/and/or priority habitat governed by the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program, a Division of the MA Fisheries & Wildlife.

Wetland resource areas that fall under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission are not always apparent. Any proposed activity that may remove, fill, dredge or alter a wetlands resource area is subject to Conservation Commission approval. Wetlands that are subject to

protection under the bylaw and regulations include banks, beaches, isolated wetlands, marshes, wet meadows, bogs swamps, lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, intermittent streams, seasonal wetlands, land under any of the above water bodies, land subject to flooding and land within 200 feet of a river; 100 feet of a wetland.

-Wetland Protection Act & Northbridge Wetland Bylaw

The purpose of Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act is to protect the following eight (8) interests: (1) public and private water supplies, (2) protect ground water, (3) provide flood control, (4) storm damage prevention, (5) prevention of pollution, (6) protection of land containing shellfish, (7) protection of fisheries and (8) protection of wildlife habitat.

The Northbridge Wetlands Bylaw is intended to provide more stringent wetlands and natural resource protection which also serve to protect/provide erosion and sedimentation control, protection of water quality, protection of rare species habitat, protection of recreational values, and protection of agriculture and aquatic activities.

The Conservation Commission also reviews all Forest Cutting Plans within the town (approval and public hearing with the Board of Selectmen). Please contact the Conservation office for guidance or information regarding the Forest Cutting Practices Act.

WETLANDS PERMITS

The Conservation Commission regulates work in or within 100 feet of any wetland and 200 feet of perennial rivers resource area. Work regulated by the Conservation Commission includes (but is not limited to the following types of activities: vegetation removal, excavation, erection of any type of structure, creation of impervious areas (paving a driveway) etc. The scope of work and the distance from the wetland resource area dictates the type of permit you will need for your project.

1. **Letter Permits** - In Northbridge Minor activities like installing a fence or removing a tree, which may be exempt (as a Minor Activity) under the Wetlands Protection Act require the submission of a Letter Permit request. Letter Permits allow quick action on projects that are simple and non-impacting on wetlands. Letter Permits are reserved for activities that present a very low probability of any wetlands impacts.
2. **Request for Determination of Applicability (Form 1)** - The Request for Determination of Applicability is a process, which provides applicants with the *option* of seeking a determination on the applicability of the Wetlands Protection Act and the Northbridge Wetlands Bylaw to a proposed site or activity. Before filing this form to confirm the activity within the resource area, the applicant should discuss other review options with the Conservation Commission. The Commission may require the submission of WPA Form 4A (Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation), WPA Form 3 (Notice of Intent), or WPA Form 4 (Abbreviated Notice of Intent).

The applicant is responsible for providing the information required for the review of this application to the Conservation Commission and the Department of Environmental Protection. The submittal of a complete and accurate description of the site and project will minimize requests for additional information by the Commission, which may result in an unnecessary delay in the issuance of a Determination of Applicability.

The Commission also may require that supporting materials (plans and calculations) be prepared by professionals including, but not limited to, a registered engineer, registered architect, registered landscape architect, registered land surveyor, registered sanitarian biologist, environmental scientist, geologist, or hydrologist when the complexity of the proposed work warrants specialized expertise.

3. **Notice of Intent (Form 3)** - To obtain a permit (called an Order of Conditions), a project proponent must submit a Notice of intent application to the Conservation Commission and the Department of Environmental Protection. The Notice of Intent application provides the Conservation Commission and DEP with a complete and accurate description of the:

- Site: including the type and boundaries of resource areas under the Wetlands Protection Act, and
- Proposed work: including all measures and designs proposed to meet the performance standards described in the Wetlands Protection Act Regulations, 310 Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) 10.00, the Town of Northbridge Wetlands Bylaw, and the Northbridge Wetland Regulations for each applicable resource area.

The applicant is responsible for providing the information required for the review of this application to the Conservation Commission. The submittal of a complete and accurate description of the site and project will minimize requests for additional information by the Commission that may result in an unnecessary delay in the issuance of an Order of Conditions.

4. **Abbreviated Notice of Intent (Form 4)** - The Abbreviated Notice of Intent simplifies filing requirements for projects, which are likely to result in limited impacts to wetland resource areas. The form may be used when:

- The proposed work is within the Buffer Zone as defined in 310 CMR 10.04 (if the filing of a Notice of Intent is required) or within Land Subject to Flooding, as defined in 310 CMR 10.57(2), or within the Riverfront Area, as defined in 310 CMR 10.58; and
- The proposed work will disturb less than 1,000 square feet of surface area within the Buffer Zone and/or Land Subject to Flooding or less than 1,000 square feet of

Riverfront Area, provided the work conforms to the requirements of 310 CMR 10.58(4)(c)2.a. pertaining to analysis of alternatives; and

- Neither a Department of Army permit nor a Chapter 91 Waterways license is required.

5. **Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation (Form 4A)** - The Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation (ANRAD) serves two purposes under the Wetland Protection Act. First, the ANRAD provides a procedure for an applicant to confirm the delineation of a Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW). If an ANRAD is filed for BVW delineation, confirmation of other resource areas may also be requested provided the other resource area boundaries are identified on the plans, which accompany the BVW boundary delineation. The second purpose of the ANRAD is to serve as the application for Simplified Review for projects in the Buffer Zone.

The filing of an Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation is optional. However, any work within an area subject to the jurisdiction of the Wetlands Protection Act may not proceed until the Conservation Commission or the Department of Environmental Protection has issued either a Negative Determination of Applicability or a final Order of Conditions. If an applicant is uncertain as to whether the Wetlands Protection Act applies to a particular area of land or to specific work planned on a particular area of land, he or she may file a Request for Determination of Applicability, RDA, (WPA Form 1) instead of WPA Form 4A. Also, an applicant may file a Notice of Intent, NOI, (WPA Form 3) or, in limited circumstances, an Abbreviated Notice of Intent (WPA Form 4) and, as part of that permitting process, seek confirmation from the Conservation Commission of delineated wetland resource area boundaries.

The applicant is responsible for providing the information required for the review of this application to the Conservation Commission and the Department of Environmental Protection. The submittal of a complete and accurate description of the site and project will minimize requests for additional information by the Commission, which may result in an unnecessary delay in the issuance of an Order of Resource Area Delineation.

The issuing authority also may require that supporting materials be prepared by other professionals including, but not limited to a registered landscape architect, registered land surveyor, environmental scientist, geologist, or hydrologist when the complexity of the proposed work warrants specialized expertise.

All applications (except for Letter Permits) are copied to the MA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and to the Natural Heritage of Endangered Species Program if necessary. Please keep in mind that the MA Department of Environmental Protection provides comments on all NOI applications and may overrule the Commission on the approval/denial.

The following is a list of wetlands protection buffer zones (from all wetland resource areas) to keep in mind when developing a project (refer to Northbridge Wetland Bylaw Regulations for a complete list):

- 35-foot local No Disturb Zone
- 50-foot local No New Permanent Structure Buffer Zone
- 100-foot state and local jurisdictional Buffer Zone
- 85-foot local No Disturb Zone from all vernal pools (certified and potential)
- 100-foot local jurisdictional Buffer Zone
- 200-foot Riverfront Resource Area from all perennial streams

Utilization of Geographic Information Systems (GIS)/Computer Mapping is a big part of the Conservation Commission review process. The Conservation Office has many map sources such as the FIRM (Flood Insurance Rate Map) maps, USGS topographic maps, Natural Heritage Priority and Estimated Habitat for Rare and Endangered species maps, and DEP Wetlands maps. Maps are a great source of information to help you determine what resource areas may be on your property, or near a proposed project.

TIME FRAME AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The timeline for permit issuance (RDA, NOI and ANRAD) is approximately 2 months (start being submittal of application to the Office and finish being permit in hand). Large-scale projects (i.e. Residential Definitive Subdivisions) require a longer timeframe for review and approval. Project review can take place in as little as a few months, or can take over a year depending on the complexity of the project. When a completed application is submitted to the office, the Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing/meeting within 21 days.

Typically, the first hearing is a presentation of the project given by the Applicant or the Applicant's representative. After the first hearing, the Commission and/or the Conservation Agent will visit the project site to review the wetlands in the field and review the proposed work.

The second public hearing includes review of any observations on the site visit and any outstanding concerns/questions. Multiple hearings and multiple plan revisions may be necessary for larger or more complicated plans. Once the public hearing is closed, the Conservation Commission has 21 days to issue the approval/denial permit.

There is a 10-business day appeal period from the date of issuance. All Conservation Commission permits (Order of Conditions, Determinations and Notice of Resource Area Delineations) are valid for three (3) years.

Municipal Departments & Boards

-DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The Department of Public Works (DPW) is comprised of the Highway Division and the Sewer Division. Additionally, the Northbridge Water System is under the jurisdiction of the DPW. Operation and maintenance of the Northbridge Water System is performed by the Whitinsville Water Company.

Department Staff

Richard R. Sasseville, P.E., DPW Director
Arthur Magowan, Highway Superintendent
Mark Kuras, Sewer Superintendent

Phone/Fax/Email

Public Works Director
Phone: (508) 234-0816
Fax: (508) 234-0807
Email: rsasseville@northbridgemass.org

Highway Division

Phone: (508) 234-3581
Fax: (508) 234-0807
Email: amagowan@northbridgemass.org

Sewer Division

Phone: (508) 234-2154
Fax: (508) 234-0809
Email: mkuras@northbridgemass.org

Office Hours

Monday – Friday 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Office Locations

DPW & Highway Division
11 Fletcher Street
Whitinsville, MA 01588

Sewer Division & WWTP
644 Providence Road
Whitinsville, MA 01588

Web Address: www.northbridgemass.org/dpw.htm

Permits Issued: Road Opening; Trench; Water & Sewer Connection; Sewer Extension; Permit to Block/Obstruct Street; and Tree Removal Permit

Process for Obtaining Permit Applications: Applications may be obtained from the Department –most are available on the web page

Time Frame for Public Hearing: Public Hearings are required for the removal of Public Shade Trees. Requirements are detailed in M.G.L. Chapter 87, M.G.L. Chapter 40 § 15C and Section 6-200 of the Code of the Town of Northbridge

Time Frame for Decision: Normally within two (2) weeks following the required public hearing

Fee Schedule: Contact the DPW for applicable fees

Overview

The DPW is responsible for maintenance and repair of all municipal public roads and highways, all public parks and playgrounds exclusive of school grounds and all public cemeteries. Additionally, the department is responsible for maintenance and repair of all municipally owned buildings exclusive of school facilities. The department operates and maintains the Town's sanitary sewer system and operates a 2.0 million gallon per day wastewater treatment plant and an increasing number of off site wastewater pumping stations. The DPW oversees the operation and maintenance of the Northbridge Water System which serves approximately 40-percent of the geographic area of the Town. The remaining portion of the Town served by the public water system is served by the private Whitinsville Water Company. The Director of Public Works serves as Tree Warden with responsibilities for the care, maintenance and preservation of public shade trees.

-Road Opening Permit

Work within the layout of a public way

All work within a public way owned and maintained by the Town of Northbridge, such as the installation of driveways, curb cuts, or connection to the municipal water or sewer, installation or repairs to underground utilities requires a permit from the Northbridge DPW. You should contact the Department of Public Works while you are in the planning stages of your project so that they may help you determine which types of permits you will need for your particular project. Requirements for this permit are detailed in the "Road Opening Permit Rules & Regulations" which are available from the DPW.

-Trench Excavation Permit

Work outside of the layout of a public way or on private property

Excavation of any trench on public or private property outside of the right-of-way of a public road in the Town of Northbridge requires a permit from the Northbridge DPW. You should contact the Department of Public Works while you are in the planning stages of your project so that they may help you determine which types of permits you will need for your particular project. Requirements for this permit are detailed in the "Excavation & Trench Safety Regulations" which are available from the DPW.

-Water Connection Permit

A permit is required for connection to the public water supply. For connection to the Town of Northbridge water system, contact the Department of Public Works. For connection to the Whitinsville Water Company water system contact the water company at 508-234-7358. For information on which system serves which area of the Town, contact either the DPW or the Whitinsville Water Company.

-Sewer Connection Permit

A permit is required to make a connection to the public sewer. Contact the DPW Sewer Division at 508-234-2154 for additional information. The connection fee schedule is available by contacting the Sewer Division. It is also available on the Town's website.

Extensions to the sanitary sewer system are governed by Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection regulations, (314 CMR 7.00) for extensions greater than 1,000 feet and/or adding 15,000 or more gallons per day of new flows. For extensions below the regulation thresholds, the Town follows the permitting procedures of the DEP regulation at the local level. The Town also requires that new connections must remove inflow and infiltration (I&I) from the sewer system on a ration of 4 gallons of I&I removed for each one gallon of new flow into the system.

It should be noted that availability of sewer capacity is not guaranteed. Before sewer extensions can be approved, the proponent must analyze the downstream capacities of the sanitary sewer system to determine that sufficient excess capacity exists to support the additional flows. The analysis must consider existing flow as well as flow contributions for previously approved or planned sewer extensions that have not been constructed.

Municipal Departments & Boards

-FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Northbridge Fire Department in conjunction with the Building Inspector reviews site plans and building permit applications for compliance with state and local statutes and regulations. Consult the Fire Department for advice as to which permits, licenses, and approvals may be required.

Office Staff

Gary A. Nestor, Fire Chief

Phone/Fax/Email

Phone: (508) 234-8448

Fax: (508) 234-3682

Email: gnestor@northbridgemass.org

Office Location

Northbridge Fire Station
193 Main Street
Whitinsville, MA 01588

Web Address: www.northbridgemass.org/firedept.htm

Permits Issued: Permits listed under MGL Chapter 148, Massachusetts Fire Prevention Code under the authority of the State Fire Marshall; including Blasting Permits

Process for Obtaining Permit Applications: Permit applications are available at the Fire Department Headquarters from the Fire Chief or Alarm Operator.

Advertising Requirements: Public hearings are required for any installation requiring a license through the Fire Department and must be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation.

Time Frame for Public Hearing: Legally advertised hearings are set by the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen

Appeal Process: Appeals can be directed to Steven Coan, Fire Marshall for the State of Massachusetts

Fee Schedule: Contact the Fire Department for applicable fees

Applicable Local, State and Federal Statutes: M.G.L. Chapter 148

Municipal Departments & Boards

-HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The Northbridge Historical Commission is charged by State Statute as the local authority to determine the significance of local historic assets. Its goal is to assist in the preservation of those assets including individual buildings, historic districts, historic sites, architectural sites, artifacts, documents, photographs, and other historic real and personal property.

Office Location

Fletcher House
1 Elm Place
Whitinsville, MA 01588

Phone/Fax/Email

Phone: (508) 234-6833
Fax: (N/A)
Email: kenwarchol2@msn.com

NORTHBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Kenneth Warchol, Chairman
Paula McCowan
Donald Gosselin
David Potty
Jerry Baghdasarian
Vacancy
Vacancy

Meeting Schedule: The Historical Commission typically meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month (September through June) at 6:30 PM at the Fletcher House, 1 Elm Place Whitinsville, MA.

Overview

The Commission regulates historic properties within National Register Districts or eligible for National Register listing when federal, state or local monies or grants are used in rehabilitation, renovation, and historic preservation. The Commission also regulates historic building work when federal tax credits are used. The local commission makes its recommendation to the state historic commission which then makes the final determination to the parties concerned.

The commission also acts as a board to educate the public about the historic character of their community by providing Walking Tour Brochures and Historic Tours.

Municipal Departments & Boards

-TOWN CLERK

The Office of the Town Clerk is the information source regarding all federal, state and local regulations and town bylaws, rules and regulations. Chief Election Officer, Registrar of Vital Statistics (birth, death, and marriage records), Records and files applications, maps and decisions of the Planning Board. Records and maintains files on preliminary and definitive subdivision plans; receives and records decisions of Zoning Board of Appeals and all appeals to such decisions. Records Town Meeting votes and Conducts annual census.

Office Staff

Doreen A. Cedrone CMC/CMMC Town Clerk
Constance T. Hills, Assistant Town Clerk

Phone/Fax/Email

Phone: (508) 234-2001
Fax: (508) 234-2001
Email: dcedrone@northbridgemass.org

Office Location

Northbridge Memorial Town Hall
7 Main Street
Whitinsville, MA 01588

Web Address: www.northbridgemass.org/townclerk.htm

Permits Issued: Business Certificates; Dog Licenses; Gas Storage Permits; Marriage Licenses; Birth & Death Certificates; and Raffle Permits & Kennel Permits
Special Permits, Variances, and Appeals must be filed with the Office of the Town Clerk

Fee Schedule: Contact the Office of the Town Clerk for applicable fees

Applicable Local, State and Federal Statutes: Town Bylaws & Town Charter, Mass General Laws covering elections, public records, and open meeting laws.

Overview

The Town Clerk's office is responsible for most of the Town records as well as issuing various state and local permits and licenses. The Office of the Town Clerk serves as the official "keeper of records" and receives copies of minutes of all public meetings. The Town Clerk's responsibilities, which are mandated by Federal and State statutes and Town Bylaws, include the maintenance of public records, the administration of fair and accurate elections, the registration of voters, and the preservation of the actions at the Town Meeting. In addition to general duties the Town Clerk is a Notary Public and as such, has the authority to notarize documents signed in her presence.

Municipal Departments & Boards

-TOWN MANAGER & BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Board of Selectmen serves as the Chief elected officials of Northbridge. The Massachusetts General Laws vest the Board of Selectmen with all municipal authority not delegated to other elected boards or retained by Town Meeting, as the Town's legislative branch. The Selectmen serves as the licensing authority with regard to alcoholic beverages. The Board of Selectmen employs a Town Manager to manage the day-to-day business of the Town.

Office Staff

Theodore D. Kozak, Town Manager
Sharon L. Susienka, Exec. Asst. to the
Town Manager
Donna M. Gosselin, Admin. Assistant

Phone/Fax/Email

Phone: (508) 234-2095
Fax: (508) 234-7640
Email: tkozak@northbridgemass.org
ssusienka@northbridgemass.org
dgosselin@northbridgemass.org

Office Location

Northbridge Memorial Town Hall
7 Main Street
Whitinsville, MA 01588

Office Hours

Monday: 8:30 AM – 7:00 PM
Tuesday - Thursday: 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM
Friday: 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Web Address: www.northbridgemass.org

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

James R. Marzec, Chairman
Daniel J. Nolan, Vice Chairman
James Athanas, Clerk
Charles Ampagoomian
Thomas J. Melia

Meeting Schedule: Typically the 1st & 3rd Monday of the month (7:00PM -Town Hall)

Permits/Licenses Issued: Auctioneers; Automatic Amusements; Bowling; Class III – Motor Vehicle Junk; Class II – Used Car Dealers; Common Victualler; Dance; Entertainment; Junk Dealer (Antiques); Liquor; Livery (Taxi); Lodging House; Pool Tables/Billiards; & Sunday Entertainment

Process for Obtaining Permit Applications: If no issues with background check, a completed application packet is submitted to the Board of Selectmen. In some cases, a public hearing is required with proper notice to abutters and a legal notice placed in the local paper.

Advertising Requirements: 7-10 days prior to hearing

Time Frame for Public Hearing: 7-10 days after legal notice appears in paper

Time Frame for Decision: Liquor licenses must be sent to the ABCC within three (3) days of local approval.

Appeal Process: If denied a liquor license, applicants can appeal to the ABCC within five calendar days of receipt of the Board's denial. The ABCC will hold a hearing and make a decision.

Fee Schedule: Contact the Office of the Town Manager for applicable fees

Applicable Local, State and Federal Statutes: Town Bylaws, Town Charter & Massachusetts General Laws

Overview

The Board of Selectmen issues licenses and permits required for the opening and operating of some businesses, including the selling of its products and/or services. All premises must be properly zoned. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Town Manager's Office for instructions. All applications must be submitted in writing to the Board of Selectmen.

Municipal Departments & Boards

-ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Zoning Board of Appeals consists of five (5) regular members and four (4) associate members who may act in the absence of any regular member or in the case of inability to act or conflict of interest on the part of the regular member. All members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The Zoning Board hears and decides applications and appeals submitted by any person aggrieved by reason of his/her inability to obtain a building permit due to a zoning ordinance or zoning bylaw.

Office Staff

Brenda M. Ouillette, Admin. Assistant

Phone/Fax/Email

Phone: (508) 234-0819

Fax: (508) 234-0814

Email: bouillette@northbridgemass.org

Office Hours

Monday: 8:30 AM – 7:00 PM

Tuesday - Thursday: 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Friday: 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Office Location

Aldrich School –Town Hall Annex

14 Hill Street

Whitinsville, MA 01588

Web Address: www.northbridgemass.org/Building_dept/Building_dept_files/Page296.htm

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Thomas E. Hansson, Chairman

Sharron W. Ampagoomian

Diane Woupio

William Corkum, Vice Chair

Carol B. Snow, Clerk

Harold Hartman (Associate Member)

Stephen Witkus (Associate Member)

Brett A. Simas (Associate Member)

Daniel Batt (Associate Member)

Meeting Schedule: 2nd Thursday of the month (7:00PM), unless posted otherwise.

Permits Issued: Special Permit (Expires after 2 years from date of decision); Variance (Expires one year from date of decision); Appeal (from decision of administrative official, officer or board); & Comprehensive Permits (Chapter 40B).

Process for Obtaining Permit Applications: Applications are available in the Zoning Board of Appeals office during normal business hours. All applications must be returned to the Town Clerk to be certified and filed. Applications must be received by the Town Clerk no later than the second Thursday of the month prior to that month’s meeting.

Advertising Requirements: Hearing notice must be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation in the town, once in each of two successive weeks, the first publication to be not less than fourteen days before the day of said hearing.

Time Frame for Public Hearing: A public hearing must be held within 65 days of the date of filing with the Town Clerk.

Time Frame for Decision: Decisions for Special Permits must be made within 90 days after the public hearing; decisions for Variances must be made within 100 days of the date of filing or within any extended time; a written notice of the decision must be filed with the Town Clerk within 14 days of the actual vote. If no appeal to this decision has been made within 20 days of the filing, then the granted Special Permit or Variance is then endorsed by the Town Clerk and the decision is then filed with the Registry of Deeds by the applicant.

Appeal Process: Appeal(s) to a decision of the Zoning Board must be filed within 20 days of the date of filing decision with the Office of the Town Clerk. Any aggrieved by a decision of the ZBA may appeal to the Superior Court or to the Land Court (per MGL, Ch.240 s14A) by bringing an action within 20 days after the decision has been filed in the Office of the Town Clerk.

Fee Schedule: Contact the Zoning Board for applicable fees

Applicable Local, State and Federal Statutes: Northbridge Zoning Bylaw (Chapter 173); Town of Northbridge Comprehensive Permit Regulations; MGL Chapter 40A, MGL Chapter 40B

Overview

The Zoning Board of Appeals is created under the provisions of M.G.L., Chapter 40A as a necessary part of the establishment of zoning regulations in a community. The zoning by-law divides the town into various residential, commercial and industrial districts, and specifies uses, dimensional requirements and other rules for each district as well as rules that apply in all districts. Like most rules, there are sometimes circumstances where the literal application or enforcement of the Zoning By-law creates a hardship or otherwise may be considered “unfair.” There are provisions known as variance and special permits that allow deviations from the Zoning By-law as follows:

Variances - The Zoning Board of Appeals is charged with deciding when a variance is warranted. Under State law, a variance can only be justified if the soil conditions, shape, or topography of the land would result in a hardship to the landowner if the By-Law were enforced literally. This is a stringent standard, and it is generally up to the applicant to document that his situation meets these requirements. A variance expires after one year from the date of decision.

Special Permits – Special permits differ from variance in that they are expressly authorized in the By-law and the conditions under which they can be granted are specified. The Zoning Board of Appeals is responsible for special permits for certain non-conforming uses in residential districts, certain business uses in some commercial districts, wireless communication facilities, and any use designated by the Table of Use regulations of the Zoning By-law. A special permit expires after 2 years from date of decision.

Appeals -Chapter 40A empowers the Board to also hear appeals taken from decisions of any administrative official or board of the town acting under the provisions of the law.

Comprehensive Permits -The Zoning Board of Appeals reviews comprehensive permit applications under MGL Chapter 40B. The ZBA has a set of local Rules and Regulations governing the submittal of such projects.

Appendix A

-FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This section of the Guidebook is designed to answer Frequently Asked Questions about the permitting process. Each question is followed by a short answer and directs the reader to a section and or a department that may answer specific questions.

How do I know if a permit or a review is needed?

Generally, remodeling or interior improvements to an existing building only require a building permit. Town staff will assist applicants in coordinating procedures for all projects that require more than just a building permit. Whatever the requirements of a project, it is useful to consult with Town personnel early in the project planning process.

What if I want to construct a new home or business?

New construction may require one or more permits depending on the size, location, and proposed use. Your first step should be to consult the Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer and review the Town of Northbridge’s Zoning Bylaw to determine whether your project is allowed in that zone. The bylaws specify minimum lot area, building coverage and setback requirements. Required permits for your project may include a Special Permit, Site Plan Review, Conservation Commission approval, Sewer and/or Water Connection Permit, Building Permit, and/or Board of Health Review.

I’m interested in purchasing an existing food establishment – what do I need to do?

You must first file for a Plan Review with the Board of Health providing name of new owner, proposed menu and physical layout of the facility. Any facility that changes ownership will be required to bring the establishment up to current food code standards. Any changes mandated by the Board of Health must be completed prior to the issuance of a food permit to the new owner. More information, including a Plan Review Manual, is available in the Board of Health office.

When can a perc test be done?

Soils Evaluation testing (also known as percolation and groundwater testing) can be performed year round. A Soils Evaluation Application is required prior to scheduling –contact the Board of Health office for more information.

Are there septic system or well setback requirements that I should be aware of?

Yes. Title 5 and Northbridge Board of Health regulations dictate minimum setback requirements from foundations, wells, wetlands, property lines, and other natural and manmade features for septic tanks and soil absorption systems. Permit applications will be reviewed for compliance with established setbacks. Contact the Board of Health office for more information.

Why does the Board of Health need to review my addition or remodeling plans?

Any change of use or potential addition of a bedroom, even if you don’t intend to use it for a bedroom, must be reviewed. If the addition meets the definition of a bedroom in Title 5 regulations, then the Board of Health must determine if your existing septic system is adequate or if your septic system must be upgraded.

What approvals are needed if my project requires a new or expanded septic system?

If your project requires the expansion of the existing system, a registered sanitarian or professional engineer will need to provide documentation to the Board of Health of measures necessary to bring the

system into compliance with Title 5. Any upgrades must be completed prior to the Board signing off on the building permit application. For new construction, your plans will be evaluated to determine if the septic plan was designed to accommodate the flow of the proposed building. For more information on Title 5 regulations contact the Board of Health office.

When is a building permit required?

It shall be unlawful to construct, reconstruct, alter, repair, remove or demolish a building or structure; or to install or alter any equipment for which provision is made or the installation of which is regulated by 780 CMR without first filing a written application with the building official and obtaining the required permit therefore.

When does a building permit expire?

Any permit issued shall be deemed abandoned and invalid unless the work authorized by it shall have been commenced within six months after its issuance; however, for cause, and upon written request of the owner, one or more extensions of time, for periods not exceeding six months each, may be granted in writing by the Inspector of Buildings. Work under such a permit in the opinion of the Inspector of Buildings must proceed in good faith continuously to completion so far as is reasonably practicable under the circumstances.

Can I be denied a building permit?

The Building Inspector has the authority to deny a Building Permit on the basis of noncompliance with the State Building code and/or the zoning bylaw. However, the Building Official is committed to working with applicants to ensure that work is completed in a manner that is safe and in compliance with the State Building Code.

Do I need a permit to construct a fence on my property?

No. A building permit is not necessary to construct a fence. In accordance with MGL, a fence can be constructed on the property line however; we recommend that you maintain a 1-foot setback in order to maintain the other side of the fence without trespassing. The law also does not specify which side of the fence faces your neighbor. Some height restrictions do apply – contact the Building Inspector for more information.

When is a certificate of occupancy issued?

The certificate shall not be issued until all the work has been completed in accordance with the provisions of the approved permits and of the applicable codes for which a permit is required.

What if I plan to perform work near a stream or wetland?

The Town of Northbridge Conservation Commission regulates activities near wetlands, streams and other water bodies. See the Conservation Commission section of this Guidebook and contact the Conservation Commission for more information.

How do I know if my property has or is near a wetland resource area?

When in doubt -check with the Conservation Commission. Wetland resource areas may not be limited to streams, rivers and other water bodies. As part of the building permit application process applicants are required to fill-out a Yes/No Sheet prepared by the Conservation Commission.

What if I wish to subdivide my property?

The Planning Board regulates the creation of new lots in the Town of Northbridge. The Zoning Bylaws defines minimum lot size and roadway frontage requirements for each Zoning District. See the Planning

office section of this Guidebook and consult the [Town Planner](#) and/or [Inspector of Buildings](#) for more information.

What is the Site Plan review process?

Site Plan review allows the Planning Board the ability to consider how the proposed project may impact the town such as compatibility with the neighborhood, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and stormwater management. It is strongly recommended before submitting a site plan; applicants meet with the Town Planner and Inspector of Buildings to discuss the proposal. The intent of the Site Plan review is not to restrict the use of a site but to ensure that such use is designed in a manner that limits the impacts to the existing surrounding properties.

What types of things are reviewed during a Site Plan review?

As part of the Site Plan review process the Planning Board shall review the following: Zoning, Traffic/circulation, Parking, Town services, Pollution control, Nuisance, Landscaping, Amenities, & Town character (-see Section 173-49.1 F [Standards for Review] Northbridge Zoning Bylaws).

How do I know if there are any special features on my property -for instance is it located in a Floodplain, within a Water Protection District, etc?

In addition to the Zoning Map, the town has a number of overlay districts, defined in the Northbridge Zoning Bylaws. Each overlay provision is accompanied by a zoning overlay map delineating the areas of town included. Applicants are encouraged to talk with the Inspector of Buildings to discuss possible additional provisions that may need to be satisfied as part of development proposal. Additionally, the Building Department has on file the State's FIRM panels for Northbridge (Flood Insurance Rate Map).

I heard my road is a designated Scenic Road -what does that mean?

The Town of Northbridge has six (6) designated "Scenic Roads": *Castle Hill Road, Fletcher Street, Hill Street, Cooper Road, Kelly Road, and (old) Quaker Street*. Cutting or removing of trees or the tearing down or destruction of stone walls within the public right-of-way or portion of shall require filing a Scenic Road application. Applicants are directed to consult the DPW Director/Tree Warden and the Town Planner, reference is made to Section 6-200 [Scenic Roads] of the Code of the Town of Northbridge and the Scenic Roadway Rules & Regulations of the Planning Board.

Who should I contact for more information?

The Inspector of Buildings and the Town Planner are typically good starting points of contact. They may be reached by calling the Building Department at (508) 234-6577 and the Planning office at (508) 234-2447 respectively.

Appendix B

-FEDERAL & STATE PERMITS AND APPROVALS

You may need to apply for one or more permits from the State or Federal government. This list is not exhaustive, but the most common permits are listed below.

Applicants are directed to consult individual State/Federal Agencies on specifics of projects, as certain thresholds and/or permitting requirements may have changed since the printing of this permitting guidebook.

FEDERAL PERMITS AND APPROVALS

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT, OR “NEPA” requires the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) to assess the impact of major federal action, i.e. projects and programs entirely or partly financed, assisted, conducted, regulated or approved by federal agencies, that may have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Major federal actions are defined by statutes or determined by agency officials.

CLEAN WATER ACT, SECTION 404 PERMIT requires a project involving the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States (including federally defined wetlands) to obtain a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers. The permit may be a Programmatic general permit, an individual permit or an official letter of permission.

CLEAN WATER ACT, WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION APPROVAL requires the state to determine whether certain activities meet water quality standards; if they don't, the Corps of Engineers is prohibited from issuing a Section 404 permit for the activity.

RIVERS AND HARBORS ACT OF 1899, SECTION 10 PERMIT requires a federal permit from the Army Corps of Engineers for dredging, filling or obstruction of navigable waters; the Section 10 permit is often applied for in conjunction with a Section 404 permit.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE ACT AND FLOOD DISASTER PROTECTION ACT CERTIFICATION requires that banks not make, extend or review any loan by improved real estate located in an area having flood hazards, and in which flood insurance is available, unless the building securing the loan is covered by flood insurance. This usually requires architectural or engineering review and certification of building plans to the lender.

CLEAN AIR ACT PERMITS OR APPROVALS may be required directly from the Environmental Protection Agency for certain emissions and hazardous air pollutants from new sources of these regulated air pollutants; most of the federal requirements, however, are incorporated by Massachusetts in its State Implementation Plan, or SIP (see State Clean Air Act).

NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT SECTION 106 REVIEW requires that certain federally assisted, permitted and licensed activities that might have an adverse effect on properties listed with or eligible for listing with the National Register of Historic Places be reviewed

concerning that effect and its consequences; Section 106 review is accomplished by submitting a Project Notification Form to the Historic Commission.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY STORMWATER NOTICES OF INTENT AND/OR NPDES PERMITS are required for stormwater discharges associated with certain activities. Industrial activity was recently redefined to include “construction activity including clearing, grading and excavation activities except operations that result in the disturbance of less than five (5) acres of total land area, which is part of a larger common plan of development or sale”. The project owner and operator are required to file a Notice of Intent and pollution abatement plan with the Environmental Protection Agency.

STATE PERMITS, APPROVALS AND LICENSES

MASSACHUSETTS ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT OR “MEPA” requires state agencies to evaluate the environmental impact of all projects or activities undertaken by state agencies, and of private projects seeking state funding or permits. An Environmental Notification Form must be filed if the project meets one or more of the thresholds specified in the regulations, whereas certain activities automatically require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report.

MASSACHUSETTS CLEAN WATER ACT, SEWER EXTENSION/CONNECTION PERMITS are required for the connection of a project to a sewer unless exempted. There are pretreatment requirements for industrial users, which must be coordinated with the permitting requirements of the Charlton Wastewater Treatment Plant.

MASSACHUSETTS CLEAN WATER ACT, SURFACE WATER AND/OR GROUNDWATER DISCHARGE PERMITS Surface Water Discharge Permits administered jointly by the federal Environmental Protection Agency and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, are required for point source discharge to U.S. Waters and application should be made simultaneously to both agencies. A permit may also be required for stormwater discharges where runoff is substantially contaminated or if contamination exists because the discharge is located within an industrial area or is associated with industrial activity. If the project is in an Un-sewered area, a disposal Works Construction Permit must be obtained from the local Board of Health in accordance with Title 5 of the State Environmental Code. If a sewage disposal system with capacity in excess of 15,000 gallons per day will be constructed; a groundwater discharge permit must also be obtained.

WATERWAYS, GREAT PONDS AND TIDELANDS CONSTRUCTION LICENSE must be obtained from the Department of Environmental Protection, Wetlands and Waterways Division, for any construction below the high water line of state waterways, great ponds (ponds over ten (10) acres in their natural state) and tidelands.

MASSACHUSETTS CLEAN AIR ACT APPROVAL must be obtained in writing from the Department of Environmental Protection for the plans, specifications, and proposed operating procedures for the Construction, substantial reconstruction or alteration of any stationary source of air pollution, unless specifically exempted. Stationary sources emitting certain pollutant levels

must register with DEP as well. Anyone constructing or demolishing a commercial building, or residential building with 20 or more units, Must notify DEP at least ten (10) working days prior to starting work, if it will create emissions that cause or Contribute to a condition of air pollution.

MASSACHUSETTS ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT prohibits taking possession of any plant or animal species listed in the federal Endangered Species Act, or the alteration of a significant habitat. A project developer should review the list of endangered species from the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, and habitat maps available for inspection at the Town of Charlton Conservation Commission office.

HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT PERMITS may be required from the federal Environmental Protection Agency or state Department of Environmental Protection if any waste generated by the project is hazardous, depending on the types or quantities generated; contact the Town of Charlton Fire Department for information.

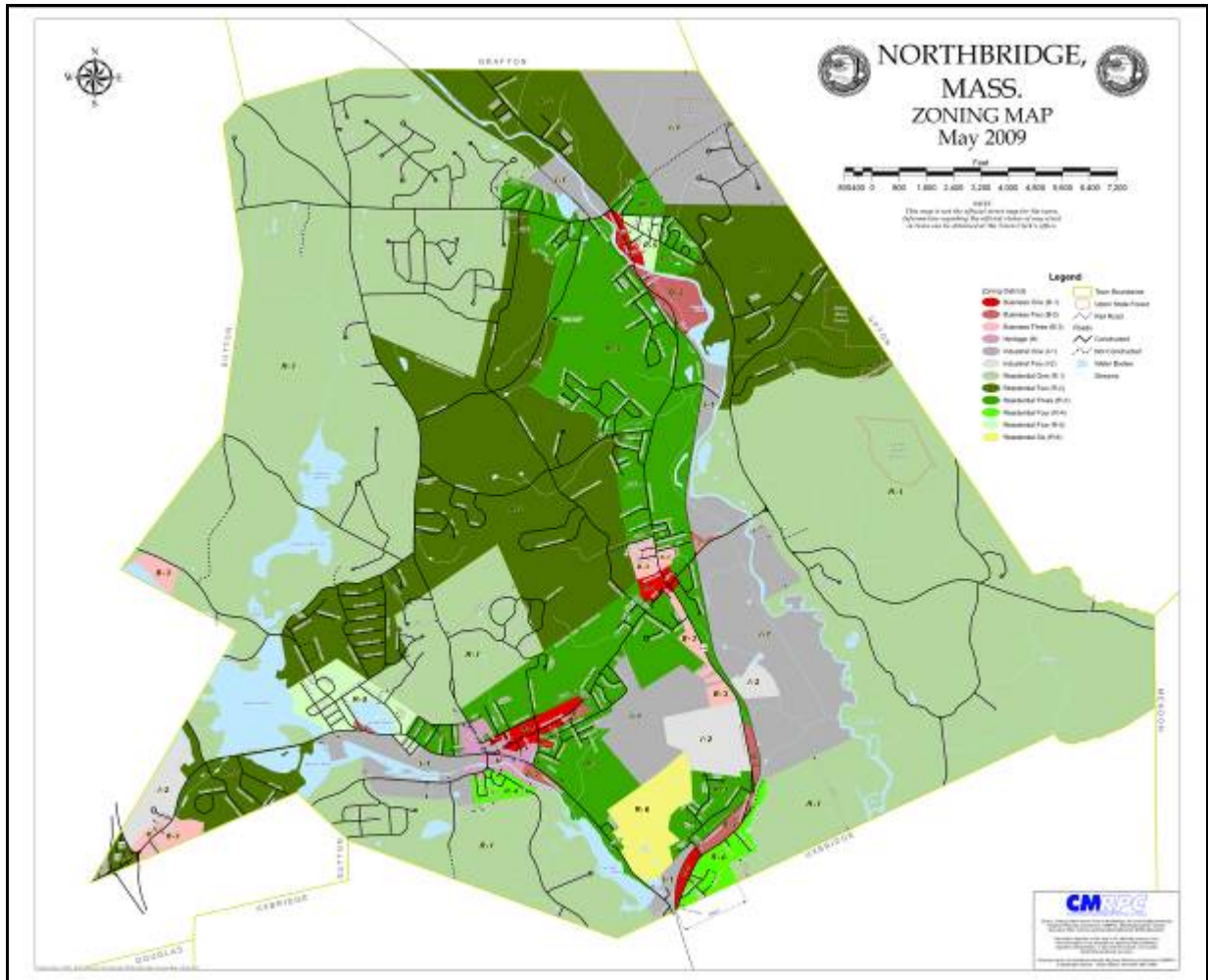
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION APPROVAL must be obtained if a designated historical or archeological landmark will be altered by a project undertaken by a state agency or any private party seeking any state funding, permits or licenses for the project.

STATE HIGHWAY ACCESS PERMIT must be obtained in writing from the Massachusetts Highway Department if a project will involve the creation, alteration, expansion or substantial impact upon an opening onto a state highway. This includes property which has access directly onto state highways and property which abuts a state highway layout.

PERMIT FOR CONSTRUCTION ON RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAYS Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 54A provides that a city or town must obtain the consent of the Secretary of Transportation and Construction prior to the issuance of a building permit for any railroad right-of-way or lands appurtenant. Thereto formerly used by any railroad company in the Commonwealth.

Appendix C

-ZONING MAP OF THE TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE



The Northbridge Zoning Map may be viewed online at http://www.northbridgemass.org/Planning_board/pb_files/Zoning_Map_draft.pdf and may be reviewed at the Building Department or purchased at the Office of the Town Clerk (7 Main Street –Town Hall). Those inquiring about a particular zoning designation are encouraged to contact the Inspector of Buildings.

Appendix D-1

-BOARD OF HEALTH FEE SCHEDULE

Per Board of Health as revised 07/01/2008 -Check with department for recent fee amendments

Permit/ Service	Fee
Food Service Establishment	
0 - 75 Seats	\$150.00
76-149 Seats	\$200.00
Over 150 Seats	\$300.00
Food Service w/ Retail	\$225.00
Retail Food Establishment	
Retail Food Only	\$150.00
Retail Food >5 registers	\$300.00
Limited Retail (<50 SF)	\$100.00
Retail Food w/ Food Service (coffee service)	\$225.00
Mobile Food Service – Seasonal	\$100.00
Residential Kitchen	\$125.00
Frozen Dessert	\$65.00
Temporary Food - One Day Event	\$25.00
Caterer	\$125.00
Tobacco Sales	\$100.00
Banquet Hall	\$100.00
Food Establishment – Plan Review Fees	
0 – 2,000 sq. ft.	\$100.00
2,001 – 5,000 sq. ft.	\$200.00
5,001 – 10,000 sq. ft.	\$350.00
Over 10,000 sq. ft.	\$600.00
Body Art	
Body Art Establishment	\$200.00
Body Art Practitioner	\$100.00
Outdoor Wood Burning Furnace	\$ 50.00
Well Permits	
Well Construction	\$100.00
Well Decommissioning	\$ 50.00
Title 5 Application for Review of:	
Soils Evaluation – New Construction	\$375.00
Soils Evaluation – Repair	\$275.00
Sewage Disposal System Design Plan Review	\$200.00
Septic Installation Inspections	\$300.00
Disposal Works Installers License	\$150.00
Commercial testing, per lot	\$450.00
Septage Hauler	\$200.00
Trash Hauler	\$200.00
Swimming Pool	\$100.00
Stable Permit	
Private/Public	\$ 50.00/\$100.00

Appendix D-2.1

-CODE ENFORCEMENT INSPECTIONAL SERVICES FEE SCHEDULE

BUILDING PERMIT -RESIDENTIAL

NEW CONSTRUCTION / (Per dwelling unit)	\$8 PER \$1000 of estimated cost (ICC cost table)
ADDITIONS (Per dwelling unit)	\$8 PER \$1000 of estimated cost (\$50 MIN.)
RENOVATIONS (Per dwelling unit)	\$8 PER \$1000 of estimated cost (\$50 MIN.)
POOLS	\$75 IN-GROUND / \$50 ABOVE GROUND
SHED OR DECK	\$50
WOOD/PELLET STOVE	\$50
FOUNDATION	\$50
RE-INSPECTION FEE	\$25
DUPLICATE PERMIT (LOST PERMIT)	\$25

BUILDING PERMIT -COMMERCIAL

NEW CONSTRUCTION	\$10 PER \$1000 of estimated cost (ICC Cost Table)
ADDITIONS/RENOVATIONS (PER UNIT)	\$10 PER \$1000 of estimated cost

- THERE IS A MINIMUM PERMIT FEE OF \$50 ON ALL BUILDING PERMITS.
- BUILDING PERMIT FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.
- WORK STARTED WITHOUT A PERMIT IS SUBJECT TO DOUBLE THE FEE SCHEDULE.
- THE PERMIT WILL BECOME NULL & VOID IF CONSTRUCTION WORK IS NOT STARTED W/IN 6 MONTHS OF THE DATE THE PERMIT IS ISSUED UNLESS AN EXTENSION HAS BEEN GRANTED IN WRITING BY THE BUILDING INSPECTOR.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN: August 10, 2009

EFFECTIVE: August 17, 2009

Appendix D -2.2

-CODE ENFORCEMENT INSPECTIONAL SERVICES FEE SCHEDULE

ELECTRICAL PERMIT –RESIDENTIAL

NEW HOME (PER DWELLING UNIT)	\$150 (with service)
GARAGE	\$75 (without service)
SERVICE (NEW OR UPGRADE)	\$50 per meter
ADDITIONS OR RENOVATIONS (PER DWELLING UNIT)	\$50 (1 & 2 ROOMS) \$100 (3+ ROOMS)
IN-GROUND POOL	\$75
ABOVE GROUND POOL	\$50
TEMPORARY SERVICE	\$50
MINIMUM PERMIT FEE	\$50
REINSPECTION FEE	\$25

ELECTRICAL PERMIT -COMMERCIAL

NEW CONSTRUCTION	\$100.00 + 2% of contract price
SERVICES (NEW OR UPGRADE)	
100 AMP	\$100
200 AMP	\$150
400 AMP	\$200
600 AMP	\$300
OVER 600 AMP	\$400
EACH ADDITIONAL METER	\$75
ADDITIONS OR RENOVATIONS	\$75 (up to \$2500 estimated value of electrical work)
	OVER \$2500 (\$100 + 1% of estimated value of electrical work)
ANNUAL MAINTENANCE PERMIT	\$150
MINIMUM PERMIT FEE	\$75
RE-INSPECTION FEE	\$25

- A SEPARATE ELECTRICAL PERMIT MUST BE FILED FOR EACH DWELLING UNIT AND EACH SEPARATE PLACE OF BUSINESS.
- WORK STARTED WITHOUT A PERMIT IS SUBJECT TO DOUBLE THE FEE SCHEDULE.
- WORK MUST BE PERFORMED OR SUPERVISED BY A LICENSED ELECTRICIAN.
- A CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE & WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE AFFIDAVIT MUST BE PROVIDED.
- PERMITS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE & NON-TRANSFERABLE.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN: August 10, 2009

EFFECTIVE: August 17, 2009

Appendix D -2.3

-CODE ENFORCEMENT INSPECTIONAL SERVICES FEE SCHEDULE

RESIDENTIAL PLUMBING & GAS

NEW HOME (PER DWELLING UNIT)	\$100 + \$5 EACH FIXTURE
ADDITIONS/RENOVATIONS (PER DWELLING UNIT)	\$50 + \$5 PER FIXTURE
MINIMUM PERMIT FEE	\$50
REINSPECTION FEE	\$25

COMMERCIAL PLUMBING & GAS

NEW CONSTRUCTION	\$100 + \$10 PER FIXTURE
RENOVATIONS/ADDITIONS (PER UNIT)	\$75 + \$10 PER FIXTURE
MINIMUM PLUMBING PERMIT FEE	\$75
RE-INSPECTION FEE	\$25

- A SEPARATE PLUMBING/GAS PERMIT MUST BE FILED FOR EACH DWELLING UNIT AND EACH SEPARATE PLACE OF BUSINESS.
- THE REQUIRED FEE WILL BE DOUBLED IF WORK IS STARTED PRIOR TO OBTAINING A PERMIT.
- A CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE & WORKER'S COMPENSATION AFFIDAVIT MUST BE PROVIDED.
- PERMITS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE & NON-TRANSFERABLE.
- WORK MUST BE PERFORMED BY A LICENSED PLUMBER.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN: August 10, 2009

EFFECTIVE: August 17, 2009

Appendix D -3

-PLANNING BOARD FEE SCHEDULE

PLANNING BOARD -ADMINISTRATIVE FEES*

Administrative fees are non-refundable

- **Site Development Plan Review**
\$250.00 plus (\$10.00 per required parking space)
- **Definitive Subdivision plan (w/out preliminary)**
\$2,000.00 plus \$300.00 per lot
- **Planning Board Special Permit**
\$250.00
- **Definitive Subdivision Modification**
\$1,000.00
- **ANR (81-P plan)**
\$200.00 plus \$50.00 for every new lot created
- **Lot Release**
\$100.00
- **Preliminary Subdivision plan**
\$1,000.00 plus \$50.00 for every lot above five (5)
- **Street Acceptance**
\$500.00 per street or portion thereof
- **Definitive Subdivision plan (w/preliminary)** \$2,000.00 plus \$200.00 per lot
- **Bond Reduction/Release**
\$300.00

**The cost associated with public hearing/meeting notification shall be the responsibility of the applicant. Applications requiring publication in the local newspaper shall be responsible for payments of invoicing to the town specific to application.*

PLANNING BOARD -REVIEW & INSPECTION FEES

Pursuant to the Zoning Bylaws and Subdivision Rules & Regulations of the Town of Northbridge, the Planning Board shall require additional fees to be deposited into a Review & Inspection Account specific to a project to cover additional expenses connected with the review of the application plans.

Zoning Bylaws -As per Section 173-49.1 D (2) [Reasonable fees], the Planning Board is authorized to retain a registered professional engineer, architect or landscape architect, or other professional consultants to advise the Board on any or all aspects of the site plan. The cost of this advice shall be borne by the applicant.

Subdivision Rules & Regulations -Pursuant to Section 222-41 [Review and inspection account], in accordance with MGL C. 44, § 53G, as added to by Chapter 593 of the Acts of 1989, a separate account known as "Planning Board's Review and Inspection Account" shall be established and used to offset costs of hiring outside consultants to assist in the review and pay for professional inspections of construction work. The Board may request that additional funds be deposited into account by the applicant according to §§ 222-39 & 222-40. Any excess amount attributable to a particular project, including accrued interest, will be repaid to the applicant at the conclusion of the project.

Appendix D -4

-CONSERVATION COMMISSION FEE SCHEDULE

CONSERVATION COMMISSION -TOWN REGULATION FEES

Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA)

Less than 3 acres	\$100
3 acres or more	\$150

Notice of Intent (NOI)

50% of the TOTAL FEE which is applied under the State NOI filing fees (as of October 8, 2004). This fee is in addition to the State filing fee.

Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation (ANRAD)

50% of the TOTAL FEE which is applied under the State ANRAD filing fees (as of October 8, 2004). This fee is in addition to the State filing fee.

Request for Extension to the Order of Conditions

\$100

Consulting Fees

The Conservation Commission may deem it necessary to obtain expert engineering or other outside consultant services in order to reach a final decision on an application. The specific consultant services may include, but are not limited to, Resource Area survey and delineation, analysis of Resource Area values (including Wildlife Habitat evaluations), hydro-geologic and drainage analysis, and / or environmental or land use law. In such instances, the Conservation Commission shall notify the Applicant of this need and shall provide the opportunity for the application to be amended or withdrawn.

Should an Applicant choose to proceed, the Conservation Commission shall require the Applicant to pay the costs and expenses for consulting services. The Conservation Commission may require the payment of the consultant fee at any point in its deliberations prior to a final decision.

Fees for Advertising

The applicant is responsible for the cost of the legal advertisement of the public hearing. The advertisement will be placed by the Conservation Commission Office and the fee shall be paid by the applicant prior to the issuance of a decision by the Conservation Commission.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION -DEP WETLANDS FILING FEES

Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA)

None

Notice of Intent (NOI)

Calculate DEP wetlands filing fee using the DEP Wetland Fee Transmittal Form. The State share is ½ of the total fee LESS \$12.50. The Town share of the filing fee is ½ the total fee PLUS \$12.50.

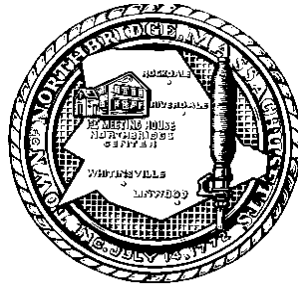
Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation (ANRAD)

Calculate DEP wetlands filing fee using the DEP Wetland Fee Transmittal Form. The State share is ½ of the total fee LESS \$12.50. The Town share of the filing fee is ½ the total fee PLUS \$12.50.

Appendix E

-DEPARTMENT & STAFF DIRECTORY

DEPARTMENT	PHONE	FAX
ASSESSOR'S OFFICE Robert Fitzgerald, Principal Assessor / 7 Main Street – Lower Level	(508) 234-2740	(508) 234-9044
BOARD OF HEALTH Jeanne M. Gniadek, Administrator / 14 Hill Street	(508) 234-3272	(508) 234-0821
CODE ENFORCEMENT INSPECTIONAL SERVICES James Sheehan, Inspector of Buildings Brenda M. Ouillette, Administrative Assistant/ 14 Hill Street	(508) 234-6577	(508) 234-0821
COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner / 14 Hill Street	(508) 234-2447	(508) 234-0814
CONSERVATION COMMISSION Barbara Kinney, Secretary / 14 Hill Street	(508) 234-0817	(508) 234-0814
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS Richard Sasseville, DPW Director / 11 Fletcher Street	(508) 234-3581	(508) 234-0807
FIRE DEPARTMENT Gary Nestor, Fire Chief / 193 Main Street	(508) 234-8448	(508) 234-3682
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT Arthur Magowan, Highway Superintendent / 11 Fletcher Street	(508) 234-3581	(508) 234-0807
POLICE DEPARTMENT Walter Warchol, Chief of Police / 1 Hope Street	(508) 234-6211	(508) 234-9021
SELECTMEN, BOARD OF Sharon Susienka, Exec. Asst. to the Town Manager Donna Gosselin, Admin. Asst. / 7 Main Street – First Floor	(508) 234-2095	(508) 234-7640
SEWER DEPARTMENT Mark Kuras, Sewer Superintendent / 644 Providence Road	(508) 234-2154	(508) 234-0809
TAX COLLECTOR / TREASURER Kim Yargeau, Treasurer/Collector / 7 Main Street – Lower Level	(508) 234-5432	(508) 234-0815
TOWN CLERK Doreen A. Cedrone, Town Clerk / 7 Main Street – First Floor	(508) 234-2001	(508) 234-0813
TOWN MANAGER Theodore A. Kozak, Town Manager / 7 Main Street – First Floor	(508) 234-2095	(508) 234-7640
WHITINSVILLE WATER COMPANY Randy Swigor, Director / 44 Lake Street	(508) 234-7358	(508) 234-5697
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS Brenda M. Ouillette, Administrative Assistant / 14 Hill Street	(508) 234-0819	(508) 234-0821



This *Permitting Guidebook* prepared for the Town of Northbridge was modeled after several Massachusetts municipalities providing same for their individual communities

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