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# TOWN OF WATERTOWN: A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO LAND USE PERMITS

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>pg. 3</b>
<b>a. What is Zoning and Why Do We Need It?</b>	
<b>2. Guide to Filling Out Zoning Permits</b>	<b>pg. 4</b>
<b>a. Gathering Information</b>	<b>pg. 5</b>
i. The Assessors Website	
ii. Town Global Information System/Map Sketch	
<b>b. What Can Be Built on the Property?</b>	<b>pg.6</b>
i. Permitted Uses by Zone	
ii. Lot Dimensions & Setback Requirements by Zone	
<b>3. General Notes</b>	<b>pg. 8</b>
<b>a. Mapping &amp; Review Requirements</b>	<b>pg. 8</b>
<b>b. Other Applications &amp; Where to Get Them</b>	<b>pg. 10</b>
<b>c. Other Important Notes</b>	<b>pg. 11</b>
<b>4. Reference Materials</b>	<b>pg. 12</b>

## What is Zoning and Why Do We Need It?

Zoning is a set of land use regulations governing the use, placement, spacing, and size of land and buildings. It is one of the key tools used by Watertown to guide practical development and growth. Zoning assists the town in its implementation of the Plan of Conservation and Development, a document developed by the town and its residents to create and implement its goals and visions on how to make the town even better in the future.

One of the key ways of enforcing zoning and the better development of the town is through zoning permits, which is a necessary step in the process of obtaining a building permit, which allows more development to be built in the town.

The zoning application and other related land use applications may be found on the town website [here](#), or in the land use office located at 61 Echo Lake Road Watertown, CT.

One of the most important steps to filling out your zoning permit is making sure that the information on it is correct, to ensure a speedy and reliable permitting process.

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# GUIDE TO FILLING OUT ZONING PERMITS

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## Gathering Information

There is certain information about your parcel needed for an application including the zoning district and the property unique identifier known as the parcel ID or map/block/lot number. One source of this information can be found from the assessor's website, or the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS). From this you can print a map of your parcel to submit with the application.

We will request that your map contain sufficient detail and scale to illustrate the nature and scope of your proposed project, specifically an accurate depiction of the location of property lines and specific setback distances to them. As mentioned, the (GIS) provides an excellent base map to use for illustrating your project. Please refer to page 8 of this guide for the level of map detail typically expected.

If you are doing the work yourself please put your own name as the contractor.

## Assessor's Website

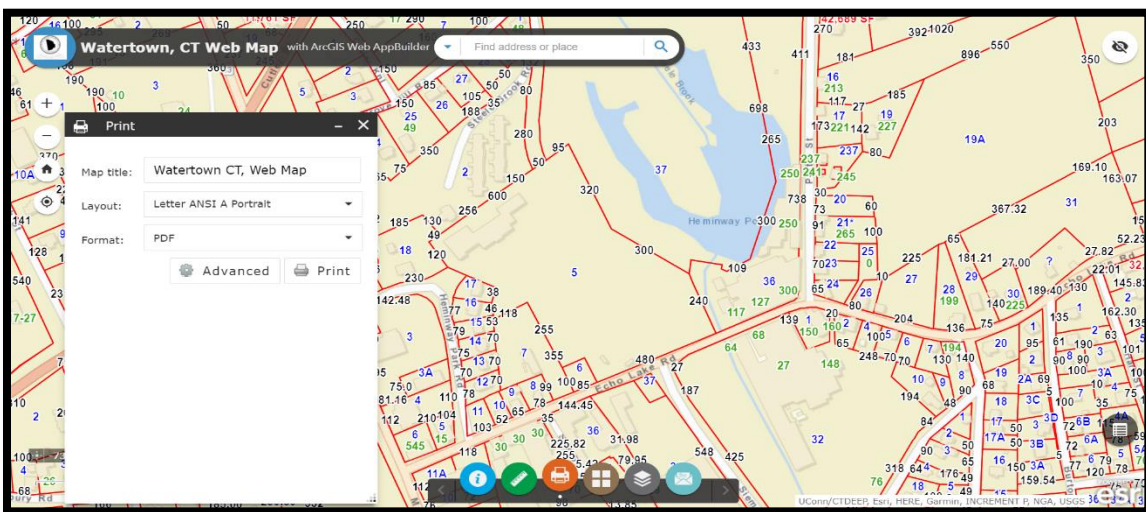
Information such as your Map/Block/Lot and zoning district can be found from the [assessor's website](#) on the property cards, simply fill out your information and find that information as illustrated here.

Parcel Information					
Location:	HEMINWAY PARK RD	Property Use:	School	Primary Use:	Education
Unique ID:	008680	Map Block Lot:	100 46 5	Acres:	8.70
490 Acres:	0.00	Zone:	R10	Volume / Page:	0069/0157
Developers Map / Lot:		Census:			

## Watertown GIS/Map Making

To print a map from town GIS:

1. Go to the [Town's GIS](#) by double clicking the "Town's GIS" in blue or going to the towns website, go under how do I, then under view click on Watertown GIS system
2. Choose the parcel you're looking for, this can be done by typing in the address in the search bar on the top of the screen
3. Click on the 4 squares in the red circle at the bottom, and choose which base map best shows what you want on the map.
4. Print Map: The print button can be found at the bottom of the screen in a orange circle with a picture of a printer
5. Title: Name the map
6. Print: Gives a preview with title block
7. Right click mouse: Print-shows print menu



If you are using the GIS you can also left click on your property and in the box that comes up click on the more info hyperlink next to VisionURL to reach the assessor's website too.

The Town GIS and assessor's website are useful tools, but should only be used to get basic information and does not replace a survey of the property. Please provide additional information regarding the level of mapping needed for your project if required.

# What Can Be Built on the Property?

## Zoning Permitted Uses

USES and STRUCTURES	R-90	R-70	R-30	R-20	R-12.5	R-10	R-G
Single-family detached dwelling	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Farms and farming	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Parks and open space	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Interior lot	P	P					
Accessory dwelling unit	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Accessory dwelling	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP
Temporary special event	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Child day care center or group day care home	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP
Convalescent home, private hospital, or sanitarium	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP
Non-profit institution	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP
Summer day camp	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP
Private recreational facility			SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP
Commercial kennel, livery or boarding stable, or riding academy	SpP	SpP	SpP		SpP		SpP
Public utility buildings, uses, and facilities	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP
Buildings, uses, and facilities of the Town, State of Connecticut, Federal Government, or the Watertown Fire District.	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP
Railroad rights-of-way and passenger station	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP
Telecommunications facilities	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP
Wind turbines	SpP	SpP	SpP				
Bed and breakfast accommodations	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP	SpP
Limited professional office conversion		SpP					
Congregate housing					SpP		
Two family dwelling			SpP	P	SpP	P	P
Three family dwelling					SpP		P
Multi-family dwelling							SpP
Planned Residential Development	SpP	SpP	SpP		SpP		
Designed Residential Development				ZC/ SpP			
Age-restricted development A			ZC/ SpP		ZC/ SpP		
Age-restricted development B	ZC/ SpP	ZC/ SpP	ZC/ SpP		ZC/ SpP		ZC/ SpP
Affordable housing development	SpP*	SpP*	SpP*		SpP*		SpP*
Accessory uses and structures	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

\* Affordable housing developments only permitted within Planned Residential Developments

**Key:**

- P: Permitted by right, subject to permitting required by Section 6
- SpP: Permitted subject to Special Permit and Site Plan approval in accordance with Section 9
- ZC: Zone Change

For a more in-depth and complete look at permitted uses please go to the town [zoning regulations](#) starting at page 69.



## Lot Dimensions & Set Back Requirements by Zone

Lot Dimensions						
District	Min. Lot Area per Dwelling		Min. Square		Additional Lot Area per Additional Dwelling Unit <sup>1</sup>	Min. Frontage
	No Muni Water	Muni Water	No Muni Water	Muni Water		
<b>R-90</b>	90000 sf	90000 sf	200'	200'	n/a	150'
<b>R-70</b>	70000 sf	70000 sf	150'	150'	n/a	125'
<b>R-30</b>	40000 sf	30000 sf	150'	100'	n/a	75'
<b>R-20</b>	40000 sf	20000 sf	150'	100'	n/a	75'
<b>R-12.5</b>	40000 sf	12500 sf	150'	75'	5000 sf	75' <sup>2</sup>
<b>R-10</b>	40000 sf	10000 sf	150'	75'	40000 sf if no Muni Water	50'
					10000 sf if Muni Water	
<b>R-G</b>	7500 sf	7500 sf	75'	75'	5000 sf	50'

"sf" = square feet; "n/a" = not applicable  
<sup>1</sup> Where permitted; see District specific uses and requirements.  
<sup>2</sup> 50' for lots on a cul-de-sac street.

Building Standards										
District	Max. Building Height	Principal Building Min. Setbacks			Accessory Structure Min. Setbacks*			Allowable Projection	Maximum Coverage	
		Front	Rear	Each Side	Front	Rear	Each Side		Building	Total
<b>R-90</b>	3 Stories/35'	50'	50'	25'	50'	20'	20'	1'	10%	20%
<b>R-70</b>	3 Stories/35'	50'	50'	25'	50'	20'	20'	1'	15%	25%
<b>R-30</b>	3 Stories/35'	35'	50'	20'	35'	15'	15'	1'	15%	25%
<b>R-20</b>	3 Stories/35'	25'	50'	15'	35'	10'	10'	3'	15%	20%
<b>R-12.5</b>	3 Stories/35'	35'	30'	10'	35'	5'	5'	1'	25%	35%
<b>R-10</b>	3 Stories/35'	25'	30'	10'	35'	5'	5'	3'	25%	25%
<b>R-G</b>	3 Stories/35'	25'	30'	10'	25'	5'	5'	1'	40%	60%

\*Oversize accessory structures (see definitions) shall comply with setback requirements for a principal building in the respective District, per Paragraph 6.3.13, Item f.

For a more in-depth and complete look at the lot dimensions and building standards please go to the town [zoning regulations](#) starting at page 73.

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## GENERAL NOTES

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### Mapping

As discussed previously, demonstrating the location of your proposed project relative to your property is an important part of the process. Staff depends upon a variety of maps or illustrations to help us understand your project.

In the majority of cases involving smaller projects you can provide us with the necessary map for review. Staff will utilize the following guidelines to determine the level of mapping or survey needed for your project.

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#### **New or updated survey required for the following projects:**

Survey means a new A-2 survey if none previously exists, or 2) an existing property survey that can be used to verify property lines and zoning setbacks.

- Single family dwelling
- New commercial development that requires a site plan or special permit.
- Addition requiring a foundation or slab if property lines/setbacks not readily discernible
- Footprint expansion of a non-conforming structure or non-conforming properties that cannot adequately demonstrate proof of property lines
- New inground pool

#### **Plan, map or sketch, with verifiable proof of property line location and zoning setback for the following projects:**

- A. Addition requiring a foundation or piers if setbacks from property lines readily apparent from supplied map,
- B. Oversized accessory structures (detached garage, barn) over 576 square feet requiring foundation or piers,
- C. Accessory structure minor (i.e. sheds between 200 and 576 sf),
- D. New Decks



Please label what your drawings are documenting, as well as to label the sizes i.e. length, width, square footage. Staff will verify using GIS or site visit.

### **Minimum Review**

Provide map or sketch as outlined above. Staff will review and approve based upon information supplied by the applicant.

1. Decks- repair of existing structures,
2. Above ground pools,
3. Permanent generators,
4. Accessory structures under 200 square feet,
5. Enclosures of existing patios or other similar construction with an existing footprint.

The following typically require no further review from zoning (although the Building Department may request our sign off for their records)

- A. Playscapes,
  - B. Temporary kiddie pools or other seasonal or non-permanent pools,
  - C. Propane tanks located adjacent to the dwelling,
  - D. Additions or alterations that do not expand the footprint of a structure.
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## Additional Applications and Where to Get Them

### A. Planning and Zoning Commission:

Three primary types of applications-

- i. Site plan approval
- ii. Special permit (usually in conjunction with site plan)
- iii. Subdivision

All are paper applications, all have statutory time frames for review, all have corresponding permits issued separate from the application.

Examples provided previously.

### B. Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency:

Primary application and permit called application/permit for Regulated Activity.

There are also subcategories

- i. Agent approval (administrative)
- ii. Determination of non-regulated activity

### C. Zoning Board of Appeals:

- i. Variances
- ii. Motor Vehicle Locational Approval
- iii. Appeals of Zoning Official; Appeals of Zoning Board decisions

### D. Building Permits

- a. Issued for any kind of construction related activity.
- b. The building department has primary responsibility for determining the types of additional permits necessary for their process.

[\(refer to the building department web page for additional information\)](#)

## Other Important Notes

1. Once the permit is complete please submit it to the Planning and Zoning office at Town Hall located at 61 Echo Lake Road Watertown CT. If you have any questions regarding the permit, or need help completing anything on it please contact the Zoning and Planning Department at 860-945-5266 or come in during office hours 8:30 to 4:30 Monday through Friday, or by appointment.
  2. You can apply for all permits concurrently, however in order for a building permit to be issued a zoning permit must be completed, as well as approval from the Water and Sewer Department, Health Department, and/or Public Works.
    - a. If the property is on town water or sewer you need approval from the Water and Sewer Department.
    - b. If the work includes changes in the town right of way, such as a driveway opening or alteration you must get approval from Public Works.
    - c. If you have an on-site sewage disposal system (septic tank and leaching fields) and/or well water, please contact Torrington Area Health District (860-489-0436; 350 Main Street Torrington, CT) to find their location on your property. The District also has an office located on the second floor of the Watertown Municipal Center.
    - d. If your property is located in a wetlands area or near a riparian environment please contact the Conservation Commission/ Inland Wetland Agency staff in the Land Use Department offices.
  3. We are in the process of automating land use applications and permits. Please check back for updates!
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## REFERENCE MATERIALS

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### **Applications and Permits:**

[https://www.watertownct.org/departments/planning\\_\\_\\_zoning/planning\\_\\_\\_zoning\\_department/applications\\_\\_\\_permits.php](https://www.watertownct.org/departments/planning___zoning/planning___zoning_department/applications___permits.php)

### **Assessor's Website Property Cards:**

<https://www.propertyrecordcards.com/SearchMaster.aspx?towncode=153>

### **Contact Information:**

[https://www.watertownct.org/departments/planning\\_\\_\\_zoning/index.php](https://www.watertownct.org/departments/planning___zoning/index.php)

### **Fee Schedule:**

[https://cms7files.revize.com/watertownct/Departments/Planning%20&%20Zoning/P&Z\\_Fees\\_Ordinance\\_-\\_Final\\_11-01-2007.pdf](https://cms7files.revize.com/watertownct/Departments/Planning%20&%20Zoning/P&Z_Fees_Ordinance_-_Final_11-01-2007.pdf)

### **Watertown Building Department:**

[https://www.watertownct.org/departments/building\\_inspectors/index.php](https://www.watertownct.org/departments/building_inspectors/index.php)

### **Watertown GIS:**

<https://townwtng.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=2c1b12f558d448ee9e81e6b003a0db76>

### **Watertown Planning and Zoning Regulations:**

[https://www.watertownct.org/departments/planning\\_\\_\\_zoning/planning\\_\\_\\_zoning\\_department/regulations\\_\\_\\_plan.php](https://www.watertownct.org/departments/planning___zoning/planning___zoning_department/regulations___plan.php)

### **Watertown Website:**

<https://www.watertownct.org/>