TOWN OF WATERTOWN: A CITIZEN’S GUIDE TO LAND USE PERMITS
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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.
GUIDE TO FILLING OUT ZONING PERMITS

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 Table](image)

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 town’s 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

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Min. Lot Area per Dwelling</th>
<th>Min. Square</th>
<th>Additional Lot Area per Additional Dwelling Unit¹</th>
<th>Min. Frontage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R-90</td>
<td>90000 sf</td>
<td>90000 sf</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>150'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-70</td>
<td>70000 sf</td>
<td>70000 sf</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>125'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-30</td>
<td>40000 sf</td>
<td>30000 sf</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>75'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-20</td>
<td>40000 sf</td>
<td>20000 sf</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>75'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-12.5</td>
<td>40000 sf</td>
<td>12500 sf</td>
<td>5000 sf if no Muni Water</td>
<td>75'²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-10</td>
<td>40000 sf</td>
<td>10000 sf</td>
<td>40000 sf if no Muni Water</td>
<td>50'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-G</td>
<td>7500 sf</td>
<td>7500 sf</td>
<td>10000 sf if Muni Water</td>
<td>50'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“sf” = square feet; “n/a” = not applicable
¹ Where permitted; see District specific uses and requirements.
² 50’ for lots on a cul-de-sac street.

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.
**GENERAL NOTES**

**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.

**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.
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!
REFERENCE MATERIALS

Applications and Permits:
https://www.watertownct.org/departments/planning__zoning/planning__zoning_department/applications__permits.php

Assessor’s Website Property Cards:

Contact Information:
https://www.watertownct.org/departments/planning__zoning/index.php

Fee Schedule:

Watertown Building Department:

Watertown GIS:
https://twnwtneng.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=2c1b2f558d448ee9e81e6b003a0db76

Watertown Planning and Zoning Regulations:
https://www.watertownct.org/departments/planning__zoning/planning__zoning_department/regulations__plan.php

Watertown Website:
https://www.watertownct.org/