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



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	pg. 3
a. What is Zoning and Why Do We Need It?	
2. Guide to Filling Out Zoning Permits	pg. 4
a. Gathering Information	pg. 4
i. The Assessors Website	
ii. Town Geographic Information System/Map Sketch	
b. What Can Be Built on the Property?	pg.6
i. Permitted Uses by Zone	
ii. Lot Dimensions & Setback Requirements by Zone	
3. General Notes	pg. 8
a. Mapping Requirements	pg. 8
b. Other Applications & Where to Get Them	pg. 9
c. Other Important Notes	pg. 10
4. Reference Materials	pg. 11

What is Zoning and Why Do We Need It?

Zoning is a set of 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 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 the Watertown Town Hall, 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's unique identifier known as the parcel ID or map/block/lot number. One source of this information can be the assessor's website, or the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS). You can also print a map of your parcel to submit with the application through GIS.

We will also request that you provide a map of sufficient detail and scale to illustrate the nature and scope of your proposed project, details on this can be found on page 8.

Other such information includes an accurate depiction of the location of property lines and specific setback distances to them, this can be done with a map or sketch of the property. The Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) provides an excellent base map to use for illustrating your project, though it is important to note that the property lines may not be fully accurate.

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

Assessor's Website

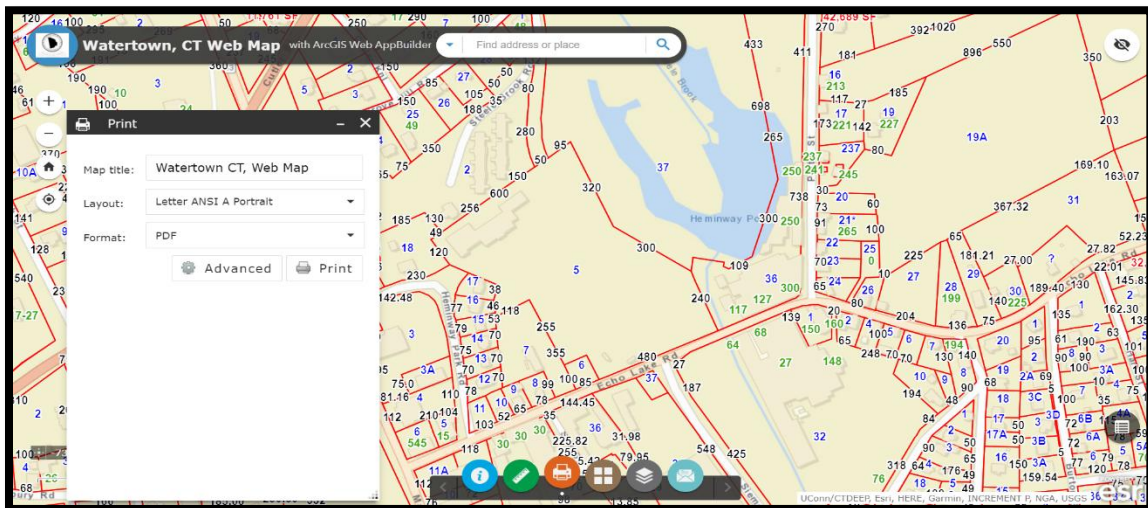
Information such as your Map/Block/Lot and zoning district can be found from the [assessor's website](#) on the property cards, simply fill out your information and find that information as illustrated here.

Parcel Information					
Location:	61 ECHO LAKE RD	Property Use:	Public Use	Primary Use:	Governmental Building
Unique ID:	008680	Map Block Lot:	100 46 5	Acres:	8.7000
490 Acres:	0.00	Zone:	R10	Volume / Page:	0069/0157

Watertown GIS/Map Sketch

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 Watertown 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 an orange circle with a picture of a printer.
5. Title: The map's name
6. Print: Creates a PDF of the map on your screen.
7. You can now print the map from the pdf.



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 Assessor Card 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

A. BASIC RESIDENTIAL USES / STRUCTURES	R-90	R-70	R-30	R-20	R-12.5	R-10	R-G
1. Single-family detached dwelling	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP
2. Two family dwelling with public water and public sewer (larger lot may be required – see Section 1.4)	x	x	SP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP
3. Three family dwelling with public water and public sewer (larger lot may be required – see Section 1.4)	x	x	x	SP	ZP	ZP	ZP
4. Interior lot subject to the provisions of Section 1.5.A	ZP	ZP	x	x	x	x	x

A	ZP	S	SP	ZC	x
Allowed	Zoning Permit	Site Plan	Special Permit	Zone Change	Not Permitted
No Zoning Permit Required	Staff	PZC	PZC with Public Hearing	PZC with Public Hearing	
	Section 8.1.A	Section 8.3	Section 8.4	Section 8.6	

Please note these are not all the allowed uses in a residential zone. For a more in-depth and complete look at the permitted uses please go to the [Watertown Zoning Regulations](#) starting at page 3, Section 1.2.

Your zone can be found using the GIS by selecting the three squares on top of each other at the bottom banner (Layer List) and selecting “Amended Zoning Map” on the list.

Lot Dimensions & Set Back Requirements by Zone

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

"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.

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
R-90	3 Stories/35'	50'	50'	25'	50'	20'	20'	1'	10%	20%
R-70	3 Stories/35'	50'	50'	25'	50'	20'	20'	1'	15%	25%
R-30	3 Stories/35'	35'	50'	20'	35'	15'	15'	1'	15%	25%
R-20	3 Stories/35'	25'	50'	15'	35'	10'	10'	3'	15%	20%
R-12.5	3 Stories/35'	35'	30'	10'	35'	5'	5'	1'	25%	35%
R-10	3 Stories/35'	25'	30'	10'	35'	5'	5'	3'	25%	25%
R-G	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 [Watertown Zoning Regulations](#) starting at page 10, Section 1.4.

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 depend 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
- Variance Applications

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, as well as to label the sizes i.e. length, width, square footage. Staff will verify using GIS or via a 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, behind or to the side, up to 125 gallons.
-

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
- iii. Request to extend and or transfer existing permits

C. Zoning Board of Appeals:

- i. Variances
- ii. Paper application and permit issued.
- iii. Motor Vehicle Locational Approval
- iv. Appeals of Zoning Official; Appeals of Zoning Board decisions

D. Building Department:

- i. Building Permits need

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

The building department has primary responsibility for determining the types of additional permits necessary for their process. See below.

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 Land Use 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, if required Wetland Permit.
 - 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 Town Hall (860-945-5270).
 - 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

Applications and Permits:

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

Fee Schedule:

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

Watertown GIS:

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

Watertown Planning and Zoning Regulations:

<https://watertownct.org/Departments/Planning%20&%20Zoning/Watertown%20Zoning%20Regulations-%20Adopted%2012-04-2024%20Effective%2012-30-24.pdf>

Watertown Website:

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