Town of Chelsea Zoning Permit Application Instructions

Property owners in Chelsea should be aware that zoning permits must be obtained before most changes can be made to their property. Some permits can be issued by the Administrative Officer (Zoning Administrator) and some must complete a second step with a hearing before the Development Review Board (DRB).

If physical changes are to be made entirely within the buildings/structures, no permits are required. If the changes affect the outside of buildings/structures, such as the building's footprint, additions, signs or other buildings erected, a permit is required. Also, if the property is to have a new use a conditional use permit is required, such as to change a residential dwelling into a business.

The Chelsea Design Control District is defined as the area of town between the two bridges in Chelsea Village. Please refer to the map in the Town Clerk's office. Any exterior changes, additions or signs in this District must get a permit from the Development Review Board after application to the Zoning Administrator.

Forms and copies of the Chelsea Zoning Bylaw are available from the Town Clerk (open Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM and Monday Eve 4:15-6:00 PM; phone 802-685-4460) or online at www.chelseavt.org.

Permit Application Tips:

- Please read instructions carefully and complete applications correctly to avoid delays in having the application processed.
- Feel free to include additional drawings, maps and letters describing the project.
- All measurements need to be filled in accurately on the application. They may be verified by the Zoning Administrator before acting on the application.
- Mail the application to the attention of the Zoning Administrator, Town of Chelsea, PO Box 266, Chelsea, VT 05038 or drop off at the Town Clerk's office.
- The permit will be acted upon by the Zoning Administrator within 30 days. If approved, a 15 day appeal period must pass before the project can be started.

Development Review Board Review:

- DRB review is required for many types of projects. After filing your zoning permit application, the Zoning Administrator will inform you if DRB review is required and provide a second application form.
- Application to the DRB will require providing more detailed drawings and include (as appropriate) dimensions, elevations, landscaping, traffic circulation, drawings of signs and exterior of buildings, and other requested information. Photographs may also be useful.
- Include a letter with a more detailed description of the project or change in property use.
- The DRB will schedule a hearing on the application within 30 days. The public hearing will be followed by a deliberation that will be completed in no more than 45 days. If approved, there is a 30 day appeal period after approval before the project can be started.

Please take into consideration the time line for the zoning process. The DRB meets once to twice a month and all hearings must be warned a minimum of 15 days in advance, so from the time of submission to the DRB a permit must typically wait 3 to 4 weeks to be heard. If continuances are needed for site visits or for the applicant to provide the DRB with needed information, the process can be longer. Once the DRB renders a decision, if it is appealed, the process will be as lengthy as the subsequent legal proceedings take. Plan accordingly when applying for zoning permits.

Questions? Feel free to contact Zoning Administrator Tim McCormick at either his cell phone (603) 208-8883 or by email at ZA@chelseavt.us . You can call Tim at his cell during the daytime and in evenings. If he's not available, leave a message and he will call you back.