



DOING BUSINESS IN NORTHWOOD

Guide to Local Approval Process

The Town of Northwood encourages business and has a commitment to promote economic development within the community.

Town staff is ready to assist you through the approval process when that is required, and/or to respond to your questions at any time. If you have questions about your proposed activity on a specific site, you are encouraged to meet with staff and provide specific details and information about your proposal in order to obtain accurate site specific responses. Depending on your situation, you may want to seek assistance from Land Use (942-5586 x205), Building (942-5586 x203), and/or Fire Department (942-9103). You may also e-mail the town planner with questions and she will assist and direct you to the appropriate information: eplanchet@northwoodnh.org.

PROPERTY AND USE APPROVAL:

Non-residential land use in Northwood is governed by the Site Plan Review Regulations and the Northwood Development Ordinance. These documents are available at the town hall for \$10 each, or at the town website (www.northwoodnh.org at “Planning Board” then “Documents and Forms”.) Northwood does not have specific zoning districts where there is commercial, industrial, and residential zones clearly outlined on a map that you may be familiar with in other communities. In Northwood, non-residential and multi-family use is allowed on a site by site basis according to the regulations. Therefore, the approval process required, if any, depends on the location of your proposed business and, to a large extent, on whether or not the property has an existing approval for non-residential or multi-family use. If the proposed use is new development, or a change or expansion of an existing use or structure, then planning board review and approval is required.

The Northwood Site Plan Review regulations provide for five types of applications: Major, Minor, Minimal Impact, Home Business and Exempt. These are defined in the Site Plan Review Regulations, Section IV-Applicability. The “Exempt” situation requires approval from the Code Enforcement Officer. Other applications are reviewed by the planning board to determine compliance with the site plan regulations and development ordinance. Planning board review includes notification of abutters and a public hearing.

- More specific information on the planning board procedure is provided in the *Application Procedure Information sheet* also on the Planning Board’s Documents and Forms section of www.northwoodnh.org
- Each type of application has its own application and checklist materials to be provided to the board for review. These are also available on the town website or at the town hall.

BUILDING APPROVAL:

Businesses are also required to meet all current applicable ICC and Fire Code (Life Safety Code) requirements for their building and specific type of business. These local permits, obtained through the Code Enforcement and Fire Departments, are often conditions of approval for a planning board application or may be obtained prior to or concurrent with the site plan review process. Building permit requirements are found on the Building Permit Application checklist. Fire department requirements are available directly from the fire department. These codes were adopted by the state legislature for compliance and enforcement within each community. This local permitting process identifies the code requirements for the specific application and may include the availability of public restrooms, handicapped parking and two modes of egress. We suggest that each proposed business check on its own specific requirements.