



Town of Salem, New Hampshire

Development Handbook

DEVELOPMENT HANDBOOK

Contents

I. Introductions

II. Development Directory

A. Town of Salem

1. Lay Boards

- a. Board of Selectmen
- b. Planning Board
- c. Board of Adjustment
- d. Conservation Commission
- e. Historic District Commission

2. Municipal Offices

- a. Town Manager
- b. Community Development
- c. Planning Division
- d. Building Division
- e. Health Division
- f. Engineering Division
- g. Assessor's Office
- h. Fire Department
- i. Police Department
- j. Public Works Department

B. State of New Hampshire

1. Department of Transportation
2. Department of Environmental Services
3. Wetlands Bureau
4. Public Utilities Commission
5. NH State Electrical Inspectors Board
6. NH State Plumbing Board

C. Federal

1. Army Corps of Engineers

D. Other

1. Granite State Electric Company
2. Verizon
3. Northern Utilities

III. Process

A. Planning Board

B. Board of Adjustment

C. Permit Application

1. Building Division
2. Fire Department
3. Engineering Division
4. Finance Department
5. Planning Division
6. Health Division
7. Assessor's Office

IV. Other Information

A. Land Use Control Ordinance

B. Town of Salem Code

C. Application Fees

D. Community Profile

E. Capital Improvement Program

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to guide the public through the land development process in Salem, New Hampshire. It identifies key local officials, boards, departments, and state agencies which have a role in local development. This guidebook also provides information on the necessary permits for project approval and throughout the development process.

The place to start with questions regarding development in Salem is the Community Development Department. The Community Development Department office is located in the Town Hall, 33 Geremonty Drive, Salem, New Hampshire 03079, or phone (603) 890-2007.

II. DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORY

A. TOWN OF SALEM

Board of Selectmen:

This is a five member elected body which establishes policy, oversees fiscal matters, acts on requests to sell Town-owned land or to release right of way dedications. The Selectmen may be contacted through the Town Manager's office.

Planning Board:

The seven members of the Planning Board are appointed by the Board of Selectmen for three year terms. It is their responsibility to review site plans and subdivisions which occur in the town. The Planning Director serves as the Board's agent on a day-to-day basis.

Board of Adjustment:

This is a five member board appointed by the Board of Selectmen, and it is responsible for hearing all variance requests and special exception requests for the Town of Salem. The Chief Building Official serves as the Board's agent.

Conservation Commission:

This is a seven member board with responsibility for locally overseeing the New Hampshire Wetland Protection Act. Any development project that involves filling, dredging, removing or altering any wetland area (or land subject to the regulations of the Act) will require involvement with the Commission. The Planning Director serves as staff support for this board.

Historic District Commission:

If your property is located in the designated Historic District along Main Street this commission is responsible for review of your project.

Town Manager:

An appointee of the Board of Selectmen, he implements the Board's policy decisions and supervises daily operation of town government.

Town Manager's Office:
(603) 890-2120

Community Development Department:
(includes Building, Health, and Planning)

Community Development Director:
(603) 890-2007

Planning Division:

Responsible for the day-to-day planning activities in the Town. These activities include zoning ordinance updates, master plan implementation, site plan and subdivision review, and site inspections. Staff is also responsible for coordinating development review. The office serves as staff for the Planning Board and Conservation Commission and implements their decisions.

Planning Director:
(603) 890-2080

Building Division:

This division is responsible for permitting building construction, plumbing, electrical work, signs, pools, sheds, etc. The staff inspects construction projects and investigates citizen complaints (regarding zoning violations, health hazards, etc.) They enforce local, state, and national codes. The office serves as staff for the Zoning Board of Adjustment and its members.

Chief Building Official:
(603) 890-2020

Health Division:

This division is responsible for the enforcement of public health laws and rules and any sanitary investigations which may be necessary, directed by the local Board of Health or as may be required by the New Hampshire Division of Public Health Services.

Health Officer:
(603) 890-2050

Engineering Division:

This division reviews and inspects all work associated with well, septic systems, roads, municipal water and sewer and storm drainage. Staff inspects septic systems as local agent for New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.

Senior Engineer:
(603) 890-2030

Assessor's Office:

The Assessor assigns lot and street numbers for subdivisions. Other information available at this office includes property abutters, legal descriptions of land and real estate information. The Assessor also processes intent-to-cut forms for forestry and logging activities.

Chief Assessor:
(603) 890-2018

Fire Department:

This department is responsible for fire safety inspections, approving sprinkler and fire alarm plans, means of egress, plans, and water supply location. It reviews subdivision plans, site plans and building plans for fire safety issues. It also approves new road names.

Fire Chief:
Central Fire Station
152 Main Street
(603) 890-2200

Fire Inspector:
Central Fire Station
152 Main Street
(603) 890-2200

Police Department:

This department reviews subdivision plans and site plans for traffic impact and sight distance issues.

Police Chief:
Veterans Memorial Parkway
(603)893-1911

Safety Officer:
Veterans Memorial Parkway
(603)890-2381

Department of Public Works

This department reviews plans and proposed work associated with all aspects of the infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, storm drainage) and public lands.

Director:
21 Cross Street
(603) 890-2150

B. STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Department of Transportation:

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation approves construction of access roads and driveways along state highways. Salem's four state roads are:

Route 28 -North/South Broadway
Route 38 -Lowell Road
Route 97 -Main Street
Route 111 -Shadow Lake/Derry Road

Contacts:

New Hampshire Department of Transportation
Hazen Drive, Box 483
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-3734

and

New Hampshire Department of Transportation
District 5 Office
Box 16476
Hooksett, NH 03106
(603) 485-9526

Department of Environmental Services:

This department regulates public water supplies, sewage disposal and treatment, and water pollution control. The NHDES reviews and issues permits for subdivisions (where lots will be under five acres in size), septic systems (new and repaired), sewer extensions, and terrain alteration.

Contact:

New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services
Hazen Drive, Box 95
Concord, NH 03301 .
(603) 271-3504 WSPCC
(603) 271-3503 -Main number

New Hampshire Wetlands Bureau:

The New Hampshire Wetland Bureau is responsible for reviewing all applications for dredge and fill permits in and adjacent to any waters of the state, including wetlands. Dredge and fill permits are necessary for excavation, soil removal, filling, dredging, or construction of any structures on any bank, marsh, or swamp. Written notice of intention to do this work is required. Applications are available from the Town's Planning Division and are filed through the Town Clerk's Office.

Contact:

New Hampshire Wetlands Bureau
64 North Main Street
Box 2008
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-2147

New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission:

This board has jurisdiction over gas, electric, steam, water, telephone and telegraph, buses, light planes and trucks used in intra-state transport.

Contact :

New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
8 Old Suncook Road
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-2431

New Hampshire State Electrical Board:

This board is responsible for the testing and licensing of all electricians practicing commercially in New Hampshire. All electrical work in New Hampshire must be installed by a licensed electrician and must comply with state and federal regulations:

Contact:

New Hampshire State Electrical Inspectors Board
Hayes Building
Hazen Drive, Box 646
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-3748

New Hampshire State Plumbing Board:

This board is responsible for the testing and licensing of all plumbers practicing commercially in New Hampshire. All plumbing work in New Hampshire must be installed by a licensed plumber and must comply with state and federal regulations:

Contact:

New Hampshire State Plumbing Board
105 Loudon Road
Box 1396
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-3267

C. FEDERAL

US Army Corps of Engineers:

The US Army Corps of Engineers reviews applications for dredge and fill permits in wetland areas.

Contact:

US Army Corps of Engineers
New England Division
424 Trapelo Road

Waltham, MA 02154
(617) 647-8590 (800)343-4789

D. OTHER

Granite State Electric Company and Verizon

All ongoing construction should receive prior clearance from these agencies as well as from the Town's Engineering Division and Public Works Department.

Granite State Electric Company
9 Lowell Road
Salem, NH 03079
(603)890-7000

Telephone: Verizon; Residential (800)870-9999; Commercial (800)941-9900

Dig Safe: 1-888-344-7233

Northern Utilities Natural Gas: (603)436-0310

III. TOWN PROCESS

A. PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board hears and votes on all proposals involving land subdivision, commercial site plan development, and requests for change-of-use permits.

The Planning Board normally meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Knightly Meeting Room of the Salem Municipal Office Building.

Applicants are expected to review the Town's Land Use Control Regulations book, (this includes the site plan, subdivision, and zoning requirements for Salem) prior to preparing plans for Planning Board review. These regulations contain information on permitted uses, dimensional restrictions, application procedures, and specific plan requirements. Copies are available from the Community Development Department.

Subdivisions and site plans must be submitted to the Planning Board Agent (the Planning Director) at least 15 days prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered. Applicants are encouraged to make an appointment to discuss plans with the agent in advance of the submission deadline as incomplete plans will not be accepted. Six copies of the plan must be submitted, along with a separate list of names and addresses of abutters, and the filing/notice fee.

If, at the initial staff review, the Agent finds the plans lacking, the applicant is expected to make all the necessary revisions before returning for a second review.

Once the plan is formally submitted and all fees paid, the plan is placed on the next Planning Board meeting agenda. Copies of the plan are then distributed to staff members for review and comments. Staff is made up of the Chief Building Official, Town Engineer, Assessor, Fire Inspector, Highway Safety Officer, and Public Works Director. They review the plan to make sure it meets all local, state, and federal requirements and that it promotes the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community. Their written comments are then made available to the Planning Board.

The Planning Board normally reviews projects in two meetings: the first meeting is a preliminary hearing and the second is a final hearing. Applicants should be aware, however, that some plans require more than two hearings. Applicants are expected to present their plans at the meeting and answer questions from the Board. Abutters are invited to express their concerns in regard to the proposed project.

Following the first hearing, the Planning Board may request that the applicant address their concerns and, if necessary, revise the plan. The altered plan must be submitted to the Planning Board Agent at least 7 days prior to the next hearing.

This process continues until the final hearing at which the Planning Board makes a decision to approve or disapprove the proposed project. Following action by the Planning Board, a follow-up letter which lists any conditions of approval or reasons for disapproval, is sent to each applicant.

If a plan is disapproved, applicants may resubmit the plan or appeal the decision to the Rockingham County Superior Court.

When a plan is approved, the next step for the applicant is to apply for, and receive, permits from the Building and Engineering Divisions.

B. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

The Board of Adjustment hears and votes on all requests for variances and special exceptions from the Town of Salem Land Use Controls and the Building Code as adopted by the Town of Salem and appeals from a decision of a building official.

The Board of Adjustment meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Knightly Meeting Room of the Salem Municipal Office Building. If necessary, the Board of Adjustment will have a second meeting on the third Tuesday of the month.

In order to be placed on an agenda, petitioners (property owners or their designated representatives) must meet with the Board's Agent and obtain an application packet from the Building Division. The completed application form, along with other required materials, must

be filed with the Agent, within a legal timeframe, to be placed on an agenda. There is a nominal charge for processing the application and for notifying the abutters by certified mail.

Applicants shall provide the Board of Adjustment with: 1. A Certified Plot Plan or Site Plan, 2. Exact wording of variance or special exception requested, 3. Names and legal addresses of abutters, 4. Name(s) and address(es) of the owners of the property involved, 5. Written permission of owner, if not property owner.

On the night of the meeting, the petitioner must address the criteria for variance or special exception, or in the case of an appeal, reasons petitioner feels an error has been made by a building official in denying petitioner's request.

The voting member of the board must address the same criteria in making his/her decision.

If the Board of Adjustment denies the request, the applicant may appeal the decision within 20 days of the date of the hearing. New evidence must be provided along with the necessary completed forms.

An abutter may appeal a decision of the Board of Adjustment by filing the necessary forms within 20 days of the Board's decision. New evidence must be submitted and the petition filed at the Building Division.

Following a request for a rehearing, the Board of Adjustment votes whether to grant or deny a rehearing based on the new evidence. If the Board approves the request, it is necessary for the party requesting a rehearing to submit the necessary forms and to pay for the notification of abutters. The petition will be heard at the next open meeting of the Board of Adjustment as a new petition.

Within 30 days after the decision of such a rehearing, the petitioner may appeal, by petition, to Superior Court.

After a petition has been granted by the Board of Adjustment, barring any requests for rehearings or litigation from abutters, and upon waiting the 20 day period, the next step is for the applicant to obtain the necessary building permits, and Planning Board approval if necessary.

C. PERMIT APPLICATIONS

1. Building Division

Applicants seeking permits issued by the Building Division are expected to complete the required form(s), provide plans, and speak with the corresponding inspector(s). Fees are required for all permits and inspections are made of completed work. Building permits are

issued with an effective date which is 10 -14 days after permit is issued. The Building Division issues the following permits:

- Building
- Electrical Plumbing
- Raze
- Chimney/Fireplace Signs
- Site work (including dredging, filling, grading, etc.)
- Change of Use

2. Fire Department

The Fire Department issues all permits pertaining to fire/life safety. Contractors and/or owners can apply for Fire Prevention Permits at the Central Fire Station Monday through Friday between the hours of 8: 30 AM to 10: 00 AM. Questions regarding permits can be directed to the Fire Inspector by calling the Central Fire Station at (603)890-2200:

- Fire Prevention Permits include, but are not limited to:
- Fire Alarm Systems
- Sprinkler Systems
- Fixed Fire Protection Systems
- Flammable/Combustible Liquid Storage Tanks
- Liquefied Propane Gas Tanks
- Underground Storage Tank Removal
- Blasting Operations
- Explosive Material Storage
- Welding/Cutting Operations
- Wood Stoves
- Oil Burning Equipment
- Assembly occupancies (750 persons, or if liquor license will be requested)
- Fire Pumps

Persons installing or maintaining fire alarm systems, sprinkler systems, private fire hydrants, and fixed fire protection systems are required to hold a valid Salem Fire Department Certificate of Fitness License to install these systems. Applications for Certificate of Fitness can be obtained at the Central Fire Station at 152 Main St. In addition, the following documents can be obtained from the Central Fire Station:

- Salem Fire Department Fire Alarm System Requirements
- Salem Fire Department Sprinkler System Requirements
- Salem Fire Department Water Supply Regulations
- Salem Fire Department Private Fire Hydrant Regulations
- Salem Fire Department Permit Fee Schedule

4. Finance Department

Developers interested in connecting to the municipal water system need to complete a "Service Application" form in the Finance Department. Payment for the water meter is to be made at the time that the application is filed. Developers who need a meter larger than 2" must contact the Public Works Department for meter specifications and list of suppliers.

Installation of the water service is to be done by the developer. The Public Works Department will inspect all installations. The installation of residential water meters will be done by the Public Works Department.

5. Planning Department (Wetland Filling)

Property owners wishing to dredge and/or fill a wetland, as defined in the Wetlands Conservation Ordinance, must apply for a Conditional Use Permit (Section 309-77). Plans of the site are then placed on an agenda for a joint public hearing with the Planning Board and Conservation Commission.

6. Health Department

The following permits are issued by the Health Department:

- Food Service
- Massage Parlors
- Salvage Yards
- Septic Haulers
- Tattoo Parlors

7. Assessor's Office

Property owners or their agent wishing to cut timber must obtain and file an Intent-to-Cut form with the Assessor's Office.

8. Utilities Department

The Utilities Department is responsible for issuing permits for water meters and irrigation permits.

IV. OTHER INFORMATION

A. LAND USE CONTROL ORDINANCE

The Land Use Control Ordinance contains zoning, subdivision, and site plan review regulations. Included with the zoning regulations is information on district requirements

(minimum lot size, frontage, setbacks, etc), off-street parking and loading, signage, wetland protection, enforcement, and how to seek relief from the regulations. The book is available from the Community Development Department for a nominal fee or can be found on the Town website at www.TownofSalemNH.org.

B. Town of Salem Code

The Town of Salem Code book contains the complete rules and regulations for the government of the Town. It includes local ordinances and regulations on numerous topics. Review copies are available in the Municipal Office Building.

C. Community Profile

The Community Profile contains information on geography, transportation, government, services, demographics, recreation and major projects approved by the Planning Board. The Community Profile is available from the Planning Division.

D. Capital Improvements Program

The Capital Improvements Program is the Town of Salem's six year capital budget. It is available from the Planning Division.