



Building & Development Services

405 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd Chapel Hill, NC
 Building/ Zoning 919-968-2718 or 919-969-5066

Email: permits@townofchapelhill.org or zoning@townofchapelhill.org

Welcome to the Town's Residential Zoning Permit Review process!

Using this Zoning Review Checklist can help you make sure your application complies with the standards of the Town's Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO). This version offers more explanation about the requirements; we also offer the Summary version on the website.

We offer **no-fee pre-application meetings** - call 919-969-5040 or email a request to zoning@townofchapelhill.org to set one up. This can be particularly useful if the site is in a Historic District (HD) or Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD); or is within or next to a Resource Conservation District (RCD), Jordan Riparian Buffer, or Floodplain; or if you have a challenging project or lot, or haven't previously worked in Chapel Hill.

Materials required with every application are listed on the Application Submittal Checklist.

Development on properties in a special District or sensitive location often has additional requirements. The most frequently required (listed below) may be needed as part of your application. Check with us if you have questions!

^ = Required if applicable

Fee-Exempt	Minor Zoning	Regular Zoning	Item (As Applicable)
	^	^	Copy of any relevant Town board approval received (such as Certificate of Appropriateness for Historic District-located projects) – contact AGrahn@townofchapelhill.org or RMcDonnell@TownofChapelHill.org if you have questions.
	^	^	Map showing notice area, mailing list and fee equal to cost of mailing notification letters in some NCDs and in historic districts. Check with staff for more guidance.
		^	Tree Survey and Landscape Protection Plan if more than 5000 sf of land disturbance proposed. (LUMO reference 5.7 for more information.)
	^	^	Survey showing stream, top of bank, RCD buffers, floodplain, Jordan riparian buffers and any other relevant features on the site for design and review purposes.
	^	^	Copy of stream determination letter/email – contact AWeakley@townofchapelhill.org if you have questions

Site Plan Requirements

The same information may be called for on the Plan Set as well as in the Application. Please provide consistent information in both.

* You can use the [Interactive Mapping](#) to find this information.

X = Required ^ = Required if applicable

Fee-Exempt	Minor Zoning	Regular Zoning	Item (As Applicable)
Site Information			
X	X	X	Site address(es)
	X	X	*Property Identification Numbers (PIN)
	X	X	Lot square footage/acreage
X	X	X	*Zoning District(s)



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X	^	^	*Note name of any Overlay or special District applicable to lot.
	^	^	*Note if in the Jordan Lake Watershed
^	^	^	*Note if a stream with Resource Conservation District, Jordan Riparian Buffer or Floodplain is on or adjacent to the lot proposed for development.
	^	^	Note if a Stream Determination has been made for any stream on or adjacent to the lot (Contact AWeakley@townofchapelhill.org if you have questions)
	X	X	Note whether site is on or will be on well/septic system; private water system; or OWASA public water and/or sewer systems. (Contact OWASA Customer Service at 919 968-4421 if you have questions.)
	X	X	Recorded Plat Reference(s) (Book and Page) (Or Deed References if no recorded Plat exists) (Property lookup thru Orange County , accesses Register of Deeds for more information.)
X	X	X	Owner - name, email, daytime phone
X	X	X	Applicant if different than Owner - name, email, phone
X	X	X	Plan preparer's business and individual name, email, daytime phone (may be same as Owner or Applicant.) NOTE - Plans sealed by a design professional required for REGULAR project submittals.
X	X	X	Date of drawing
	^	^	Plan revision date(s) as needed
^	^	^	Stipulations from any Special Use Permit or Project Zoning Compliance Permit directly affecting lot should be noted on the plan or attached as part of the submittal. (Check with us if you have questions.)
Site Data in Tables			
X	X	X	Square footage of Land Disturbance
X	X	X	Tally of Impervious Surface Area (sf): Existing; To be removed; Proposed New; Total Resulting SF and percent of site
^	X	X	Tally of Building Area (sf): Existing (Main Building; Accessory Structures); To be removed (Main Building; Accessory Structures); Proposed New; Total (Main Building; Total for lot)
^	^	X	Setbacks: Minimum Setbacks per Ordinance for Street, Interior, Solar; Proposed Setbacks - Street, Interior, Solar (Note - Cluster developments may have smaller setbacks than the base zoning district. Note if Cluster setbacks are involved.)
^	^	X	Building height maximum at minimum setback lines (existing, proposed); and at core/secondary height setback lines (existing, proposed)
^	^	^	Accessory building height if change from existing



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	^	^	Area of roof drainage to each outlet
Existing Conditions - Plan View			
	X	X	Vicinity map showing location of site relative to roads in surrounding area
	X	X	North arrow
X	X	X	Scale of drawing (feet per inch, using standard engineering scale, at a scale appropriate for the site - example: 1" = 20')
	X	X	Adjacent street right of way
X	X	X	Show entire lot - with dimensions, - with existing contours at 2' intervals in area of work - with existing driveway, any fencing and retaining walls
	^	X	Show any utility and access easements and street rights of way within or adjacent to the lot - Includes underground or overhead utilities, existing septic field and/or well, repair areas
^	X	X	Show location and footprint of existing house (inc stoop, porch, deck, etc) and any accessory structures - with dimensions, - with existing setbacks from all lot lines, - with dimensioned separation between structures (such as between house and carport or shed) if 10' or less. - Label any structure to be removed as 'to be removed'.
	X	X	Show all existing hard surfacing on the lot - driveway, parking, walks, patios, pool, covered decking, etc
	^	^	*Show any stream channel, stream bank, edge of stream buffer, floodway or floodplain on or adjacent to lot
	X	X	Show existing roof drainage outlets and direction of flow
	X	X	If you are using patterns or varying line types, provide legend
Proposed Project - Plan View			
X	X	X	Show entire lot, with any proposed changes to lot, easements and /or rights of way, labelled
	X	X	Show proposed grading, 2' contours, in area of land disturbance or work and between any stream on/adjacent to the property and the area of work or land disturbance
X	X	X	Show any proposed addition, new structure(s), all other structural development and hardscaping - with dimensions and setbacks from all lot lines - with dimensioned separations between all buildings on site or within 10' of proposed structures



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	X	X	Provide building elevations , distinguishing between existing and proposed construction.
	X	X	Indicate the proposed building height at the setback line <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Measure building height from mean finished grade, along the street façade(s) of the building, to the highest roof or ridge line. - To determine mean finished grade, take the spot elevations from the highest and lowest points of the foundation, and average. - Maximum building height at the minimum setback line is shown in Land Use Management Ordinance Table 3.8-1 . (This may differ in NCDs.) - Corner or through lot? Provide the information for both street facades; height shall be measured from the lower, more restrictive mean finished grade. - See 3.8.3 Exceptions to Setback and Height Requirements for things like chimneys cupolas, and solar panels.
	^	^	Greater building height is typically allowed for a building (or portion of a building) that sits further back from lot lines . In most zoning districts the allowable height increases 1' for every 2' of distance interior from the setback line, up to the maximum 'interior' or 'core' height shown in Land Use Management Ordinance Table 3.8-1 Dimensional Matrix . NCDs may have different limits. If the additional height provision is used, include a building envelope showing distance from lot line, proposed and maximum height.
^	X	X	Show proposed revised or new roof drainage areas, downspouts, and location of dissipators/outlets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dissipator/outlet Locations: minimum 5' separation from foundation, AND not within minimum setbacks, right of way, RCD or Jordan buffer areas.
^	X	X	Show how site drainage is to be handled. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show the direction of flow from the dissipators - Show any conveyance by piping or swales to public drainage system - Include standard detail drawings for drainage outlets/ dissipators/ splash blocks. - Proposing an alternative to standard detail(s)? Contact Stormwater (Ernest Odei-Larbi 919 968 2717 or Allison Weakley 919 969 7202) first.
X	X	X	Show all new impervious surface area (ie covered by gravel, pavement, other hard surfacing - such as driveways, patio, pool, decking, parking, walkways, retaining walls etc) indicating materials, dimensions, locations
X	X	X	Show limits of land disturbance (areas to be graded, newly planted, built upon or covered in hard surfacing, including buildings) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show on plan, and include in area calculation, the 10' work area around the building or structure, as well as the area covered by dirt stockpiling, materials storage and staging areas; and - access routes for equipment and deliveries from and between street to staging, stockpiling and work areas. - Designate areas for construction dumpster, parking, and construction



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			<p>entrance if different than existing/proposed driveway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show silt fencing at limit of land disturbance - Show silt fence outlet(s) if any required - Show any tree clearing - Show elevations and cross-sections for any proposed / modified retaining walls - Include standard details for silt fencing, erosion control measures
		X	<p>If proposed land disturbance is >= 5000 sf - show the location and Critical Root Zone (CRZ) of any tree having these diameters at 4' above ground level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - any pines => 18"; - any Native Species (inc dogwood, beech, cedar, holly, magnolia) => 6"; - any other tree => 12". - Also show location and CRZ for any trees within 50' of disturbed area, including off-site. - Mark trees to be removed with an "X".
	^	X	Show any tree protection area , or buffer , with its protection fencing (which should not encroach into the protection area)
	^	^	Include standard detail for driveway , with dimensions, if new one proposed
	^	^	<p>*Plan Note where Project is adjacent to Resource Conservation District or Jordan Riparian Buffer:</p> <p>Contractor will stake out location of Jordan Riparian Buffer / RCD and install silt fence at limits of disturbance. Town staff shall inspect and approve installation PRIOR to land disturbing activity. Call Development Services at 919-969-5040 to schedule an inspection.</p>

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I tell if my lot is in a Historic District or Neighborhood Conservation District?	<p>Visit the Town's interactive map (https://chplan.us/2WRMeB2), put in the address and click on 'Zoning Overlay Districts' in the left-hand 'Layers' column. You can expand the layer to see that hatching identifies the Historic Districts and Neighborhood Conservation Districts; click on your property and one or more window 'file cards' will open telling you the name of any special district, among other things.</p>
Where can I find the zoning of my lot?	<p>Visit the Town's interactive map (https://chplan.us/2WRMeB2), put in the address, and click on 'Zoning Districts' in the left-hand 'Layers' column. You can expand the layer to see a legend by color to the various zoning districts, but clicking on your lot also brings up this information specifically for your lot b opening one or more window 'file cards'.</p>
Where can I find if my lot is in or near a floodplain or Resource Conservation District?	<p>Visit the Town's interactive map (https://chplan.us/2WRMeB2), put in the address, and in the left hand 'Layers' column click on 'Floodplain Boundaries' for floodplain information, on 'Stream Buffers' for approximate Jordan Riparian buffer along streams (give it a little time to load.)</p> <p>For single family lots, RCD is applicable along perennial streams and streams with floodplains.</p>
Where can I find if a stream has been classified as perennial?	<p>Visit the Town's interactive map (https://chplan.us/2WRMeB2), put in the address, and in the left hand 'Layers' column click on 'Hydrology' (then through to then 'Streams') there is a very generalized stream identification as perennial, intermittent or ephemeral. If any type of stream is indicated, call us for more information!</p>



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<p>What are my setbacks?</p>	<p>Setbacks are determined by zoning, and whether your lot is in a cluster development (and if so whether it is a lot on the perimeter of the development.) Once you've used the Interactive Mapping tool to determine your zoning, check the Dimensional Matrix in the Land Use Management Ordinance, Table 3.8.1, to find the standards for your zoning district.</p> <p>Southern Village and Meadowmont lots work a little differently, and its best to check in with staff for the specifics.</p>
<p>My lot is in a cluster subdivision. What are my setbacks?</p>	<p>Cluster subdivisions develop at the zoned density but with smaller lots and reduced minimum setbacks. You can look at the recorded plat for your overall development to see if it is labelled as a Cluster Subdivision. Otherwise, check with us. Those smaller setbacks are applicable to interior lots (those not on the outer edge of the subdivision) and most often - though not always! - are 10' street, 8' interior and 10' solar setback. (Perimeter lots must meet the setbacks of the base zoning district - ie R-2 standards if the cluster is in R-2 zoning.)</p>
<p>Do I need something from the Homeowners Association?</p>	<p>Homeowner Association covenants are private agreements; the Town does not enforce them. For instance, the covenants may call for a deeper setback, or allow a lesser one. While it is wise to make sure what you want to do is in line with your covenants, and you've gotten any approval from the HOA that the covenants call for, the Town only enforces the Town's regulations and we do not require evidence that an HOA has approved a proposed development. One caveat - in Southern Village and in Meadowmont, the HOA tracks the impervious surface against an overall maximum. If they approve a different impervious surface for the lot in question, taking it away from somewhere else, we do require documentation of this.</p>
<p>Do I need a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for my proposed work within a Historic District?</p>	<p>Most work requires either an administrative COA issued by staff, or a COA issued by the Historic District Commission. This includes most anything on the exterior of any building on the lot, any site work, including fences and walls, any additional structures, any demolition, any change in materials, any signage, etc. It is important that you check on this early on! Check with AGrahn@townofchapelhill.org or RMcDonnell@townofchapelhill.org if you have questions.</p>
<p>Do I need a driveway permit?</p>	<p>If you propose new construction, a new driveway, additions or changes to the existing driveway, or relocation of a driveway, you need to provide a completed Driveway Application with all the related materials.</p>
<p>Do I need a stream determination?</p>	<p>This can get complicated. Call Stormwater staff (Allison Weakley at 919 969 7202)!</p>
<p>Do I need to notify the neighbors?</p>	<p>We notify neighbors when demolition or construction work is proposed in certain of the Neighborhood Conservation Districts and in any of the Historic Districts. You will be responsible for providing with your submittal a map showing the notice area, the mailing list, and the cost of the postage to do the mailing.</p>
<p>What does this term mean?</p>	<p>Check our Glossary for definitions from the Land Use Management Ordinance and the Residential Building Code, and ask if you still have questions.</p>