



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
409 South Main Street, P.O. Box 20031
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801-7531

Building Inspection (540) 432-7700
Engineering (540) 432-7700

Planning & Zoning (540) 432-7700
Department FAX (540) 432-7777

November 13, 2012

To all parties interested in the Harrisonburg building permit process,

Over the past couple of years, there have been instances where building permit applications were processed, approved and issued through our current procedure, only for the project owner to find out later that questions or issues may exist. For example, the project may require a water meter upgrade, an entrance change could not be made or City refuse service could not accommodate their needs. These and other issues can result in unanticipated expense and delay for the project owner and stress for both the project owner and the City in trying to accommodate a project already underway.

To improve the building permit process, a multi-department City staff team has evaluated our process to more proactively address these situations. We have developed a proposal to incorporate a "prerequisite questionnaire" that would be completed before a building permit application is accepted. This questionnaire targets items such as plumbing fixtures, fire suppression, entrance configuration and refuse disposal. If a project answers "no" to all of the questions, the permit will be accepted at the Community Development counter and proceed through the review process. If a project answers "yes" to questions, further information must be submitted to the applicable City department and an authorized signature obtained before a building permit application will be accepted into the review process. We hope this interaction between the City and project developers will result in a better understanding for all of what the project involves and that potential problems can be resolved before the project begins.

If this process is put into place, the questionnaire would be posted online as well as be available at the Community Development counter. City staff recognizes that a "yes" on the questionnaire will involve additional communication between the applicant and a City Department, but we anticipate it will prevent future delays and unanticipated expenses.

Included is a draft of the proposed "Prerequisite Questionnaire." We would appreciate your review of the concept as well as the document itself.

Thank you in advance for your review and any suggestions you make. Comments, suggestions and questions may be emailed to me at stacy.turner@harrisonburgva.gov, or mailed to our above address. Please include your contact information so we may get in touch with you for further clarification if needed. Your reply by November 30th would be helpful to us in continuing to make progress in addressing these issues. After receiving input, we will evaluate whether to proceed with implementation and if so what changes may be needed to the format. Thanks for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Stacy Turner
Director of Planning and Community Development
Enclosure

CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VA

Department of Community Development - Building Inspections Division

BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION PREREQUISITE QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: Applications for building permits may be accepted at the counter. Some applications, however, may require that approvals be obtained from City departments prior to acceptance. This questionnaire is intended to determine the need for advanced coordination with departments prior to submittal. Please answer the questions below based on the needs/requirements of your project. A "YES" answer to any of these questions means that further information must be submitted to a particular department of the City, and an authorized signature obtained, before a building permit application will be accepted into the review process. Applicant should default to a "Yes" answer if uncertain, until information is obtained to allow for a proper answer.

PROJECT NAME (if any):		
Project address:		
Property Owner:	Phone:	Email:
Applicant (other than Owner):	Phone:	Email:
Date:		

NOTE: If project site plans have gone through City Site Plan Review Process and received approval, completion of this form is not necessary. Please check the box to the right if this is the case.	
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SECTION 1 - Zoning Division of Community Development

Notes: Please be aware that if the zoning classification of the site does not permit the intended use, allows the intended use only by special use permit, or violates a setback or other requirement of the Zoning Ordinance, your application will be stopped in the zoning review and rejected unless the situation can be resolved with an application for special use permit, subdivision or rezoning. If one of these further application processes is required, it must be approved before review can proceed. Before spending further time or cost in design to obtain the prerequisite approvals of other departments as listed in the sections below, you may want to confirm that your intended use is permitted. If you have questions or need further information about this, you should contact Nancy Stone, Rosalyn Ray or Alison Banks in the Community Development Dept. (432-7700).

SECTION 2 - Engineering Division of Community Development

(circle one)

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|---|---|---|
| A. Does this project involve an extension or change of a public water, sewer or storm drainage line? | Y | N |
| B. Does this project involve installation or relocation of a public fire hydrant? | Y | N |
| C. Does this project involve installation or change of a public water or sewer pumping facility? | Y | N |
| D. Does this project involve installation or change of a public water storage facility? | Y | N |
| E. Does this project involve installation or change of a public water or sewer treatment facility or a private sewer pretreatment facility? | Y | N |
| F. Does this project involve grading or encroachment on a public water, sewer, storm drainage or utility easement? | Y | N |
| G. Does this project involve installation of a new street, or widening of an existing street? | Y | N |
| H. Does this project involve installation of a stormwater management practice? | Y | N |
| I. Does this project involve any reconstruction, grading or other work in any Floodplain district? | Y | N |
| J. Does this project disturb more than 10,000 sq. ft. of land area? (including demo projects) | Y | N |

Notes: A "Yes" answer to any of the above questions may mean an approved Comprehensive Site Plan is required before a Building Permit Application can be processed. Contact Ray Bailey or Dan Rublee in the Community Development Dept. (432-7700) for information.

Approved for processing /date - Comm. Dev. (Engineering):
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SECTION 3 - Fire Department

Note: Please be aware that assembly uses typically require sprinkler system protection. Other uses may also require such depending on specifics of the project. A change in use of an existing building often triggers this requirement. If your project has an assembly use, or if you suspect that sprinklers may be needed under other code provisions, your project may require a site plan as necessary to determine need and secure approvals for fire lines, onsite hydrants or other measures needed to serve the sprinkler system. It is in your best interest to confirm this need prior to completing your Building Permit application as you may lose time if your plan review is turned away later in the review process. Please contact Mike Williams or Wayne Lilly in the Community Development Dept. (432-7700) if you have questions.

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| A. Does this project have existing or require new automatic fire sprinklers? | Y | N |
| B. Does this project require other automatic fire suppression systems? | Y | N |
| C. Does this project have existing or require any new forms of fire alarm? | Y | N |
| D. Does this project include tanks or containers for hazardous materials? | Y | N |
| E. Does this project include areas where commercial or industrial storage greater than 12 ft. in height is proposed? | Y | N |

Notes: A "Yes" answer to any of the above questions means additional information is needed before a Building Permit Application can be processed. Contact Cpt. Arthur Miller in the Fire Dept. (432-7703) for information.

Approved for processing /date - Fire Department:

SECTION 4 - Department of Public Works

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|--|---|---|
| A. Does this project include the modification, elimination or addition of an entrance to a public street or alley, or other work in any public right-of-way? | Y | N |
| B. Does this project or project site have a parking or loading area for which use of a public street section is necessary for maneuvering into or out of the area? | Y | N |
| C. Is this project located in the B-1 (downtown) Zoning District? | Y | N |

Notes: A "Yes" answer to questions A or B will require submittal of a layout plan showing the parking, loading area and/or entrance configurations to the Public Works Dept. Any work within the Public right-of-way, including but not limited to entrances, sidewalks, drain lines and utilities will require a Public Access Permit from the Community Development Dept. after Public Works approves the scope of work. Contact Brad Reed or Drew Williams in the Public Works Dept. (434-5928) for further information and submittal requirements. A "Yes" answer to question C prompts the requirement for a Solid Waste Management Plan to be submitted for advanced review and approval prior to application acceptance. Contact Harsit Patel or Charlie Honaker in the Public Works Dept. (434-5928) for information.

Approved for processing /date - Department of Public Works:

SECTION 5 - Department of Public Utilities

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| A. Does the project require water and/or sewer service but has none now? | Y | N |
| B. If the facility currently has water service, does the project include any change to the plumbing? (single family dwellings are not of concern-circle N for single family projects) | Y | N |
| C. Does the project require grading or other work within 10 feet of an existing public water or sewer pipe or within the associated easement limits? | Y | N |

Notes: A "Yes" answer to any of the above questions means additional information is needed before a Building Permit Application can be processed. Contact David Gray or James Fultz in the Dept. of Public Utilities (434-9959) for information.

Approved for processing /date - Department of Public Utilities:

ACCEPTED FOR BUILDING PERMIT REVIEW:

DATE: