

PROCESS: PERMITTING AND ZONING APPEAL FOR DEVELOPMENTS

This one-pager is to help inform residents about the process any development must go through and where the community voice is taken into consideration

1 PERMIT REQUEST

The developer will submit their plans to Inspectional Services (ISD) for permits needed to build.

2 PERMIT APPROVED

The plan meets the zoning regulations for that area and may proceed with construction “as-of-right.”

PERMIT DENIED

Boston’s zoning code (a set of rules by which the City’s neighborhood planning is preserved to keep neighborhood developments harmonious with their context) was developed in 1964. Therefore, most of the time a developer’s plan violates one or more of the codes and is denied.

3 ABUTTERS MEETING

If the plan is denied, the developer will appeal it and request a variance, or zoning relief. When they appeal, the Mayor’s office of Neighborhood Services will facilitate an abutters meeting. Abutters (residents who live within a 300ft radius of the proposed project) should be either flyered or mailed a notice of the meeting 7-10 days in advance.

At the abutters meeting the developer will present the plans to the neighbors, field questions, and ultimately ask for their support. Some developers will ask for signatures of support to present to the Board of Appeals. It is at this stage the community may ask the developer to consider changes to the initial plans.

Most of the time the Office of Neighborhood Services will direct the developer to present at the closest civic association meeting as well; given that some projects will impact more than just a 300ft radius of the community. Often civic associations will vote whether to support or oppose a project receiving the variances they need.

4 ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) - The mayor appoints seven people to the board every three years. They are their own entity and empowered to make their own decisions.

APPROVED WITH REVIEW

the plans will now go to the Boston Planning and Development Authority for a closer plan review, and if they approve they will receive the permit.

DENIED WITH PREJUDICE

You can come back with a change in plans no sooner than 1 year.

DEFERRED

Something was not ready, so you are given a later Hearing date.

APPROVED

they receive the variance for their permit

DENIED WITHOUT PREJUDICE

You can come back with a change in plans as soon as you are ready



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HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- 1 Attend Abutters meeting and share suggestions with developer
 - 2 Attend local civic meetings
 - 3 Call/Email Mayor's Office and ONS Liaison with feedback
 - 4 Contact local electeds
 - 5 Collect signatures and organize neighborhood advocacy
 - 6 Attend and testify at ZBA hearings
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COUNCILOR CAMPBELL'S EVALUATION FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Do Abutters and nearest Civic Associations support or oppose?

COMMUNICATION

Was care given to abutters? Multi-lingual engagement if needed, # of days notice for community meeting, etc

DESIGN

Does it fit with the neighborhood? Number of units, rental vs homeownership, aesthetics, etc

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

What are construction practices? (rodent control, debris, etc), LEED certified, green space

DURABILITY

Are developers using long-lasting construction supplies?

COST

Affordable (actual cost, not just AMI), moderately affordable, or market rate?

PARKING & TRAFFIC

What's the impact of parking and traffic flow on immediate community?

WORKFORCE

Are they incorporating local, women- and minority-owned businesses and a diverse workforce?

LOCALITY

Presence of developer and owner: Are they local?

REPUTATION

What other projects has the developer done? What is the owner's relationship to the neighborhood?

JOB CREATION

Will this create permanent jobs and support local entrepreneurs?

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

What benefits will they promise to the community?



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