

Town of Columbia, NH
Columbia Planning Board
Site Plan Review Regulations

Table of Contents:

Section 1: Authority

Section 2: Purpose

Section 3: Compliance

Section 4: General Requirements

Section 5: Definitions

Section 6: Procedure for Site Plan Review

Section 7: Application Requirements

Section 8: Requirements for Approval

Section 9: Changes and Alterations

Section 10: Enforcement

Section 11: Waiver

Section 12: Separability

Section 13: Penalty

Section 14: Effective Date

Section 1: Authority

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Columbia Planning Board by the legislative body and in accordance with Chapter 674:43 and 674:44 of the NH RSAs as amended, the Columbia Planning Board adopts the following regulations governing the review of site plans for non-residential developments and for multi-family dwelling of more than 2 units.

Section 2. Purpose

The purpose of these regulations is to protect the public health, safety and welfare of the community, to provide for orderly growth of the community; to review adequacy of traffic access, parking and location of buildings and to allow considerations of adjoining property owners with respect to noise, lighting, odors, appearances and to guard against adverse environmental impacts.

Section 3. Compliance

The site plan review procedure shall in no way relieve the applicant from compliance with the Town of Columbia's Zoning Ordinance, the Land Subdivision Regulations of Columbia, or any other regulation or bylaws which pertains to the proposed development. No Site Plan shall be approved unless such plan complies with all applicable local ordinances and regulations.

Section 4: General Requirements

4.1 - No construction or site development changes or improvements shall be permitted on any lot in Columbia, and no buildings shall be erected, or existing structures enlarged, or uses changed without first obtaining site plan approval from the Columbia Planning Board. When a development is proposed, the property owner or his agent shall apply to the Board in writing for approval by complying with the requirements set forth in these regulations.

4.2 - Notwithstanding the foregoing, site plan approval is not required for:

(a) the construction or improvement of one and two family residential properties;

(b) Agricultural and farming uses.

4.3 - Other minor developments (less than 100 square feet) that do not adversely affect the health, safety, and general welfare of the community, and will not cause any increase in traffic, noise, odor, glare, heat, or environmental impacts as determined by the board

Section 5: Definitions

Abutter means (1) any person whose property is located in New Hampshire and adjoins or is directly across the street or stream from the land under consideration by the local land use board; (2) other municipalities and regional planning commissions in the event of developments having regional impact.

For purposes of testimony only, and not for purposes of notification, the term "abutter" shall include any person who is able to demonstrate that his or her land will be directly affected by the proposed development.

Applicant: means any person submitting an application for site plan review to the planning board, whether he or she is property owner or authorized agent.

Application complete: means a final plat along with all accompanying materials and supporting documents, and all fees paid as required by these regulations.

Approval: means that the Planning Board, at a duly called meeting of the board, certifies its written approval on the Site Plan stating that the requirements of these regulations have been satisfied.

Board means the Planning Board of the Town of Columbia NH.

Multi-family dwelling means a residential building designed or occupied by three or more families.

Non-residential development means all development of buildings, structures or land except one-family, two-family and multi-family dwellings.

Performance Bond means cash, surety bond, or escrow deposit or a lien on the property as approved by the planning board to secure the completion of the development. Can be required as a condition of approval being granted.

Residential development: shall mean any construction or expansion of dwelling units.

Screening: means a strip of land 10 feet wide, densely planted with shrubs and trees at least 4 feet high at time of planting. Also means a wall, fence or barrier of opaque uniform appearance being at least 6 feet high.

Section 6: Procedure for Site Plan Review

Pre-submission discussion-

An applicant may come before the board to discuss early thoughts on the project and receive input from the board. This discussion is non-binding on either party and not considered a public hearing requiring notification.

Filing and submitting a completed application -

All applications should be filed with the planning board 15 days before the regular monthly scheduled public meeting.

Board response on completed application -

Within 30 days after submission and acceptance of completed application, the Board shall act to consider the proposal. During this 30 day period, the Board shall hold a public hearing after posting and publishing notice of such in the local newspaper of at least 10 days prior to date of hearing describing proposal, time and place of hearing. Certified return - receipt- requested notices shall be sent to abutters and the applicant with the costs and mailings being paid by the applicant at the application acceptance time. (RSA 674:6) Applicant or representative must

attend public hearing or proposal will be denied without prejudice and the applicant would need to re-file.

Any continuation of the hearing would take place at the planning board's next regular meeting without re-notifying all parties concerned provided that due notice of date, time and place of meeting is given before the adjournment of the public hearing.

Decisions by the Board -

Approval of the Site Plan shall be signed by the Secretary and Chairman of the Columbia Planning Board.

Section 7. Application requirements

Applications shall include:

***Names and addresses of all abutters -according to the town tax map

***list of property owners, and any conservation, historic preservation, or agricultural commissions.

***Fees paid according to Appendix 1

***A sketch depicting all abutters with existing property uses,

existing structures, roads, all manmade and natural features and all wetlands and flood hazards, and any easements on the property.

***A sketch of exterior changes to any facade,

use of any and all structures on the property,

***a parking plan showing number and layout of spaces,

***plan of exterior lighting,

***loading and unloading docks and surroundings,

plan of all utilities (existing and proposed),

*** a landscape plan to include any necessary screening , proper drainage and erosion control system - designed according to USDA's best management practices.

***Proposed signage

***permits from all state agencies as required: Highways: DOT, septic: Water Supply and Pollution Control.

***A narrative statement to include hours of operation, food arrangements, waste disposal, number of employees anticipated and parking for employees.

***All other information the Board may request in order to make an informed decision.

Section 8: Requirements for Site Plan Approval

The Planning Board shall review the proposed site plan and approve if the following requirements are met:

The proposed development should blend into the naturally rural landscape of Columbia to the extent possible.

Site clearing should be kept to a minimum.

A buffer of trees at least 10 feet wide shall be maintained between the site and the roadway, preferably of native species.

Adequate traffic access including parking, adequate loading and unloading areas on-site;

all permits from NH Department of Transportation, Town Selectmen, and Town Road Agent if applicable. Any new roads must be constructed according to the regulations set forth in the Land Regulations for the Town of Columbia, NH.

A plan to avoid and address any dust, run-off and erosion conditions affecting neighboring properties and roadways.

The perimeter of parking lots of greater than 10 spaces shall be planted with trees and shrubs. .

Proof of electric, phone and other services as needed.

A screening shall be planted and maintained between the site and neighboring residential properties, preferably of dense year-round greenery.

Outdoor lighting shall not glare upon neighbor properties or roadways, consideration shall be given to neighbors regarding height and intensity of lighting. Furthermore, all outside lighting should be able to be turned off with the exception of security lighting.

Sewerage disposal and water supplies adequate for the site proposal.

Drainage and erosion control plan in place.

Any impact fees as determined by the Planning Board in accordance with NH laws.

Conservation of energy considered in proposed plan to gain solar and and minimize northern exposures.

Where new construction will be surrounded by older, historic structures choices of compatible exterior finishes needs to be considered.

Storage and waste facilities shall be screened from view of neighbors and roadways.

Pollution control measures shall be taken. Smoke and soot particulate shall not exceed levels as determined safe and healthy by the State of NH Air Quality Standards, and noise at property boundaries shall not exceed levels harmful according to the EPA standards.

A performance bond if applicable.

Section 9: Changes and Alterations

If at any time before or during construction, conditions arise making it necessary to change or modify the approved site plan, the Board may do so only after proper notification to abutters and public hearings take place, at the owner's expense. All changes to be written and signed by the Secretary and Chairman of the Planning Board. All modifications shall be requested and approved before alterations begin.

Chapter 10: Enforcement

If the Columbia Planning Board determines after one year of use or occupancy that the original conditions of the site plan approval are in violation, the Board shall send written certified notification to the owner. The owner shall have 90 days to remedy the violation. Failure to do so may result in a fee up to \$100. a day and other legal action as deemed necessary by the board.

Chapter 11: Waiver

Where strict conformity to these regulations would cause undue hardship or injustice to the owner of the land, and a waiver would not be contrary to the spirit and intent of these regulations, and public welfare would not be adversely affected, the Board may choose to grant such a relaxation of the requirements. The reasons for granting the waiver shall be duly noted in the written minutes of the meeting.

Chapter 12: Separability

If any section, portion, or provision of these regulations shall be held to be invalid or unconstitutional, by any court for any reason, such holding shall not invalidate in any manner any other provisions contained herein.

Chapter 13. Penalty

Any violation of these regulations may be punishable as provided by RSA 676:17, as amended. In addition, enforcement may include the institution of injunction, abatement, or other appropriate action to abate, enjoin, or remove any unlawful construction, alteration or reconstruction.

Chapter 14: Effective Date

These regulations shall take effect upon the adoption by the Columbia Planning Board.

Adopted by the Columbia Planning Board on: December 11, 2013

After a public hearing on: December 11, 2013

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