

LAND USE INFORMATION SHEET

The Sherman land use boards and commissions want your permit application experience to be pleasant and cooperative. The content of this information sheet is not to be considered legal advice nor should it be used as a primer on land use law.

It is important to understand that the various municipal boards and commissions were created by the people of the Town of Sherman under authority granted by the Connecticut General Assembly. As such, each municipal agency (as the boards and commissions are also known) possesses only those powers and authorities conferred upon it by statutes enacted by the state legislature. Additionally, each agency, in line with their authority, has adopted regulations to foster land use methods and practices that are consistent with their respective mandates.

When making applications to the land use commissions, regulations pertaining to each agency (i.e., Inlands Wetlands, Planning & Zoning, Town of Sherman Sanitary Code or Zoning Board of Appeals) are available for your review/purchase. Communication with the land use officials and clerks of the various commissions is encouraged prior to making formal applications to each department. Advisory consultations can be scheduled.

All information needed by the agency to make a decision on the application is the responsibility of the applicant and should be filed with the land use office as quickly as possible. This is so because there are certain timeframes within each agency must act. An incomplete application may result in a delay or denial of the application without the agency ever having the "full picture."

The first step in the process is the Health Department approval. Secondly, if a wetlands issue is involved, a wetlands application is required. Third, a Planning & Zoning Statement of Intent is required. If the Planning & Zoning Statement of Intent is denied, you have the option to appear before the Zoning Board of Appeals for consideration of a Variance. The applicant should be aware that if a variance is granted that all other approvals will still be required in order to proceed. Various sign-offs are required from the Planning & Zoning Commission prior to issuance of a Certificate of Zoning Compliance.

It is vital that each applicant understand that although all of the land use boards and commissions are related, each is limited to the jurisdiction conferred by law. This is critical to know because it means that the approval of a particular application by one agency does NOT assure or guarantee approval by any other agency. Thus if a wetlands or sanitary permit is used, for instance, that fact does not mean that the Planning & Zoning Commission or the Zoning Board of Appeals will automatically approve the application before it. This is because, as stated above, each agency, though related, acts under regulations particular to its own area of concern.

We hope this makes the application process proceed smoothly. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. Thank you.