

How do I apply for a Building/Zoning Permit?

There is one permit application form for either a building or zoning permit and it is available on the Permits and Applications page of the village website, www.auroranewyork.us, or you may obtain one from the village office. Once the application is received, the next step is a meeting with the village code/zoning enforcement officer. Contact information is at the bottom of each page of the website, or you may call the village office to schedule an appointment. (315) 364-7293

How long does it take to receive the permit?

That depends on if your application requires Planning Board/Community Preservation Panel (CPP) review. Most building permits can be issued by the code enforcement officer once the application is submitted, and the fee is paid. However, properties within the historic district that change the appearance to the exterior of a property and can be seen from a public way, which includes Cayuga Lake, must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the CPP.

Any project that changes the footprint of a structure, either by demolition or addition, requires site plan review by the Planning Board. Additionally, projects such as complete demolition of a structure, significant excavation (removal of more than 25 cubic yards of dirt), and home occupations require a Special Use Permit and public hearing.

How long do the reviews take?

The boards meet monthly and complete applications must be submitted at least 10 days prior to the reviewing board's meeting. If your project requires documents beyond the application form, ALL materials must be submitted by the 10-day deadline. Once an application is deemed complete by the reviewing board, a determination must be made within 62 days, though most reviews will not take that long.

What other documents are required beyond the application form?

Applications going to the Planning Board should include a site plan designating property setback, dimensions of all buildings including any new additions or accessory structures, setbacks between buildings, and "N" direction. A "site plan checklist" is available and the code enforcement officer/Planning Board chairperson can discuss with applicants which items are necessary for your project.

Additionally, an Environmental Assessment Form should be included with the file (see SEQR question below). Most projects only need part 1 of the short form completed, found on the Permits & Applications page (part 1 SEAF).

It is very helpful to include a project narrative with your application so that everyone involved with the process has a clear understanding of your intent.

CPP requires elevations for each side of the structure, types of materials (especially when there is a change), and color for designated landmarks.

What if my project requires a variance?

Sometimes a project will be submitted that does not conform to the zoning law. A common example is building an addition or accessory structure that does not adhere to the 10' side/rear property line setback requirement. When the code enforcement officer denies the permit application, an appeal application may be filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals for an area variance.

The ZBA will first review the appeal application for "timeliness, sufficiency, and completeness". Once the ZBA is satisfied that all necessary materials are included with the file, they will schedule a public hearing. If the variance is approved, the application moves on to the other boards for review. If the variance is denied, then the applicant must revise their project to conform with the zoning law or submit a new appeal for a less substantial variance.

A less common request is for a use variance, which is required when a building project does not conform with the zoning district.

Criteria for meeting variance requirements is included in the "Guidelines for Applicants to the ZBA" link on the Permits and Applications page.

How is a public hearing different from a regular meeting?

All village board meetings are open to the public, but the public only has a right to observe the proceedings, not participate. At public hearings, members of the public are allowed to speak for a set amount of time (usually 3-5 minutes) specifically on the public hearing topic.

All variance requests as well as Special Use Permits, issued by the Planning Board, require a public hearing. Neighbors of the applicant are encouraged to comment at the public hearings, verbal or written, whether for or against the project.

(Note: It is recommended that during a regular meeting the reviewing board deem an application complete before setting a public hearing date. A public hearing must be noticed in the newspaper at least a week in advance and any neighboring property owners notified.)

What is SEQR and why do I have to complete a SEQR form?

SEQR stands for State Environmental Quality Review and there are three types of "actions" depending on the size and scale of the project. Type 1 actions are major projects that are likely to have a significant impact on the environment. Type 2 actions are minor projects that do not require a coordinated review. Unlisted actions do not meet the criteria for a Type 1 or Type 2 and the environmental review may be limited, dependent on the project's impact on the environment.

All project application files should have a completed Environmental Assessment Form (EAF). Most applicants only need to complete the Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF) for Planning Board/ZBA review. Larger projects and all Type 1 actions require a Full Environmental Assessment Form (FEAF).

What is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

When a Type 1 action review results in "Moderate to Large" impacts on any of the environmental questions, an EIS must be completed. Again, this would be for a large, development project having significant effect on a major scale, not individual property owners maintaining their residences.