Introduction

Great Barrington is a small town of roughly 7,000 people, nestled in the Berkshires of Western Massachusetts. The Town offers a thriving downtown, the unique village of Housatonic, historic sites and neighborhoods, and beautiful scenery. Maintaining this quality of life and ensuring the health and safety of all of our residents is a top priority of the Town; thus we take very seriously our duty to enforce building, environmental regulations, historic, and zoning.

This booklet provides you, the Applicant, with a “how to” roadmap to guide you through the permitting, construction, and land development process. You may be a homeowner looking to build a new house or simply add a deck. You may be a developer looking to build a commercial building. Your project may require crossing over a wetlands resource area. Whatever the Project, this Guidebook will help you. This Guidebook introduces you to the People who are here to assist you identify and obtain any Permits you might need. Finally, this guides you through the Process to follow to obtain those permits. It explains the roles of the Town’s various departments and boards, their roles, the types of permits they issue, and how they all interact.

This Guidebook provides you with the information you need to proceed with a “typical” application. This is not intended to cover every situation that occurs. If your project is more complex, requires multiple permits from a different boards, please call the Building Inspector or Town Planner for guidance. The Town has tried to make this Guidebook as complete and as up to date as possible. However, please note that required permits and timelines sometimes change. Thus we suggest you always call the appropriate Town staff person. We can help you make sense of the process.

Whether you are a homeowner, developer, or someone looking to relocate to our wonderful Town, we hope this Guidebook saves you time, money, and headaches.

The Project

Most construction projects—whether for houses, garages, commercial buildings, or even driveways, require some type of permit. It’s likely you will at least need a building permit. If you are a business or a home occupation, you might need a sign permit. If the use is permitted only by a special permit in your zoning district, then you will need a special permit. If you are near a wetland or river, you might need a permit from the Conservation Commission. Some or all of these instances, and perhaps others, may apply to you.

The more research you do in the planning stage, the easier it will be to meet all requirements in a timely, efficient, and cost effective manner. Do your homework first. This will greatly increase the likelihood that your project and design are approved, and reduce your risk of having to make significant and expensive changes later on.

The information in this section and in the Appendix can help you determine what permits you will need. If you have any questions, call us! The best place to start is usually the Building Inspector or Town Planner. You can also use the free online interactive maps on the town’s website to find your property and investigate its characteristics.

As soon as you know the location and approximate size of your project, and the use(s) to which it will be put, seek advice from the Town’s professional staff. Again, the best place to start is usually the Building Inspector. We can tell you if your project seems feasible and what changes might be needed. We will also explain which permits you are likely to need, roughly how long it will take to get them, and whether public hearings will be required.

The People

You will most likely be working with the following Departments (staff) and Town Boards (elected or appointed officials) in order to obtain your permits:
## Building Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Office Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edwin May</td>
<td>Building Commissioner</td>
<td>Town Hall, 334 Main St</td>
<td>(413) 528-1619, x 2600</td>
<td><a href="mailto:emay@townofgb.org">emay@townofgb.org</a></td>
<td>Mon-Fri 8:30am-12 noon or by appointment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is the gateway for all applicants, and it is the First Department You Should Contact if you are building or developing! The Building Inspector enforces the Town of Great Barrington Zoning Bylaw, the Great Barrington Town Code (general regulations, including signs), and the Massachusetts State Building Code. This office also issues building, electrical, plumbing, and gas permits, conducts inspections, and issues Certificates of Occupancy. This office also issues sign permits. Finally, the Building Inspector or Town Planner can help you determine whether there are already variances or special permits that apply to a property.

## Planning Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Office Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Rembold</td>
<td>Assistant Town Manager / Director of Planning and Community Development</td>
<td>Town Hall, 334 Main Street</td>
<td>(413) 528-1619, x 2401</td>
<td><a href="mailto:crembold@townofgb.org">crembold@townofgb.org</a></td>
<td>Mon–Thurs, 8:30am-4:00pm, Friday by appt. only.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Planning Department guides residential and commercial development proposals through the permitting processes outlined in the Zoning Bylaw. It coordinates multi-departmental reviews of projects (see Development Review Team, below), coordinates any and all Special Permits and Site Plan Review applications, and assists the all of the Town’s regulatory Boards by summarizing proposals and drafting Findings of Fact. The Planning Department also evaluates proposals for their consistency with the Town’s Master Plan, and, with the Town Manager, coordinates economic development.

## Assessor’s Office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Office Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ross Vivori</td>
<td>Principal Assessor</td>
<td>Town Hall, 334 Main Street</td>
<td>(413) 528-1619, x 2300</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rvivori@townofgb.org">rvivori@townofgb.org</a></td>
<td>Mon–Fri, 8:30am-4:00pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among its many functions, the Assessor’s Office maintains all tax (parcel) maps and tax records, including owner’s names and addresses, and generates the Abutters Lists required for public hearings.

## Selectboard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Office Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amy Pulver</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>Town Hall, 334 Main Street</td>
<td>(413) 528-1619 x 2900</td>
<td><a href="mailto:apulver@townofgb.org">apulver@townofgb.org</a></td>
<td>Mon–Fri, 8:30am-4:00pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Selectboard is an elected five member board and is the official governing body of the Town of Great Barrington. The Selectboard are the primary policy and goal-setting body for the Town. The Selectboard issue licenses and permits for weekday and Sunday entertainment (events), for alcohol sales, for auctions, for automobile sales, and are the Granting Authority for most Special Permits.

## Conservation Commission / Conservation Agent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Office Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shepley W. Evans</td>
<td>Conservation Agent</td>
<td>Town Hall, 334 Main Street</td>
<td>(413) 528-1619 x 2801</td>
<td><a href="mailto:conservation@townofgb.org">conservation@townofgb.org</a></td>
<td>Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri 1:00pm-3:30pm. Please call for an appointment. Meetings: 4th Wednesday, 6:30pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do Not Bypass This Step! The Conservation Commission administers the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, Massachusetts Rivers Protection Act, and the Massachusetts Scenic Mountains Act. The “Cons. Comm.” can tell you if your project falls within its jurisdiction and advise you on obtaining any needed local, state, and federal permits. Conservation impacts are not always apparent; however any work within 100 feet of a wetland or 200 feet of a stream or river requires the review of the Cons. Comm.

## Department of Public Works

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Office Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sean Van Deusen</td>
<td>Superintendent of Public Works</td>
<td>Town Hall, 334 Main Street</td>
<td>(413) 528-1619 x 5, then 1</td>
<td><a href="mailto:svandeusen@townofgb.org">svandeusen@townofgb.org</a></td>
<td>Mon – Fri, 8:30am-4:00pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DPW includes Highway, Wastewater, Parks and Cemetery Divisions. Call the DPW on questions regarding new driveways and access roads, locations of underground utility lines such as sewers, and the removal of public shade trees. You must contact the DPW if you intend to connect to municipal sanitary sewer or to the stormwater drainage system. The four DPW divisions are Highways, Public Buildings, Cemeteries/Parks, and Sewer. For connections to public water supply, contact either the Great Barrington Fire District or the Housatonic Water Works.
**Design Advisory Committee**

Edwin May  
Building Commissioner  
Town Hall, 334 Main Street  
Phone: (413) 528-1619, x. 2600  
emay@townofgb.org  
Meetings: at call of the Chair

All new structures, alterations or additions to existing structures in the Downtown B district or Village Center Overlay District which affect the exterior architectural appearance of a building are subject to review by the DAC. The DAC provides design recommendations to the applicant prior to the issuance of a building permit or special permit.

**Development Review Team**

Christopher Rembold  
Assistant Town Manager / Director of Planning and Community Development  
Town Hall, 334 Main Street  
Phone: (413) 528-1619, x 2400  
Email: crembold@townofgb.org  
The DRT usually meets every other Tues. morning. Call in advance to be on the agenda.

Once you have your ideas and plans roughed out, you can often avoid delays and costly changes by scheduling an informal review with the DRT. The amount of detail you need for your plan varies according to the permits you require, but in general at least a rough building and site layout, including parking and relationship to adjacent buildings, is an appropriate start. Applicants are strongly encouraged to schedule a meeting with the DRT prior to, and hopefully well in advance of, submitting applications to the Town Boards for special permits, subdivisions, etc. We will guide you through the application process, and flag potential issues prior to you preparing detailed plans.

**Fire Department**

Charles Burger, Fire Chief  
Fire Station, 37 State Road  
Phone: (413) 528-0788 (office)  
Emergency: 911  
Email: cburger@townofgb.org  
Office Hours: By appointment, Mon – Fri, 8:00am-4:00pm.

The Fire Dept. is the local enforcement and permitting agency for the Regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Fire Prevention, as noted by 527 CMR 1. Responsibilities include reviewing plans submitting to the Building Department for access and fire protection systems, issuing storage and process permits for hazardous materials, witnessed acceptance testing of fire protection systems, and conducts period safety inspections of required occupancies.

**Health Agent / Board of Health**

Rebecca Jurczyk  
Health Agent  
334 Main Street, Town Hall  
Phone: (413) 528-1619 x 2700  
Cell: (413) 717-2010  
Email: rjurczyk@townofgb.org  
Office Hours: Mon 8:30am-4:30pm. Tues 8:30am-11:30am. Fri 10:00am-12:00pm  
Meetings: 1st Thursday, 6:30pm

The Board of Health enforces State and local health and some environmental codes. This includes permits for septic systems, wells, demolition, food establishments, lodging, swimming pools, camps, special events and various licenses.

**Historic District Commission**

Chris Rembold  
Town Hall, 334 Main Street  
Phone: (413) 528-1619 x 2400  
Email: crembold@townofgb.org  
Meetings: 3rd Monday or call of Chairman

No building or structure in a Historic District may be constructed, altered, or demolished in a way that affects the exterior features, unless a certificate is obtained from the HDC. See Chap 113 of the Town Bylaws for district boundaries and regulations.

**Parks Commission**

Carolyn Wichmann, Secretary  
Town Hall, 334 Main Street  
Phone: 413-528-1619 x 2601  
Email: ewichmann@townofgb.org  
Meetings: 2nd Monday, 5:00, Mason Library

The Parks Commissioners administer the Town parks, ball fields, and beaches, including recreational programs. Use of Town parks and beaches for events requires permission of the Parks Commissioners.

**Planning Board**

Christopher Rembold  
Assistant Town Manager / Director of Planning and Community Development  
Town Hall, 334 Main Street  
Phone: (413) 528-1619, x 2400  
Email: crembold@townofgb.org  
Office Hours: Mon – Thurs, 8:30am-4:00pm. Friday by appt.

The Planning Board is an elected five member board, whose responsibilities are outlined by Mass. General Law and include but are not limited to the following: Approving subdivisions and ANR plans; Serving as Site Plan Review authority; Serving as a special permit granting authority and recommending Board on all other special permits; Drafting zoning amendments for Town approval and holding public hearings on zoning amendments; Approving common driveways; and, Adopting a master plan for the town.
Meetings: 2nd and 4th Thursday, 6:00pm. Agenda items must be submitted at least 1 week before

**Police Department**
Paul E. Storti  
Chief of Police  
Police Station, 465 South Main Street (at Maple Ave)  
Phone: (413) 528-0306 (office)  
Emergency: 911  
Email: pstorti@townofgb.org  
Office Hours: Mon – Fri, 8:30am-4:00pm

The Police Department is responsible for safeguarding the life and safety of the public. In terms of permitting and development, the Police Department must approve temporary road closures and any traffic detours and police details for traffic safety. These issues often arise when structures are demolished, large cranes, dumpsters, etc. are placed in a sidewalk or roadway, or trees in or near a roadway are removed.

**Town Clerk**
Jennifer Messina  
Town Clerk  
Town Hall, 334 Main Street  
Phone: (413) 528-1619, x 2100  
Email: jmessina@townofgb.org  
Office Hours: Mon – Fri, 8:30am-4:00pm

The Town Clerk is the official record of all applications and decisions for all subdivisions, special permits and variances. It is the Clerk’s time stamp that starts the clock that tolls the official review period for special permits and variances. All businesses operating in Great Barrington must register with the Town Clerk. In addition, marriage licenses, dog licenses, raffle permits, & copies of Town Bylaws and regulations, may all be obtained from the Town Clerk.

**Town Manager’s Office**
Mark Pruhenski  
Town Manager  
Town Hall, 334 Main Street  
Phone: (413) 528-1619, x 2900  
Email: mpruhenski@townofgb.org  
Office Hours: Mon – Fri, 8:30am-4:00pm

The Town Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town and oversees all town staff. This office coordinates permits for a variety of licenses required by local and State regulations, including but not limited to weekday and Sunday entertainment licenses, and liquor licenses.

**Zoning Board of Appeals**
Christopher Rembold  
Town Hall, 334 Main Street  
Phone: (413) 528-1619, x 2401  
Email: crembold@townofgb.org  
Meetings: At the call of the Chairman

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is an elected five member board, with two alternate members. The ZBA has the power to hear and decide appeals by persons who have been unable to obtain a permit or enforcement action in accordance with Great Barrington’s Zoning Bylaw and related zoning provisions of Massachusetts law. The ZBA has the power to decide on applications for variances from the Bylaw and applications for special permits under the "grandfather" provisions of the Bylaw. It is the authority for “40B” Comprehensive Permits.

**The Permits**

The charts in this section summarize the permits that are needed for specific projects. Remember, these permits are required in order to protect for your health and safety and the health and safety of your neighborhood. Never work without a permit if you need one. If officials discover that you have done work without a permit, you will be required to stop the work and dismantle or reverse the work, all at your own expense. If you are wondering whether or not you need a permit, please call and ask us.

**How do I know if a permit or review is needed?**

A good rule of thumb is that any work that builds a new structure or alters walls or roofs requires a building permit. Also, garages, sheds, fences, decks, and swimming pools require building permits. Sometimes, depending on the project site and characteristics, other permits might be needed. Your best course of action is to ask first—the Building Inspector can help you determine exactly which permits apply to you.

*You probably need a building permit if you plan to...*
- Change the footprint of your house and/or dig any foundation
- Move a wall
- Alter the roofline
- Create a new door or window opening
- Replace an electric stove with a natural-gas model
- Move a sink
- Install new electrical wiring
- Build a garage, barn, shed, or deck
- Install a fence or swimming pool

**What if I want to construct a new home or new business?**

New construction sometimes requires one or more permits, depending on the size, location, and proposed use of the structure. Your first step should be to consult the Building Inspector. The Building Inspector will discuss with you the property improvements you propose, and what the typical permit requirements are. The Building Inspector will inform you of other regulations, like environmental regulations, wetlands, etc. that might apply to your site. He will also guide you to the Zoning Bylaw, which specifies minimum lot area, setbacks for front, rear, and side yards, and permitted uses in specific districts.

**How do I know what laws apply to my project?**

Call the Building Inspector or Town Planner for help in determining the various laws and regulations that govern your project and your site.

**What is Zoning?**

All property in Great Barrington is classified into a zoning district. These districts are located on the official Zoning Map, which can be found in the Zoning Bylaw, on the town website, or on the [free online interactive maps](#). These districts define the uses that are allowed in that district by right or by special permit (see Section 3 of the Bylaw). Each district also has specific regulations for lot frontage, building height, and yard setbacks (see Section 4). Specific regulations for parking (see Section 6), various commercial uses (see Section 7), and residential uses (see Section 8) further guide development. There are also several “overlay” districts that stipulate additional development controls in some areas of town such as floodplains, downtown, and the Housatonic mills (see Section 9).

**What is the difference between the Zoning Code and the Building Code?**

Zoning regulations are established by the Town. Zoning determines the types of structures and uses that are allowed in each zoning district. No matter where your property is located in town, it is subject to some type of zoning.

The Building Code is established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and applies to all structures and buildings, no matter the use or location. The Building Code sets the minimum safety standards to protect the health and safety of the building occupants and neighbors.

**What if my proposed structure or use is not allowed by the Zoning Bylaws?**

Some uses are not allowed, and others are allowed only with a Special Permit. A Special Permit means that the use is not normally permitted, but the Town will consider allowing it if it meets certain criteria and is judged to be an overall benefit to the Town. Sections 10 and Section 3 of the Zoning Bylaw outline the process and the uses subject to Special Permits. In other cases, when a proposed structure cannot fit properly on a lot, a Variance may be required. Please contact the Building Inspector or Town Planner for more information.
## COMMONLY REQUIRED BUILDING, ZONING, & ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permit</th>
<th>When Required</th>
<th>Issuing Authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building permit</strong>&lt;br&gt;This is the last permit you must get before starting construction. All other permits must be in place at this time. The Building Inspector conducts final zoning compliance and reviews building and construction plans for compliance with the Massachusetts Building Code and handicapped access standards.</td>
<td>New construction and alterations. If you are doing work that opens or alters walls in all probability you will be required to apply for a permit. Additionally, construction of sheds, fences, decks, pools all require permits.</td>
<td>Building Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commercial Kitchen/New Food Establishment</strong>&lt;br&gt;Any major renovations or new construction of a commercial kitchen must be reviewed and approved by the Health Department.</td>
<td>An annual Food Establishment permit and preoperational inspection is required prior to opening.</td>
<td>Health Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common Driveway permit</strong>&lt;br&gt;If the new driveway will serve more than one dwelling unit (and no more than three units), it requires a permit from the Planning Board. The design is reviewed by the Highway Superintendent, Fire Chief, Conservation Commission, and Planning Board. A common driveway opening onto a State Highway also requires a permit from Massachusetts DOT.</td>
<td>Altering or opening a new shared driveway</td>
<td>Planning Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demolition</strong>&lt;br&gt;For full demolitions a Board of Health permit is required. COC is issued when receipts of all proper hazardous material removals are submitted to the BOH. Pre-demo inspections may be required and baiting and trapping of rodents may be required.</td>
<td>Full demolitions and construction of any property.</td>
<td>Health Agent, Building Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design Review</strong>&lt;br&gt;New construction, exterior changes, or substantial changes to buildings within the downtown B district and the Village Center Overlay District require design review. This is intended to ensure the design is in keeping with the character of its surroundings.</td>
<td>New construction, changes to exterior of a building within the downtown area</td>
<td>Design Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dig Safe</strong>&lt;br&gt;State laws require anyone who digs to notify utility companies before starting, and for good reason. Dig Safe is a free hotline assisting excavators, contractors and property owners by notifying the utilities before digging. NOTE: GB Sewer and Water must be contacted directly; they do not participate in Dig Safe calls.</td>
<td>Any excavation on public or private property. Excavation includes movement or removal of earth, rock or the materials in the ground, whether for foundations, utility lines, test borings, grading, or any other purpose.</td>
<td>Call 1-888-DIG-SAFE and also call: GB Water 528-0133 GB Sewer 528-0650 Housatonic Water 528-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Driveway permit</strong>&lt;br&gt;Constructing a new or altering an existing driveway access to a Town road requires a permit from the Selectboard. The design is reviewed by the Highway Superintendent, Fire Chief, Conservation Commission, and Town Planner. Driveways on State Highways require permits from Massachusetts DOT.</td>
<td>Altering or opening a new driveway</td>
<td>Selectboard with advice of Town DPW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nonconforming Use or Structure</strong>&lt;br&gt;If the use of your property or the location and size of your structure does not conform to the Zoning bylaws, any change of use or alteration of the structure may require a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals.</td>
<td>Alteration of a nonconforming use or structure</td>
<td>Building Inspector, or Zoning Board of Appeals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scenic Mountains Act</strong>&lt;br&gt;A Notice of Intent (permit application to Conservation Commission) is required when clearing (including logging) and new development in any mapped Scenic Mountain Area.</td>
<td>Land clearing in designated areas. See Conservation Commission webpage</td>
<td>Conservation Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Septic systems</strong>&lt;br&gt;New septic systems and repairs or replacement of old systems must be done per Mass. Title V regulations, administered by Board of Health to ensure that wastewater does not contribute pathogens or otherwise endanger surface and ground waters, drinking water supplies, wildlife habitat, and surface water.</td>
<td>New septic systems; repairs or replacement of existing septic systems.</td>
<td>Health Agent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMMONLY REQUIRED BUILDING, ZONING, & ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permit</th>
<th>When Required</th>
<th>Issuing Authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sewer connection</td>
<td>New connection to municipal sewer</td>
<td>Health Agent and Dept. of Public Works, Wastewater Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects that connect to the Town’s system to discharge household wastewater must obtain a permit from the Health Agent and a permit from the DPW, Wastewater Division. These permits ensure that new connections are done properly and increased volumes do not overwhelm the capacity of the system.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalk Cafes and Sidewalk Vendors</td>
<td>Use of sidewalk for outdoor dining or merchandise displays.</td>
<td>Selectboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any person or business wishing to utilize sidewalks for cafes / outdoor dining or for the placement of merchandise displays for sale must obtain a permit from the Selectboard.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign</td>
<td>Per the Sign Bylaws, for all commercial, and some residential signs.</td>
<td>Building Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs for business and residential purposes are regulated by the Sign Bylaws, Chapter 146 of the Town Code. It is your responsibility to determine how much signage you are permitted, where it can be placed on the property, and so on.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Plan Review</td>
<td>Per Zoning Bylaw, depends on use and extent of the work</td>
<td>Planning Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most non-residential projects require Site Plan Review by the Planning Board. Your plans will be reviewed for specifics of site and building layout, parking facilities, lighting, landscaping, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Permit</td>
<td>Per zoning bylaws, depending on use and zone</td>
<td>Selectboard, Planning Board, or Zoning Board of Appeals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many uses identified in the zoning ordinance require the issuance of a Special Permit from the prior to the allowance of the use. The Town Planner or Building Inspector will assist you in filing the special permit application.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Closure</td>
<td>Any proposed temporary or permanent street or sidewalk closure or obstruction.</td>
<td>Police Department Fire Department Selectboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All requests for temporary or permanent street closures must be approved by the Police and Fire Dept., and approval from the Selectboard. This includes temporary closures for large construction equipment, demolitions, dumpsters, and events.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming Pools</td>
<td>New swimming pools and renovations. Public and Semi-Public pools are subject to annual or pre-operational inspections and require an annual or seasonal license to operate.</td>
<td>Health Agent Building Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming pools require building permits. Public and semi-public pools also require a permit from the Health Agent.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trench Permit</td>
<td>Any new trench</td>
<td>Health Agent or Building Inspector or Fire Chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any new trench (a “trench” is any excavation which is narrow in relation to its length, is 3’ or more deep, and deeper than wide)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Connection</td>
<td>New connections and alterations</td>
<td>GB Fire District Housatonic Water Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New connections or alterations to existing connects to public water supply is subject to the approval of the local water district.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well Drilling</td>
<td>Any new well or repairs or replacement of an existing well</td>
<td>Health Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New wells or repairs or replacement of existing wells are subject to Mass. DEP regulations. Well drillers must be certified by the Commonwealth. Also includes geothermal wells / heat pumps.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetlands Protection and Rivers Protection</td>
<td>Development within 100 feet of a wetland or stream</td>
<td>Conservation Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work within 100 feet of a wetland or 200 feet of a river or stream is regulated by the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act administered by the Conservation Commission. Some projects are prohibited. Those that are allowed require a permit called an Order of Conditions or a finding of non-impact called a Determination of Applicability.</td>
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The Process

The flowcharts and diagrams that follow illustrate the application and review process for typical permits. These reviews and timelines are governed by local and state laws. Applicants are reminded that several permits may be required for a project. All applicants are encouraged to speak with Town staff before applying for permits. We can help you understand the required forms, the process, and the review criteria.

Call us! We’re happy to help!
March 6, 2013

**Using the new Great Barrington online mapping system:**

1. Go to [http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/map_ol/great_barrington.php](http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/map_ol/great_barrington.php) or follow the link on the Planning Department page of the town website ([www.townofgb.org](http://www.townofgb.org)).

2. Enter a street address to fly to the area of interest. Be sure to include the zip code. To browse around, simply use the zoom controls. Use the four-sided arrow symbol to pan around the map.

3. Change the base map if you want. Aerial imagery and topographic lines can be viewed. Go to the bottom right corner of the map window to see the available base map options. Only one base map option is available at a time.

4. Once you have zoomed in on an area, you can begin adding different layers of data. Go to the top right to the Available Data Layers window on the top right. Open each folder by double clicking to see what data is available.

5. As a default, roads, parcel lines, and buildings will be shown. If you are zoomed in close enough, the address of the lot will be shown.

6. When you find the layer, like Zoning, click that layer name and it will be added to the map. The layer is added to the Active Data Layers window on the middle right portion of the screen. You can add as many data layers as you want.

7. Please note that on some smaller screens, you might not see this Active Data Layers window. You will need to hover your mouse until it changes to the double arrow / double line icon, then drag it to enlarge or shrink the window panes.

8. Sometimes the layers you add are opaque, and you cannot see through them to the parcel you are interested in. You will need to change the opacity of the layer. To do this, right click on the layer in Active Data Layers. Using the slider bar under Opacity, adjust it from 100% towards 0% and it will become more transparent.

9. When you want more information about a parcel, click the blue information button and then click on the parcel you are interested in. A window of information will pop up, and the various active data layers will be searched.

For example, if you want to know the owners name, the size, the parcel ID numbers, and valuation, click on the Tax Parcels for Query line and the data will load in a window pane called Feature Details. Use the scroll bar to slide the resulting detail table to the right to see all the information. This is the information from the Great Barrington Assessor’s most recent fiscal year.
10. The best way to print is to use the Print function of your internet browser (File, Print. Or, Control P). You can save the pictures as a picture file but it is a bit more complicated. If you have the ability, either create a PDF directly, or instead of choosing to print to your local printer, print to Adobe PDF.

If you don’t have the PDF ability, then you’ll have to press Alt and Print Screen. This copies the image to your computer clipboard. Open a document file or a slide and Paste the copied screen image into the document or slide. Then save or print that document or slide file.
TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
BUILDING PERMIT PROCESS

START HERE
1) Project is proposed. Applicant contacts the Building Inspector.

2) The Building Inspector determines whether the proposed use is allowed in the zoning district.
- Yes, the use is allowed.
- The use is not allowed. STOP. You may want to revise the project and start again.
- The use is allowed only by Special Permit. Read the Special Permit regulations. Contact the Town Planner. Special Permit adds 2-3 months.

3) Will the land be subdivided?
- Yes, the land will be subdivided. Read the Subdivision regulations. Contact the Town Planner. Subdivision adds 3 months or more.
- No the land will not be subdivided.

4) Applicant is encouraged to meet with staff Development Review Team (DRT) to informally discuss plans, and receive input regarding other possible requirements. Contact the Town Planner.

5) Are any other permits or approvals required? The DRT will help you determine this.
- Yes, other permits are required. Go to step 6.
- No, other permits are not required. Go to step 8.

6) Applicant files for other required permits. (Special Permit, Subdivision, Site Plan Approval, Wetlands permits, Historic District, Village Center Design Review, new septic system, new driveways, etc...)

7) Other required permits and approvals are received.

8) Applicant files application for Building Permit. (Be sure to read instructions and include all required information.)

9) Application is deemed complete, includes fee payment, and is stamped received. 30-day clock starts.

10) Plan review. 30 day maximum.
- Tax status is checked (2 days – 1 wk)
- Fire Chief review: alarms, smoke detectors, carbon monox., sprinklers, etc. (10 days)
- Conservation Commission review: wetlands and rivers regs, endangered species, etc. (1 wk)
- Board of Health review: health code, wells, septic, housing code, etc. (1 wk)
- Zoning review: zoning code, water quality district, floodplains, scenic mountains, existing special permits, MGL Ch 40A, etc. (1 wk)
- Building Code review: structural and engineering, energy, accessibility, fire, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, etc. (1 wk)

11) Post plan review. Building Inspector gathers all information from Plan review and issues decision.
- Permit is denied. Reason/ relevant code section is cited. STOP.
- Applications is valid, OK’d, and permit is processed (each Wed. a.m.). PROCEED to step 13.

12) Clerk calls Applicant to pickup the processed permits.

13) Applicant signs for permit, indicates understanding of inspection process that follows.

14) Inspections process
- Inspection passes.
- Inspection fails or is missed. Redo work. Re-inspect.

15) Contractor calls to schedule necessary inspections when work is ready.

16) Inspections process

17) Proceed to next inspection. Repeat 15-17 as necessary.

18) Final inspections are passed.

19) Construction is complete. Assessor is notified. Certificate of Occupancy is issued. Congratulations!
PROJECTS AFFECTED:

1. Construction, exterior alteration or exterior expansion of, or change of use within, a municipal, institutional, commercial, industrial, or multi-family structure;
2. Construction or expansion of a parking lot for municipal, institutional, commercial, industrial, or multi-family structure or purpose involving more than 6 spaces; and
3. Grading or clearing more than 10% of a lot or 10,000 square feet, except as noted in section 10.5.1 of the Zoning bylaw.

One- and two-family residential uses do not require Site Plan Review.

For More Information

Contact the Town Planner:
(413) 528-1619, x.7 or crembold@townofgb.org

* Note Site Plan Review is not the same as a Special Permit. Site Plan Review and Special Permits are separate applications, reviews, and decisions. If your project requires a Special Permit, contact the Town Planner.

START HERE *

1) Application is determined to be subject to Site Plan Review.
   * See Note, below left.
2) Application, including all plans and fee, is submitted to Town Planner’s office.
3) Town Planner reviews application for completeness.

4) Complete application is processed and stamped by Town Clerk. The 60-day review clock starts.

5) Applicant is notified of Development Review Team (DRT) meeting and of Planning Board meeting. Site visits may be conducted.

6) DRT meets with applicant and reviews site plan. DRT meets in the morning of the 2nd and 4th Tues. of each month.

7) DRT issues formal comments to applicant. The application, site plan, and DRT comments are forwarded to the Planning Board.

8) Planning Board meets and reviews the site plan. Applicant must attend the meeting.
   Planning Board meets at 7pm on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month.

9) Site Plan decision
   Site Plan is denied
   Stop. Revise project and begin again.
   Site Plan is approved, or is approved with conditions.
   Continue to Building Permit application.

Stop. Revise project and begin again.
The DAC has review authority for:

- **VCOD zone**: All applications subject to VCOD (i.e. all changes to exterior of structures, new construction, replacement of an existing structure, and any substantial change to an existing structure (see Zoning §9.6))
- **B zone**: All new structures, alterations or additions to existing structures which affect the exterior architectural appearance of a building (see Zoning §9.5)

1. **Building Inspector** receives building permit or special permit application. Applicant must provide 7 copies for DAC.

2. Within 5 working days, **Building Inspector** notifies, by email or phone, each DAC member of application. Plans will be placed in a DAC box in the Town Clerk’s office.

3. **DAC Chairman** calls meeting, to be held within 20 days of application date, to review the plans with applicant.

4. **Design Review Standards** set forth in §9.5, as amended, shall guide the application and the DAC’s deliberations.

5. **Recommendation**
   No later than 30 days from the application, the DAC, by its Chairman or designee, shall transmit a brief report of the DAC’s recommendations to the SPGA and the Planning Board. If such report is not transmitted within 30 days, SPGA shall assume approval of application by DAC.
1. **Applicant** consults zoning bylaws, zoning map, design guidelines, Building Inspector, and/or Town Planner

2. **Building Inspector** determines zoning applicability, required special permits, etc. and whether VCOD applies (see Zoning Sec. 9.6)

3. a. **Applicant** applies for building permit or required special permit(s) as applicable

3. b. **Applicant** shall meet with staff Development Review Team before filing special permit (call Town Planner to arrange a meeting)

4. **Applicant** meets with DRT to identify key aspects of project and identify any possible issues that may arise

5. **Applicant** files for Special Permit(s) (using form SP-2). Call Town Planner to arrange meeting to file application.

6. a. **Recommending Boards** hold SP meetings (applicant must attend)

6. b. **Design Advisory Committee** meets to review application (applicant must attend)

7. **Boards and DAC** send recommendations to the SPGA (Selectmen) (within 35 days of receipt of application)

8. **Selectmen** hold public hearing (no earlier than 40 days and no later than 65 days from application). Applicant must attend

9. **Selectmen** make decision (within 90 days of close of public hearing) and file final action with Town Clerk

10. **Selectmen** make decision (within 90 days of close of public hearing) and file final action with Town Clerk

11. **Appeals** (within 20 days after filing of decision) and/or **Recording of Permit** (after the 20 days)

12. **SP lapses** if not exercised within 2 years of #11

Note: If site is in a designated Historic District per Chap 113 of the Town bylaws, Applicant must also apply to Historic District Commission for appropriate certificate.

Please note: copies of the zoning bylaws, design guidelines, special permit forms, and special permit timelines are available on the Town’s website (www.townofgb.org), or call the Town Planner at (413) 528-1619, x.7
A Special Permit application is filed with the City/Town Clerk, and a certified copy filed with the SPGA, by the proponent.

Within **65 days** of the application filing
(Unless extended by written agreement between the SPGA & proponent that has been filed with the City/Town Clerk)

The SPGA holds a public hearing.
*The hearing may be continued over the span of multiple meetings.

Within **90 days**
After the close of the public hearing (Unless extended by written agreement between the SPGA & proponent that has been filed with the City/Town Clerk)

The SPGA reaches a decision. The decision and records of proceedings must be filed by the SPGA with the City/Town Clerk, and mailed to parties of interest within 14 days.
(special permits require a 2/3 vote of a board with more than 5 members, 4 members of a 5 member board, and unanimous vote of a 3 member board)

Appeals must be filed with the City/Town Clerk.
*Construction may begin if an appeal is filed, but will be at the proponent’s own risk.

Within **20 days** of the decision filing

City/Town Clerk issues a certificate stating the date of approval, that no appeal was filed, or that the appeal was dismissed or denied.

No more than **2 years**
After the decision
(as specified in local bylaws or ordinances)

The special permit decision is filed by the City/Town Clerk with the Registry of Deeds.

Within **14 days**
Of the 90th day

The petitioner notifies the City/Town Clerk and parties of interest that the SPGA did not act.

Within **20 days** of notification

Appeals must be filed with the City/Town Clerk.
*Construction may begin if an appeal is filed, but will be at the proponent’s own risk.

City/Town Clerk issues a certificate stating that SPGA did not act and that constructive approval is granted.

The special permit lapses, if construction/substantial use has not begun. (except for good cause or if another date is specified in the decision).

Disclaimer: Developed as an informal guide for permit granting agencies with information current as of September, 2007. It has been transmitted for informational purposes only, and its content should not be construed as legal advice. Please consult legal counsel before taking any action on this information. Please consult MGL C40A §11-17 for more detailed information.
A preliminary plan is submitted to the planning board and board of health, and a notice of plan submittal to the City/Town Clerk, either by delivery in person or by certified mail. A copy of the plan must also be filed with the Board of Health.

A definitive plan is submitted to the Planning Board, and a written notice of plan submittal to the City/Town Clerk, either by delivery in person or by certified mail. The plan must also be filed with the Board of Health.

Within 45 days of the plan submittal (Unless extended by written agreement between the planning board and the applicant that has been filed with the City/Town Clerk)

Each Board notifies the applicant and the City/Town Clerk by certified mail whether the Planning Board approves, approves with modifications, or disapproves the plan.

At least 14 days before hearing

The hearing is advertised in the newspaper and posted in the town hall. Notice is mailed to the applicant and abutting landowners. *The hearing may be continued over the span of multiple meetings

Within 90 days of the plan submittal (Unless extended by written agreement between the planning board and the applicant that has been filed with the City/Town Clerk)

The planning board holds a public hearing

Within 20 days of the certificate filing

If a decision certificate (or a written agreement to extend the decision period) is not filed by the planning board with the City/Town Clerk within 90 days

The plan and its certificates are filed at the Registry of Deeds

After 20 days of the decision filing have passed

Appeals must be filed with the City/Town Clerk.

City/Town Clerk issues certificate stating that the Planning Board did not act and that constructive approval is granted. The plan and certificate of constructive approval are delivered to the applicant by the City/Town Clerk.

Within 6 months of plan endorsement

*Construction may begin if an appeal is filed, but will be at the petitioners own risk.

Within 20 days of the certificate filing

A certificate of the board’s action is filed with the City/Town Clerk and mailed to the applicant.

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A definitive plan is submitted to the Planning Board, and a written notice of plan submittal to the City/Town Clerk, either by delivery in person or by certified mail. An copy of the plan must also be filed with the board of Health.

**Residential Subdivision—Massachusetts General Laws, Ch. 41**
(definitive plan submitted without a preliminary plan)

- Within **45 days** of the plan submittal (Unless extended by written agreement between the planning board and the applicant that has been filed with the City/Town Clerk)
- The planning board holds a public hearing
  *The hearing may be continued over the span of multiple meetings
- The Board of Health reports their approval or disapproval of the plan. Failure to report shall be deemed approval.
- The planning board approves, approves with modifications, or disapproves the plan.

- Within **135 days** of the plan submittal (Unless extended by written agreement between the planning board and the applicant that has been filed with the City/Town Clerk)
- If a decision certificate (or a written agreement to extend the decision period) is not filed by the planning board with the City/Town Clerk within 135 days
  - City/Town Clerk issues certificate stating that the Planning Board did not act and that constructive approval is granted. The plan and certificate of constructive approval are delivered to the applicant by the City/Town Clerk.

- Within **20 days** of the certificate filing
  - Appeals must be filed with the City/Town Clerk.
  *Construction may begin if an appeal is filed, but will be at the petitioners own risk.

- Within **20 days** of the decision filing have passed
  - The planning board endorses the plan (if approved). The signed plan is delivered to the applicant by the planning board.

- Within **6 months** of plan endorsement
  - The plan and its certificates are filed at the Registry of Deeds

- At least **14 days** before hearing
  - The hearing is advertised in the newspaper and posted in the town hall. Notice is mailed to the applicant and abutting landowners.*

- The next successive week following the first notice
  - The hearing is again advertised in the newspaper *

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* = at the expense of the applicant.