

Citizen and Developer's Guide to the Permitting and Approval Process for Land Development in **Town of Bloomsburg**, Columbia County, Pennsylvania



Contact Information

Town of Bloomsburg
301 East Second St.
Bloomsburg PA, 17815
Phone: (570)784-7123
Fax: (570)784-1518

Council Meeting *(Meets the second and fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers, Second Floor, Town Hall 301 East Main St.)*

James Huber	(570)784-0458
Sylvia Costa	(570)387-6425
Fred Trump	(570)784-5728
Joe Martarano	(570)441-3484
William Kreisher	(570)784-4968
W. Carey Howell	(570)784-2490

Mayor

Sandy Davis (570)784-7123 (ext. 133)

Township Administrator/ Secretary/ Treasurer/Airport Coordinator

Lauren Martz (570)784-7123 (ext. 125)

HARB & Planning Commission Contact/Code Enforcement Admin. Asst.

Christine Meeker (570)784-7123 (ext. 115)

Admin Asst.

Amy Seamans (570)784-7123 (ext. 117)
(570)784-7703

Director of Finance

Lisa Dooley (570)784-7123 (ext. 123)

Code Enforcement ,Zoning Officer, & Building Permit

Ralph Magill (570)784-7123 (ext. 124)

Kyle Bauman (570)784-7123 (ext. 122)

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Environmental Services Coordinator

Charles Fritz (570)784-4532

Solicitor

John Mihalik (570)784-7666
(570)784-7516

Superintendent of Public Works

John Barton (570)784-2300
Pager: (570)387-5870

Bloomsburg Municipal Authority

Dan Murphy, Superintendent (570)784-4738

Planning Commission (*Meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM at Town Hall.*)

Diane Levan
Michael Mertz
Ed Sabo Jr.
Richard Bogar, Chair
Alex Dubil Jr.
Raymond Vought (570)784-8996
Joe Martatano



Ordinances

[Town of Bloomsburg Zoning Ordinance](#)

Subdivision and Land Development

The following information is not all inclusive and is meant only to be a general guideline. For detailed requirements, applications and information consult Town of Bloomsburg Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) and speak with Zoning Officer

Definitions of “Subdivision” and “Land Development”

For a COMPLETE list of definitions of Subdivision and Land Development see the SALDO, Article 2, DEFINITIONS.)

Minor Subdivision: *The subdivision of a single lot, tract or parcel of land by any means into two or more lots, tracts, parcels or other divisions or land including changes in existing lot lines for the purpose, whether immediate or in the future, of transfer of ownership or of building development, providing lots,*

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tracts or parcels of land thereby created have frontage on an improved public street or streets and providing further that there is not created by the subdivision and new streets, street easement, easement of access or need therefor.

Major Subdivision: *any subdivision involving more than five lots, parcels of land or other divisions of land whether or not they involve new streets, additional utilities or other facilities immediate or future.*

Land Development:

The development of property as specified below:

a. The improvement of one lot or two or more contiguous lots, tracts or parcels of land for any purpose involving:

- 1. A group of two or more residential or nonresidential buildings whether proposed initially or cumulatively, or a nonresidential building on a lot or lots, regardless of the number of occupants or tenure.*
- 2. The division or allocation of land or space, whether initially or cumulatively, between or among two or more existing or prospective occupants by means of or for the purpose of streets, common areas, leaseholds, condominiums, building groups or other features.*

b. Any subdivision of land.

(FOR EXCLUSIONS, see the definition of Land Development in the SALDO, Part 3, DEFINITIONS, Section 301 page22-15 for definitions of Types of Land Development.)

Sketch Plan: *an informal plan, not necessarily to exact scale, indicating salient exiting features of a tract and its surroundings and the general layout of a proposed subdivision or land development.*

Submittal and Review Process

Submittal Requirements:

- 1. Eleven copies of the Plan.*
- 2. Application and fee.*
- 3. Submit to the Columbia County Planning Commission: One (1) copy of the application along with three (3) copies of the plan and the Required fees outlined in County SALDO, Article 9, Sec. 906, FEE SCHEDULE, page 138. The Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247-1968 requires all municipalities with adopted SALDOs to allow the County Planning Commission a thirty (30) day review and comment period, prior to final approval. After this review a County representative will sign the plans and return them to the municipality. The plans can not be recorded without the County representative's signature.*

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Review Process:

- 1. The applicant, 14 calendar days prior to the meeting of the Commission at which consideration is desired, shall file with the Assistant Towns Administrator, or designee, ten copies of a complete preliminary plat of the proposed subdivision or land development and other required data and maps. The applicant shall submit concurrently, with the preliminary plat, five copies of the sewage plan revision module for land development, if applicable.*
- 2. The Assistance Town Administrator, or designee, shall submit copies to the County Planning Commission, Town Engineer and, or Consultant and may submit copies to the public utilities, Bloomsburg Area School District, Columbia County Conservation District, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and other Public Agencies. The Town Council, upon the recommendation of the Commission shall act on any such preliminary plat not later than 90 days following the date of the regular meeting of the Town Council or the Planning Commission (whichever first reviews the application) following the date the application is filed; provided, that should the said next regular meeting occur more than 30 days measured from the 30th day following the day the application has been filed. In the event that any alternation of requirements from this chapter is requested by the applicant or is deemed necessary by the Commission for approval, the alteration and the reason its necessity shall be entered in the records of the commission. [Ord. 841]*
- 3. The Columbia County Planning Commission shall review the preliminary Plat and data and shall return one copy of a written report stating their suggestions for modifications and design changes to the Planning Commission within 30 days of their receipt of same or forfeit their right to review.*
- 4. The Town Council shall determine whether the preliminary plat shall be approved or disapproved and shall notify the applicant in writing thereof, including, if approved with conditions or disapproved, a statement of reasons for such action, not later than 15 days following the decision.*
- 5. Before acting on any subdivision plat, the Town Council may hold a public hearing thereon after public notice.*
- 6. When the application is not approved in terms as filed, the decision shall specify the defects found in the application and describe the requirements which have not been met and shall, in each case, cite the provisions of this Chapter.*
- 7. Failure of the Town Council to render a decision and communicate it to the applicant within the time and in the manner required herein shall be deemed an approval of the application in terms as presented unless the applicant has agreed in writing to an extension of time or change in the prescribed manner of presentation of communication decision, in which case, failure to meet the extended time or change in a manner of presentation of communication shall have like effect. (A sample "Agreement to Extend the Time for Rendering and Communicating a Decision on Certain Preliminary and/ or Final Subdivision Plans" is provided in Exhibit III.)*

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8. *Approval of the preliminary plat constitutes approval of the proposed subdivision or land development with respect to the general design, the approximate dimensions and other planned features. Preliminary approval binds the developer to the general scheme of the plat as approved. Preliminary approval does not authorize the recording, sale or transfer of lots or the installation of improvements.*

Zoning

For detailed requirements, applications and information consult the Town of Bloomsburg Zoning Ordinance (at the web address given above) and speak with the Zoning Officer.

State and Federal Requirements Associated With Subdivision and Land Development

State Contact Information

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

PA Dept of Environmental Protection
NC Regional Office
Office Hours 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Phone: 570 327-3636 (24 hours)



Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

State Park Region 4 (East)
Kevin Fazzini, Regional Park Manager
Phone - 215-453-5000

Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)

Email: ra-dcedcs@pa.gov
Phone: 866-GO-NEWPA (866-466-3972)



Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)

PennDOT Engineering District 3-0
Jim Krise, Permit Manager
Telephone: 570-368-4277



Department of Labor and Industry

General information: 717-787-5279



Public Utility Commission (PUC)

General Information: 800-692-7380

Farm Bureau

General Information: 717-761-2740



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State Approval and Permits

1. NPDES Permits for Discharge of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activities

- Columbia County Conservation District (570-784-1310) should be contacted at any time that you are going to be causing Earth Disturbance to check to see if a permit is required.

2. Water Obstruction and Encroachment Permits

- Columbia County Conservation District (570-784-1310) should be contacted if you are to be doing anything involving waters of the Commonwealth, *Chapter 105 regulations define this as any watercourse, stream or bodies of waters and their floodway.*

3. Sewage (Act 537) Approvals

- Any subdivisions or land developments should involve contacting the local municipal Sewage Enforcement Officer to determine if sewage planning is needed for what you are proposing. For general information a person could also contact DEP Sewage Office at 570-327-3668

4. Public Water Supply Permits

- When a involves the creation of a public water facility which is intended to distribute water to individuals a Public water supply permit is needed from DEP. Any questions can be referred to the DEP Northcentral Water Supply Offices at 570-327-3490.

5. Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission (PHMC) Review

- The role of the Pennsylvania Bureau for Historic Preservation is to advise and assist state and federal agencies in complying with their responsibilities under various legislation, such as the National Historic Preservation Act and the PA History Code, that protect historic properties. To meet this goal, the Bureau has established the Environmental Review process, through which it reviews projects for their potential to affect historic properties. Any questions should be directed to Cheryl Nagle, (Central PA) 717.772.4519

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State Approval and Permits (continued)

6. Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) Review

- PNDI stands for **Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory** which is the Environmental Review (ER) function of the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program (PNHP). It is set up to help identify impacts to threatened, endangered or rare plants, animals, natural communities, and geologic features throughout Pennsylvania. Any questions or to conduct a PNDI search please visit: <http://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us/HomePage.aspx>
- A PNDI search is needed for all subdivision and land developments. Additionally it is required in order to obtain several different types of permits from DEP including but not limited to a Sewage Permit.

7. Highway Occupancy Permits

- Any access, driveways or work to be done with in a State Right-of-Way requires a Highway Occupancy Permit to be obtained from The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Any and all questions regarding the need for a permit should be directed to the PennDOT Permit Manager Jim Krise at 570-368-4277

FEDERAL CONTACT INFORMATION

U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Call the Mid-Atlantic Region
(800) 438-2474 (from *within Region 3*)
(215) 814-5000 (from *outside Region 3*)



Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Bloomsburg Service Location
(570) 784-1062 ext 2



Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

Harrisburg Region
(717) 774-8271

Army Corps of Engineers

General Questions
202-761-0011
Regulatory (Permits)
202-761-5903



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Northeast Region- Pennsylvania's Field Office
814.234.4090

**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

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FEDERAL APPROVAL AND PERMITS

1. **Section 404 Clean Water Act Permits** – If the applicant needed a state Chapter 105 Permit from DEP (concerning Water Obstruction and Encroachment) and additional federal permit may be needed (Section 404 Permit). Section 404 Permits are issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This permit is required for any discharge of dredged or fill material into navigable waters of the United States.

Projects that impact less than 250 feet of a stream or less than one acre of wetlands may avoid Section 404 permit review by the Corps if they determine it qualifies for a joint permit review. This means that DEP will take the lead in reviewing the permit application. If the DEP feels the permit is acceptable they will issue a state Chapter 105 Permit and a federal Section 404 Permit known as the “Pennsylvania State Programmatic General Permit”.

If the proposed project does not qualify for a joint permit then DEP and the Corps will do independent permit reviews and issue separate decisions.

2. **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Review** – The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision making processes by considering the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions.

To meet NEPA requirements federal agencies prepare a detailed statement known as an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). EPA reviews and comments on EISs prepared by other federal agencies, maintain a national filing system for all EISs, and assure that its own actions comply with NEPA.

3. **Endangered Species Act**-The applicant should contact Fish and Wildlife Service if they get a “hit” on the PNDI (Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory) for a federally listed threatened or endangered species.

4. **Federal Aviation Administration**- Applicant should contact FAA if:

- any construction or alteration exceeding 200 ft above ground level
- any construction or alteration:
 - within 20,000 ft of a public use or military airport which exceeds a 100:1 surface from any point on the runway of each airport with its longest runway more than 3,200 ft
 - within 10,000 ft of a public use or military airport which exceeds a 50:1 surface from any point on the runway of each airport with its longest runway no more than 3,200 ft
 - within 5,000 ft of a public use heliport which exceeds a 25:1 surface
- any highway, railroad or other traverse way whose prescribed adjusted height would exceed the above noted standards

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- when requested by the FAA
- any construction or alteration located on a public use airport or heliport regardless of height or location.

Disclaimer: *This guide is meant to be a general guideline for development in the Town of Bloomsburg. It should **NOT** be considered all-inclusive. For specific details and requirements concerning land development and subdivision contact the Town of Bloomsburg Codes Enforcement Office.*

*Prepared by the Columbia County Planning Office staff.
Information contained within is relevant as of July, 2017.*