

City of Norwalk

Commercial Development Permit Process



City of Norwalk Zoning Department
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OVERVIEW

Commercial zoning permits are required for all commercial developments and commercial alterations in the City of Norwalk.

The developer/owner must submit required plans to the City Zoning Inspector for review. Upon approval by the City, a zoning permit will be issued.

The developer/owner must then submit the City zoning permit together with required plans to the Richland County Building Department in Mansfield, Ohio. The Richland County Building Department is certified by the State of Ohio to exercise enforcement authority for the Ohio Building Code in the City of Norwalk.

The Richland County Building Department will issue a building permit upon review and approval of the plans by their department.

Commercial building inspections in Norwalk are performed by the Richland County Building Department.

Plumbing approval and inspections in Norwalk are conducted by the Ohio Department of Commerce, Division of Industrial Compliance, Plumbing Section.

PRE-APPLICATION MEETING

A pre-application meeting will be held for all new commercial development within the City of Norwalk. This meeting will consist of the prospective developers and representatives from the City Public Works, Zoning, General Services, Wastewater, and Safety/Service Departments.

The purpose of the pre-application meeting is to discuss the conceptual plan of the development, as well as to address any

concerns and questions on the part of the developers or the City. The developer/owner should contact the Zoning Inspector to schedule a pre-application meeting.

Conceptual Site Plan Requirements

The following is a list of the site plan requirements to be presented at the pre-application meeting:

1. Sketch of lot with dimensions
2. Footprint of building
3. Setback dimensions
4. Proposed storm water plan
5. Proposed sanitation/water connections
6. Parking lot layout
7. Projected number of employees
8. Landscaping
9. Ingress/Egress

FINAL APPLICATION

Review Procedures

The final application for the zoning permit must include 1 full set of building plans, 5 site plans, and 2 sets of storm sewer 5-year storm calculations. These documents are to be submitted to the Norwalk Zoning Department for review by the following departments:

- Zoning Department
- Engineering/Public Works
- Fire Department
- Water Treatment Department

The items specifically reviewed by the Water Treatment Department include:

- Backflow prevention

The items specifically reviewed by the Fire Department include:

- Proper fire protections systems, to include location of

valves, Siamese connections, smoke detectors, type of riser, fire hydrants and water main size, and any other related areas to include fire doors and fire walls.

- Means of egress
- Assured fire lane distance around the structure and proper parking to allow for fire access
- General construction of structure and occupancy limit
- Utility service entrances
- Hazardous material storage areas and proper containment and drainage from those areas

The full set of building plans must include all required documents in compliance with OBC Section 106.

Site Plan Requirements

The final site plan shall include the following information:

1. Existing contours and elevations within 50' of proposed lot
2. Location and elevation of existing storm, sanitary, and water lines
3. Location of existing pavement, curbs, and curb cuts
4. All lot lines, lot area, and lot dimensions
5. All structures on proposed site and any within 50' of lot lines not on proposed site
6. Name and address of owner, lot number, and adjacent subplot or parcel numbers
7. Name and address of plan preparer
8. Footprint of proposed structure
9. Parking – proposed, existing, and handicapped
10. Location of structure from lot lines, parking, etc.
11. Floor elevation of all proposed structures; housing, garage, etc.
12. Parking lot elevations
13. Proposed finished grades on lot (contours), at building corners
14. Proposed sewer and water connections
15. Storm water management

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16. Existing zoning use, proposed zoning use, type of product manufactured
 17. Existing and proposed fence and/or sign locations and size
 18. Water and wastewater flows
 19. Number of employees
 20. Estimate of cost and square footage of building
 21. Landscaping
 22. Trash Receptacles
 - *All sewers and water lines must conform to the City of Norwalk Construction Standards

A maximum of 10 working days is allotted for departmental review. Upon approval by the City and payment of all fees, a zoning permit will be issued.

PERMIT FEES

The fee for a zoning permit is \$200 plus 1/10 of 1% of the cost of construction.

A fee for the site plan review shall be paid with the fee for the zoning permit. This fee will be determined at the pre-application meeting and is based upon an estimate of review time submitted by the Public Works Coordinator. Fee schedules for review are on file with the Public Works Coordinator.

The fee for a zoning permit for additions and alterations is \$100.

The fee for a boulevard opening permit is \$200. The fee for a street opening is based on an estimate by the Superintendent of the Street Department.

Water meters shall be purchased through the Street Department.



CONDITIONAL USES

A conditional use is defined as a use permitted within a district other than a principally permitted use, requiring a conditional use permit and approval of the Board of Zoning Appeals.

An application for a conditional use can be obtained from the Clerk of Council. A \$50 fee is required to be paid upon submission of the completed application to the Clerk.

Conditional use applications will be considered by the Board of Appeals. The Board meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Ohio State Highway Patrol, 300 South Norwalk Road, Norwalk. Applications must be received by the first of the month in order to be considered at that month's meeting.

Approval by the Board of Appeals of a conditional use does not constitute approval of the preliminary or final review.

VARIANCES

Any variance from the zoning code must be considered and approved by the Board of Appeals.

The applicant shall meet the standards and conditions imposed by Section 1137.02 of the Norwalk Zoning Code. No variance shall be granted which will alter the character and use of a zoning district or to correct an error of judgment in zoning laws.

An application for a variance can be obtained from the council clerk. A \$50 fee is required to be paid upon submission of the completed application to the Clerk.

Variance applications will be considered by the Board of Appeals. The board meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Norwalk Municipal Court, 37 N. Linwood Avenue, Norwalk. Applications must be received by the first of the month in order to be considered at that month's meeting.

Approval by the Board of Appeals of a variance does not constitute approval of the preliminary or final review.

LOT SPLITS

Development of property may necessitate a lot split. Lot splits must meet the requirements of the zoning ordinance and must be approved by the Planning Commission.

A request for a lot split should be submitted to the Zoning Inspector and must include a survey plat and description of the property, along with the \$25 application fee. The Zoning Inspector will forward the request to the Planning Commission. The commission meets in the Norwalk Police Department Training Room on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. The Zoning Officer must receive the request for the lot split seven days prior to a meeting for consideration at the next meeting.

The Board of Appeals must approve any variances before a lot split may be submitted to the Planning Commission.

ZONING CHANGES

Zoning changes may be initiated in one of the following ways:

1. By adoption of a motion by the Planning Commission.
2. By adoption of a resolution by City Council.

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3. By the filing of an application of at least one (1) or more owners of property within the area proposed to be changed or affected by said amendment.

The application must be accompanied with the \$200 fee.

Any person or entity desiring a change in the zoning classification of property that said person or entity owns shall file an application for a zoning change. Applications must be filed with the Clerk of Council. Payment of the fee of \$30 plus the actual cost of publishing, posting, and/or mailing notices shall be made at the time the application is filed.

Procedures and requirements for zoning changes may be found in Norwalk Codified Ordinances Chapter 1143. Copies of this ordinance are available from the Clerk of Council.

STATE BUILDING PERMIT PROCEDURE

A State building permit is required upon receiving the City zoning permit. The Richland County Building Department is under contract to issue State building permits for the City of Norwalk. The developer must take the zoning permit and the required building plans to the Richland County Building Department to apply for the permit.

The developer may contact Richland County at (419) 774-5517 with regard to the requirements and fees for application for the permit. Richland County will conduct all of the building inspections.

All plumbing plans shall be submitted to the State of Ohio Department of Industrial Compliance, Plumbing Unit in Reynoldsburg. Review and approvals are available on a mail-in or walk-thru basis. You may contact the main office for details at 1-800-523-3581.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Norwalk Economic Development Corporation (NEDC) is a non-profit corporation funded by the City of Norwalk and private-sector investors to provide economic development services for the Norwalk area. The Economic Development Director can serve as a liaison between business owners and government approval agencies to help coordinate the development and permit process.

NEDC also coordinates incentive packages on a local and state level when development projects will have a significant economic development impact. Access to financing, current market data, access to employee recruitment services and other types of business expansion assistance are available.

The economic development program is housed in the offices of the Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce at 10 West Main Street. NEDC's director can be contacted at (419) 668-9858.

DEVELOPING EXISTING STRUCTURES

Additions/Alterations For Existing Commercial Buildings

When a developer is planning an addition to an existing commercial building, five copies of the site plan and one complete set of building plans must be submitted to the Zoning Department to be distributed for departmental review. The site plan must show the following:

1. Lot dimensions of the entire lot
2. Existing utilities
3. Footprint of all existing buildings on the property
4. Connections for storm water from addition
5. All lot line setback dimensions
6. Dimensions to all other existing buildings on property

For alterations exclusively to the interior of an existing building, the developer needs to submit one complete set of building plans.

City departments will review the plans within 10 working days. Upon approval, a zoning permit will be issued. The developer must take the zoning permit and required plans to the Richland County Building Department in Mansfield for issuance of a state building permit.

Architectural Requirements for Downtown District

Whenever a structure, whether public or private, within the Architectural District of the City of Norwalk is proposed to be constructed or erected, and whenever an existing structure is proposed to be altered, demolished, reconstructed, or enlarged, if such involves the exterior design, material, finish grade line, landscaping or orientation of the structure, a certificate of appropriateness must be issued by the Board of Architectural Review. The standards for review are found in Norwalk Codified Ordinance section 157.06. When the project involves federal funding, in part or in whole, the standards for the certificate of appropriateness are based upon the Downtown Architectural Design Standards, found in Norwalk Codified Ordinance Chapter 1333. The application for the certificate of appropriateness can be obtained by contacting City Hall. Completed applications shall be filed at City Hall for submission to the Board. The board meets at the Norwalk Police Department Training Room at 6 p.m. on the 2nd Monday of the month, as needed.

The Architectural District includes all lots that front on the area of Main Street, commencing at Case/Church Street and extending to Foster Street; and on Whittlesey/Benedict Avenue, commencing at Ohio Street/Railroad Avenue and extending to Water Street.



CONTACTS

City of Norwalk

City Hall	Mayor Rob Duncan	(419) 663-6700
Police	Chief David Light	(419) 663-6780
Fire	Chief John Soisson	(419) 663-6790
Public Works	Josh Snyder	(419) 663-6735
Zoning/Planning	James Frado	(419) 663-6736
Clerk of Council	Lisa Hivnor	(419) 663-6760
Finance	Diane Eschen	(419) 663-6720
Park & Rec	Joe Lindenberger	(419) 663-6775
Law	Stu O'Hara	(419) 663-6785
Municipal Court	Judge Eric Weisenburger	(419) 663-6750
Water Treatment	Robert DelVecchio	(419) 663-6725
Safety/Service	Bob DelVecchio	(419) 663-6700
General Services	Richard Moore	(419) 663-6715
WasteWater	Bill Albrecht	(419) 663-6755
Architectural Review	Mary Stewart	(419) 668-8031
Planning Commission	Clerk of Council	(419) 663-6760
Board of Appeals	Clerk of Council	(419) 663-6760

Norwalk Economic Development Director

Ellen Heinz 10 ½ W. Main (419) 668-9858
Norwalk, OH 44857

Huron County Chamber of Commerce

Melissa James 10 W. Main (419) 668-4155
Norwalk, OH 44857

Huron County General Health District

Tim Hollinger 180 Milan Avenue (419) 668-1652
Norwalk, OH 44857

Richland County Building Department

Stephen Risser 1495 W. Longview (419) 774-5517
Suite 202A
Mansfield, OH 44902

State of Ohio, Department of Industrial Compliance, Plumbing Unit

Vern Buyer 6606 Tussing Road 1-800-686-1597
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Reynoldsburg, OH 43068