

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- *What does the Planning Board do?* The Dennis Planning Board is responsible for developing and reviewing zoning proposals, land development applications, and the Local Comprehensive Plan and other special district studies as may arise. The Planning Board is required to schedule public hearings on land subdivision and development applications as well as zoning changes. For zoning changes, the Planning Board makes recommendations to Town Meeting. The Planning Board is also charged by Dennis General By-law to hear all tree removals within the roadway layout under the Dennis Scenic Roads By-law.
- *How many Board members are on the panel and how long do they serve?* The Planning Board is comprised of seven members who are appointed by the Selectmen for a three-year term. Currently we are looking for new alternates (Planning Board Associates), to serve for a one-year term on Special Permits only, in the case of a Member's absence or conflict of interest in a particular case. If you are interested in applying for a position on the Planning Board, please contact Jacquelyn Varjian, Executive Assistant, in the Town Administrator's Office.
- *What are the qualifications for becoming a Planning Board Member or Associate?* Planning Board members come from a broad spectrum of life. To qualify one does not need any particular degree but must be open-minded, willing to learn, and capable of reading and understanding the Dennis Zoning Bylaws. Attending meetings either in person or by screen is helpful in becoming familiar with the issues and procedures.
- *When do Planning Board Hearings take place?* The Planning Board typically meets at 6:30 PM on the first and third Monday evening of every month. Due to holidays or other circumstances, these dates are subject to change. For a current schedule please see the Hearing List on the Planning Board web page.
- *What is the purpose of the Subdivision Control Law?* The Subdivision Control Law serves to protect the safety, convenience and welfare of the town's inhabitants by regulating the laying out and construction of ways in subdivisions providing access to the lots therein, but which have not become public ways and ensuring sanitary conditions.
- *Where can I get a copy of the Subdivision Rules and Regulations?* Copies of the Town of Dennis Subdivision Rules & Regulations can be purchased for \$10.00 at the Planning Office.
- *Where can I get a copy of the Dennis Zoning Bylaws?* The Dennis Zoning Bylaws can be viewed or downloaded from the Planning Board Website. Printed copies can be purchased for \$25.00 at the Planning Office.

- *What is the difference between a subdivision and an ANR (approval not required)?* A subdivision is a division of land into two or more lots and typically involves the creation of a new road. An ANR is the division of land into lots with frontage on existing roads, whether public or private. The Planning Board endorses ANR's certifying that approval under the Subdivision Control Law is not required.
- *How can I determine what Zoning District I live in?* A zoning map is viewable on the Planning Board website. Zoning maps are also available for \$5.00 at the Planning Office. You may also call or come into the office for assistance in determining your zoning district.
- *How can I determine if my property is in a floodplain?* Floodplains are designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). You may view this map from the main page of the Town website or call the Planning Office for assistance.
- *How do I find my Map and Parcel Number?* You can locate your Map and Parcel number from the home page of the Dennis Town Website at [www.town.dennis.ma.us](http://www.town.dennis.ma.us). Click on the "Assessor's Database" link, then on "Search," and enter your name and/or address. You can also call the Planning and Appeals Office for assistance in looking up your information.
- *Do you have a plot plan for my property?* Generally we do not unless a planning or zoning permit has been filed within the last ten years. You will need an updated certified plot/site plan prepared by a Registered profession Land Surveyor.
- *What does it cost to file a permit?* The application fee is determined by several factors: type of project, square footage, number of lots, etc. Please consult our fee schedule on the website or in our office.
- *What uses are allowed on my property?* You may come into the Planning Department and discuss potential uses with the Town Planner any time. Zoning District and Zoning Bylaw Use Codes will be considered, but the Building Commissioner is the definitive authority on zoning.
- *What are the minimum lot requirements, yard setbacks and total site coverage for my property?* This information is contained in the Intensity of Use Schedule located on page 23 of the Dennis Zoning Bylaws (either online or at our office).
- *Once a Special permit is granted, how long does it take to obtain my building permit?* Chapter 40A Section 9 provides us with up to 65 days from the close of the hearing to record a Special permit with the Town Clerk. Typically, the Town Planner takes up to 14 days from the date the Board approves the permit to write up the Final Decision and have it stamped in with the Clerk's Office. A 20-day appeal period follows after which

time, if no appeals are filed the Final Decision is sealed and forwarded to the applicant. The applicant must then have that document recorded at the Barnstable County Registry of Deeds after which they are clear to pursue their building permit (which may take up to an additional 30 days).

- *How long is a Special Permit good for after it is granted?* You have one year to begin your project from the date of its approval.
- *I have several questions before proceeding with filing my application. Who can help?* You may call and set up an appointment to meet with the Town Planner, or drop by the Planning and Appeals Office. If you have any relevant plans to your project bring them with you. The Planner will be happy to answer any of your questions and discuss potential pitfalls or possibilities related to your project. If you would like to meet with several department heads in one meeting, please call the Planning Office two weeks ahead and schedule a *Staff Review*. There is no charge for this service.