GETTING STARTED

The Town of Natick has created this Business Guide to help small businesses navigate municipal procedures – including permitting, licensing and zoning – in a simple, straight-forward format. It is part of a larger effort to attract new businesses into the town’s business districts while also seeking to diversify the existing retail mix.

Natick’s small business community is the heart of the town’s commercial districts in Natick Center, West Natick, South Natick and along Route Nine. Unlike major chains, malls and lifestyle centers, small businesses are typically run by an owner with few, if any, employees. Small business proprietors often have to engage in potentially confusing permitting and licensing processes on their own, with little assistance or counsel. This Guide provides short summaries of the steps required to apply for various permits and licenses required to do business in the town, enabling small proprietors to save time and money by following concrete, defined processes with results that are as predictable as possible.

As you move forward with your business venture, licenses and permits are required in Natick because the Town must complete technical and regulatory reviews to ensure the health and safety of its citizens. However, as a small business, you will receive assistance and guidance as you go through various application processes, which will help ensure that the outcomes are clear and finalized as quickly as possible so you can open your business. Your success becomes the town’s success!

As you prepare to open your business, always remember that Natick’s Community & Economic Development Department is happy to assist you with municipal applications so that you can do things right the first time. You should also visit the Selectmen’s Office and Board of Health in Town Hall and, potentially, the Public Works Department at the Public Works headquarters on West Street. Key contacts for the Town’s licensing and permitting processes are listed on the next page.
KEY CONTACTS

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT (Town Hall, Second Floor, 13 E. Central Street)

James Freas 508-647-6450 Director of Community & Economic Development (special permits)
Michael Connolly 508-647-6448 Building Inspector (building permits)
Ted Fields 508-647-6428 Senior Planner (site plan review, special permits, troubleshooting)
David Gusmini 508-647-6447 Building Commissioner (zoning enforcement)
Marianne Iarossi 508-647-6452 Conservation Agent / Planner

SELECTMEN'S OFFICE (Town Hall, Second Floor, 13 E. Central Street)

Melissa Malone 508-647-6410 Town Administrator
Donna Donovan 508-647-6410 Senior Executive Assistant (alcohol licenses, Selectmen's permits)
Joan McNamara 508-647-6400x1402 Executive Assistant to the Select Board and Town Administrator
Michael Hickey 508-647-6410 Select Board Chair

HEALTH DEPARTMENT (Town Hall, Second Floor, 13 E. Central Street)

James White 508-647-6460 Director of Public Health (health permits)
Jane Anderson 508-647-6460 Environmental Health Agent
Michael Boudreau 508-647-6460 Environmental Health Agent

TOWN CLERK (Town Hall, First Floor, 13 E. Central Street)

Diane Packer 508-647-6430 Town Clerk (business registration)
Kerry Graveline 508-647-6430 Executive Assistant

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (Public Works Headquarters, 75 West Street)

Jeremy Marsette 508-647-6550 Director of Public Works
Anthony Comeau 508-647-6557 Supervisor (water & sewer division)
Tom Hladick 508-647-6562 Deputy Director (highway & sanitation)
William McDowell 508-647-6400 Town Engineer (curb cuts, utility connections)

FIRE DEPARTMENT (Fire Headquarters, 22 E. Central Street)

Michael Lentini 508-647-9551 Chief

POLICE DEPARTMENT (Police Headquarters, 20 E. Central Street)

James Hicks 508-647-9551 Chief
Brian Lauzon 508-647-9518 Lieutenant (safety officer)

METROWEST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (860 Worcester Road, Framingham, MA 01702)

James Giammarinaro 508-879-5600 President/Chief Executive Officer

OFFICE HOURS

Town Hall: Monday – Wednesday: 8:00am to 5:00pm, Thursday: 8:00am to 7:00pm and Friday: 8:00am to 12:30pm

DPW: Monday: 7:00am to 7:00pm, Tuesday-Thursday: 7:00am to 4:00pm and Friday: 7:00am to noon

Police: Monday-Friday: 8:00am to 4:00pm (Dispatch: 24 hours/day)

Fire: Monday-Friday: 8:30am to 5:00pm (Dispatch: 24 hours/day)
Town of Natick, Massachusetts

Community & Economic Development Department
TOWN OFFICE LOCATIONS
ESTABLISHMENT LICENSES

CONTACT James White, Director of Public Health at 508-647-6460

WHAT IS AN ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE? An Establishment License allows the Town to determine compliance with relevant health and safety codes for businesses that involve, among other uses, preparing, distributing and selling food or tobacco, raising livestock, lodging guests, performing body work or creating body art on clients or operating dumpsters for commercial uses.

WHO NEEDS AN ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE? Any business handling and selling food such as a catering business, restaurant, diner, or food distributor must obtain a FOOD ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE. Any business selling goods for consumption, such as tobacco and candy must obtain an ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE. Any business using a dumpster or dumpsters on a site must obtain a DUMPSTER LICENSE. Businesses offering bodywork services, such as therapeutic massage or indoor tanning, or body art, such as tattoos or piercings, must obtain a BODY ART or BODYWORK LICENSE. Finally certain other businesses, such as recreation camps, motels, hotels and funeral homes must obtain an ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE.

WHERE DO I GET AN ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE? The Health Department issues ESTABLISHMENT LICENSES.

HOW DO I GET AN ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE? An ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE may be obtained by the following process:

I. Application: The application form is called a License to Operate an Establishment. It may be obtained from the Health Department.

II. Review: The Director of Public Health and Board of Health will schedule the review of the application, which may include a public meeting.

III. Decision: A decision on the application will be made within 30 days.

IV. Inspection: The Director of Public Health may periodically inspect the premises to check compliance.
OPENING A RETAIL BUSINESS

CONTACT Ted Fields, Senior Planner at 508-647-6428

TO START:

A. Consult the Community & Economic Development Department for information about zoning and parking requirements on any particular site. Talk to a Building Inspector about obtaining a BUILDING PERMIT and/or a SIGN PERMIT if your proposed retail site requires interior or exterior renovations, including any new or re-modeled signage. Apply to the Zoning Board of Appeals for VARIANCES or the Planning Board for SPECIAL PERMITS or SITE PLAN REVIEWS to comply with local zoning requirements, if necessary.

   Contact: David Gusmini, Building Commissioner or Michael Connelly, Building Inspector at 508-647-6450

B. Obtain a BUSINESS CERTIFICATE from the Town Clerk’s Office, if necessary.

   Contact: Diane Packer, Town Clerk at 508-647-6430

   Please refer to the directions on page 5 for more information on this topic.

C. Obtain an ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE from the Health Department, if necessary.

   Contact: James White, Director of Public Health at 508-647-6460

   Please refer to the directions on page 6 for more information on this topic.

D. Contact the Police Department’s Safety Officer and the Fire Department’s Fire Safety Officer to schedule safety inspections for smoke detectors and, if necessary, hazardous materials storage.

   Contact: Lieutenant Brian Lauzon at 508-647-9518

   Contact Lieutenant Rocky Francoise at 508-647-9550

F. Consider joining Natick Center Associates if your business is located near Natick Center.

   Contact: Athena Pandolf at 508-650-8848

G. Consider joining the Metrowest Chamber of Commerce.

   Contact: Paul Joseph at 508-879-5600

NOTE: Retailers of tobacco products, nicotine delivery products, and food products must obtain a permit from the Health Department and may be required to submit a plan review application; retailers of second-hand goods also require a permit from the Board of Selectmen.

PROCESS: Secure a Site (in a CII, DM, HMI, HMI1 or LC zone or an MC, RC or RCP overlay district - refer to CED for details) —

Obtain Zoning Permits ——— Obtain a Business Certificate ——— Obtain an Establishment License, if necessary ———

Obtain a Building Permit for construction/renovations ——— Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy ———

Open for Business
OPENING A SERVICE BUSINESS

CONTACT Ted Fields, Senior Planner at 508-647-6428

TO START:

A. Consult the Community & Economic Development Department for information about zoning and parking requirements on any particular site. Talk to a Building Inspector about obtaining a BUILDING PERMIT and/or a SIGN PERMIT if your proposed retail site requires interior or exterior renovations, including any new or remodeled signage. Apply to the Zoning Board of Appeals for VARIANCES or the Planning Board for SPECIAL PERMITS or SITE PLAN REVIEWS to comply with local zoning requirements, if necessary.

   Contact: David Gusmini, Building Commissioner or Michael Connelly, Building Inspector at 508-647-6450

B. Obtain a BUSINESS CERTIFICATE from the Town Clerk’s Office, if necessary.

   Contact: Diane Packer, Town Clerk at 508-647-6430

   Please refer to the directions on page 5 for more information on this topic.

C. Obtain an ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE from the Health Department, if necessary.

   Contact: James White, Director of Public Health at 508-647-6460

   Please refer to the directions on page 6 for more information on this topic.

D. Contact the Police Department’s Safety Officer and the Fire Department’s Fire Safety Officer to schedule safety inspections for smoke detectors and, if necessary, hazardous materials storage.

   Contact: Lieutenant Brian Lauzon at 508-647-9518

   Contact Lieutenant Rocky Francoise at 508-647-9550

F. Consider joining Natick Center Associates if your business is located near Natick Center.

   Contact: Athena Pandolf at 508-650-8848

G. Consider joining the Metrowest Chamber of Commerce.

   Contact: Paul Joseph at 508-879-5600

PROCESS: Secure a Site (in a CII, DM, HMI, HMII or LC zone or an MC, RC or RCP overlay district - refer to CED for details) → Obtain Zoning Permits → Obtain a Business Certificate → Obtain an Establishment License, if necessary → Obtain a Building Permit for construction/renovations → Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy → Open for Business
OPENING A RESTAURANT

CONTACT Ted Fields, Senior Planner at 508-647-6428

TO START:

A. Consult the Community & Economic Development Department for information about zoning and parking requirements on a particular property. Talk to a Building Inspector about obtaining a BUILDING PERMIT and/or a SIGN PERMIT if your proposed restaurant site requires interior or exterior renovations, including any new or remodeled signage. Apply to the Zoning Board of Appeals for VARIANCES or the Planning Board for SPECIAL PERMITS or SITE PLAN REVIEWS to comply with local zoning requirements, if necessary.

   Contact: David Gusmini, Building Commissioner or Michael Connelly, Building Inspector at 508-647-6450

B. Obtain a BUSINESS CERTIFICATE from the Town Clerk's Office, if necessary.

   Contact: Diane Packer, Town Clerk at 508-647-6430
   Please refer to the directions on page 5 for more information on this topic.

C. Obtain a FOOD ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE from the Health Department. An application can be downloaded here: www.natickma.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/4093

   Contact: James White, Director of Public Health at 508-647-6460
   Please refer to the directions on page 6 for more information on this topic.

D. Apply for a LIQUOR LICENSE from the Town Administrator's Office if your restaurant plans to serve alcohol. Your establishment will require at least 20 seats for a Beer &Wine License, and more than 100 seats for an All Alcohol License. More information can be obtained at these sites: www.natickma.gov/954/Alcohol and www.natickma.gov/522/Licenses-Fees

   Contact: Donna Donovan, Town Administrator's Office at 781-647-6410

E. Contact the Police Department's Safety Officer and the Fire Department's Fire Safety Officer to schedule safety inspections for smoke detectors and, if necessary, hazardous materials storage.

   Contact: Lieutenant Brian Lauzon at 508-647-9518
   Contact Lieutenant Rocky Francoise at 508-647-9550

F. Consider joining Natick Center Associates.

   Contact: Athena Pandolf at 508-650-8848

G. Consider joining the Metrowest Chamber of Commerce.

   Contact: Paul Joseph at 508-879-5600

PROCESS: Secure a Site (in a CII, DM, HMI, HMII or LC zone or an MC, RC or RCP overlay district - refer to CED for details) → Obtain Zoning Permits → Obtain a Business Certificate → Obtain a Food Establishment License → (Obtain a Liquor License) → Obtain a Building Permit for construction/renovations → Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy → Open for Business
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSES

CONTACT Ted Fields, Senior Planner at 508-647-6428

DEFINITION: An alcoholic beverage license is required for establishments handling alcoholic beverages, including retail pouring and off-premises package sales. Any business that sells, stores, distributes, serves or delivers alcohol must have an alcoholic beverage license.

WHERE AND HOW DO I GET AN ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE? Alcoholic beverage licenses must be approved by the Board of Selectmen as well as the Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC). The Board of Selectmen, acting as the local licensing board, ultimately issues alcohol licenses in Natick.

TO START:
A. Contact Donna Donovan, Town Administrator’s Office at 508-647-6410 or Ted Fields at 508-647-6428 about the availability of different varieties of ALCOHOL LICENSES (restaurant pouring, retail pouring, off-premises package, etc.) in Natick. A schedule of fees for different types of alcohol licenses can be found here: www.natickma.gov/522/Licenses-Fees;
B. Choose and complete the appropriate online application on the ABCC’s website (www.mass.gov/abcc/forms.htm). Your establishment will require at least 20 seats for a Beer &Wine License, and more than 100 seats for an All Alcohol License. More information can be obtained at: www.natickma.gov/954/Alcohol;
C. Submit your application to the Board of Selectmen. The application will be posted as an agenda item for the Board;
D. Appear before the Board of Selectmen at the posted time, date and location. The Board of Selectmen will review your application and determine whether to approve it at the local level;
E. Consider joining Natick Center Associates.
   Contact: Athena Pandolf at 508-650-8848
F. Consider joining the Metrowest Chamber of Commerce.
   Contact: Paul Joseph at 508-879-5600

PROCESS: Determine what type of alcohol license you require and discuss availability of such licenses in Natick
complete State ABCC alcohol license application 
Submit ABCC license application and support documents to Administrator’s Office
Testify before the Board of Selectmen about your license application
If approved by Selectmen, wait for application approval by ABCC
Receive license from Board of Selectmen
OPENING A CANINE-RELATED BUSINESS

CONTACT Ted Fields, Senior Planner at 508-647-6428

TO START:

A. Consult the Community & Economic Development Department for information about applying to the Planning Board for a SPECIAL PERMIT to operate a Dog Kennel in a Single Family Residence, General Residence or Commercial II zoning district. Dog Kennels are defined in the Natick Zoning By-law to cover any dog-related business that services three or more dogs at any time during business hours.

   Contact: Ted Fields, Senior Planner at 508-647-6450

B. Consult the Building Commissioner for parking requirements on a particular property and for requirements for obtaining a BUILDING PERMIT and/or a SIGN PERMIT if your proposed site requires interior or exterior renovations, including any new or remodeled signage.

   Contact: David Gusmini, Building Commissioner or Michael Connelly, Building Inspector at 508-647-6450

C. Obtain a copy of the Board of Health’s Dog Waste Disposal Standard Operating Procedure from the Health Department.

   Contact: James White, Director of Public Health at 508-647-6460

D. Obtain a KENNEL LICENSE from the Town Clerk’s Office.

   Contact: Diane Packer, Town Clerk at 508-647-6430

E. Obtain a BUSINESS CERTIFICATE from the Town Clerk’s Office, if necessary.

   Contact: Diane Packer, Town Clerk at 508-647-6430

   Please refer to the directions on page 5 for more information on this topic.

F. Consider joining Natick Center Associates.

   Contact: Athena Pandolf at 508-650-8848

G. Consider joining the Metrowest Chamber of Commerce.

   Contact: Paul Joseph at 508-879-5600

PROCESS: Secure a Site (in an RS, RG or CII zone) → Obtain a Special Permit for a Dog Kennel → Obtain a Kennel License → Obtain a Business Certificate → Obtain a Building Permit (for construction/renovations) → Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy → Open for Business
OBTAINING A BUILDING PERMIT

CONTACT Michael Connelly, Building Inspector at 508-647-6448

WHAT IS A BUILDING PERMIT? In Natick, Building Permits are issued by the Building Department to licensed contractors and property owners for the construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, demolition, removal and inspection of any buildings or structures. The Building Department also issues and revokes permits, classifies and defines any building or structure, the use of occupancy of all buildings and structures and administers and enforces Natick’s Zoning By-law.

WHO NEEDS TO GET A BUILDING PERMIT? Building permits are required to construct, reconstruct, alter, repair, remove or demolish a structure (which includes buildings, fences, walls, signs, temporary sheds, awnings, etc. under Natick’s Zoning By-Law).

WHERE AND HOW DO I GET A BUILDING PERMIT? The Building Commissioner issues building permits. Other required approvals for the work, such as Special Permits, Variances and Fire Department approval, must be obtained before a Building Permit can be issued.

TO START:

Follow these steps to obtain a Building Permit and a Certificate of Occupancy:

A. Application: Submit a Building Permit application to the Building Department. The fee is calculated at that time based on the value of construction. A full range of applications can be downloaded here: www.natickma.gov/156/Building-Department

B. Process: After submittal of the Application and Plans, a Building Permit must be issued to begin construction. Elements of construction such as foundation, plumbing and electrical will be permitted separately under certain conditions. Periodic inspections must be scheduled as elements of the project are completed. A final inspection and review is necessary for a Certificate of Occupancy. Consult the Building Department for a complete description of the Building Permit process.

C. Certificate of Occupancy: After work is completed in compliance with requirements of the Building Permit, the project will receive a Certificate of Occupancy from the Building Department, which is required to occupy the building.

PROCESS: Secure a Site (in any zone) → Submit a Building Permit Application, with Plans, to the Building Department → Obtain a Building Permit → Proceed with construction → Schedule periodic inspections as directed by the Building Department → Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy → Open for Business
OBTAINING A SPECIAL PERMIT

CONTACT Ted Fields, Senior Planner at 508-647-6428

WHAT IS A SPECIAL PERMIT? A SPECIAL PERMIT grants the use of a structure or lot in a manner not allowed By-Right under Natick’s Zoning Bylaw. A SPECIAL PERMIT can only be granted after a Special Permit Application is filed with the Community & Economic Development Department (CED). The SPECIAL PERMIT process is regulated by the provisions of Sections VI-DD of the Natick Zoning By-law.

WHO NEEDS A SPECIAL PERMIT? SPECIAL PERMITS are required for developing a use or uses on a lot which are not allowed By-Right in the town’s Zoning By-law, and require the approval of the Planning Board (or the Zoning Board of Appeals in certain zoning districts). SPECIAL PERMITS are also required for changing the existing uses of lots to uses not allowed By-Right under the Zoning Bylaw. Note that uses not allowed By-Right or by Special Permit in the Bylaw cannot be allowed by a Special Permit.

WHO APPROVES A SPECIAL PERMIT? The Planning Board reviews and approves SPECIAL PERMIT applications in all zoning districts in Natick, except for Limited Commercial (LC) and Subsidized Housing (SHA) zones, where the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) reviews and approves Special Permit applications.

SPECIAL PERMIT OVERVIEW: The purpose of Natick’s Special Permit procedure is to protect the safety, public health, convenience and general welfare of the inhabitants of the Town by providing a comprehensive review of plans for uses and structures which have a significant impact upon the character of the Town and upon traffic, utilities and property values. Factors to be considered are the placement of buildings and utilities, surface and groundwater drainage, wetlands, water supply, parking, loading, landscaping, lighting, dust and noise control, access to the development, acceptable sanitary conditions and the proper provision for open areas. This Special Permit process is intended to insure that the design and layout of developments subject to its provisions will constitute be suitable and will not result in a detriment to the neighborhood or to the environment. Any Special Permit application filed with the Planning Board or ZBA shall also require Site Plan Review. Special Permits are discretionary, the Planning Board/ZBA are not required to approve Special Permit applications if in their opinion a proposed plan does not merit granting the approval, in view of the criteria and standards set in the Natick Zoning By-law.

HOW DO I GET A SPECIAL PERMIT? There are several steps to obtaining a Special Permit from the Planning Board or ZBA.

TO START:

Please consult the Community and Economic Development Department (CED) for complete information regarding the town’s special permitting process. More information can be found here: www.natickma.gov/162/Community-Economic-Development.

PROCESS: Pre-application review at Community & Economic Development Department (CED) → Submit a Special Permit Application to CED → Wait one (1) month for abutter and public notification → Present Special Permit proposal at Planning Board/ZBA hearing(s) → If Special Permit is approved, wait 20 days for appeals to be filed → If no appeals are filed, obtain a Building Permit → Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy
OWNING A SITE PLAN REVIEW

CONTACT Ted Fields, Senior Planner at 508-647-6428

WHAT IS SITE PLAN REVIEW? A SITE PLAN regulates the design of a structure or layout of structures on a lot in a manner permitted By-Right or allowed by Special Permit under Natick’s Zoning By-law. A SITE PLAN can only be approved after a SITE PLAN Application is filed with the Community and Economic Development Department (CED). The SITE PLAN process is regulated by the provisions of Sections VI-DD of the Zoning By-law.

WHO NEEDS A SITE PLAN? SITE PLANS are required for changing a use or uses on a lot which are allowed By-Right or Special Permit in Natick’s Zoning By-law. SITE PLANS are also required for exterior modifications to structures allowed By-Right or Special Permit under the Zoning By-law (except for one or two-family homes, garages, public service, religious and educational structures). Additionally, construction of parks, trails, roads, driveways and parking areas require SITE PLAN APPROVAL. Note that uses prohibited By-Right or by Special Permit in the By-law cannot be allowed by a SITE PLAN.

WHO APPROVES A SITE PLAN? The Planning Board reviews and approves SITE PLAN applications in all zoning districts in Natick, except for Limited Commercial (LC) and Subsidized Housing (SHA) zones, where the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) conducts SITE PLAN REVIEWS.

SITE PLAN OVERVIEW: The purpose of Natick’s Site Plan Review procedure is to protect the safety, public health, convenience and general welfare of the inhabitants of the Town by providing a comprehensive review of plans for uses and structures which have a significant impact upon the character of the Town and upon traffic, utilities and property values therein. Factors to be considered are the placement of buildings and utilities, surface and groundwater drainage, wetlands, water supply, parking, loading, landscaping, lighting, dust and noise control, access to the development, acceptable sanitary conditions and the proper provision for open areas. This Site Plan Review process is intended to insure that the design and layout of developments subject to its provisions will constitute be suitable and will not result in a detriment to the neighborhood or to the environment. Any Site Plan filed with the Planning Board or ZBA shall receive approval if the plan conforms to the standards established in the Natick Zoning By-law and to reasonable rules and regulations of these boards made in conformance with the by-law.

HOW DO I GET SITE PLAN APPROVED? There are several steps to obtaining SITE PLAN APPROVAL from the Planning Board or ZBA.

TO START:

Please consult the Community and Economic Development Department (CED) for complete information regarding the town’s special permitting process. More information can be found here: www.natickma.gov/162/Community-Economic-Development.

PROCESS: Pre-application review at Community & Economic Development Department (CED) ➔ Submit a Site Plan Review Application and Site Plan(s) to CED ➔ Wait one (1) month for abutter and public notification ➔ Present Site Plan at Planning Board/ZBA hearing(s) ➔ If Site Plan is approved, wait 20 days for appeals to be filed ➔ If no appeals are filed, obtain a Building Permit ➔ Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy
OBTAINING A VARIANCE

CONTACT Michael Connelly, Building Inspector at 508-647-6448

WHAT IS A VARIANCE? A VARIANCE is a waiver of certain zoning requirements, typically dimensional standards. Use variances cannot be granted in Natick. This means that if a use is not listed in the Natick Zoning By-law, it cannot be allowed by a VARIANCE.

WHO NEEDS TO GET A VARIANCE? Typically, VARIANCES are sought when a property owner or developer wants to construct, expand or change a building, but their property or building does not meet all the dimensional requirements in the Zoning By-law. Variances are specifically required if you want to reconstruct, extend or structurally change a nonconforming building – one that does not conform to the Zoning By-law – if the change either increases an existing nonconformity or creates a new one.

WHO APPROVES VARIANCES? The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) reviews and approves petitions for VARIANCES.

VARIANCE OVERVIEW: The Massachusetts standard for granting a zoning variance, contained in M.G.L. c. 40A, § 10, is strict. It basically requires proof that: (1) due to circumstances concerning SOIL CONDITIONS, the SHAPE OF THE LOT, or the TOPOGRAPHY OF THE LAND; which (2) especially affect the land but not the zoning district generally; (3) literal enforcement of the zoning ordinance would cause a substantial hardship (financial or otherwise); and (4) relief can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good; (5) without nullifying or substantially derogating from the intent or purpose of the ordinance. Each requirement must be met. Applications for variances are NOT guaranteed to be approved by the Natick ZBA.

HOW DO I GET A VARIANCE? There are several steps to obtaining a Special Permit from the Planning Board or ZBA.

TO START:

Please consult the Community and Economic Development Department (CED) for more information regarding the VARIANCE process: www.natickma.gov/162/Community-Economic-Development. Applications can be found here: www.natickma.gov/406/Downloadable-Forms.

PROCESS: Pre-application review at Community & Economic Development Department (CED) —— Submit a Building Permit Application to CED —— Wait for Building Commissioner to deny Building Permit —— Apply for a Variance for zoning relief —— Wait one (1) month for abutter and public notification —— Present Variance application at ZBA hearing(s) —— If Variance is approved, wait 20 days for appeals to be filed —— If no appeals are filed, obtain a Building Permit —— Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy