



## **PROCEDURES FOR FILING A VARIANCE**

An individual has the right to file an appeal with the Nashua Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) if a particular construction project fails to conform to the requirements of the Nashua Zoning Ordinance. This process is available if a proposal fails to comply with the use, dimensional, or other specified requirements of the Zoning Ordinance due to unique circumstances affecting the subject property. The appeal procedure for seeking such relief is referred to as a “variance.”

For many, appearing before the ZBA represents a new experience. The purpose of this handout is to provide information necessary for proceeding with this process. It is recommended that you carefully read the following instructions and contact the Planning Department (603) 589-3090 should you have any questions or desire additional information.

### **1. HOW TO COMPLETE THE ZBA APPLICATION**

- a. Obtain a ZBA application form. Forms are available at the City of Nashua Planning Department, City Hall, 229 Main Street, Second Floor, Nashua, New Hampshire and are also available at [www.nashuanh.gov](http://www.nashuanh.gov). Complete the application, including all necessary signatures. Lessees and/or optionees must secure the owner’s written authorization as provided on the application form.
- b. All applications must be submitted with a plot plan denoting the location of property lines, all existing and proposed buildings/structures in relation to the property lines, paved or parking surfaces, and appropriate measurements. Plot plans do not need to be completed by a professional engineer or surveyor; however, such plans must be drawn to scale and accurately reflect existing and proposed conditions. It is recommended that plot plans be drawn on an 8½” x 11” sheet of grid paper. (See example of plot plan attached.)
- c. Applications must be submitted with appropriate application fees payable to the City of Nashua, in order to defray costs associated with legal notification, advertising, and administrative expenses. The application fees vary depending on the type and number of requests being sought. Refer to #4 below for determining appropriate application fees.
- d. Submit a completed application, plot plan, and applicable application fee to the Planning Department.
- e. Upon receipt of a complete application, your request will be scheduled for a public hearing. Refer to the attached schedule of hearing dates and corresponding deadline dates for submitted applications.
- f. The Planning Department will notify applicants by certified mail approximately ten (10) days prior to the hearing confirming the time and location of the meeting. As a general rule, hearings are held at 6:30 p.m. in the third floor auditorium in City Hall. It is important, however, to refer to your notification letter in the event of a change in time or location.

### **2. THE PUBLIC HEARING**

- a. Attendance at the ZBA public hearing is mandatory by either yourself or your representative. When your case is called, approach the podium, give your name and address for the record, and proceed to explain the nature of your request. When considering a variance, the ZBA can weigh only the following conditions of law relative to a variance. Therefore, it is important that you explain how each condition applies to your case.

The zoning board of adjustment shall have the power to:

- b. Authorize, upon appeal in specific cases, a variance from the terms of the zoning ordinance if:
  1. The variance will not be contrary to the public interest;
  2. The spirit of the ordinance is observed;
  3. Substantial justice is done;
  4. The values of surrounding properties are not diminished; and

5. Literal enforcement of the provisions of the ordinance would result in an unnecessary hardship.

(A) For purposes of this subparagraph, “unnecessary hardship” means that, owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area:

(i) No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property; and

(ii) The proposed use is a reasonable one.

(B) If the criteria in subparagraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be reasonably used in strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore necessary to enable reasonable use of it.

The definition of “unnecessary hardship” set forth in subparagraph (5) shall apply whether the provision of the ordinance from which a variance is sought is a restriction on use, a dimensional or other limitation on a permitted use, or any other requirements of the ordinance.

c. Members of the public may speak either in support or opposition to a variance appeal once the petitioner has addressed the conditions of law. Both parties may offer rebuttal to previous testimony prior to concluding the case. The deliberation and decision of each case occurs after the case has been presented.

### 3. **ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES – REQUEST FOR REHEARING**

a. If you are aggrieved by a ZBA decision, you may file a Request for Rehearing within thirty (30) calendar days following the decision. It is recommended that the Request for Rehearing be hand delivered to the Planning Department. A Request for Rehearing, presented in letter format and addressed to the ZBA, should outline the basis for the rehearing request. The ZBA is empowered to grant a rehearing if it is found a procedural error has occurred or if the Request for Rehearing contains new evidence not presented during the initial hearing.

b. If a rehearing is granted, you must submit a new application to the ZBA to schedule a new hearing. A Request for Rehearing that is denied may be appealed to the New Hampshire Superior Court within thirty days from the date of decision.

### 4. **FEES (See Article XLIII, C. (1) and (2) for more information)**

a. **Basic fee for all other petitions except as otherwise noted** **\$330.00**

b. Basic fee for special exception petitions involving the following:

1. Filling of floodplains	\$440.00
2. Filling of wetlands	\$440.00
3. Planned business developments	\$440.00
4. Planned industrial developments	\$440.00
5. Processing/removal of raw material	\$440.00

c. Basic fee for use variance **\$900.00**

d. Applications with more than one request **\$200.00**

e. The abutter notification fee shall be \$3.00 per abutter, plus any necessary postal fees.

Notification fees do not apply to existing residential structures on lots containing three residential units or less. The time and date of the hearing shall not be set, nor shall notices be sent out, unless and until all the supporting documents, including all permits, plans, approvals and other documents required for the application have been filed with the administrative officer. Additionally, any postponement caused by the applicant, unless the direct result of Zoning Board action shall necessitate the payment of a processing fee of \$100.00.

f. The applicant shall pay \$15.00 for each required on-site notification sign. A recovery fee of \$100.00 shall be paid by the applicant for each sign remaining on-site in excess of seven days of the public hearing.



**City of Nashua**  
**Planning Department**

229 Main Street  
Nashua, New Hampshire 03061-2019

Planning & Zoning 589-3090  
WEB www.nashuanh.gov

**VARIANCE APPLICATION (ZBA)**

**PLEASE NOTE: INCOMPLETE OR ILLEGIBLE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

This application must be completed and submitted to the Planning Department no later than the dates listed on the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) schedule sheet. Please print clearly or type.

**I. VARIANCE INFORMATION**

1. ADDRESS OF REQUEST \_\_\_\_\_

Zoning District \_\_\_\_\_ Sheet \_\_\_\_\_ Lot \_\_\_\_\_

2. VARIANCE(S) REQUESTED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**II. GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. **APPLICANT / OPTIONEE** (List both individual name and corporate name if applicable)

**(Print Name):** \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number H: \_\_\_\_\_ C: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

2. **PROPERTY OWNER (Print Name):** \_\_\_\_\_

\*Owner's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Owner's address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number H: \_\_\_\_\_ C: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Agents and/or option holders must supply written authorization to submit on behalf of owner(s).**

.....

<b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	Date Received _____	Date of hearing _____	Application checked for completeness: _____
A# _____	Board Action _____		
\$ _____ application fee <input type="checkbox"/>	Date Paid _____	Receipt # _____	
\$ _____ signage fee <input type="checkbox"/>	Date Paid _____	Receipt # _____	
\$ _____ certified mailing fee <input type="checkbox"/>	Date Paid _____	Receipt # _____	
Land Use Code Section(s) Requesting Variances From: _____			

.....

**III. PURPOSE OF REQUEST**

Answer all questions below. Provide as much information as available to give the ZBA the necessary facts to review your case. Attach additional sheets if necessary. See "Procedures for Filing a Variance" for further information.

- 1. **Granting of the requested variance will not be contrary to the public interest**, because: (The proposed use must not conflict with the explicit or implicit purpose of the ordinance, and it must not alter the essential character of the neighborhood, threaten public health, safety, or welfare, or otherwise injure "public rights.")

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- 2. **The proposed use will observe the spirit of the ordinance**, because: (The proposed use must not conflict with the explicit or implicit purpose of the ordinance and must not alter the essential character of the neighborhood, threaten public health, safety, or welfare, or otherwise injure "public rights.")

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- 3. **Substantial justice would be done to the property-owner by granting the variance**, because: (The benefits to the applicant must not be outweighed by harm to the general public or to other individuals.)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- 4. **The proposed use will not diminish the values of surrounding properties**, because: (The Board will consider expert testimony but also may consider other evidence of the effect on property values, including personal knowledge of the members themselves.)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- 5. **Special conditions exist such that literal enforcement of the ordinance results in unnecessary hardship,** because: (The applicant must establish that because of the special conditions of the property in question, the restriction applied to the property by the ordinance does not serve the purpose of the restriction in a “fair and reasonable” way. Also, you must establish that the special conditions of the property cause the proposed use to be reasonable. The use must not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. Alternatively, you can establish that, because of the special conditions of the property, there is no reasonable use that can be made of the property that would be permitted under the ordinance. If there is any reasonable use (including an existing use) that is permitted under the ordinance, this alternative is not available.

---



---



---



---



---



---



---

**IV. USE VARIANCE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Please answer all questions below that are applicable. Your answers to these questions will allow staff to better understand your request.

- a. Total number of employees \_\_\_\_\_ Number of employees per shift \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Hours and days of operation \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Number of daily and weekly visits to the premises by customers, clients, vendors and solicitors \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Number of daily and weekly commercial deliveries to the premises \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Number of parking spaces available \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Describe your general business operations:

---



---

- g. Describe any proposed site renovations, including, but not limited to – landscaping, lighting, pavement, structural changes, signage, access and circulation:

---



---

*I hereby acknowledge that I have read this application and state that the above is correct and agree to comply with all the city ordinances and state laws regulating construction. I understand that only those points specifically mentioned are affected by action taken on this appeal.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

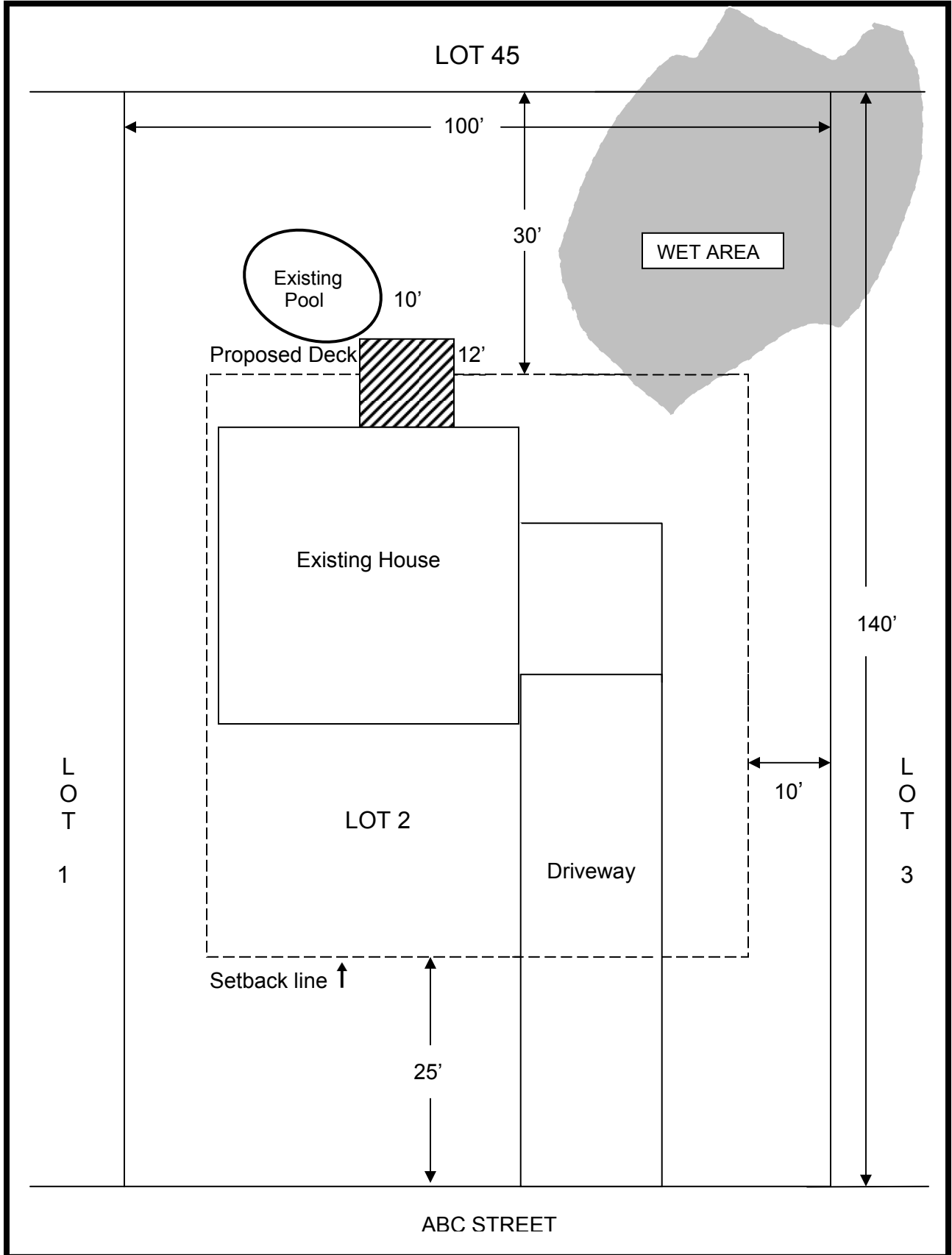
\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

The staff report for a Use Variance request will be available no later than Friday of the week before the ZBA meeting. If you would like a copy, please indicate below:

- I will pick it up at City Hall
- Please email it to me at \_\_\_\_\_
- Please mail it to me at \_\_\_\_\_

# SAMPLE PLOT PLAN



35 ABC Street

1/2" = 10 feet



## **NASHUA CITY ZONING BOARD**

### **2021 Meeting and Deadline Dates**

The following deadlines and meeting dates are now in effect:

<u>APPLICATION DEADLINE</u>	<u>ABUTTER NOTIFICATION</u>	<u>HEARING</u>
December 08	December 22	January 12
December 22	January 12	January 26
January 12	January 26	February 09
January 26	February 09	February 24 (Wed)
February 09	February 23	March 09
February 23	March 09	March 23
March 09	March 23	April 13
March 23	April 13	April 27
April 13	April 27	May 11
April 27	May 11	May 25
May 11	May 25	June 08
May 25	June 08	June 22
June 08	June 22	July 13
June 22	July 13	July 27
July 13	July 27	August 10
July 27	August 10	August 24
August 10	August 24	September 14
August 24	September 14	September 28
September 14	September 28	October 12
September 28	October 12	October 26
October 12	October 26	November 09
October 26	November 09	November 23
November 09	November 23	December 14