



# Demystifying The Permitting Process

Continuing Education Class

#### Introduction to our Instructors



C. Justice Choate, Jr. Real Estate Attorney Campbell & Brannon Licensed in 2008



John Moores, AIA Architect, REALTOR Licensed in 2005



# Agenda



**Section 1** – When is a permit needed



**Section 2** – Researching properties and basic information



Section 3 – How to protect your clients.



#### Heard this before?

"This seems newly renovated. Do you know if it was permitted"

"Oh, this attic is high enough to build out"

"This backyard is perfect for an ADU"

"I wanna build a workout shed beside our home"

"Can I add the ADU onto my existing garage?"

"You should consult a land-use attorney or architect - let me give you a couple of names."











# Demystifying the Permit Process

#### What we are covering today:

Part 1: Build 'By-Right' | Renovations, New Attics and ADUs

#### What will be offered in the future:

Part 2: SAP vs Variance

Part 3: Subdivisions



# Learning Objectives for this CE

- To understand when a permit is needed and basic zoning guidelines
- Researching properties and online resources
- You will better understand how to Protect your Clients



# The Permitting Process (Part 1)

Section A: When do I need a permit

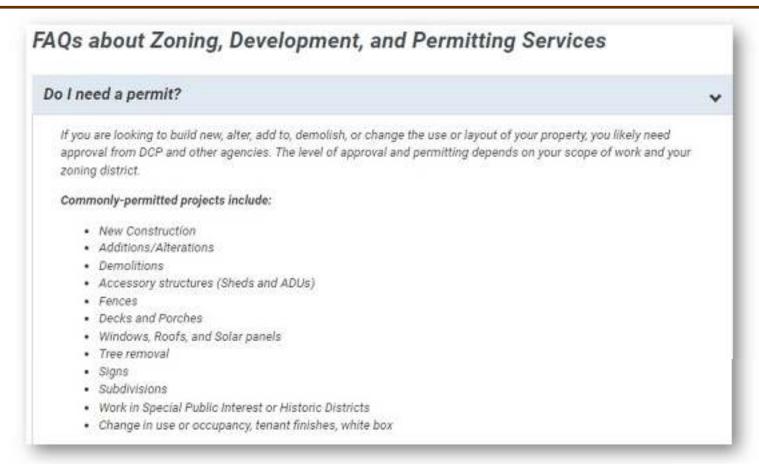
**Section B:** History of Zoning / Atlanta

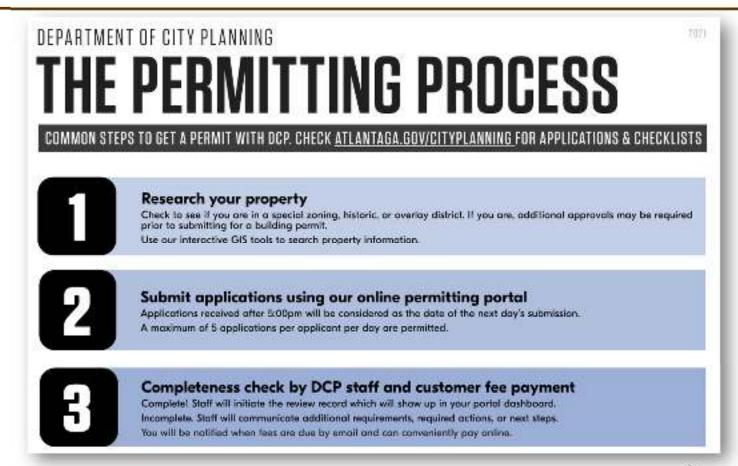
Section C: Zoning & Buildable area

**Section D:** Researching a Property

Section E: Applying for a permit & Resources







#### When is a building permit necessary?

- 1. Remember to consider your client's intentions for the property. If the tasks are minor—floor refinishing, repainting the dining room walls, or replacing the carpet, the need to discuss permitting is not top of mind.
- 2. When you know your client wants a 5 bedroom and the house only has 4, consider the need for a permit. If the home is in a historic district (e.g.: Inman Park, Druid Hills, etc..) there are limitations as to what can be done to the structure. Is a pool non-negotiable, even if it has to be built? These are all signs that a permit would be needed. Before a client makes an offer on a property discuss the potential need for the permit and connecting the buyer with a professional who can review the property to determine the feasibility and necessary steps to see the project to fruition.



**Practice Point:** Arming yourself with a strong arsenal of contractors, architects, and design professionals is essential to connecting clients with the appropriate people to determine if a permit is needed.



#### When does a renovation require a new CO?

#### Danger in re-buying unpermitted work:

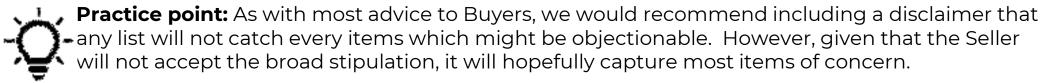
- 1. Open permits are a potential for review if the buyers either seek a new permit that brings review of the property back into or if a complaint is made against the property for a building or zoning violation.
- 2. If an open permit reveals a non-conforming violation, the buyer is responsible for bringing the property up to code. The work could include expense and time. A buyer should always review the county website and or make a direct inquiry of the owners as to their knowledge of open permits on the property.
- 3. If a property has an open permit, the buyers should determine the risk of additional work to bring the property into compliance.
- 4. Proper Due Diligence items for renovations/ new builds as it pertains to permits.
- 5. If a buyer determines that the property needs work which will require permitting or if the property has open permits that the buyer needs additional information to make an informed decision, ensure that the contract includes terms and timelines for the buyer to conduct their due diligence.



#### Disclosures, language and / or exhibits to add to the contract

The following stipulations can be included in contracts when representing Buyers which provide for the Buyer's right to terminate for issues that must be addressed during due diligence.

- Example: Buyer's ability to construct a pool means that the buyer must have a permit which includes surface ratios and topography. These surveys almost always need more time than is typically agreed to in a typical due diligence period. You can write a special stipulation that provides for additional period of due diligence as it pertains to specific items.
- If acceptable to the Seller, it is the best practice to use the broad stipulation which allows a Buyer to terminate.
- If this is unacceptable to the Seller, the second narrow options still covers the great majority of issues which would potentially concern the Buyer.



If you know a property contains an item upon initial offer (for example you know the property has a stream which will limit the ability to build on the property you will need to edit accordingly.

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#### **Broad Stipulations to Include in Initial Offers**

- Buyer shall have the right to terminate the Purchase and Sale Agreement without penalty and with full refund of all Earnest Money if in Buyer's sole discretion any matters revealed by said survey are objectionable to Buyer.
- Buyer shall notify Seller of such termination for matters revealed by said survey no later than \_\_\_ days from Binding Agreement Date.

#### Narrow Survey Stipulation if above is unacceptable to Seller

- To the best of Seller's knowledge, there are no encroachments, easements, sewer lines, storm drainage lines, other utility lines not serving only the subject property, water buffers, flood zones, setback issues which would prevent the Buyer from constructing a NEW POOL / DOUBLE GARAGE / ADU on the Property.
- Should the Buyer obtain a recent survey of the Property which reveals any such item, Buyer shall
  have the right to terminate the Purchase and Sale Agreement without penalty.
- Buyer shall notify Seller of such termination no later than \_\_\_ days from Binding Agreement Date.



ZONING FEES	FEE				
Zoning Non-Conforming Verification Letter with Inspection	\$300				
Zoning Non-Conforming Verification Letter with without Inspection	\$100				
Zoning Verification for Business License	\$50				
Zoning Verification Classification Letter	\$100				
BUILDING PERMIT FEES	FEE				
Building Permit (\$7 per \$1,000 of Cost of Construction)	\$7 Per \$1000				
Technology Fee (per permit)	\$25				
Permit Extension (each)	\$170				
Change of Contractor/Record Change (each)	\$50				

#### Refer to Table 100 of the Appendix B for more information on building valuation

ADDENDUM TO TABLE 100 (Building Valuation Date)	FEE
One (1) & Two (2) Family Residence - Carport (detached or Attached)	\$35
One (1) & Two (2) Family Residence - Garage (Detached or Attached)	\$55
One (1) & Two (2) Family Residence - Unfinished Basement / Attic	\$55
One (1) & Two (2) Family Residence - Basement / Attic Finish-Build Out	\$46
One (1) & Two (2) Family Residence - Deck / Balcony / Porch / Screened Porch	\$35



# **Section B: History of Zoning**

#### Why Zoning? Historical Forces



Industrialization



Urbanization



Population Increase



Public Health



Urban Planning



Automobile

# **Section B: History of Zoning**

# **Zoning Tools**





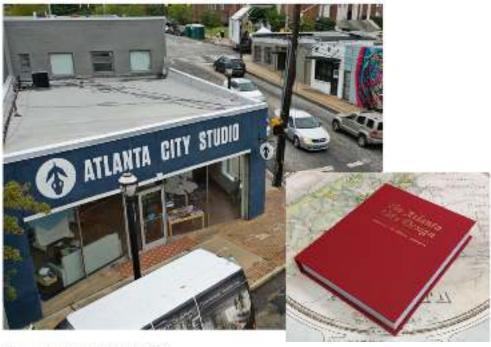
# **Section B: History of Zoning**



#### Ponce City Market 2016-2017

We launched at our first location in Old Fourth Ward in May 2016. The space served as an incubator, workspace and meeting place for residents, visitors, design professionals and urbanists to connect.

atlcitystudio.org



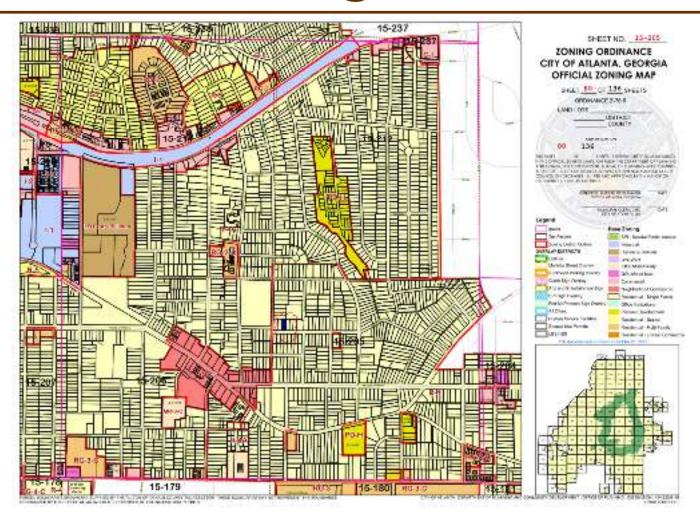
#### Cascade Heights 2017-2019

Our second location was in Southwest Atlanta. We This is the Cascade Heights Community

Development Corporation to move the studio to Southwest

Atlanta. Check out our work in the neighborhood at historiccascadeheights.com

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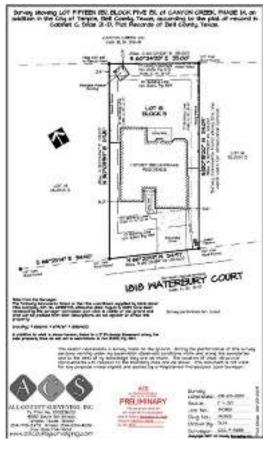




Plat Map









Trees, Topography & Utilities

Metes and Bounds Survey



LOT AREA:

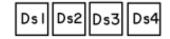
OWNER/CONTACT:

9550 sf.

0.219 ACRES

NO GRADED SLOPE SHALL EXCEED 3H:1V

ON ALL DISTURBED AREAS



DISTURBED AREA = 5625 sf. 0.129 ACRES

#### ZONING INFORMATION:

CLASSIFICATION: R-75

SETBACKS: FRONT - 30 FEET

SIDE - 7.5 FEET

REAR - 40 FEET

MINIMUM LOT AREA - 10,000 sf.

MINIMUM LOT WIDTH - 75 FEET

MAXIMUM LOT COVERAGE - 35%

MINIMUM FLOOR AREA - 1600 sf.

MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT - 35 FEET

#### EXISTING LOT COVERAGE:

HOUSE = 1420 sf. DRIVEWAY = 1130 sf. FRONT WALK = 287 sf. FRONT PORCH = 24 sf.

REAR DECK = 340 sf. OUT BUILDING = 89 sf.

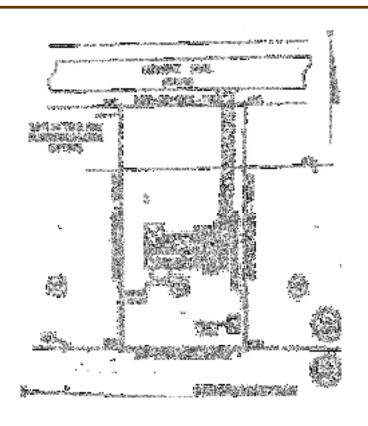
STONE WALKS = 163 sf.

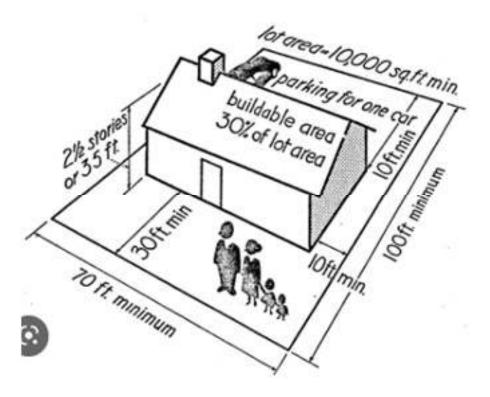
TOTAL = 3453 sf.

LOT COVERAGE = 36.16%

ALL EXISTING LOT COVERAGE TO REMAIN







Metes and Bounds Survey



#### Summary of Zoning Regulations in R Districts

		R-1	R-2	R-2A	R-2B	R-3	R-3A	R-4	R-4A	R-4B	R-5
MKS	FRONT	60 ft.	60 ft.	60 ft.	50 ft.	50 ft.	50 ft.	35 ft.	30 ft.	20 ft.	30 ft.
MINIMUM SETBACKS	SIDE*	25 ft.	15 ft.	15 n.	10 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	7 ft.	7 ft.	5 ft.	7 ft.*
MI	REAR	35 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.	20 Л.	20 ft.	15 ů.	15 ft.	15 ft.	5 0.	7.0.5
50	LOT AREA	2 acres	I acre	30,000 sq.ft.	28,000 sq.ft.	18,000 sq.ft.	13,500 sq.ft.	9,000 sq.ft.	7,500 sq.ft.	2,800 sq.ft.	7,500 sq.f
MENT	MINIMUM STREET FRONTAGE <sup>b</sup>	200 ft.	150 ft.	100 ft.	100 ft.	100 ft.	85 n.	70 ft.	50 ft.	40 ft.	50 ft.°
STREET	CHARBARE CHARBARE	2898	3098	33%	-865%	686	48%	20779	3565	236	2078
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Read the complete Adjusts, stating actions to which at <u>seven products state</u>.

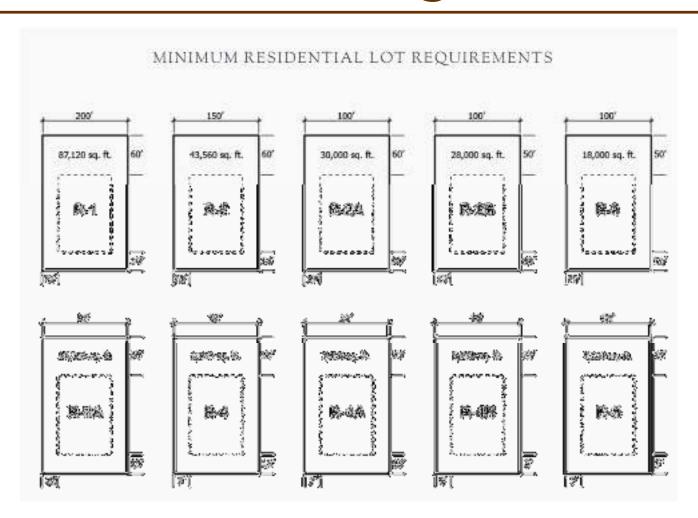


PRACTICE POINT: If a survey indicates that the property is over the current building setback lines, the property might be grandfathered. This means that the violation does not need to be corrected, but it does not your ability to replace the non-conforming structure in the same location.

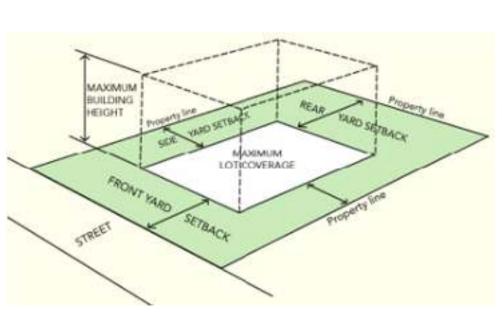
Often, older structures that are outside of the building setback lines (example: garages that abut the property line) can only be maintained. Renovation or addition to the structure that is built outside of the building setback line could require a variance.

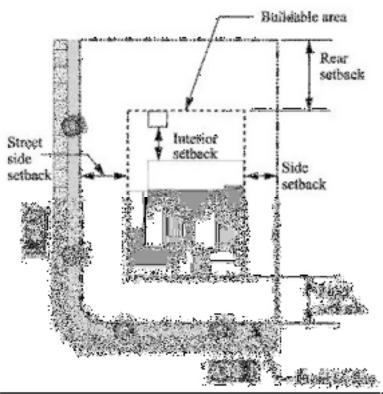
As the building setback violation relates to title insurance, your title insurance does not provide coverage for setback violations that made known to you through the purchase of a new survey.













#### Summary of Zening Regulations to R Districts

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OTHER BOOK	neck.	75 d.	5 <b>4 K</b> .	59 fiz.	28 %	28%	15条	粉束	15 范	3 %	7歲"
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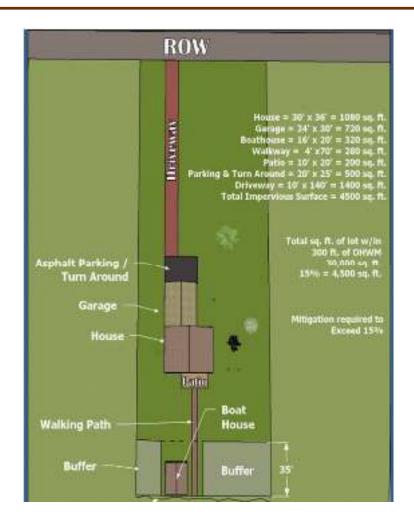
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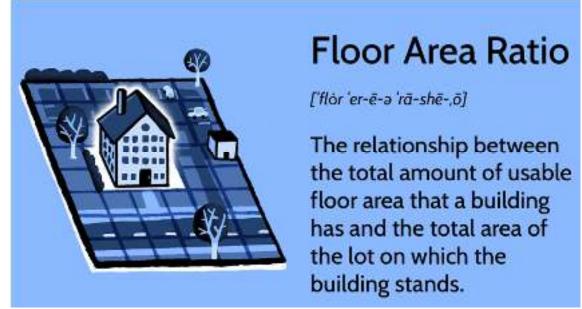
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#### **Attic / New Square Footage**





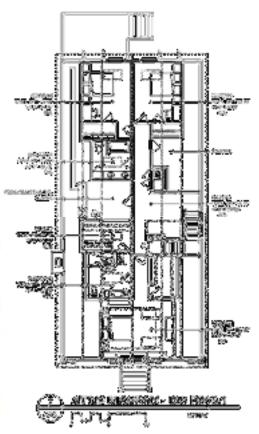


#### R305.1 Minimum helpht.

Habitable space, hallways and portions of basements containing these spaces shall have a ceiling height of not less than 7 feet (2134 mm). Bathrooms, toilet rooms and laundry rooms shall have a ceiling height of not less than 6 feet 8 inches (2032 mm).

#### Exceptions:

- For rooms with sloped ceilings, the required floor area of the room shall have a ceiling height of not less than 5 feet (1524 mm) and not less than 50 percent of the required floor area shall have a ceiling height of not less than 7 feet (2134 mm).
- The ceiling height above bathroom and toffet room fixtures shall be such that the fixture is capable of being used for its intended purpose. A shower or tub
  equipped with a showerhead shall have a coiling height of not less than 6 feet 8 inches (2022 mm) above an area of not less than 30 inches (762 mm) by
  30 inches (762 mm) at the showerhead.
- Beams, gliders, ducts or other obstructions in basements containing habitable space shall be permitted to project to within 6 feet 4 inches (1931 mm) of the finished floor.
- Beams and girders spaced apart not less than 36 inches (914 mm) in clear finished width shall project not more than 78 inches (1981 mm) from the finished finor.





An **accessory structure** (without a kitchen) is subject to the following regulations: shall not exceed 20 feet in height, shall not cover more than 25 percent of the area of the rear yard, and shall not contain a total floor area greater than 30 percent of the main structure.

The size of the accessory structure may be increased through BZA action. However it must NOT have a kitchen.

An **Accessory Dwelling Unit** (with a kitchen) is subject to the following regulations: shall not exceed 20 feet in height and having a floor area of 750 square feet.

The size of an accessory dwelling unity may **not** be varied by the BZA.

Again, you may apply to the BZA to increase the size of an **accessory structure** (without a kitchen) if you so choose. However, the size of an accessory dwelling unit cannot be varied.

Feel free to reach out if you have any clarifying questions/concerns. Regards,

Tamaria Letang, AICP
Project Manager | Development Services Division
City of Atlanta | Office of Zoning and Development
55 Trinity Avenue SW, 3<sup>rd</sup> FL, Suite 3350 | Atlanta, GA 30303
p: 470.755.1245 | e-fax: 404.589.5533 | e: TLetang@atlantaga.gov



DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

2021

# THE PERMITTING PROCESS

COMMON STEPS TO GET A PERMIT WITH DCP. CHECK ATLANTAGA.GOV/CITYPLANNING FOR APPLICATIONS & CHECKLISTS



#### Research your property

Check to see if you are in a special zoning, historic, or overlay district. If you are, additional approvals may be required prior to submitting for a building permit.

Use our interactive GIS tools to search property information.

2

#### Submit applications using our online permitting portal

Applications received ofter 5:00pm will be considered as the date of the next day's submission.

A maximum of 5 applications per applicant per day are permitted,

3

#### Completeness check by DCP staff and customer fee payment

Complete! Staff will initiate the review record which will show up in your partal dashboard. Incomplete. Staff will communicate additional requirements, required actions, or next steps. You will be notified when fees are due by small and can conveniently pay online.

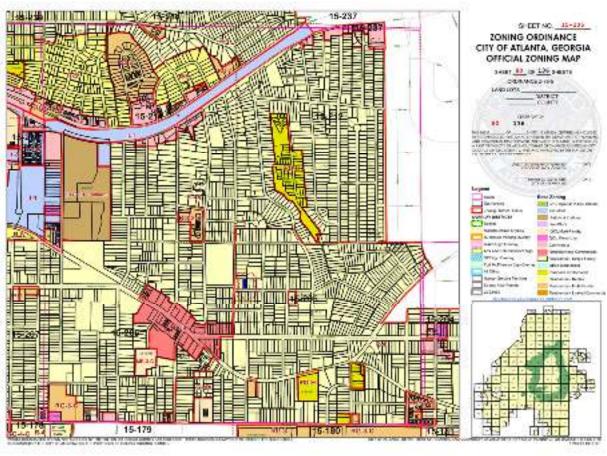


Step One | MLS / Realist
Establish address
Jurisdiction, City & County



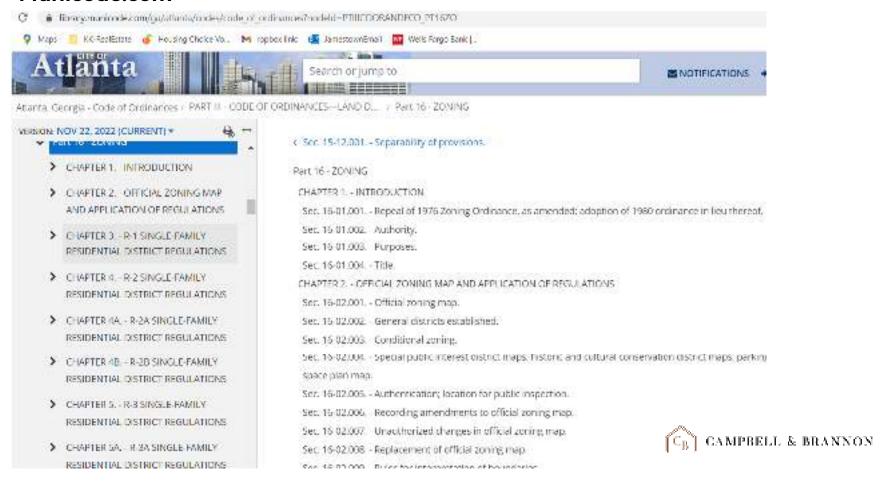


#### gis.atlantaga.gov | Establish Zoning





#### Municode.com



### Municode.com





### Atlantaga.gov



### Zoning or Historic Preservation review

Staff will review your submitted materials for code compliance.

Comments for revisions will be handled through the online portal and responses can be uploaded directly to your project through the portal,



### Plans routed for review

In most cases, once Zoning review is complete, DCP staff will route the project for review by other agencies, such as the Building and Arborist reviewers or other agencies, like Site Development or Traffic Engineering. From a handful of project scopes, zoning review will run parallel to the other review types.



### Atlantaga.gov

### Zoning and Non-Conforming Use Verification

🖨 Print Feedback 🖸 Share & Bookmark Font Size 🚺 🚍

### Zoning Verification

Interested parties can request official documentation of the zoning on a subject parcel through the following processes. If it is determined by the Office of Zoning & Development the current property is non-conforming, applicants will be directed to the non-conforming zoning verification process listed below.

#### ZONING VERIFICATION LETTER

A Zoning Verification Letter is official documentation of a property's current zoning classification issued by the City of Atlanta's Department of City Planning - Office of Zoning & Development. The letter content will vary depending on the availability of zoning records for the specific property and represents the status of the subject property as of the date the letter is issued. Any subsequent changes to the property, or changes that occurred with no record contained in the city's file, are not reflected.

#### What is included:

A verification letter will verify the zone district where the subject property is located.

- Confirmation of address
- Confirmed zoning district
- Any applicable overlay zone, planned development, historic, landmark or special public interest district (e.g., Beltline)
- Existence of an approved or recorded regulatory plan and/or any applicable conditions with corresponding ordinances.

A zoning verification letter will NOT include:

Confirmation of ROW widening, utility or other easements; building permits or certificates of occupancy; building or fire



**PRACTICE POINT:** Knowing the zoning classification can be of great importance to your buyer client and even your listings.

- If your seller has a property with three units, confirm that the tax card reflects three separate units on the property before listing it as a tri-plex. \*\*Older multi-family properties might have more units than the tax card reflects and than the current zoning allows. If the zoning does not allow the number of units in the property this could affect a buyer's ability to obtain financing on the property.



**PRACTICE POINT:** Knowing the zoning classification can be of great importance to your buyer client when purchasing raw land to develop .

- Confirming your buyer can construct a structure allowed by current zoning ordinances
  will affect a buyer's decisions and use of your time! Some lots and neighborhoods have
  recently been affected by changes to the zoning ordinances. It is possible that the tax
  card does not reflect the current zoning ordinance. If there is any confusion, you must
  request confirmation of the zoning
  - If the zoning is in question, you must provide additional time for clarification. If the seller objects, the buyer can offer up additional earnest money to conduct further investigation.

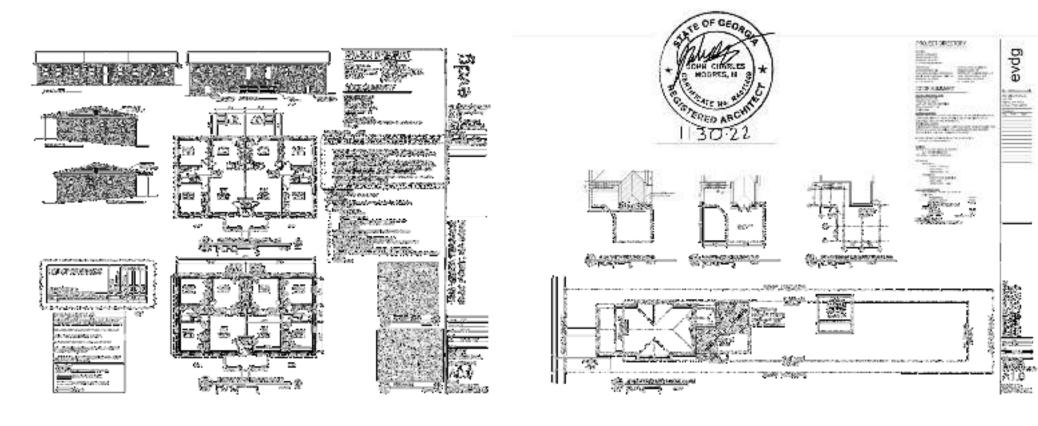


### **Summary:**

### At this point you have:

- 1. Verified the agency having jurisdiction (city and county)
- 2. Confirmed zoning designation
- 3. Understand the site limitations
- 4. Determine the buildable area









#### Agency review and plan revisions

DCP and other agency staff will review your submitted materials for code compliance.

Any comments or approvals will be noted in the online permitting portal and marked-up drawings for revisions available for download. Applicant responses can be uploaded directly to your project through the portal.

7

#### Review complete and final customer fee payment

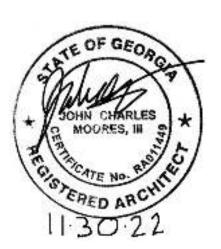
Once all reviews are complete, DCP staff will assemble the final permit package, request supplemental permit requirements like contractor's licenses, and invoice any final fees.

You will be notified when fees are due by email and can conveniently pay online.



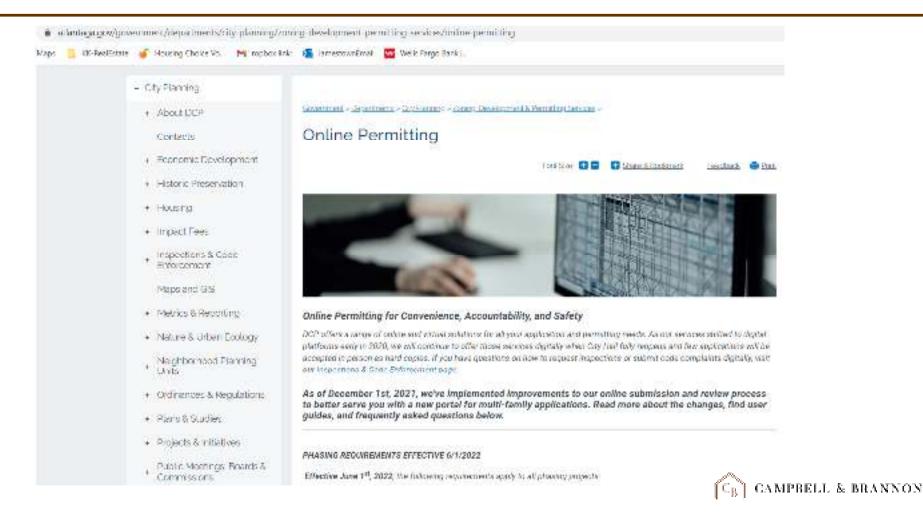
#### Permit issued and approved plan retrieval

Approval letters or stamped plans will be digitally signed off by DCP staff and uploaded to the permitting portal available for your download. Be sure to have hard copies on site for downstream inspections!









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#### Plans routed for review

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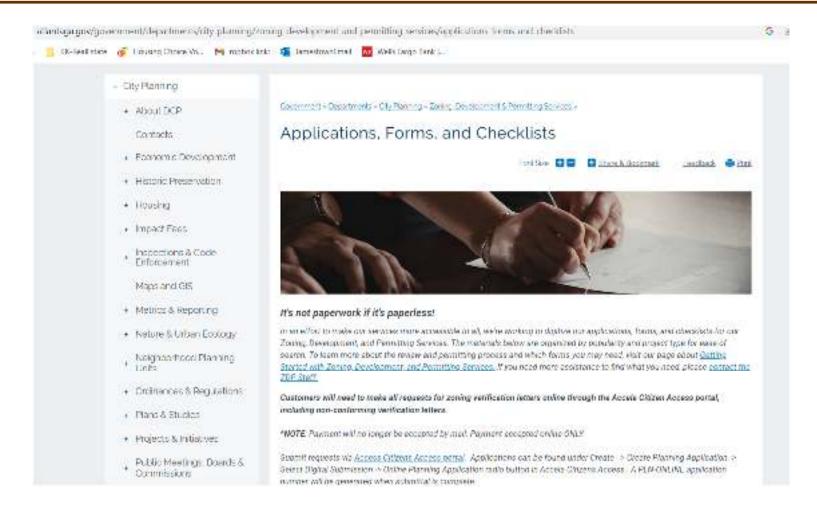
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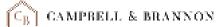
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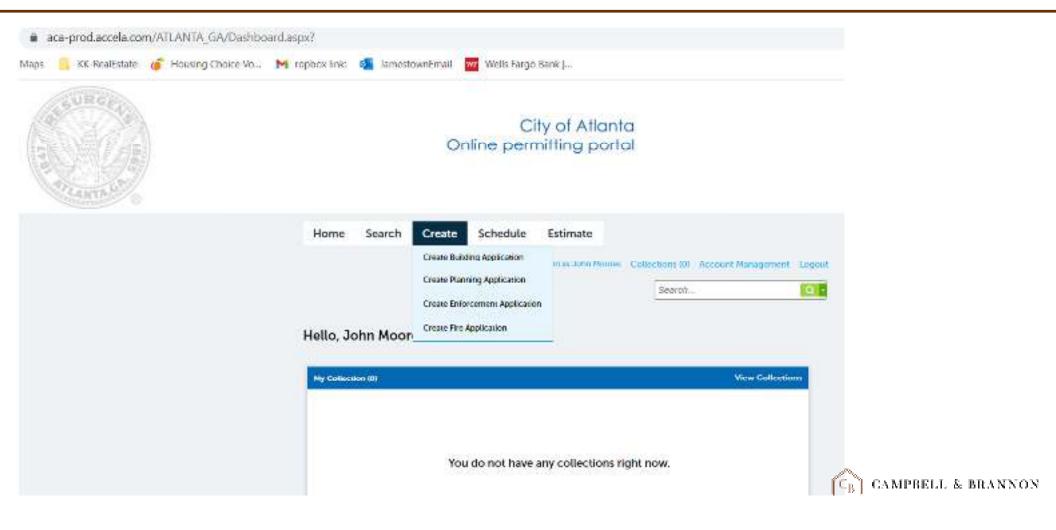
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# Thank you

**Questions?** attorneys@cb.law