



Citizens' Guide to Variations for Residential Properties

What is a Variance?

A variance is the granting of permission to do something that is not allowed under the zoning regulations.

When do you need a Variance?

You need to request a variance when you want to make a change to your property that is not legal under the current Zoning Regulations.

Examples include constructing an addition to a house or a shed that is too close to a property boundary.

Where do you get a Variance Application?

You can either stop by the Planning and Zoning Office or go online to the Town of Hamden Website. Copy and paste the following into your browser:

<http://www.hamden.com/content/7089/7093/7091/7121/7226/default.aspx>

or:

1. Go to Hamden.Com
2. Select "Government"
3. Choose "Departments"
4. Click on "Planning and Zoning"
5. Select "Fees, Forms & Procedures"
6. Click on "ZBA Application"

When submitting a **Variance Application**, what should you include?

The following must be handed in:

- Application Fee (the fee schedule is attached to the application form)
- Application Form
- Site Plan
 - Dimensions of the lot
 - Location of all existing and proposed structures on subject property
 - Elevation drawings for any structures over 4ft. high
 - Zone of adjacent properties
 - Location of existing structures on adjacent properties
- Assessor's Map (available from the Assessor's Office or online) clearly showing...
 - Your property (highlighted)
 - Nearest intersecting streets
 - All properties located within 100ft. of any portion of your property
- Provide a list of property owners within 100ft. of any portion of your property, including properties across streets
- Provide stamped envelopes addressed to all property owners within 100ft.

Because you are asking for an exception to the regulations, state law requires a public hearing. You will be required to put up signage on the property for which you are requesting the variance. (please review the actual **Variance Application** for further instructions)

*Please review the actual **Variance Application** to determine the number of copies required of each

When should I have a **Variance Application** submitted by?

Completed applications must be submitted by 3:00pm on the 15th of the month to the Planning Office, 3rd Floor, Hamden Government Center, 2750 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden, CT in order to be put on the agenda for the meeting the following month. The ZBA Board of Appeals meets the 3rd Thursday of every month except August. Meetings are held in the third floor conference room in Government Center and begin at 7:00 pm.

What happens at a public hearing?

During the public hearing, the variance request will be explained by you or your representative. Then the ZBA Chairperson will allow neighbors and any other members of the public to speak for or against your application. Members of the ZBA may ask you questions about your application. You will then be given the opportunity to respond to any questions or criticisms raised. The chair will then close the public hearing. After all the public hearings on the agenda are completed, the ZBA begins its “Regular Meeting”, during which it votes on each variance requested. To receive a variance at least four of the five members must vote in favor of your application.

What is the key to a successful **Variance Application**?

- 1) Explain clearly what it is you are requesting.
- 2) Explain the “hardship” necessitating a variance – examples include: slope of land; wetlands; and position of existing structures
- 3) Provide a clear **plot plan** of the property showing all existing and proposed structures with distances from property lines.

What is a **plot plan**?

A plot plan is a simple plan that shows proposed improvements along with existing structures and distances to all boundaries.

For simple projects you may use the Plot Plan sheet attached to the Zoning Permit Application (also available online).

For major projects a survey may be required and for new home construction, a survey is always required.

Once you have successfully completed the above checklist (**all components** of the Application are completed) you are ready to **submit to the Planning Office**. We will review your application and contact you further.

Any further questions, the Hamden Zoning Regulations are available online at www.hamden.com