

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUBLIC HEARING NOTIFICATIONS TO ADJACENT LANDOWNERS

PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE MAKING NOTIFICATIONS.

Please find attached a copy of the code covering the requirement for notification of adjacent landowners. This procedure is required so that your adjacent neighbors can be notified of the date, time and place of the public hearing for your project. The following are guidelines for making this notification. (NOTE: Do **NOT** send out the letter of notification until all the following procedures have been followed and a public hearing date has been set by the board. In the case of ZBA applications, you will be given the date of the public hearing when your application is filed. Public hearing dates for planning board applications will be set by the board when a determination is made that all information needed has been submitted.)

1. Obtain names and addresses by using the tax maps and computer in the assessor's office. If you do not have the tax map number of the subject parcel, it can be obtained when your application is filed. The regulations require that property owners immediately adjacent to your property and any property owners across any street must be notified. If there is a question about the proximity of a property to your parcel, we advise you to notify that landowner also to be on the safe side. The names and addresses listed on the tax rolls are the designated by the town as the official landowners and those are the people who must be notified.
2. Prepare a letter to the adjacent landowners giving a brief description of your application and giving the date, time and place of the public hearing. Include in the letter a paragraph stating that further questions can be addressed to the appropriate town office (planning board, town board or zoning board of appeals). You can also indicate that you would be willing to answer any questions. A copy of the notification must be submitted to the town with your proofs of notification. I would encourage you to let someone here in our offices review the letter to be sure that all the necessary information is included. This can be done by fax at 587-2837. A review by a staff member may avoid the possibility of having to send the letter a second time.
3. Send the notification letters by certified mail, return receipt requested. The receipts of mailing stamped by the post office are your proof that notifications were made. These must be submitted to the town prior to the public hearing. Green return receipt cards returned to you must be presented to the town prior to the public hearing. If a letter is returned to you unclaimed, submit that as well. If you do not receive all the green cards by the date of the public hearing, so advise the board. As long as you can show that you mailed the notification in a timely fashion, it is likely that the hearing shall proceed.

4. Notifications should be sent out at least 10 days prior to the hearing date. This will give adjacent landowners time to sign for the letter and ask any questions they may have.

The above guidelines should answer some of the questions that you may have about this notification process. The object here is to advise neighbors of pending applications. This provides the opportunity to have questions and/or concerns resolved before the project is finalized. Public hearings are designed to allow any interested party an available arena to put forth comments and questions. You will be expected to give a brief presentation for the audience's benefit before the floor is open for audience participation. Remember that, although you may have been before the board prior to the hearing, residents may be learning of this project for the first time. Please call my office if you are unsure about any of these procedures. This will avoid misunderstanding and the need for additional mailings. I can be reached at 597-1939 ext. 211. If I am not available, please leave a message on my voice mail.

Lucy Harlow
Executive Secretary