

What are Land Use Boards?

Land use boards consist of the Conservation Commission, Board of Health, Planning Board, and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

These four Boards have distinctly different jurisdictions of land use, yet share a common goal of protecting the health, safety, character and environmental resources of the Town of Sterling.

Bylaws and Regulations have been established by each of the four Boards to aid the permitting process. All bylaws and regulations can be found on the Town website at www.sterling-ma.gov.

The Town always welcomes any suggestions that you may want to provide. Simply call, stop by the office or email addressed provide in this brochure.

Town of Sterling
1 Park Street
Sterling MA 01564

978-422-8111

978-422-0289 fax

ppage@sterling-ma.gov

Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday

8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Fridays 8:00 am to 12:00 noon

Town of Sterling



Are you applying for a building permit?

You may need approval from other town boards or Commissions



Please read this brochure for information on Land Use Boards requirements.

When applying for a Building Permit, you are agreeing to conform to all applicable Town Bylaws, State Building Code and other restrictions/ requirements from authorized agencies.

In order to make this process easier, Sterling would like to offer the following information:

1. To determine if the project is allowed by the Town's Protective (zoning) Bylaw, it is recommended that all applicants review the bylaws at Sterling-ma.gov.
2. Under MGL* Chapter 40A (the Zoning Act), the use may require you to obtain a Special Permit from the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA), typically the Zoning Board of Appeals or the Planning Board. Please check out their web page, or contact those offices for filing instructions.
3. Will the land in question be divided? If yes, an application under MGL Chapter 41 will need to be filed with the Planning Board. Also, the Board of Health must "approve" the subdivision as it may have Title 5 implications.
4. Will the activity result in the cutting or removal of trees, or the tearing

down or destruction of any portion of a stone wall on a designated Scenic Road? If yes, please contact the Planning Board for an application and schedule a hearing.

5. Will the activity result in a commercial use or business use of the property? If yes, Site Plan review will be required by the Planning Board.
6. Will the activity increase the number of bedrooms within an existing dwelling? If yes, please reach out to the Board of Health to verify the existing septic system has the capacity to support the change.
7. Does the activity represent a change in use from the current use? If yes, please contact the Zoning Enforcement Officer to discuss next steps.
8. Any alteration within 100' of any wetland or 200' of any vernal pool, stream or pond will require approval from the Conservation Commission. See MGL Chapter 131 §40, the Wetland Protection Act, and the Town's bylaw on Stormwater Manager, [Chapter 164](#).

Failure to comply with the above mentioned could result in fines or delay the start of the proposed activity.

*MGL = Massachusetts General Law

If in doubt, start with the Zoning Enforcement Officer for guidance.

Additional Information

[Zoning Enforcement Officer](#)

978-422-8111 x2303

[The Zoning Board of Appeals](#) meets the second Tuesday of every month in room 205. 978-422-8111 x2301

The Planning Board meets the fourth Thursday of every month in room 205. 978-422-8111 x2332

[The Conservation Commission](#) meets the first and third Tuesday of every month in room B13. 978-422-8111 x2321

[The Board of Health](#) meets the second Thursday of each month in room B13. 978-422-8111 x2305