

Billerica Permitting Cheat Sheet

I have a business that I want to bring to/expand within Billerica. Where do I start?

Your first call should be to Billerica's Community Development Director, Rob Anderson, 978-671-0963.

When I call Rob what should I have at my fingertips to make the permitting process run smoothly?

There are important things to have on that call:

1. **What your business does**—*This will let the Town determine if the zoning supports the use.*
2. **Where your business is/ or wants to be located**—*There are some uses not allowed in certain zoning, so providing an address is vital.*
3. **What is your timing**—*Letting the Billerica team know about preferred target dates is important; there are no guarantees that those will be met but it helps develop a reasonable schedule.*
4. **What are the associated jobs/investment**—*Part of any economic development project is the public story and building consensus. Jobs and investment are metrics that allow us to bring that story to life.*
5. **Draft site plans**—*If you have site plans, even if they are rough, will give the permitting authorities a better sense about the potential permits you will need. We can have the conversation without them, but a company runs the risk of being surprised by the permits necessary once the pen hits the paper.*

Who grants permits?

There are permit granting entities that do not require a Board's approval: Fire, Police (Traffic), Engineering, and Building. Many of these permits will be granted through the **Building Permit** process and you would receive that direction from Billerica's Building Commissioner.

However, there are also permit granting entities that have Boards: Planning, Conservation, Health, and Zoning Board of Appeals. All of the Boards have public meetings and applications. You may need to apply to more than one Board for the approval of your project, although some permits within these departments can be granted administratively.

I think I know which permits I need, but how can I be sure?

Billerica will set up a pre-permitting meeting with all the permitting entities, and Rob can direct a business to department heads who can offer guidance prior to the pre-permitting meeting. During that discussion each department will identify the potential permits necessary, potential red flags for the project, and application process. A business that prepares for their application that utilizes the suggestions from the pre-permitting meeting will move through the permitting process much quicker.

OK, I've spoken to the Town, identified my goals and preferred timeline, and participated in a pre-permitting meeting. What are my next steps?

Each of the Boards meets at least one per month; however, because they need to advertise the public meetings you need to allow time between application submission and the next scheduled meeting. Depending upon the complexity of the project, some decisions can be made in one meeting, but the town will make sure that you receive the feedback you need to bring your project to market quickly.

If a company has draft plans in hand, works quickly after the pre-permitting meeting, and takes on board the suggestions of the department heads, they could have permits in hand within 4 months (120 days) from their initial call to the Town. Each project is unique and the Town will work with each applicant to make the process run smoothly.

Phone Call to Billerica

Project provides

- Use
- Address
- Jobs
- Investment
- Timing
- Draft Plans

Internal Project Assessment (Building, Planning, Community Development)

Set pre-permitting meeting within 2 weeks or schedule set by company.

Pre-permitting Meeting

Feedback and permits necessary are outlined for the company by the attendees.

After the meeting a company takes suggestions away and depending on **their** timing, prepare application submissions.

By-Right Use in an existing facility

Project stays with **Building Department** who will coordinate with other permitting agencies (Police, Fire, etc.)

DPW

Building

Police

Fire

Permits here (including street openings) do not need a Board's Approval. They will be granted through the **Building Permit** process.

Planning

Chris Reilly
Planning Director

- meets once/month
- allow 5 weeks after submission for meeting
- can receive approval in one meeting
- can happen concurrently w/ other Boards

Average to permit:
2-3 months

Health

Rich Berube
Director of Public Health

- meets once/month
- allow 5 weeks after submission for meeting
- can receive approval in one meeting
- can happen concurrently w/ other Boards

Average to permit:
2-3 months

ZBA

Jane Nolan
Clerk

- meets once/month
- allow 5 weeks after submission for meeting
- can receive approval in one meeting
- can happen concurrently w/ other Boards

Average to permit:
2-3 months

Conservation

Isabel Tourkantonis
Director of Environmental Affairs

- meets twice/month
- allow 3 weeks after submission for meeting
- Min. of 2 meetings
- can happen concurrently w/ other Boards

Average to permit:
3-4 months