

---

**BUILDING PERMITS**

Building permits are required to construct, enlarge, alter or demolish a structure; or change the purpose of a building/structure requiring greater strength, exit or sanitary provisions; to change to another use; or to install or alter certain equipment.

Repairs which include the cutting away of any wall, partition or portion thereof, the removal or cutting of any structural beam or bearing support, or the removal or change of any required means of egress, or arrangement of parts of a structure affecting the exit requirements will necessitate a building permit. In addition, repairs which include addition to, alteration of, replacement or relocation of any standpipe, water supply, sewer, drainage, drain leader, gas, soil, waste, vent or similar piping, electric wiring or mechanical or other work affecting public health or general safety require a building permit. The building permit must be accompanied by a plan certified by a registered architect.

**OFFICE CONVERSIONS**

Conversions of dwellings to professional office uses may be permitted in certain residential districts with Board of Appeals approval. Also, expansion of professional office uses in residential districts must be approved by the Board of Appeals. Conversion of any dwelling to an office or retail use requires engineer certification that the building is structurally sound and meets the Code requirements for such commercial use. It also requires parking/handicap parking and landscaping.

---

**SITE PLAN REVIEW**

Site Plan approval by the Bel Air Planning Department is required for new construction or substantial additions.

Projects within the Town of Bel Air are subject to the Town's Development Regulations (zoning and subdivision). Applications for Site Plan approval are processed through the Town Planning Department. For new buildings or additions to existing structures that result in a building in excess of 5,000 square feet, the Bel Air Planning Commission (a 5-member volunteer board appointed by the Board of Town Commissioners) also reviews. After review, any approval conditions or comments are forwarded to the applicant.\*

**OCCUPANCY CERTIFICATES**

There are two types of Occupancy Certificates – a Use & Occupancy (U&O) certificate that is provided for new construction or renovations once the building permit process is complete – and a Tenant Occupancy certificate which is required for new commercial tenants if no structural work is planned. All new businesses should contact the Planning or Public Works Departments to determine which type of certificate is required and to obtain applicable forms and information.

\*In some instances, such as conversion of a dwelling to professional office use in a residential transition district, the Board of Appeals must also review.

---

**Applicable Regulations**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Project Checklist

1. Does the property have proper zoning for the proposed use?
2. Have you considered environmental issues... floodplain, non-tidal wetlands, buffer areas?
3. Is your building or property located in an Overlay District? If so, it is subject to special design and performance requirements.
4. Can your proposed project meet setback requirements, parking, buffer and performance standard requirements of the Town Development Regulations?
5. What road improvements will be required?
6. Will the project require a stormwater management facility or stormwater quality measures?
7. Is a grading permit required?
8. Is the building structurally sound? All conversions require a professional engineer's certification of structural adequacy.
9. Can the building meet handicap code requirements, i.e., bathrooms, ramps, hallways?
10. What is the cost to hook up to public water or sewer?
11. Does the building have a sprinkler system, as required by law?
12. Will your proposed signage meet Sign Code requirements?
13. Is your building or property listed in the National Register of Historic Places? If so, it may require review by the Historic Preservation Commission.
14. Is Health Department review required?

For more information, contact:

Bel Air Planning Department  
410-638-4540  
410-879-9500

Bel Air Dept. of Public Works  
410-638-4536  
410-879-9507



## TOWN OF BEL AIR DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL PROCESS



705 Churchville Road  
Bel Air, MD 21014