

TO: ALL BUILDING DIVISION PERSONNEL

FROM: DOUG WISE
BUILDING DIVISION DIRECTOR

PREPARED BY: BUILDING DIVISION

SUBJECT: PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESSING PROCEDURES

PPM #: PB-O-081

ISSUE DATE
April 24, 2012

EFFECTIVE DATE
March 20, 2024

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this PPM is to outline procedures for processing permit applications.

UPDATES:

Future updates to this PPM are the responsibility of the Building Division Director, or the Deputy Building Official under the authority of the Director of the Building Division.

AUTHORITY:

The Florida Building Code; Palm Beach County Amendments to the FBC Chapter 1 Administration; and Building Division Policy and Procedure.

POLICY:

The Building Division will process permit applications in accordance with the procedures identified below. It is the goal of the Building Division, to review and issue permits in a timely manner.

PROCEDURE:

Permit applications are only accepted online via the ePZB portal www.pbcgov.com/epzb 24 hour a day/7days a week. The Permit Center staff are available to assist applicants between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on normal business days (excluding county holidays). Staff shall answer general questions by walk-in customers, emails and telephone in a friendly and professional manner, and provide other public assistance, as necessary.

APPLICATION INTAKE & SUFFICIENCY REVIEW:

Permit Applications, Revisions, Renewals, and Fee Sub permit applications submitted by contractors must first be reviewed for sufficiency before they continue to Agency/Section for review. When appropriate applications should be accompanied by a legal lot certification and a planning determination letter. The Application is assigned to a Plans Specialist where it is either Accepted, Rejected or Accept upon Payment. Insufficient applications are returned to the applicant where they take corrective action and resubmit. Accepted applications continue on to the review process established by the default routing determined by the permit description or as

staff determines.

Refer to EPR Training Guide for Sufficiency Reviewers for specific details [EPR User Guide for Sufficiency Review \(pbcgov.org\)](#)

REVIEW PROCEDURES

STANDARD REVIEW PROCEDURES (ALL STAFF)

The following procedures shall be used by all reviewing groups within the Building Permit Review Process:

- Review and critique the permit application for regulatory compliance.
- Inform the applicant of comments, if significant deficiencies are found. Individual review groups should directly contact the customer, if deficiencies are found.

STANDARD REVIEW PROCEDURES OF THE BUILDING DIVISION

It is the policy of the Building Division to process Permit Applications in order of submittal.

Exceptions:

- **General Criteria**
 - Emergencies, such as a change of electrical service, demolition, emergency repairs, etc. as established by the Building Official.
 - Master plans - because master plans are pre-reviewed, they are routinely processed out of numerical sequence by the Plan Reviewers for greater efficiency or as a customer prioritizing their permit requests.
- **Special Criteria**
 - If project financing is contingent on obtaining a permit, and receiving the financing is in jeopardy because of a deadline.
 - If a contractor is faced with a genuine prospect of laying off employees, because of the lack of any other work (this may be verified by checking whether the contractor has any other outstanding permits in our jurisdiction, as an indication of the accuracy of the contractor's assertion).
 - The proposed construction is for a temporary or special event that has a charitable purpose, or is operated for the public.
 - A departmental or governmental error, related to permitting, has caused a significant delay.
 - The permit is for a government project with a public purpose, as defined in F.S. Chapter 162.
 - The permit is for the Business Development Board.
 - During the time before new codes or impact fees become effective, applications for projects under firm contract with owners (verifiable by direct county contact).
 - Initial display model homes in a new development
 - Other circumstances in which the interest of the public is served by expediting an application.

Staff is authorized to make a determination and take the appropriate action for processing permit applications that fit the General Criteria. For applications that fit the Special Criteria, a letter and other relevant documentation shall be submitted by the applicant, to support the circumstances presented as justification for expediting a permit. Special Criteria applications shall be reviewed by any immediate supervisor and whenever possible shall be a collaborative decision with other supervisors within the

permit review process.

Requests for consideration under the Special Criteria shall not be used by a permit applicant as a standard means of doing business, nor shall it be used to show preference or favoritism to any permit applicant.

PERMIT TECHNICIAN REVIEW

Plans Specialists (Permit Technicians) shall sign in on Permit Applications that have been routed to them or assigned for review. Permit application review should include at a minimum:

- Reviewing for compliance with Zoning Regulations.
- Critiquing any zoning or other applicable regulatory violations in the application, for needed correction.
- Contacting the applicant, when review is complete if deficiencies are found.
- Designating all other review groups on ePZB whose programs are affected by the proposed work, as required.
- Signing off on the application, when zoning code and other regulatory compliance are achieved.
- Assisting in other areas of the Permit Center, as needed.

PLANS EXAMINER REVIEW

Plans Examiners shall routinely sign in on Permit Applications that have been routed to them for review. A typical review should include at a minimum:

- Reviewing for code requirements, per adopted Florida Building Codes (FBC), including local Palm Beach County Amendments to the FBC Chapter 1 Administration.
- Critiquing plans and sending the critique, citing code sections for deficiencies, to the applicant or designee in a timely manner.
- Verifying appropriate data designated on the permit application, such as:
 - Permit description code for proposed work.
 - Value of work for permit fee.
 - Sub-permit requirements.
 - Limitations of contractor's license in accordance with F.S.S. 489.
- Signing off on the application, when code and other regulatory compliance are achieved.
- Answering routine questions from the public, contractors and designers, regarding adopted Florida Building Codes.

PERMIT ISSUANCE

Permit Issuance staff generate the permit documents requiring a two-step process.

- Step One
 - Finalize Documents: Select documents to be included in the final document set and finalize them which queues them for merging.
- Step Two
 - Verification of the merged documents and Permit Issuance: Issuance staff verifies that all the document sets merged successfully. If the merge is correct the permit card and invoice can be generated. There are two selections needed to complete Step Two:

- * Check Issuance to identify any outstanding issues
- * Issue Permit and Generate Invoice. The Permit Card is generated and an email is sent to the applicant informing them that the documents are ready for download pending payment of fees due.

Duties assigned to the Permit Issuance Section include, but are not limited to:

- Verify contractor license and scope of work
- Verify sub-permit requirements are indicated
- Change of Contractors
- Verify proper documentation is received on the Primary Permit
- Verify proper documentation is received on the Sub-Permits
- Ensure that Owner Builder permits do not retain Owner Builder sub-permits of the previous owners.
- Renewals
- Answer routine questions from the public, regarding permit processing.
- Assess municipal impact fees.

SITE PLAN REVIEW PERMITS

In accordance with Section 104.1 Palm Beach County Amendments to the Florida Building Code Chapter 1 Administration, Site Plan Permits do not undergo a full technical review. They shall be reviewed for Zoning and licensing requirements. The application request should include a Site Plan Review Certification Form.

HOLDS

Preventing the issuance of a permit, a Certificate of Occupancy or a Certificate of Completion, or any or all inspections, is accomplished through the use of ePZB, automated system “Holds”.

Some holds are automated processing functions, and an open customer comment acts as the most common hold of a permit issuance, as it indicates at least one non-code compliant review. Other holds may exist in the background of the ePZB system such as a hold on a particular property due to a zoning, environmental or other regulation. Manual Holds on various actions or events may be placed on a permit by staff of various levels depending on the severity of the Hold. These manual holds also include the ability to stop the permit application from being reviewed (Hold Process). Hold Process should be used for items of extreme importance only.



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Supersession History

1. PPM# PB-O-081, issued 10/13/92
2. PPM# PB-O-081, effective 01/15/93
3. PPM# PB-O-081, issued 13/11/94
4. PPM# PB-O-081, issued 02/26/01
5. PPM# PB-O-081, issued 04/24/12
6. PPM# PB-O-081, effective 03/20/24