

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW CHECKLIST

WESTCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD



westchester 2025 /plan together
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Notice to Applicants/Developers: At some point during the development review process your project may be referred to the Westchester County Planning Board for review and comment in accordance with state and county laws that require local planning boards, zoning boards of appeals and governing bodies to refer certain development applications to the County Planning Board. Referral to the County Planning Board may not occur until your project has progressed well along through the design process. Since the Planning Board's comments may impact project design, this checklist is provided to encourage early consideration of these areas of concern by applicants to avoid project changes later. Please note that by viewing this document on a computer, you can link directly to the referenced websites.

For information on the County Planning Board review process and to access an electronic copy of this checklist, go online to www.westchestergov.com/planningreferrals or contact Lukas Herbert at lah5@westchestergov.com.

I. COUNTY PLANNING BOARD POLICIES

Written policies underlie all recommendations of the County Planning Board. *Westchester 2025 - Context for County and Municipal Planning and Policies to Guide County Planning*, adopted by the County Planning Board on May 6, 2008, amended January 5, 2010, can be found at www.westchestergov.com/2025.

Westchester 2025: Policies should be reviewed to determine how they relate to the development proposal.

II. IMPACTS TO COUNTY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The County Planning Board coordinates the review of development projects with Westchester County departments to identify and address potential impacts on County services and infrastructure. **In some situations, permits and approvals may be required that could change project design.**

Map of County Facilities: Review the State & County Roads and Parks map (which also includes county channel lines) to identify proximity to County facilities at: www.westchestergov.com/planningdocs/pdfmaps/countystateroadsparks.pdf Other useful map links for information about environmental features, septic/sewer map, county sewer districts map, etc can be found at: www.westchestergov.com/maps

COUNTY ROAD: Applications for development on sites that abut a County road must be submitted for review by the County Department of Public Works. Information and forms can be found at: www.westchestergov.com/dpw/bldgperm.htm. Former County Roads do not need review by the Department of Public Works, but will still likely trigger a review by the County Planning Board.

COUNTY CHANNEL LINES: Applications for development on sites within 100 feet of a designated County Channel Line require a stream control permit from the County Department of Public Works. Information and forms can be found at: www.westchestergov.com/dpw/bldgperm.htm

COUNTY PARK: New construction and land alteration projects adjacent to County parks are expected to address screening and buffer of new uses from the park, as appropriate. Stormwater should not drain from a developed site onto a County park without acceptable quantity and quality controls. County parks are designated as Critical Environmental Areas.

- SEWAGE TREATMENT AT COUNTY TREATMENT PLANT:** Local municipalities are required to reduce and eliminate inflow and infiltration (I&I) into the sanitary sewage systems tributary to County treatment plants. New development will be expected to reduce I&I in relation to generation of new flow at a ratio of three to one. **This requirement must be discussed with local officials.**
- BEE-LINE BUS SERVICE:** Bee-Line bus stops serving a development site should be identified on plans or noted if located off-site. **If a bus stop is located along the site's frontage, the applicant should contact the County Department of Transportation to discuss impacts and the need for improvements.** Safe and separate pedestrian access should be provided to link a bus stop and sidewalk with building entrances. Information on County bus service and design guidelines can be found at: www.westchestergov.com/transportation/images/Bus%20Service%20Guidelines.pdf
- FAIR AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** Many municipalities require inclusion of fair and affordable units in new developments. Financial assistance to achieve fair and affordable housing development is available through Westchester County and other sources. **Applications that include new residential units to be affirmatively marketed and sold or rented subject to fair and affordable housing provisions should be tied to Westchester County guidelines on affordability including income guidelines of eligible households that can be found at: <http://homes.westchestergov.com/>.** If County funding is sought to develop fair and affordable housing, the County Board of Legislators must be included as an involved agency under SEQR.
- RECYCLING:** New buildings must contain a designated area of sufficient size for separation and storage of recyclables and trash. Building expansions should also include sufficient space for separation and storage of recyclables. For more information about County recycling requirements go to: <http://environment.westchestergov.com/index.php>
- STORM SEWER SYSTEM:** Any connections to a County storm sewer line will require a permit from the Department of Public Works in accordance with the County Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) law. Information and forms can be found at: www.westchestergov.com/dpw/bldgperm.htm Non-stormwater discharges to the County storm sewer system are prohibited.

III. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The County Planning Board's land use policies focus attention on several aspects of development that may have intermunicipal and quality of life impacts. The list below includes areas most frequently commented on by the County Planning Board.

- WATER:** All development plans should include sufficient provisions for stormwater management, water quality measures and mitigation of flooding.
 - Plans should identify the major drainage basin or watershed the site is located in (Croton River, Upper Hudson River, Lower Hudson, Upper Long Island Sound, Bronx River and Lower Long Island Sound). An interactive map with watershed boundaries can be found at www.westchestergov.com/planning/maps&lists/drainbasins11x17.html
 - Watershed plans have been developed for several of the County's watersheds— the Croton, Indian Brook-Croton Gorge, Bronx River and Long Island Sound watersheds — that include specific recommendations that apply to development projects. See recommendations in watershed plans at : planning.westchestergov.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1231&Itemid=2204

- Development that involves filling, creation of impervious surfaces or buildings and substantive loss of natural vegetation in a floodplain or flood prone area should be avoided.
- Above ground, vegetated retention/detention basins or devices are preferred because they perform better, are easier to inspect and maintain and provide additional environmental benefits over sub-surface structural devices. Any such treatments should not be constructed within wetlands or buffer areas around wetlands.
- The development should treat and retain as much stormwater on-site as possible, particularly when the site is located in a drainage basin with known flooding problems. A Construction Stormwater Toolbox with tools and sources of technical information related to the construction activities and stormwater management best practices is available from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation at: www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8694.html
- New development should include protection of aquatic resources. For more information about protection of aquatic resources and buffer areas, go to: planning.westchestergov.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1491&Itemid=2458
- Impervious cover should be minimized. Permeable paving surfaces should be used where feasible. Vegetative rain gardens should be used, particularly in areas of overland or channelized stormwater flow, to improve stormwater quality and reduce runoff volume. For more information, go to: www.westchestergov.com/stormwater
- Buildings along coastlines and low lying area should consider the impacts of sea level rise. Specific consideration is required of potential impacts to surface and subsurface drinking water supplies.
- SITE LAYOUT.** Aesthetic design, building orientation and community character should be considered in the site layout and building appearance.
 - In most locations, buildings should face the street and have pedestrian access from the street.
 - Commercial buildings should be located near the front street line with the majority of parking located in the rear of the building. Even gas stations and convenience stores should be upfront in a landscaped setting with parking, pumps and canopy toward the rear.
 - Buildings should be of pedestrian-scale when seen from the sidewalk.
 - Building facades should contribute to and enhance the character of the community.
 - Driveway and pathway connections should be provided to adjacent sites when possible and cross-easements provided.
- STREETS.** Street design should reduce unwarranted paving and promote connectivity.
 - New streets should connect with adjacent streets wherever feasible to prevent the proliferation of dead-end streets and promote neighborhood integration.
 - Connections could be vehicular or pedestrian/bicycle only, where appropriate.

- Street widths should be minimized for streets with low traffic volume to reduce speeds and impervious surfaces. Lane widths of 12 feet are only appropriate for major roadways.
- Driveway widths should be no more than 9 feet to reduce impervious surfaces.
- Permeable paving surfaces should be used where feasible.

GREEN TECHNOLOGY. New development should include as many green building elements as possible, such as: renewable building materials, energy efficient heating/cooling systems and fixtures, water saving devices, green roofs and permeable paving surfaces. Information can be obtained from the U.S. Green Building Council at: www.usgbc.org.

LANDSCAPING AND LIGHTING. The site improvements should enhance community character.

- Landscaping should consist of native plant species appropriate for the location. Invasive plant species should be prohibited. Invasive plant information is available at: www.westchestergov.com/planning/environmental/Reports/InvasivePlantsBroch08.pdf
- Pollutant tolerant plantings should effectively shield parking, loading areas and refuse collection sites.
- Site lighting should be provided at the lowest safe levels and lowest heights, avoiding all spillage off site.

PEDESTRIANS. Safe, convenient and ADA accessible pedestrian access is provided.

- A sidewalk should be provided along the site frontage along each street.
- Direct pedestrian connections should be made from the front of the building to the sidewalk. Pedestrian crossings of driveways and parking lots should be minimized or avoided. If they must be provided, painted crosswalks should be provided through parking lots.
- ADA accessibility must be provided.

BICYCLISTS. Provisions for bicyclists should be incorporated into project design.

- Bicycle parking should be provided in commercial and residential developments. Guidelines can be found at: www.apbp.org/resource/resmgr/publications/bicycle_parking_guidelines.pdf
- If near a trailway or bicycle route, extra consideration should be given to bicycle accessibility such as bike lanes on internal roadways, bicycle parking and other amenities.
- Drive-thru lanes at uses such as banks and fast-food restaurants should also be accessible for bicycles.