



TOWN OF CHATHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Policy and Procedures for the Administrative Review of Proposed Projects

Background: Some proposed projects fall in the 0-100 foot buffer zone to a Resource Area (also known as the Adjacent Upland Resource Area in Chatham) and are small in scale as to cause no likely impact to any interest of the Wetlands Protection Act or Chatham Wetlands Protection Regulations. Such projects will not undergo formal review before the Conservation Commission and can be reviewed and approved by the Conservation Agent.

Activities that are not allowed to be permitted using an Administrative Review Application:

1. Any activity in a Wetland Resource Area as defined in 310 CMR 10.00
2. Any activity that involves the use of excavation or heavy equipment in a Resource Area
3. View pruning activities
4. Regrading, filling or foundation work
5. Uprooting or root grappling of trees
6. Mowing or clear cutting of vegetation
7. Construction of decks, stairs, walkways or any other hardscaping in the 0-50 foot buffer to any Wetland Resource Area. If the Agent determines that the work is proposed in an existing hardscapes area, he/she may authorize the work with submission of an Administrative Review Application.

Note: An individual seeking to permit the activities listed above must submit a Request for Determination of Applicability or a Notice of Intent. Please contact the Conservation Agent if you have questions about your project and/or would like more information on how to file.

Criteria for Removing Trees using an Administrative Review Application:

The following activities can be requested through the submission of an Administrative Review Application:

1. A maximum of 3 healthy trees can be proposed for removal or pruning. The proposal must include a 1:1 replacement with native trees in the Resource Area(s).
2. The removal of unhealthy trees (i.e. dead, dying or diseased) can be proposed if they pose eminent danger to structures and personal safety.
3. Flush cutting storm-damaged trees can be proposed when accompanied by photographs of the proposed tree with the date taken and identifying the date of the storm event.

Supporting Documents Required with the Application:

1. A letter stating why the trees pose a danger to surrounding structures or public safety from a Certified Arborist with their license number or a letter from a qualified arborist with a statement briefly outlining their professional tree experience.
2. Photos of the proposed plants/trees to be removed.

Procedure for Filing an Administrative Review Application: If proposed project meets the criteria for an Administrative Review (see criteria list above), the applicant must fill out an Administrative Review Application and submit \$50. Cash, check (checks can be dropped off to the Conservation Division or electronically processed with a fee of \$0.50) or credit card (credit card transactions will have an additional processing fee of 2.99% plus \$0.99) are accepted, and all checks should be made out to the Town of Chatham. A hard copy of the Administrative Review Application can also be picked up at the Town Hall Annex, 261 George Ryder Road or a Smart Form can be downloaded from the Town of Chatham website (under the Conservation Division page, select “Filing Instructions”) and submitted by email. The Conservation Division Office is open Monday-Thursday 7 AM-4 PM and Friday 8 AM-12 PM.

Complete applications are reviewed quickly and efficiently; incomplete applications typically result in more time delays. If the submitted Administrative Review Application is incomplete, a Conservation Division staff member will contact the person listed on the application and outline why the application was incomplete. Once the application is complete, the application will be reviewed by the Conservation Agent. Upon submission of a complete Administrative Review Application, the applicant will clearly define the proposed project during a site visit with the Conservation Agent in the field, as practicable, with staking and/or flagging.

Decision Procedure:

The Conservation Agent will visit the site to review the proposed activities in the field. The decision from the Agent is emailed to the applicant and representative. If denied, the Agent will provide instructions on how to proceed. The decision can be appealed by applying for a Request for Determination of Applicability or Notice of Intent.

Note: Any work approved under the Administrative Review Application must be completed within 6 months of the date issued.

Administrative Review Application

Please provide the information below:

Project Address: _____

Name of Property Owner: _____

Property Owner's Phone # _____

Property Owner's Email Address _____

If applicable:

Name of Contractor or Representative: _____

Contractor or Representative's Email Address: _____

Contractor or Representative's Phone #: _____

Please answer YES or NO to the following questions:

Is the proposed work in a Resource Area?

If yes, identify the Resource Area. _____

Is the proposed work within 50 feet of a Resource Area?

If yes, identify the Resource Area. _____

Is excavation by machinery required or proposed? _____

Is foundation work proposed? _____

Is view pruning proposed? _____

Is regrading proposed, including addition or removal of soil, sand, fill, etc.? _____

Is removal of vegetation proposed? If yes, what species, native or invasive, how much (square footage of number of plants)? _____

Is tree removal proposed? If yes, how many trees will be removed, what is the diameter at breast height (dbh) and what species? _____

Is pruning of trees proposed?
If yes, how many trees will be pruned and what species? _____

Is planting proposed? If yes, please supply planting information which includes the number and species of native plants to be planted. _____

Is removal of invasive species proposed?

If yes, please identify the species and describe the removal process in the Project Description. _____

Please provide photographs of the site:

Please provide digital or printed photographs of the proposed project site. Photographs must be in focus and include a description in the Project Description. The photos help expedite the permitting process for the Applicant and the Conservation Agent.

Project Description:

Please provide a clear and comprehensive description of the proposed work.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW DECISION (FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY):

Date Stamp of Received Application: _____

Fee Paid, Check #, Credit Card or Cash: _____

Date of Site Inspection: _____

Decision: APPROVED DENIED

Decision Date: _____

If denied, required Filing and rationale: _____

Conditions of the Approval: All work shall be completed within 6 months of this decision and the contractor must notify the Conservation Agent prior to the start of work (nsmith@chatham-ma.gov).