



HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
THOMAS APPLEBY, Administrator

Department of Buildings
120 WALL STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10005

JEREMIAH T. WALSH, P.E., Commissioner

Dec. 2, 1961

GENERAL BUILDING DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES FOR ALTERATIONS

Based on our experiences with the problems caused by the unfamiliarity of the general public with routine department procedures, as well as their unawareness of basic provisions of building laws, the following is a step-by-step procedure of obtaining an alteration application approval, permit and certificate of occupancy.

1. An alteration application for a proposed change of use and/or desired or required work is filed by a registered architect or licensed professional engineer in the appropriate borough office of this department, with all relevant plans, and payment of a required filing fee computed, based on the cost of alterations. The owner of the premises must authorize the filing, in writing.
2. The application should, on the average, be reached for examination primarily for compliance with the Building Code and Zoning Resolution in approximately three weeks. If disapproved in part, written objections are sent to the applicant.
3. If the objections are readily complied with, the application and plans are thereafter approved. If substantive objections relating to fire protection, egress or zoning are raised, the owner should discuss with his architect or engineer, the cost of compliance or possibility of obtaining a variance at the Board of Standards and Appeals, or, alternately, whether another site is advisable.
4. After approval of the application and plans by this department (whether "as-of-right" or subsequent to a variance), a permit must be obtained by the contractor before any work may commence. The permit is issued upon submission of evidence of required insurance coverages, and payment of the permit fee (related to the cost of the alterations, as was the filing fee). If plumbing work is involved, a separate permit must be filed for by the licensed plumber.
5. At various critical stages in the work, the contractor(s) should request department inspection before concealing the work already done.

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General Building Department Guidelines for Alterations (Cont'd.)

6. If basic fire safety, egress and ventilation work have been completed, a temporary certificate of occupancy may be requested in writing.

7. After all work has been completed in conformance with approved plans, and all required quality control or test reports have been submitted and approved, the final certificate of occupancy should be requested in writing by the architect, engineer, or contractor who supervised the construction. This certificate of occupancy request should result in final inspection in approximately ten days, and, if all requirements of building laws and the approved plans have been complied with, a final certificate of occupancy is issued, and no further inspections or certifications by the Building Department would normally be required. If there are objections to issuance of the certificate of occupancy, they must be complied with.

8. At any point in the above described procedure, requests for supervisory review of decisions or objections can be made in writing, and they will be evaluated.

Please Note:

The following delay causing incidents have happened in the past, often enough to warrant cautioning all concerned to take appropriate steps to prevent their occurrence.

- a. There is a delay in the filing of the alteration application.
- b. There is no resubmission of corrected plans to comply with objections.
- c. Either the general contractor or licensed plumber or both have failed to obtain their permits.
- d. There have been field deviations from approved plans, and the applicant has failed to file amendments.
- e. No application has been filed for a certificate of occupancy.
- f. The field copy of the approved plans and application has been taken by the contractor, and if the Building Department file is unavailable, no conclusive inspections and sign-offs are possible without resubmission of plans.
- g. Correspondence and inquiries fail to note the proper address and application number.
- h. The original applicant and contractor are no longer available.

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(Borough Superintendents)

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JEREMIAH T. WALSH, P.E.
Commissioner

Dated: December 2, 1976

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