

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

Marcia Rasmussen,
Director of Planning and Land Management

Mission

To guide the development and use of private and public lands within the Town in a manner that preserves and celebrates the unique character that is Concord.

Organization and Staffing

The Department is comprised of fourteen full-time and two part-time individuals within four distinct Divisions – Building Inspections, Health, Natural Resources, and Planning. The range and extent of authority exercised by these Divisions is found in State Law and in the Town's bylaws. This year, we welcomed Brian Smith as the Electrical/Wiring Inspector and James O'Reilly as the Gas/Plumbing Inspector in the Building Inspections Division and McLinda Kuong to the Planning Division as the Administrative Assistant to the Board of Appeals and Historic Districts Commission. Two part-time summer conservation crew members, Ian Hunter and Brigit Avell, were hired to work with the Natural Resources Division staff on trails maintenance, field mowing and invasive species control of Town open space and conservation lands.

These four Divisions provide staff support to the Town's regulatory boards and committees that address land use and development activities in the Town: the Board of Appeals, Board of Health, Natural Resources Commission, Planning Board and Historic Districts Commission. DPLM staff also provides support to the Community Preservation Committee, Historical Commission and Comprehensive Sustainable Energy Committee, in addition to many other sub-committees and task forces that may be appointed to address specific issues from time to time, such as the Mill Brook Task Force, Conservation Restriction Stewardship Committee, the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee and the West Concord Advisory Committee. Staff also works with regional groups such as the 13 communities that make up the MAPC-Minuteman Area Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) and the six towns

that participate in the Regional Housing Services Office.

Planning & Land Management staff work cooperatively with other Town departments to further the goals and objectives of the Town. Some of the projects in which we have been involved include: the Parking Management Planning effort, an integrated planning initiative for wastewater and potential development, and the Facility Manager's committee.

Detailed reports on the regulatory activities of the various boards staffed by DPLM are included in this Annual Report.

BUILDING INSPECTIONS AND ZONING ENFORCEMENT

John Minty,
Building Commissioner

The Building Inspections Division issued 733 building permits, which is a drop in the number of building permits compared to previous years. Despite this drop, the total construction value increased significantly. The overall value of 2011 construction was \$44 million compared to \$68.8 million in 2012. Of this total, \$34.3 million was residential construction with \$34.5 million in commercial work. In previous years residential construction consistently counted for roughly 75% of the total construction. In 2012 residential versus commercial construction values are virtually the same.

The value of "new" residential dwelling units built in Concord went from \$17 million last year to \$15.7 million in 2012; an 8% decrease. This residential construction value represents 29 new single family dwelling units built in 2012. Of these 29 new dwellings, 21, or 73%, were the result of "tear downs" (the demolition of an existing house to allow the construction of a new, often larger, home). Over this past year, \$18.3 million dollars were spent on alterations or additions to existing single family residential homes. This is an increase in value of 6% from last year.

Plumbing permits increased by 4%, gas permits by 12%, and electrical permits decreased by 2%. This was also the first full year that the Building Inspections Division

# Permits Issued	PERFORMANCE INFORMATION					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
New single family homes	22	28	26	41	30	29
Multi-family attached units	7	5	6	21	0	0
Additions/Alterations	618	595	537	644	686	631
Commercial	92	83	97	90	90	73
Total Building Permits:	739	711	666	796	806	733
Electrical	761	716	643	642	745	730
Mechanical	-	-	-	-	26	70
Plumbing	468	462	435	424	470	487
Gas	344	315	326	320	340	382
Signs	34	44	50	30	41	35
Total all Permits:	2,346	2,248	2,120	2,212	2,428	2,437
Value of Const. (millions)	66.5	64.4	40.6	90	44	68.8
Permit Fee Revenue	\$593,835	\$506,070	\$486,410	\$955,212	\$554,211	\$809,045

issued Mechanical permits. There were 70 Mechanical permits issued in 2012, compared to 26 Mechanical permits issued from July 1 to December 31, 2011.

The Building Inspections Division collected \$809,045 in permit fees in 2012. This is an increase of \$254,834 (46%) in permit fees collected over last year.

The level of building construction activity continued to increase in 2012. The requirements of the Building Inspections Division staff remain above average. As a Division, the Building Inspections staff is committed to pursuing aggressive zoning and sign bylaw enforcement, as well as enforcement of the State building code which includes, but is not limited to handicap access, structural integrity, fire safety and many other items relative to public safety. Our technical assistance to property owners, builders, real estate professionals, other Town departments, boards, committees and staff, increases each year. Beyond issuance of building permits and conducting all required onsite inspections, the Building Inspections Division staff spends an increasing amount of time reviewing subdivision proposals, special permits, site plans, variance requests, making zoning determinations and addressing zoning complaints.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Alice Kaufman, Chair
 David Fisher
 David Broadwin
 John Brady, Associate Member
 Robert Sepucha, Associate Member

The Board of Appeals is authorized by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, and is responsible for conducting public hearings and meetings for matters relating to the zoning bylaws of the Town.

In July, Alice Kaufman was re-elected as Chair. Having completed his term, Roberto Braceras left the Board in August. Steven Ng left the Board in May; David Broadwin was appointed as a full member to complete the remainder of Mr. Ng's term. David Fisher was appointed to a term as a full member. Robert Sepucha joined the Board in September. There is currently one vacancy of an associate member to the Board.

The Board conducted 12 public hearings and 12 public meetings in 2012, during which it considered 50 applications. 6 applications were withdrawn without prejudice at the request of the applicants. 38 special permits were granted. 2 variances from height requirements and 1 variance for an awning overhanging Town land, all in conjunction with special permits, were granted. 1 amendment to a previously approved variance was granted. 4 applications are pending. 1 appeal of a decision of the Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer was filed and withdrawn at the request of the appellant. No decision made by the Board was appealed.