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Certificate of Occupancy (CO) Guide & Checklist:

The purpose of this document is to provide a *guide* and explain the Certificate of Occupancy/Use (CO) process for the City of Winchester, the responsibility of the applicant, and the responsibility of each City agency in recommending approval of the CO to the Building Official. The CO is the final construction document issued by the Building Official to authorize the occupancy of a structure upon completion of all building components, per Section 116.1 of the 2012 Virginia Uniform Building Code (USBC). The Certificate of Occupancy ensures the final approval of all newly issued building and associated trade permits, the completion of required grading or other site plan items required by engineering and compliance with all applicable certificates of appropriateness, development permits, variances, subdivisions and conditional use permits.

It is highly recommended that at least a one week "cushion" be allowed between the completion of construction and the intended settlement date, "move-in" date, or grand opening event requiring an issued CO. This one week period will allow for any noted deficiencies to be corrected in time for the scheduled settlement/opening without delay. It is important to designate one person to coordinate the inspection process, communicate with the inspection agencies to resolve any disapproval, and then follow up with Building Inspections to obtain the Certificate of Occupancy.

Even with the best planning and communications, it is sometimes necessary to request to move furniture in or stock goods prior to the CO being approved and issued. These requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and require the approval of the Building Official or designee. A Stocking Permit form is available from the Building Department and online: <https://www.winchesterva.gov/sites/default/files/documents/planning-zoning/Forms/stocking-permit.pdf>

It is sometimes possible for the Building Official and Zoning Administrator to approve the temporary occupancy of a structure in accordance with Section 116.1.1 of the USBC. In order for a temporary CO to be considered, all portions of the structure to be occupied must not endanger life or public safety. This means that required fire alarms and fire suppression/sprinkler systems must be installed and pass field acceptance tests. Common areas, accessibility, and access/egress components including emergency & egress lighting are installed, inspected and approved. CUP conditions, if applicable, are inspected and approved. If a temporary occupancy will be issued, and outstanding site development items remain per the approved site plan, a bond may be required with the Zoning Administrator.

CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY CHECKLIST

In order to be ready for issuance of the CO, please use the following agency checklist *guide* to make sure that the project is ready for CO approval. Please contact each agency by the number provided if you have any questions about what they require or will be inspecting. If item(s) are identified by City Staff for correction, once the item(s) are corrected contact the disapproving agency to reschedule your inspection.

Public Services-- (Engineering – Utilities– Public Works) 540-667-2387

- I. Engineering (Requires 1-3 inspection days) Contact Kelly Henshaw (540)667-2387
 - 1. Grading plan complied with and Erosion and sediment control conditions of site plan are met.
 - 2. Site must be stabilized (seed and straw or sod).
 - 3. Storm sewers are clean and functional (not blocked).
 - 4. The street and site area are clean and free of mud and construction debris.
 - 5. Stormwater BMPs must be certified by an appropriate party and as-built submitted for review and approval.
 - 6. All storm inlets and manholes must have parged flumes and tops.
 - 7. Storm manhole covers (for public storm system) should be City standard stamped covers (PSSM)
 - 8. Approved final inspection for occupancy

- II. Utilities (Requires 1-3 inspection days) Contact Kelly Henshaw (540)667-2387
 - 1. Water meter must be set (no services on bypass).
 - 2. Sanitary sewers are clean and functional (not blocked).
 - 3. Sanitary sewers must be TV'd and accepted by Public Utilities.
 - 4. Waterlines and Fire Hydrants are installed and operational.
 - 5. All sanitary manholes must have parged inverts and tops.
 - 6. Sanitary manhole covers (for public sanitary system) should be City standard stamped covers (PSSM)
 - 7. Utility as-built for all public utilities must be submitted, reviewed and approved
 - 8. Approved final inspection for occupancy.

- III. Public Works (Requires 1-3 inspection days) Contact Kelly Henshaw (540)667-2387
 - 1. Pavement installed in public roadways and parking areas as delineated on the approved plan.
 - 2. Public traffic signals and street lights, if applicable, are installed and working with approved final inspections.
 - 3. Sidewalks/trails and entrances in the ROW or public easements must be installed correctly and free from defects (cracks or otherwise).
 - 4. Striping on City street modifications and new City streets per City standards (PSSM)
 - 5. Approved final site inspection for occupancy.

Development Office-- – (Site Engineering – Planning– Zoning & Building) 540-667-2370

- I. Planning (Requires 1-3 inspection days). Contact Tim Youmans
 - 1. All landscaping, screening and plantings installed living and irrigation measures in place.
 - 2. All parking requirements are met and lot is striped.
 - 3. The applicant shall demonstrate compliance with the approved plan or have a revised as-built plan filed with the City for approval.
 - 4. There is free access to the building to be occupied.
 - 5. If applicable, temporary fencing installed to separate remaining construction from area to be occupied.

6. Accessible parking spaces are properly located, signed, sized and marked.
 7. Site lights (driveways and parking areas) are installed, operational and are at proper minimum distance from curb. (Pole light foundations require separate building permits)
 8. Rezoning Proffers and Subdivision conditions, if applicable, tied to the occupancy of the property have been fulfilled.
 9. Exterior features are compliant with Certificates of Appropriateness for properties; located in a Corridor Enhancement (CE) or Historic (HW) District.
 10. Fencing and screenings walls (dumpster enclosures) are in place with required opaque gates.
 11. Approved final inspection for occupancy.
- II. Zoning & Building Inspections (requires 1-3 inspection days) Contact Aaron Grisdale for Zoning and Victoria Palmerton for Building.
1. All trade permits have received final inspection (plumbing (backflow certifications), gas and mechanical (air balance report)).
 2. Building permit has received final inspection.
 3. Accessibility requirements are met as delineated on approved plans.
 4. All Third Party and Special Inspection Reports have been submitted indicating any outstanding issues are satisfied including the 'Final Statement of Inspections' from RDP & SER.
 5. All signage has proper permits and inspections.
 6. Ancillary construction shown on site plan such as monument signs, dumpster enclosures, retaining walls, and site lighting shall be permitted independently from the site development permit and shall have approved final inspections.
 7. Building/house numbers are posted.
 8. Board of Zoning Appeals conditions and Conditional Use Permit conditions, if applicable, has been fulfilled.
 9. Flood plain elevation certification, if applicable.
 10. Final building location survey/as-built submitted, if required.
 11. Approved final inspection for occupancy.

Electrical Final inspections: Contact MDIA (Middle Dept. Inspection Agency) 540-667-8484

Fire Marshal's Office: Contact Jeremy Luttrell 540-662-2298

1. Fire Extinguishers located and installed per NFPA 10 and/or approved plans. Signs shall be provided identifying extinguisher if not readily visible in area they protect.
2. Fire Lanes need to be marked with signs and pavement/curb markings per City Ordinance. If gates are installed acceptance testing must be accomplished and witnessed by the Fire Marshal.
3. Fire Hydrants – Fire Hydrants must face fire lanes and be painted to City standards. Hydrants not protected by curbs must have bollards installed to protect them from vehicle damage.
4. Fire Alarm Systems – Acceptance testing must have been accomplished on installed systems. The alarm company technician(s) must be present during this test that is witnessed by Fire Marshal's Office inspector. Fire Alarm Systems must be monitored by an approved service.
5. Fire Protection Systems – Acceptance testing must have been accomplished on installed systems such as fire sprinkler, hood extinguishing systems, etc. The installing company technician(s) must be present during these tests that are witnessed by a Fire Marshal's Office inspector. Fire Protection Systems alarms must be interfaced with the Fire Alarm System.

6. Egress Components/Systems – Clear unobstructed paths to exits must be in place with correct door hardware/releasing system operational. Exit and emergency lighting must be in working order.
7. Fire Rated Separations – Required fire separations must be labeled and intact with openings protected and penetrations sealed with approved materials/devices.
8. Premises Address – The City Code requires the posting of the street/suite address number on the front and rear of the building/suite. Place the street/suite address on the utility meters and disconnects in multi-tenant buildings.
9. Fire Department Key Safe – The “Knox Box” key safe(s) shall be mounted near the main entrance or other approved location at approximately 60 inches above the walking surface. Specific location shall be coordinated with a Fire Marshal’s Office inspector prior to mounting. Keys or other entry devices need to be provided for placement in the key safe.
10. Approved final inspection for occupancy.

Health Department: 540-722-3480

No Issued CO = No Grand Opening/Occupancy of Building.

I hope the above information is useful as you take the proper steps to project completion. Please call if you have any questions or comments.

Victoria Palmerton, C.B.O.
City of Winchester
Building Official
(540)667-1815x1417