



# DISCRETIONARY PROCESSES OVERVIEW

Discretionary applications are those that require approval from the Board of Supervisors before proceeding. Following a public hearing, the Board makes the final decision on whether to approve or deny an application, based on the merits of that particular case. The following provides an overview of the various discretionary processes.

Each zoning district within the Hanover County Zoning Ordinance contains a list of permitted uses, conditional uses, and special exceptions. If a particular use is proposed that is not listed under the current zoning of the property, a [Rezoning](#) may be required. If the desired use is listed under conditional uses or special exceptions, a [Conditional Use Permit \(CUP\)](#) or [Special Exception \(SE\)](#) application may be required.

A [Comprehensive Plan Amendment \(CPA\)](#) is another discretionary item the Board of Supervisors considers. The Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for development in the County. A proposed amendment should describe a perceived problem or inadequacy in the currently adopted [Comprehensive Plan](#), which cannot await the next regularly scheduled County-wide Comprehensive Plan Update.

## The Process

Hanover County strongly recommends holding a pre-application meeting with the Planning Staff prior to submission of an application. During this meeting, the staff will review your proposal and

### Take Note

A [pre-application meeting request form](#) must be completed prior to setting up the meeting. This can be done over the phone with staff or the form can be found online under Application Forms within the Planning Department webpage.

offer general guidance on the process and potential issues (such as site layout, drainage impacts, Chesapeake Bay, utility connections, traffic generation, architectural elevations, possible community concerns) that may arise during a formal review. Contact the Applicant Liaison at (804)365-6171, should you wish to schedule an appointment. These meetings are

typically held on the first Wednesdays and the third Tuesdays of the month.

The deadline for submitting an application for zoning action is the first Monday of the month. (If the first Monday falls on a holiday, the deadline will be moved to the next business day.) Applications are routed for review to various County and state agencies, including the Departments of Public Works and Utilities and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). A staff meeting is held on the third Wednesday of the month of submittal to discuss comments on the new applications. Written comments are sent to the applicant. The applicant may meet with the Planning Staff to discuss the comments and then may make modifications to their application as necessary to address the identified issues. Sometimes at this stage in the process, meetings with the community are recommended, particularly for complex rezoning applications or cases with significant community interest.

### Did you know?

A [community meeting guide](#) is available to assist you in arranging for a meeting with the community.

Once revised plans are submitted, the Staff prepares the zoning case for public hearing. A public notice is placed in the local newspaper, and a sign is posted on the property that notifies the community that a zoning application is under review. A staff report is prepared, which typically includes a recommendation, and is sent to the Planning Commission and/or Board of Supervisors prior to the public hearing.

The Planning Commission generally meets on the third Thursdays of the month to review rezoning, CUP, and CPA applications. In addition to the aforementioned applications, the Board of Supervisors also reviews Special Exception applications. Board hearings are typically held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors schedules for each year are posted on the County's website.