



San Juan County Community Development & Planning

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POLICIES / PROCEDURES / INTERPRETATIONS

Requirements for a Complete Building Permit Submission

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ISSUE:

Potential upcoming changes to building codes and land use regulations have prompted questions regarding the submission requirements for a complete building permit application. The primary question is what will be required for submission to deem an application as “complete” for the purposes of vesting under land use regulations and building codes in affect at the time of submittal.

ANALYSIS:

State of Washington RCW 19.27.095 (1) & (2) provide, in part, the following: *“(1) A valid and fully complete building permit application for a structure, that is permitted under the zoning or other land use control ordinances in effect on the date of the application shall be considered under the building permit ordinance in effect at the time of application, and the zoning or other land use control ordinances in effect on the date of application. (2) The requirements for a fully completed application shall be defined by local ordinance...”*

San Juan County Code 15.04.080 (B) provides *“Unless otherwise delegated by the County administrator, the director shall administer and enforce the codes adopted in this article. The director may establish necessary administrative procedures including those for permit application and issuance, plan review, inspection, investigation, the maintenance of records, and the collection of fees. The director shall determine the items necessary for a complete application, and each application shall meet the minimum requirements established by RCW 19.27.095 and the adopted codes. Fees shall be as approved by resolution or ordinance adopted by the County council.”*

San Juan County Code 18.80.020 (D)(1) specifies (for “Project Permits”) that a determination of completeness shall be made within 28 days of receipt of the application. Absent a specific requirement to Building Permit applications, it is reasonable to recognize this 28 day threshold for consistency between codes.

San Juan County UDC Sections 18.60.020 “Water Supplies” and 18.60.030 “Wastewater disposal”, provide requirements for “all development”, which by definition, would include building permits. The water supply section requires that the applicant *“must demonstrate actual connections and guarantees of service before final approval”*, in the context of short and long subdivisions. Similar language is found for wastewater disposal provisions as well. “Final approval”, used in this section,

shall be understood to mean approval of the permit application, not approval of actual construction or completion of the project.

It is clear from the scoping language found in 18.60.010, which states, in part, *“the development standards of this chapter are designed to.....and apply to all development subject to this code...”*, that these provisions would be applicable to building permits, as they fall under the definition of *“development”*, per 18.20.040.

Further language on these requirements can be found in SJCC Section 8.06.140 *“Demonstration of water availability – Building permits.”* Subsection ‘A’ offers *“Applicants for building permits for new construction that contains plumbing fixtures dependent on potable water for their operation must demonstrate water availability.”*

The International Building Code (IBC) provides detailed explanations of information required on a submission in sections 105.3 *“Application for permit”* and 107.2.1 *“Information on construction documents”*. It is clear from these sections that certain application information is necessary as well providing adequate *“construction documents”* for submission of an application for a building permit. This is specifically detailed as *“Construction documents shall be drawn upon suitable material...”*. *“Construction documents shall be of sufficient clarity to indicate the location, nature and extent of the work proposed and show in detail that it will conform to the provisions of this code and relevant laws, ordinances, rules and regulations, as determined by the building official. Where required by the building official, all braced wall lines, shall be identified on the construction documents and all pertinent information including, but not limited to, bracing methods, location and length of braced wall panels, foundation requirements of braced wall panels at top and bottom shall be provided.”*

The IBC section 107.1 (**Submittal Documents**) states, in part, *“The construction documents shall be prepared by a registered design professional where required by the statutes of the jurisdiction in which the project is to be constructed.”*

The IBC further provides section 107.3.4.2 *“Deferred submittals”*, described as *“...those portions of the design that are not submitted at the time of the application and that are to be submitted to the building official within a specified period.”* The section also provides *“Deferral of any submittal items shall have the prior approval of the building official”*.

From the assortment of State and local laws, rules and codes, it is clear that San Juan County can define the criteria of what constitutes a *“complete submission”*, as long as the State required minimums are met. Furthermore, various SJCC and I-Code language offer clear guidance to the minimum requirements for building permit submittal documents.

POLICY:

For the purpose of vesting a building permit, as it pertains to land use and building code regulations, a permit application will be deemed vested under the regulations in affect at the time when the submission is accepted as *“complete”*. A *“complete submission”* shall be defined to include the following items:

- 1) Completed & signed *“Building Permit”* application packet, as provided by San Juan County, including all applicable forms, affidavits, or similar, contained in the packet. [1]

- 2) Storm Water Management Plan documents as required, described in SJC SWMP compliance forms, found in the building permit application packet. [1]
- 3) Accurate site plan showing all required elements, as described in SJC Building Permit instructions titled "Drawing a Site Plan".
- 4) "*Construction Documents*" of sufficient clarity, containing information required as specified in the IRC & IBC. This shall include, but not be limited to:
 - Floor plan, elevation, section, framing, and foundation drawings.
 - Necessary callouts and details to describe, in detail, elements of the construction methods used.
 - Braced wall lines shall be identified and braced wall panels marked on the plans.
 - In the event that engineering is not provided but subsequently determined as being required, specified in IBC section 107.1, submittal of required engineering will be required to vest the submission.
- 5) Water availability documentation as defined by SJCC 18.60.020 (B)(1)
- 6) Wastewater disposal documentation consisting of either:
 - Actual connection and guarantee of service from wastewater treatment provider in the case of sewer service availability or
 - Approval of an OSS (On-site sewage system) design by SJC Department of Health
- 7) Where water availability and/or wastewater disposal approval(s) has (have) not been obtained, the Building Official may accept these items as "*deferred submittals*". The deferred submittal of a water availability certificate and/or wastewater disposal design approval would be subject to a 180 day limit, as described in IBC 105.3.2.
- 8) Verification by San Juan County CDP that the subject parcel has no outstanding/unresolved code enforcement violations.
- 9) A determination of completeness shall be made within 28 days of submission of the application. Upon determination, the submitted application will be categorized under one of the following:
 - Accepted, complete, vested
 - Accepted, incomplete, vested (a list of incomplete items will be provided)
 - Accepted, incomplete, not vested (a list of incomplete items will be provided)
 - Not Accepted, incomplete, not vested (a list of incomplete items will be provided)

Where special circumstances exist, the Building Official may grant a modification to these requirements when the submitted materials are determined, in the opinion of the Building Official, to be in substantial compliance with the intent of this policy.

[1] San Juan County Building Permit Application packet found at (under "complete building permit application packet):

<http://sanjuanco.com/permitcenter/applicationforms.aspx>