



## Montgomery Planning

# DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

## Demystifying the Development Review Process for Applicants and Neighbors

---

Consider this your handy guide to how Montgomery Planning, landowners and community members work together to review plans for new development and keep our communities thriving.

This brochure is for you if:

- You're considering or have already submitted an application for new development.
- You have questions or comments about a development application in your community.

## WHY IS DEVELOPMENT REVIEW IMPORTANT?

The Montgomery County Planning Board reviews development applications and subdivision requests to ensure that our county—and your community—is a great place to live, work and visit. During the development review process, Montgomery Planning staff **works jointly with the applicant and community members** to ensure that proposed development is in accord with the Subdivision of Land Article, Zoning Ordinance, General Plan, master plan recommendations and other regulations and guidelines.

## WHAT DO WE LOOK FOR WHEN REVIEWING DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS?

Montgomery Planning staff and the Montgomery Planning Board consider whether and how proposed development allows for and provides:

- Adequate public facilities and amenities like schools, parks and libraries.
- Compatibility with neighboring uses.
- Master Plan conformance.
- Appropriate infrastructure like transportation, water and sewer.
- Protection of the environment.
- Preservation of historic resources.

## WHO PARTICIPATES IN DEVELOPMENT REVIEW?

Throughout the development review process, Montgomery Planning staff works jointly with applicants and neighbors to address issues of concern before the Planning Board reviews applications. For example, depending on the findings for a development application, staff may recommend that proposed development projects dedicate land for roads, schools, parks or recreation facilities. Montgomery Planning staff then continues to work with applicants, neighbors and state and local agencies to find common ground.



## ABOUT MONTGOMERY PLANNING

Montgomery Planning examines the past and present land use conditions to plan for the brightest possible future for Montgomery County and its residents. Our research and expertise are informed by the needs and realities of community members like you and other stakeholders to plan, design and enhance the best use of the county's land and related resources. Montgomery Planning's recommendations ensure that communities are designed and equipped to keep pace with the way you live, work and play now and into the future.

## WHAT MONTGOMERY PLANNING DOES

Montgomery Planning develops plans and sets policies to ensure that we have what we need as Montgomery County grows while preserving what's good about what's already in place. We do this through:

- **CUTTING-EDGE RESEARCH** that lays the groundwork for what's possible and what will best serve the community.
- **DEVELOPMENT OF MASTER PLANS AND FUNCTIONAL PLANS** that work toward balancing the county's present realities with the needs of the future to improve our communities.
- **REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS** to ensure that proposed development follows Montgomery County's General Plan and subsequent master plans.
- **LAND USE AND ZONING REGULATIONS** to ensure that communities grow as intended by the master plans.
- **HISTORIC PRESERVATION** to identify, designate and regulate historic sites in the county.
- **EMPOWERING PROPERTY OWNERS TO PARTICIPATE** in the development process by providing information, tools and maps.

# WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMEONE WANTS TO DEVELOP LAND?

---

If you want to develop or subdivide property in Montgomery County, you must submit a development application. That application goes through the development review process, which relies on participation, input and cooperation between the applicant, community members, Montgomery Planning and other agencies.

Depending on what is proposed, how the property is zoned and the zone's requirements, **applicants** may need to submit one or all three of the following type of proposed plans:

- Sketch Plan
- Subdivision Plan
- Site Plan

The development review process is designed to inform and engage the community surrounding the proposed development. Montgomery Planning encourages **community members** to evaluate the effects of a proposed development on neighborhoods and to participate in the Planning Board's review. *See the back of this brochure for tips on how to get involved.*

**KEY**



Applicant



Montgomery  
Planning



Community  
Members



### NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY AND FOREST STAND DELINEATION

Property owner submits to Montgomery Planning.



### MONTGOMERY PLANNING REVIEW

A Montgomery Planning environmental specialist reviews the Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation. Upon approval, the property owner may continue the application process.



### COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION AND MEETING

Before filing any development application, a property owner must:

- Post notification signs with contact information.
- Hold meetings with the community.
- Send written notice to abutting and confronting property owners and to homeowner and civic associations within a ½–1 mile radius, depending on application type.



### LEARN ABOUT POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

When community members see signs or receive notice, they should review any information provided. Anyone interested in the development of the site may attend the scheduled community meetings to ask questions or express concerns.



### FILE APPLICATION

The applicant submits a proposal for development. At this time, the applicant:

- Sends written notice to the community and all who indicated interest.
- Posts new signs with application number and contact information.

For more information on the types of development plans and on submitting development applications, go to [montgomeryplanning.org/development](http://montgomeryplanning.org/development).



### APPLICATION REVIEW

Montgomery Planning accepts an application when all necessary documentation is submitted and complete, and the community is notified. The application is then assigned a Planning Board hearing date in accordance with regulations.



### REVIEW APPLICATION AND COORDINATE

Community members are encouraged to:

- Review the application.
- Discuss your questions and concerns with your neighbors.



### LEAD REVIEWER ASSIGNED

Montgomery Planning assigns a lead reviewer and a point of contact for the applicant and community members.



### REQUEST MEETING WITH LEAD REVIEWER

To learn more about the issues addressed in the plan's review and discuss questions or concerns, community members may:

- Call or meet with the lead reviewer.
- Invite the lead reviewer to attend a civic or a homeowner association meeting.

Contact the lead reviewer at 301-495-4610.



### PLANNING STAFF REVIEW

Development Review staff from Montgomery Planning and other county agencies review the development proposal.

They look at the subdivision requirements, zoning ordinance, recommendations in the relevant master plan and other applicable regulations and guidelines. For more info, go to [montgomeryplanning.org/development](http://montgomeryplanning.org/development).



### PROVIDE ONGOING INPUT

- Community members meet with staff to identify and resolve issues.
- They may also submit written or emailed comments for the lead reviewer's consideration and public record.



### DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE REVIEW

Planning staff sends the applicant consolidated comments and the applicant discusses the comments with the Development Review Committee (DRC). Learn more about the DRC at [montgomeryplanning.org/development](http://montgomeryplanning.org/development).



### ATTEND DRC MEETING

Community members can attend, but may not speak, at DRC meetings. The schedule is posted two weeks in advance at [montgomeryplanning.org/development/development-review/](http://montgomeryplanning.org/development/development-review/).





### SUBMIT PLAN REVISIONS

To address concerns received from Planning staff, the DRC or the community, the applicant will often submit a revised plan.



### REVIEW REVISED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION (IF APPLICABLE)



### REVIEW REVISED APPLICATION

The community may communicate any concerns to the lead reviewer.



### MONTGOMERY PLANNING STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Montgomery Planning issues a staff report which may recommend approval (usually with a list of required conditions) or denial of the application.



### PLANNING BOARD HEARING NOTICE

The applicant and adjoining and confronting property owners are notified of the Planning Board public hearing date.



### PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED

The development plan is scheduled for review by the Planning board. Montgomery Planning sends hearing notifications at least 10 days before the scheduled Planning Board hearing date to adjoining and confronting property owners, HOAs within 1 mile and anyone who has submitted comments on the application.



### REVIEW MONTGOMERY PLANNING STAFF REPORT AND PLAN TO ATTEND PUBLIC HEARING

Community members may review the Planning Board agenda and relevant Montgomery Planning staff reports, which are posted online two weeks before the hearing at [montgomeryplanningboard.org/agendas](http://montgomeryplanningboard.org/agendas).



### TESTIFY AT PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING



### PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

The Planning Board holds a public hearing to receive testimony from staff, the applicant and interested parties and takes action on the proposal. The Planning Board's decisions on Sketch Plans, Preliminary Plans of Subdivision and Site Plans are binding.



### COMMUNITY TESTIMONY

Any interested party may testify in person at the Planning Board hearing or by letter or email at [montgomeryplanningboard.org](http://montgomeryplanningboard.org).

APPLICATION APPROVED OR DENIED



## TIPS

### TO EVALUATE EFFECTS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATE IN DEVELOPMENT REVIEW:

1. Be on the lookout for notices of development applications: signs and notifications by mail or from your homeowner or civic association.
2. Review the development application at [montgomeryplanning.org/development](https://montgomeryplanning.org/development) under Development Application Information Center.
3. Consider:
  - The development's effect on adjacent properties and the neighborhood.
  - Whether there is adequate existing and planned public infrastructure to serve the proposed development.
  - The development's impact on traffic and access.
  - The development's environmental impacts and adherence to development regulations.
4. Get in touch with the lead planner with questions, comments and concerns.
5. Testify about the application at the Planning Board's public hearing. Check [montgomeryplanningboard.org](https://montgomeryplanningboard.org) for agenda updates.

## CONTACT US

LEARN MORE ABOUT DEVELOPMENT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY: [montgomeryplanning.org/development](https://montgomeryplanning.org/development)

FIND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY: [mcatlas.org/devfinder](https://mcatlas.org/devfinder)

CONTACT MONTGOMERY PLANNING AT: 301-495-4610 or [MCP-InfoCounter@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:MCP-InfoCounter@mncppc-mc.org)

