



# building or expanding a house of worship

in montgomery county, maryland

*Information You Need to Know Before You Start*



Prepared by Montgomery County  
Department of Permitting Services (DPS) and  
the Montgomery County Planning Department

# Places of Worship

Even though places of worship are permitted by right in every zone, each facility has to comply with numerous other laws and regulations. Moreover, neighborhood opposition can be strong. Learn all you can about the process before you start. Meeting with us ahead of time will enable you to make informed decisions about your future development plans and could save you considerable time and money.

## Development Applications Checklist

Identify every use you want to accommodate on your site:

- ☐ Sanctuary. Number of seats \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Parking facility. Number of spaces \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Daycare for children/elderly
- ☐ Social services such as a clinic or AA
- ☐ Educational facilities. Please specify  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Recreational facilities (such as a basketball court)
- ☐ Meeting rooms/social facilities that can be rented
- ☐ Catering facilities
- ☐ Dwelling units
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Questions

to ask before signing a lease or purchasing a property:

- Are all the uses being proposed permitted in the zone?
- Is the property on a previously recorded lot or will you be required to go through the subdivision process?
- Are there environmental constraints on the property, such as streams, wetlands, steep slopes or trees that need to be preserved?
- Is the property within a Special Protection Area?
- Are there easements on the property that could affect your ability to develop?
- Will right-of-way improvements be required for your project?
- Are you adjacent to residential neighborhoods? If so, have you thought about how you can buffer your use from your neighbors?
- Have you determined the impact your facility will have on traffic capacity in the area?
- Have you considered how you will employ environmentally sensitive design to help obtain approval of your stormwater management concept plan?
- Will the property be served by public water and sewer? If it is to be served by well and septic, can the proposed uses be accommodated?
- Will you need to extend utilities to the site?

# *Application Tips*

## ✓ **Get help early in the process**

Schedule a free consultation with DPS and/or the Planning Department. We highly recommend such a meeting before you purchase property or start to design your project.

## ✓ **Avoid common pitfalls**

We can help you understand the issues most frequently encountered by places of worship that could significantly impact your plans.

## **Call us today!**

Montgomery County  
Department of Permitting Services  
[montgomerycountymd.gov/311](http://montgomerycountymd.gov/311)

In-county: 311

Out-of-county: 240-777-0311

TTY: 240-773-3556

Montgomery County Planning Department



M-NCPPC

Development Review Division

[MontgomeryPlanning.org](http://MontgomeryPlanning.org)

301-495-4610