



Omega Church Consultants, Inc.

architectural • financial • consulting
construction management

Permits and Zoning

Nearly every proposed church renovation or construction project will involve a process of review by regulatory authorities. These governmental or regulatory bodies are charged with enforcing established guidelines and codes relating to storm water management, septic systems, building codes, fire safety, traffic control, etc. Further, zoning boards exercise great discretionary powers regarding the use of land, landscaping requirements, building height, building appearance, signage, site lighting and more.

Some smaller communities have very limited, or no, permitting or zoning requirements. They may only require that a registered architect prepare the building plans and comply with some national standard, such as the Uniform Building Code. This gives the church great design flexibility and can result in dramatic cost savings. Other jurisdictions, such as large cities, new communities, historic districts or environmentally sensitive areas have multiple layers of bureaucracy that can cost the church both time and money.

A church should not assume that they will receive special treatment or be exempt from regulations. There will be many people involved in various stages of the review process who possess broad authority in their interpretation of ever-changing laws and regulations. It is best to hire experts to represent the interests of the church, to involve the civil authorities at an early stage in your project, and to convey your understanding that these regulators share your desire to serve the best interests of your community.

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