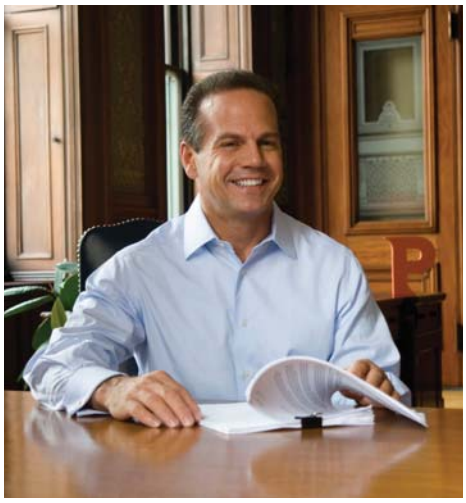
PROVIDENCE
GUIDE TO PERMITTING

David N. Cicilline, Mayor

Draft February 1, 2010



The City of Providence Guide to Permitting is intended to help us work together to ensure that the City is your partner, working with you to enhance our city. We developed this guidebook to provide citizens, business owners and developers with a clear and transparent process for obtaining the necessary permits for improving your home, constructing or renovating buildings for residential or commercial use, or relocating your business. In Providence, we are focused on the economic development of our city and recognize that an understandable and predictable permitting process is a City function that supports economic growth.

Although we make every effort to keep this guide current, city ordinances and state law are subject to change. It is very important that you contact the departments, divisions, agencies, boards or commissions indicated in this guidebook to ensure that you have access to the most current information. City staff will be happy to help answer your questions and guide you through this process.

Thank you for your interest in Providence.

David N. Cicilline, Mayor

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Fire Plan Review Application 52
Owner Affidavit for Owner to Perform Work 54
Owner Authorization for Contractor to Perform Work 55
Design & Construction Procedures, Contractors/Owner Responsibilities 56
Moving or Demolition Permit Application 57
Application for Sign Permit 58
Project Certification Form 59
200 Ft. Radius Plan Sample 61
Sample Building Permit Application 62
Sample Mechanical Permit Application 63
Sample Electrical Permit Application 64
Sample Plumbing Permit Application 65

Zoning Variance or Special Use Permit
If the proposal does not meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, or if the ordinance requires a special use permit, the property owner may file an application with the Zoning Board of Review (ZBR) for a variance or special use permit. Contact the staff of the ZBR at 421-7740, ext. 376.

It is possible for some projects to fall into several of the categories outlined above. For example, it is possible to have a project that requires both a zoning variance and Historic District Committee approval.

Where zoning relief and approval by another board is required, the CPC, HDC, DRC, and/or the CCC must review the project first. If the project receives the respective Board or Commission's approval, this approval is granted on a 'conditional' basis, with a recommendation to the ZBR. The ZBR hearing comes next, and if the variance(s) and/or special use permit(s) are granted by the ZBR, the project returns to the first board or commission for final approval. Often, this approval can be made at the staff level.

Pre-Application Meeting

For new construction projects, or complex renovation projects, applicants are strongly urged to set up a pre-application meeting through the DIS. At that time, one or more reviewing departments will participate in a pre-application process to discuss the project, identify any issues of concern, and affirm the review process.

Expedited Review:

The City has initiated an expedited review process to provide faster plan review for certain projects such as commercial improvements, owner renovations, and restaurant renovations. Projects will be screened for completeness prior to acceptance for the expedited review process.

The City provides an expedited, or 15-business-day review, for projects that meet the following criteria:

- Commercial project only
- No change in use
- No change in capacity (occupancy load)
- Building size and dimensions are unchanged
- No substantial alterations to the structure
    - Substantial alterations include any additions or removals of building entrances or exits, and any additions or removals of egress routes.
- Life safety systems are compliant with no major alterations proposed.
    - A guide for compliant systems are if; the system has been installed or brought into compliance since January 1, 2004; the existing fire alarm systems that were in compliance with the 1997 edition of the Rhode Island Fire Prevention Code and subject to alternate provisions set forth in RIUFC 13.7.1.1.1; or if the system has been granted a variance since Jan 1, 2004 by the Rhode Island Fire Safety Code Board of Appeal and Review.
    - Major alterations include: A) Twenty or more sprinkler heads being added or moved, B) Egress routes being altered, C) More than five devices being added or altered to the fire alarm system, D) The ceiling structure being reconfigured. The ceiling may not be lowered more than 24”, or altered in any way that may affect sprinkler coverage. E) In a building that does not have a sprinkler system, there cannot be any substantial changes to the interior finish.

Although the intent of the expedited plan review process is that the applicant will secure a building permit sooner, there is no guarantee that a building permit will be issued at the conclusion of the expedited plan review. Building code violations, incomplete information, or other deficiencies in the construction plans presented, may require that such construction plans be revised and resubmitted for review

before a building permit can be issued.

Regular Review:

Projects that do not meet the criteria above will go through the City's regular review process. The applicant will receive either a building permit or comments from all departments within 30 business days.

Requirements for Building Permit Issuance

For each type of project, there are submittal requirements that must be met before plans will be accepted for review at DIS. Once plans are submitted and under review, a determination will be made as to whether or not a project can be issued a building permit. While under review at DIS, a project may require additional approvals from other sources. These may be sought after while waiting for building permit issuance.

For example, (please refer to the submission requirements matrix on pages 15 and 17,) if one is seeking a building permit for an interior renovation in a 1 or 2 family dwelling, one may have to submit plans and construction drawings with the building permit application in order to be considered for building permit issuance. While a project's plans and application are under review, an Owner/Contractor Responsibility form, and an Owner Authorization form must be completed before a building permit is issued. Narragansett Bay Commission approval, and/or a project certification form, and/or Providence Water Supply Board approval, may also be needed prior to receiving a building permit.

Plan Review Submittal Matrix and Permit Requirements Matrix

The following matrices are guides on how to acquire a building permit and begin construction. To use the matrix, first choose what type of project is being planned from the top row. By following that column downwards, one will have a list of the items that are needed in each step leading up to receiving a building permit and beginning construction. If a row along that column is marked with an "X", one must have that plan, or approval, or form, etc. If a row along that column is marked with an "O", one may or may not need that item. City staff is available for assistance in determining what one's individual needs are. If a row in a column is unmarked, that item is not required.

The Plan Review Submittal Matrix will show what one must have prior to submitting a building permit application at the DIS. While an application and plans are under review, additional approvals may be required before receiving a building permit. Any additional approvals needed are listed in the Permit Requirements Matrix, in the rows marked as "Required for Building Permit." Also in that matrix, are permits and approvals that may be needed prior to beginning construction.

For every requirement listed in the matrices' rows, there are notes in the pages following the matrices to further explain what the requirement is, and how to fulfill it.

Plan Review Submittal Matrix

		X = Required O = May be required	Demolition and Moving	Foundation	Roofing	Exterior Work siding, window replacement, etc.	Temporary Structure	Site Work, Paving, Site Modifications, etc.	Outdoor Seating and other encroachment in City - RoW	Daycare Facility Home & Commercial	Healthcare Facility	Hospital
Required for Plan Review Submittal	A	State Building Commission Approval										
	B	Plans and Construction Drawings	X	X			O Manufactures' Literature & Specifications, Foundation & anchorage details	X		X	X	X
	C	Site Plan	X	X			O Provide a sketch of the property; showing lot lines, existing buildings and approximate location of temporary structure	X	X	X	O If there is proposed expansion to the building envelope	O If there is proposed expansion to the building envelope
	D	Landscaping plan	O If there are significant trees on the site	O				X		O If there is proposed expansion to the building envelope	O If there is proposed expansion to the building envelope	O If there is proposed expansion to the building envelope
	E	Fire Protection System Narrative Report								*	*	*
	F	Sprinkler Plan								*	*	*
	G	Fire Alarm Plans								*	*	*
	H	Fire Alarm Code Analysis								*	*	*
	I	NFPA 241 Plan of Action										
	J	State DOT Review						O If site is on a State Road	O If site is on a State Road	O If site is on a State Road	O If site is on a State Road	O If site is on a State Road

* = The Fire Protection System Narrative Report, Sprinkler Plan, Fire Alarm Plans, Fire Alarm Code Analysis, and the Completed Fire Review Application for Daycare, Healthcare, and Hospital facilities, must all be reviewed by the Rhode Island State Fire Marshal rather than the Providence Fire Department. For questions, please call the Fire Prevention Office at 401-243-6050.

Plan Review Submittal Matrix *(cont'd)*

		X = Required *O = May be required*	**Demolition and Moving**	**Foundation**	**Roofing**	**Exterior Work** siding, window replacement, etc.	**Temporary Structure**	**Site Work,** Paving, Site Modifications, etc.	**Outdoor Seating** and other encroachment in City - RoW	**Daycare Facility** Home & Commercial	**Healthcare Facility**	**Hospital**
Required for Plan Review Submittal	K	Class 1 Survey						X		O If there is proposed expansion to the building envelope	O If there is proposed expansion to the building envelope	O If there is proposed expansion to the building envelope
	L	Utility Plan						O If work involving utilities are involved		O If work involving utilities are involved	O If work involving utilities are involved	O If work involving utilities are involved
	M	Soil Erosion & Sediment Control Plan						O If proposed site work will create unstable soil conditions		O If proposed site work will create unstable soil conditions	O If proposed site work will create unstable soil conditions	O If proposed site work will create unstable soil conditions
	N	Post-Construction Stormwater Control Plan						O If additional impervious surface is proposed		O If additional impervious surface is proposed	O If additional impervious surface is proposed	O If additional impervious surface is proposed
	O	Completed Fire Plan Review Application								*	*	*
	P	Completed Building Permit Application	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Q	Project Specifications								O If level of complexity requires it	X	X
	R	# Sets of Plans	6	5	0	0	5	4	4	12	12	12

* = The Fire Protection System Narrative Report, Sprinkler Plan, Fire Alarm Plans, Fire Alarm Code Analysis, and the Completed Fire Review Application for Daycare, Healthcare, and Hospital facilities, must all be reviewed by the Rhode Island State Fire Marshal rather than the Providence Fire Department. For questions, please call the Fire Prevention Office at 401-243-6050.

Plan Review Submittal Matrix

		X = Required O = May be required	1 & 2 Family Dwellings				Commercial / Industrial and Mixed Use				
			New Construction	Additions: decks, 3 season rms, open porches, dormers, Exterior Stairs	Interior Renovations	Detached Structure	New Construction	Addition	Interior renovations (tenant fit out)	3 Family Residential and up	Restaurants and projects with cooking equipment
Required for Plan Review Submittal	A	State Building Commission Approval	O	O		O	O	O		O	O
	B	Plans and Construction Drawings	X	X	O If altering the building layout including but not limited to moving, demolishing and/or adding walls	O If not a pre-fabricated unit; prefab unit requires Manufactures' Literature & Specifications, Foundation & anchorage details	X	X	X	X	X
	C	Site Plan	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
	D	Landscaping plan	X	O If project involves the cutting down of trees		O If project involves the cutting down of trees	X	O If project involves the cutting down of trees		X	O If new construction, addition and/or if project involves the cutting down of trees
	E	Fire Protection System Narrative Report					X	O	O	O	O
	F	Sprinkler Plan					O If required by size and/or use of the structure	O If required by size and/or use of the structure	O If required by size and/or use of the structure and the work constitutes a change in use	O If project is a new structure or a total rehab	O If occupancy is determined to be Assembly

*=Rather than complete the Fire Plan Review Application, new construction of 1,2, and 3 family dwellings, require a different application for review of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. For questions, please call the Fire Prevention Office at 401-243-6050.

Plan Review Submittal Matrix *(cont'd)*

X = Required *O = May be required*			1 & 2 Family Dwellings				Commercial / Industrial and Mixed Use				
			New Construction	Additions: decks, 3 season rms, open porches, dormers, Exterior Stairs	Interior Renovations	Detached Structure	New Construction	Addition	Interior renovations (tenant fit out)	3 Family Residential and up	Restaurants and projects with cooking equipment
Required for Plan Review Submittal	G	Fire Alarm Plans					X	X	O	O If project is a new structure or a total rehab	X
	H	Fire Alarm Code Analysis					X	X	O		O
	I	NFPA 241 Plan of Action						O	X		
	J	State DOT Review	O	O		O	X	O		O	O
	K	Class 1 Survey	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
	L	Utility Plan	X	O If altering and/or adding/removing utilities		O If altering and/or adding/removing utilities	X	O If altering and/or adding/removing utilities		O If altering and/or adding/removing utilities	X
	M	Soil Erosion & Sediment Control Plan	O If site work creates unstable surface soils				O If site work creates unstable surface soils	O If site work creates unstable surface soils		O If site work creates unstable surface soils	O If site work creates unstable surface soils
	N	Post-Construction Stormwater Control Plan	O If stormwater control was required				O If stormwater control was required	O If stormwater control was required		O If stormwater control was required	O If stormwater control was required
	O	Completed Fire Plan Review Application	*				X	X	X	X	X
	P	Completed Building Permit Application	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Q	Project Specifications					O If the level of project complexity demands it	O If the level of project complexity demands it	O If the level of project complexity demands it	O If the level of project complexity demands it	O If the level of project complexity demands it
	R	# Sets of Plans	12	5	4	4	12	10	7	12	12

*=Rather than complete the Fire Plan Review Application, new construction of 1,2, and 3 family dwellings, require a different application for review of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. For questions, please call the Fire Prevention Office at 401-243-6050.

Permit Requirements Matrix

		X = Required *O = May be required*	**Demolition and Moving**	**Foundation**	**Roofing**	**Exterior Work -** siding, window replacement, etc.	**Temporary Structure**	**Site Work -** Paving, site modifications, etc.	**Outdoor Seating** and other encroachment in City - RoW	**Daycare Facility** Home & Commercial	**Healthcare Facility**	**Hospital**
Required for Building Permit	A	**Narragansett Bay Commission Approval** **(CONTACT)**								O **Permits are not transferable for new owner or new use**	O **Permits are not transferable for new owner or new use**	O **Permits are not transferable for new owner or new use**
	B	**State Department of Health Approval** **(CONTACT)**								X		
	C	**Project Certification Form**						X		O **If project includes more than cosmetic work**	X	X
	D	**Owner / Contractor Responsibility Form**	X	X	X	X	O	X		X	X	X
	E	**Owner Authorization Form**	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
	F	**State Fire Marshal**								X	X	X
	G	**Physical Alteration Permit**						O **If property is located on a State Road**	O **If property is located on a State Road**	O **If property is located on a State Road**	O **If property is located on a State Road**	O **If property is located on a State Road**
	H	**Providence Water Supply Board Approval** **(CONTACT)**	X							**	**	**
Required prior to beginning construction	A	**Road Opening Permit**						X				
	B	**Dig Safe** **(CONTACT)**	X					O **If digging**		O **If digging**	O **If digging**	O **If digging**

** = For specific requirements, please call the Providence Water Supply Board at 401-521-6300 x 7244.

Permit Requirements Matrix

			1 & 2 Family Dwellings New Construction; Additions: decks, 3 season rms, open porches, dormers, Exterior Stairs; Interior Renovations; Detached Structure				Commercial / Industrial and Mixed Use New Construction; Addition; Interior renovations (tenant fit out); 3 Family Residential and up; Restaurants and projects with cooking equipment				
X = Required *O = May be required*			**New Construction**	**Additions:** decks, 3 season rms, open porches, dormers, **Exterior Stairs**	**Interior Renovations**	**Detached Structure**	**New Construction**	**Addition**	**Interior Renovations** (tenant fit out)	**3 Family Residential and up**	**Restaurants** and projects with cooking equipment
Required for Building Permit	A	Narragansett Bay Commission Approval (CONTACT)	X		O If adding bedrooms or any plumbing fixtures	O If adding any plumbing fixtures	X	O If adding any plumbing fixtures	O If adding any plumbing fixtures	X	X
	B	State Department of Health Approval (CONTACT)									X
	C	Project Certification Form	X	O	O If project includes more than cosmetic work	X	X	X	O If project includes more than cosmetic work	X	X
	D	Owner / Contractor Responsibility Form	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	E	Owner Authorization Form	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	F	State Fire Marshal									
	G	Physical Alteration Permit	O If property is located on a State Road				O If property is located on a State Road	O If property is located on a State Road		O If property is located on a State Road	O If property is located on a State Road
	H	Providence Water Supply Board Approval (CONTACT)	X		**	**	X	**	**	X	X
Required prior to beginning construction	A	Road Opening Permit	O				O			O	
	B	Dig Safe (CONTACT)	X	O If digging		O If digging	X	O If digging		X	X

** = For specific requirements, please call the Providence Water Supply Board at 401-521-6300 x 7244.

G) Physical Alteration Permit

- For new curb cuts on State Roads

H) Providence Water Supply Board Approval

- Required if additional plumbing fixtures and/or a sprinkler system are proposed.
- May be contacted at 521-6300 x7205

Required Prior to Beginning Construction Notes

A) Road Opening Permit

- A permit is required if work disturbs a public street or sidewalk. The usual fee for a Road Opening Permit is $75. Permits are only issued to contractors with a Sidewalk Contractor's License, or to public utilities.

B) Dig Safe

- Required if construction requires excavation.
- May be contacted at 1-888-344-7233

Construction Permits

If a building permit is issued for a project, this allows one to begin construction and apply for construction permits. The types of permits needed are dependent on the scope of the project. Five different construction permits may be received from DIS: mechanical, electrical, plumbing, moving or demolition, and sign permits. Permits from other departments such as the Department of Public Works, or the Providence Water Supply Board, may also need to be obtained.

Commencing Operations

Depending on the type of project, other licenses and approvals may be required before commencing operations.

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State Contacts

Building Code Standards Committee
1 Capitol Hill, Providence RI 02908
222-3033

Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC)
Stedman Government Center, Suite 116, Tower Hill Road, Wakefield, RI 02879
783-3370

Department of Children, Youth, Families,
101 Friendship St, Providence RI 02903
528-3502

Department of Environmental Management (DEM)
235 Promenade Street, Providence RI, 02908
222-6800

Department of Transportation (DOT)
Two Capital Hill, Providence RI, 02903
222-2379 x4820

Dig Safe
331 Montvale Ave, Woburn MA, 01801
1-888-344-7233

Fire Marshal, Division of
118 Parade St, Providence RI 02909
462-4200

Fire Safety Code Board of Appeal
1 Regan Court, Varley Building #46
Cranston, RI 02920
462-0940

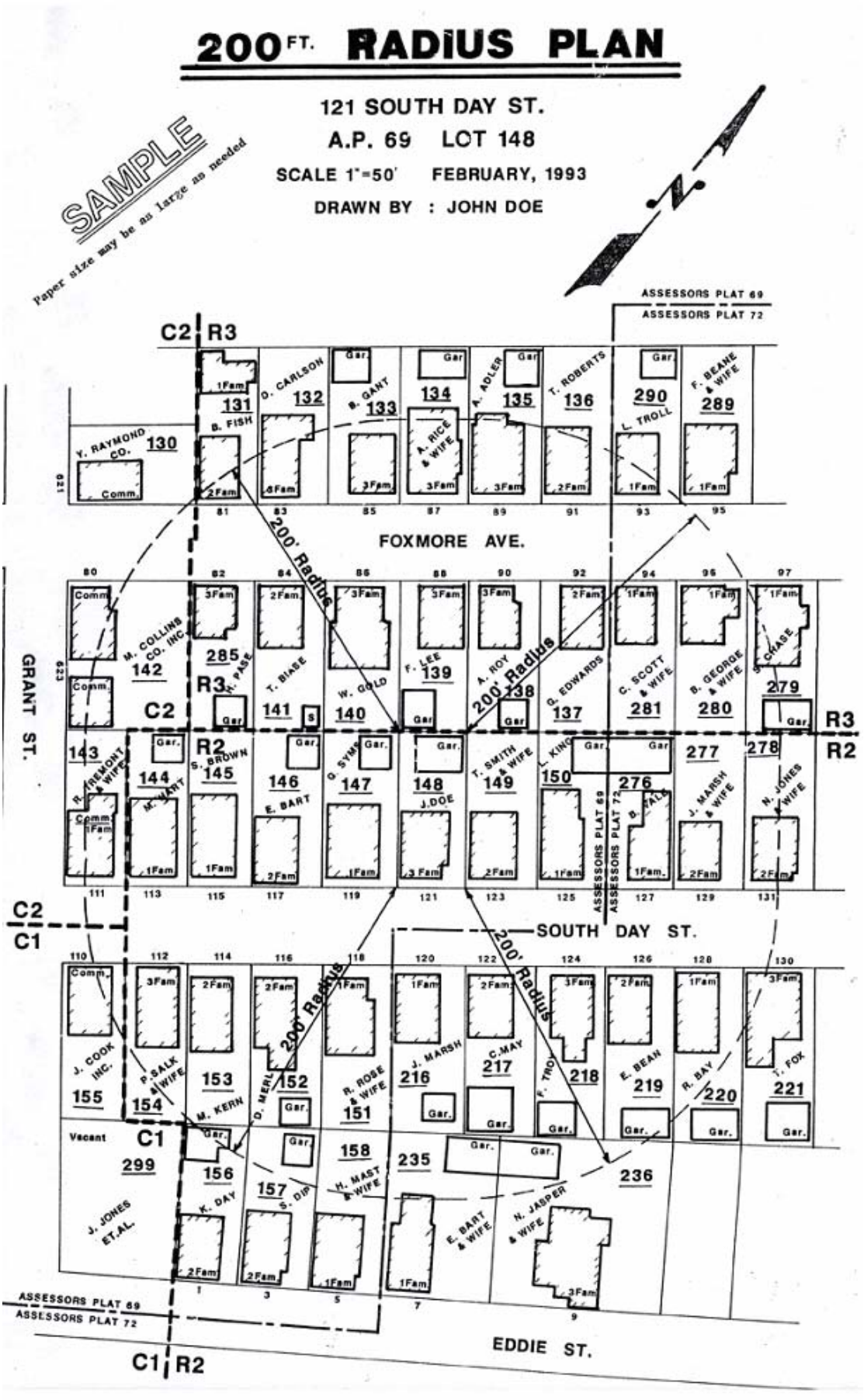
Narragansett Bay Commission
1 Service Rd, Providence RI 02905
461-6540

Rehabilitation Code Board of Review
1 Regan Court, Varley Building #46
Cranston, RI 02920
462-0940

State Building Commission
One Capitol Hill, Providence RI 02908
222-3032

State Department of Health
Three Capitol Hill, Providence RI 02908
222-2750

- Planting Specifications and Details
  - Copy of technical specifications
  - Details shall show planting depth, staking (if necessary), mulch, shrubs, groundcover, etc.
  - Screening details – fencing, plant material, etc.
- Tree Protection Plan
  - Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) – dimensions
  - Work site operations – area of disturbance, vehicular paths and access
  - Stockpile areas
  - Clearance pruning
  - Proposed root zone trenching or auguring for utilities


200 FT. RADIUS PLAN
121 SOUTH DAY ST.
A.P. 69 LOT 148
SCALE 1"=50' FEBRUARY, 1993
DRAWN BY : JOHN DOE
SAMPLE
Paper size may be as large as needed
ASSESSORS PLAT 69
ASSESSORS PLAT 72
FOXMORE AVE.
SOUTH DAY ST.
EDDIE ST.
GRANT ST.
200' Radius
C2 R3
R3
R2
C2
C1
C1 R2
Y. RAYMOND CO. 130
B. FISH 131
D. CARLSON 132
B. GANT 133
A. RICE & WIFE 134
A. ADLER 135
T. ROBERTS 136
L. TROLL 290
F. BEANE & WIFE 289
M. COLLINS CO. INC. 142
R. PASE 285
T. BIASE 141
W. GOLD 140
F. LEE 139
A. ROY 138
Q. EDWARDS 137
C. SCOTT & WIFE 281
B. GEORGE & WIFE 280
S. CHASE 279
R. FREMONT & WIFE 143
M. HART 144
S. BROWN 145
E. BART 146
O. SYMS 147
J. DOE 148
T. SMITH & WIFE 149
L. KING 150
B. SALE 276
J. MARSH & WIFE 277
N. JONES & WIFE 278
J. COOX INC. 155
P. SALK & WIFE 154
M. KERN 153
D. MERL 152
R. ROSE & WIFE 151
J. MARSH 216
C. MAY 217
F. TROY 218
E. BEAN 219
R. BAY 220
T. FOX 221
Vacant 299
J. JONES ET.AL.
K. DAY 156
S. DIP 157
H. MAST & WIFE 158
E. BART & WIFE 235
N. JASPER & WIFE 236