

NEW CONSTRUCTION ON YOUR BLOCK?

Here's what you need to know.

Sometimes it seems like every block in the neighborhood has new construction going on. There are a few things you should know to be sure that the builders are doing things legally and safely.

This document is not meant to be comprehensive....call 311 or your Councilperson for more information.

PERMITS

Every demolition, new construction and most rehabilitation projects require **Work Permits** to be obtained from the city before the work begins. The permits must be posted at the job site. Take a look at them and make sure they are up to date and match the work being done. **You can also look up new and old zoning & building permits on any address in the city by using atlas.phila.gov**

ZONING NOTICES

These are bright orange posters that mean some of the work being planned is not permitted at that location by the Zoning Code. The Zoning Code is a set of rules and regulations designed to protect your neighborhood. Check out the City's [ZoningQuickReferenceGuide](#) for more information. The property owner must get special permission, called a Variance, from the City's Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) to do something that is not permitted by the Zoning Code. It will say on the orange posters what the work is and when the builder will appear at the ZBA to ask for the Variance. You have the right to attend that ZBA meeting to support or oppose that Variance request. The date, time and location of that ZBA meeting is on the orange poster.

COMMUNITY ZONING MEETINGS

These meetings are organized every month by the **Fishtown Neighbors Association (FNA)** and are focused on every construction project that requires a Zoning Variance and are held before the property owners go to the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA).

The property owners are required to give written notice to all the residents near the construction project indicating when and where the Community Zoning Meeting will be held. But *everyone* in the neighborhood is encouraged to participate in any of these meetings.

After the property owners present information about the project and why they need a Zoning Variance you will have an opportunity to vote whether or not you think the project is good for the neighborhood. These meetings are very important because they give residents a voice in what kind of construction and development happens in their neighborhood.

The ZBA will notify the community when the owners go to the ZBA to officially ask for the Variance (date listed on orange poster). The ZBA takes the community vote under consideration but does not have to follow the community vote.

Community Zoning Meetings are usually on the first three Tuesdays of the month and are advertised in the STAR NEWSPAPER, on the www.fishtown.org website Calendar, and our Facebook page.

GET SOME NAMES AND NUMBERS

It's a good idea to get the name, phone number and email address of the builder doing the work and also the property owner. Some of that information should be on the posted building permits, if not you should ask for it. You can also get that contact information at the Community Zoning Meeting.

WHAT ABOUT NOISE AT THE JOB SITE?

On weekdays construction noise is not permitted to begin before 7AM and must stop by 8PM. On weekends, it's before 8AM and after 8PM. If there is noise beyond these hours, you should talk to the builder or owner, call 311 or Air Management at 215 685 7580.

WHAT ABOUT BLOCKING THE SIDEWALK?

Permits are required to block the sidewalk or street. They should be posted at the work site & atlas.phila.gov

TAKE SOME PICTURES

If the construction or demolition is next door to you or very close it is a good idea, *before* the work begins, to take pictures of your property including walls, fences, trees, sidewalk, anything that might accidentally be damaged by the work going on. Photograph inside and outside your home and don't forget the basement. You may want to use a professional and use a time and date stamped photos.

WHAT ABOUT DEMOLITION?

Permits must be obtained and posted before demolition begins. A safe area with fencing must be erected. Dust and debris must be controlled and contained in the work area during and after demolition by wetting (weather permitting) and covered. For concerns and questions about demolition call Licenses & Inspections (L&I) via 215 686 2583.

MORE CONTACT INFO

Fishtown Neighbors Association: 267 702 4690 or email info@fishtown.org

FNA website: www.fishtown.org

Licenses & Inspections Department (L&I): call 311 or go to phila.gov/311

Building permits & property information: atlas.phila.gov

City Council Representatives serving Fishtown:

Council President Darrell L. Clarke (District 5): 215-686-3442

Councilman Squilla (District 1): 215-686-3458

Councilwoman Quinones Sanchez (District 7): 215-686-3448

City Council Website: <http://phlcouncil.com/>

