



ABBREVIATED PROCESS

Why Final Plats are revised

If you are planning to apply for a building permit to construct a house, addition, garage, pool, or some other accessory structure on your property that is serviced or will be serviced by a septic system (on-site sewage disposal system {OSDS}), you may have been informed by the Harford County Health Department (HCHD) or the Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning (HC P & Z) that you must first revise the existing septic reserve area (SRA) on your property by re-recording the record plat. This is because the proposed construction either extends into the SRA or will be too close to the SRA as presently recorded. The HCHD enforces Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 26.04.02 and Harford County Code Chapter 216 which establishes regulations that forbid the construction or the placement of a structure within the SRA and also limits how close a house or accessory structure can be constructed toward the SRA. You may also desire to change the configuration of your SRA to accommodate a proposed house site that is different than the one that was proposed on the originally approved preliminary plan that created your property.

In addition, many people desire to reduce the size of their SRA as presently recorded on the record plat to provide greater flexibility for future construction activities on their property. The current minimum SRA area (10,000 sq. ft.) requirement was enacted on August 15, 2014. See **Please Note** on page 2 for additional information.

Final plats are also revised through the abbreviated process when property lines are altered, lots are combined, or easements are added to the property.

How to Begin the Process

First you must secure the services of a Maryland licensed land surveyor to prepare an Abbreviated Process Plan. Typically, submittal of a plan with the following items is sufficient for the HCHD review.

1. Any existing and proposed structure (dwelling, shed, garage, pool, deck, etc.).
2. Any existing or proposed driveway, paved or disturbed area.
3. Any existing or proposed well.
4. Any existing or proposed OSDS.
5. The configuration of the current SRA.
6. The configuration of the proposed SRA.
7. Any neighboring well, OSDS or SRA within 100 feet of the property.
8. Soil type(s) and slopes.
9. Contours in a minimum of 5 ft. intervals. Many plans will require contours in 2 ft. intervals.
10. All field located soil percolation test sites (old & new test sites).
11. Any existing or required easement, right-of-way, or any other designated area including but not limited to Critical Area, flood plain, Natural Resources Area, Forest Retention Area, etc.

Other reviewing regulatory agencies may have requirements of their own that will need to be completed in addition to HCHD requirements in order to complete the proposed record plat change. If your surveyor has any questions, your surveyor should consult with HC P&Z.

Once the proposed plan is prepared, your licensed surveyor will submit the plan along with the review fee of **\$50** to the Bureau of Environmental Health, Land and Water Resources Division of the HCHD for review and comment.

The HCHD will review the submitted plan to determine the following:

1. If the revision as proposed is acceptable. (Some SRAs cannot be revised.)
2. Are additional soil percolation tests necessary to determine if the proposed revised area is satisfactory? Most SRA reductions from 40,000 sq. ft. to 10,000 sq. ft. will require additional soil percolation testing. There is a percolation test application fee that is the responsibility of the applicant. (See www.harfordcountyhealth.com Percolation Testing for additional information)
3. If the submitted revision cannot be approved as proposed, what options are available, if any, that could be considered or discussed with you and/or your surveyor (i.e., smaller structure, different location, etc.).

If the abbreviated process proposal cannot be approved, or a soil percolation test is required in order for the review to continue, the HCHD will notify your surveyor. Please keep in mind that if percolation tests are required, depending on the soil classification(s) and/or site conditions, the soil percolation tests may have to be conducted during the “Wet Season” testing period which typically occurs between February 1st and April 30th. This could cause delays in the approval of your proposed change to the existing record plat. Once the revision can be approved, the HCHD will submit an approval letter to the surveyor and HC P&Z.

Please Note: A reduction of an existing recorded SRA below 20,000 sq. ft. will require the consultant to provide a site plan showing an initial OSDS (trench length & spacing) layout design and future repair(s) OSDS based on the number of bedrooms. If the lot was recorded on or before November 18, 1985, initial and one (1) repair must be shown. If recorded after November 18, 1985, an initial and two (2) repairs must be shown. Finally, any lot created and recorded on or after March 10, 2017 an initial and three (3) repairs must be shown based on a four (4) bedroom house. Regardless of the number of OSDS systems required to be shown, the recorded SRA must always amount to an area of ***at least 10,000 square feet.***

Any existing OSDS and/or well must be in good repair and deemed safe and adequate based on existing laws, regulations and guidelines.

Final Step in the Process

Once the Abbreviated Process Plan has been approved by all reviewing agencies, the final plat or mylar may be submitted to HC P&Z. The submitted final plat will then circulate through the various approving agencies for signature. The HCHD is the first stop in the signature process. Once all signatures have been obtained, the final plat must be recorded in the courthouse prior to the HCHD granting approval to any building permits and/or occupancy permits that impact the SRA.