

<p style="text-align: center;">ZBDEPARTMENT OF LICENSES AND INSPECTIONS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CODE BULLETIN OF INFORMATION</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Z-1901</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CODE OF GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">TITLE 14 ZONING AND PLANNING</p>
<p>SUBJECT OF INTERPRETATION:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EXPIRATION PERIODS RELATED TO ZONING PERMITS</p>	<p>REFERENCE CODE SECTION(S): 14-303(10); 14-304(6); 14-304(7)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ISSUED BY</p>	<p>ISSUE DATE 12/ 11/19</p>
<p>NAME: Elizabeth Baldwin, P.E.</p>	<p>EXPIRATION DATE</p>
<p>TITLE: Building Code Official</p>	<p>PAGE 1 OF 3</p>

BACKGROUND:

The Philadelphia Zoning Code establishes zoning permit expirations in Section [14-303](#) as follows:

(10) ***Lapse of Permits and Approvals***

(a) *Except as specifically stated in any other section of this Zoning Code, an approval or permit granted under this Zoning Code, including approvals by the Historical Commission pursuant to § [14-1005](#) (Regulation), shall expire if construction or operation pursuant to the permit or approval has not begun within three years after the date the permit or approval was granted.*

(b) *As exceptions to § [14-303\(10\)](#) (a) above:*

(.1) *A conditional zoning approval (see § [14-303\(6\)](#)(c) (Optional Conditional Zoning Approval Process)) shall be valid for a period of one year after the date the Conditional Zoning Approval was granted; and*

(.2) *Use registration permits shall be valid for a period of six months unless an application for a Certificate of Occupancy is submitted for that use within such period.*

Section [14-303](#) of the Philadelphia Zoning Code also grants the Department of Licenses & Inspections (Department) and the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) the authority to extend a permit, variance, or special exception:

(10) ***Lapse of Permits and Approvals***

* * *

(d) *Unless otherwise required by state law, the agency or department that granted the original approval may renew or extend the effective time of a previous approval a maximum of one time for a maximum of up to one year if the required findings or criteria for that approval remain valid.*

This Code Bulletin serves to establish policy on the application of provisions related to zoning permit expiration and extension

POLICY:**A. ZBA Decisions**

When construction or other activity is authorized by a variance or special exception, the expiration of the zoning permit shall be based upon the date of ZBA decision notice. In all other cases, the expiration shall be based upon the date of permit issuance.

B. Permit Expiration**1. Zoning Permits for Construction**

The Department considers construction has begun upon the issuance of the building permit for construction of the proposed structure or for the renovation of the building. If no building permit is issued within three years of the issuance of the zoning permit or approval, the zoning permit shall expire.

Should a building permit expire and more than three years has elapsed since the issuance of the zoning permit or ZBA approval authorizing the work, the zoning permit shall also expire.

2. Zoning Permits Involving Phased Construction

In order for the zoning permit for a multi-phase construction project to remain active, there must be an active building permit or subsequent building permits must also be issued within three years of the issuance of the zoning permit or ZBA approval.

Building permits for additional phases of construction must be issued by the time the building permit for previous phases closes. Should all building permits expire and more than three years has elapsed since the issuance of the zoning permit or ZBA approval authorizing the work, the zoning permit shall also expire.

A building permit for foundations, building construction, or complete renovation shall constitute the start of work. Permits solely for the partial or entire demolition of a structure or for the partial renovation of an affected site, space or building shall not constitute the start of work.

3. Use Permits Without Construction

If the establishment of a new use does not require renovation or construction, an application for a Certificate of Occupancy must be filed within six months of the issuance of the zoning permit or approval. If no Certificate of Occupancy is required as per [Code Bulletin A-1301, Certificates of Occupancy for Existing Buildings](#), the use must be established within six (6) months of zoning permit issuance or ZBA approval.

If no application for a Certificate of Occupancy is filed or the use is not established (where no Certificate of Occupancy is required) within six months, the zoning permit or ZBA approval shall expire.

4. Zoning Permits for Lot Adjustments

In accordance with Philadelphia Code Sections, [14-304\(6\)\(b\)](#)(.3)(.c) and [14-304\(7\)](#)(e)(.5), deeds must be recorded with the Department of Records to reflect all lot adjustments and subdivisions.

Deeds must be recorded within three years of zoning permit issuance or ZBA approval. The zoning permit or ZBA approval for a lot adjustment or subdivision is subject to the policy for multi-phase construction outlined under Section B.2.

No building permits issued for new or adjusted parcels will be finalized until deeds are recorded with the Department of Records and adjustments are registered with the Office of Property Assessment.

C. Zoning Permit Extensions

Per Philadelphia Code Section [14-303\(10\)](#)(d), the Department or the ZBA has the authority to grant an extension of a zoning permit or approval for a maximum of one (1) year.

The extension of the permit or approval is based upon the date of zoning permit issuance or ZBA approval.

Specific procedures and requirements shall be established by the Department or the ZBA and posted on the City website.

D. Administrative Adjustments and Amendments

An administrative adjustment or amendment does not extend the zoning approval. The expiration of the permit is based upon the original date of the zoning permit issuance or ZBA approval.