



# Long Form Due Diligence

## LEGAL CONCERNS

- ✓ Is the lot buildable?
- ✓ Has the site passed a perc test that is still valid (some expire in 2-3 years)?
- ✓ Conventional septic or city sewer?
- ✓ Sewer connection costs and access?
- ✓ Are the boundaries clearly and accurately marked?
- ✓ Can the seller provide a clear title for the property?
- ✓ Is it zoned for the type and size of the house we are planning?
- ✓ Where can we build on the site?
- ✓ Does the proposed house plan violate any rules: setbacks or other zoning restrictions, septic rules, rights-of-way, covenants, wetlands, or other regulations?
- ✓ Is there legal access by road or right-of-way?
- ✓ Who maintains the road?
- ✓ Is there adequate road frontage to build?
- ✓ Are there any liens, rights-of-way, easements, covenants, or other deed restrictions or encroachments on the property?
- ✓ Are there building restrictions due to wetlands, water frontage, steep slopes, historical or cultural sites, or other local, state or federal regulations?
- ✓ Was the land formerly used to store old vehicles, farm chemicals, industrial chemicals, or other toxins that we will need to clean up?
- ✓ Does all or part of the lot lie in a floodplain?
- ✓ Is there sufficient potable water?
- ✓ Water connection fees?
- ✓ Will you own the water and mineral rights?
- ✓ Are there any endangered or protected species on the property?



## **CONSTRUCTION ISSUES**

- ✓ Is there adequate access for construction equipment?
- ✓ Are there problem soils, including expansive clay, un-compacted fill, or ledge that may require blasting?
- ✓ Has a soils report ever been created?
- ✓ Is the area prone to high radon readings?
- ✓ Is there a high seasonal water table, seasonal streams, or low-lying areas subject to flooding?
- ✓ Are there steep slopes or unstable land that requires special engineered foundations?
- ✓ Will large areas of cut and fill be required to level the land?
- ✓ Are there areas subject to erosion that will need stabilization?

## **DESIGN ISSUES**

- ✓ Is the land flat or sloping?
- ✓ Wooded or open?
- ✓ Shaded or sunny?
- ✓ Solar exposure?
- ✓ Wind exposure / buffering?

## **MAIN COST FACTORS**

- ✓ Cost of land acquisition?
- ✓ Legal fees: title search, title insurance, and other closing costs. Also may include variance applications, challenges from abutters, right-of-way issues, etc..
- ✓ Survey cost?
- ✓ Water and sewer connection fees (for municipal systems) - may cost hundreds to several thousand dollars.
- ✓ Connection fees for other utilities: phone, electric, cable and gas.
- ✓ Septic system (for rural sites): perc testing, system design and installation.



- ✓ Well installation: including drilling, pump, plumbing to house, pressure tank, and water treatment, if needed.
- ✓ Land clearing.
- ✓ Excavation, cut and fill and final grading.
- ✓ Landscaping.
- ✓ Road / driveway construction.
- ✓ Permits and fees: well, septic, building, driveway and variances.
- ✓ Impact fees: often cost thousands of dollars. Varies by state and municipality. Also called development fees, mitigation fees, service availability charges, facility fees, and other creative names.

## **MISC.**

- ✓ Are there nearby nuisances such as unwanted noises, smells, or hazards: farmers' silage, hunters, snowmobile trails, a firing range or blasting at a quarry just beyond the trees?
- ✓ Find out who your neighbors are and whether their lifestyle (collecting dead pickup trucks, e.g.) are compatible with yours.
- ✓ Have any neighbors been granted a special exception or zoning variance and what for use - a pig farm perhaps?
- ✓ What school district?
- ✓ Distance to work, shopping, restaurants, etc?
- ✓ Property and / or rollback taxes.
- ✓ Fire protection - what is available in rural areas.
- ✓ Future development nearby: houses, commercial development, roads and highways.
- ✓ Insurance rates - may be higher near water, in flood plain, in high-wind zones or far away from a water source or pressurized hydrant for fire protection.