

WHAT IS AN ACCESSORY STRUCTURE?

An accessory structure is one that is customarily incidental and subordinate to the principal building on the property and is physically detached to the principal building.

Accessory structures must be on the same property as the building or use to which they are accessory.

Some common examples of an accessory structure include:

- Garage
- Workshop
- Garden shed
- Gazebo
- Carport
- Pool house or cabana

This list is not inclusive. Other structures may also be considered accessory structures.

This brochure is for informational purposes only. For additional information regarding accessory structures, please contact the Planning and Building Department at (518) 465-1693.



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
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ALL YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW* ABOUT.....

ACCESSORY STRUCTURES IN THE CITY OF RENSSELAER



Garages ♦ Workshops ♦
Garden Sheds ♦ Gazebos
♦ Carports ♦ Poolhouses
♦ Cabanas

* but were afraid to ask

HOW CAN I DETERMINE IF MY PROJECT IS CONSIDERED AN ACCESSORY STRUCTURE?

If you are planning to place a new structure on a property, you should consult with the Building Department for a determination as to whether it is considered an accessory structure.

An accessory structure is one that is customarily incidental and subordinate to the principal building on the property

HOW MANY ACCESSORY STRUCTURES CAN I HAVE?

Up to two detached accessory structures may be located on a single residential property, only one of which may be a garage. There is not specific limit on the number of accessory structures located on a single non-residential parcel, provided that they comply with all general accessory use standards.

DO I HAVE TO GET A BUILDING PERMIT FOR AN ACCESSORY STRUCTURE?

Yes, a building permit is required for any accessory structure. In a residential district,

a building permit may only be issued for an accessory structure if the main residential structure is occupied and has a valid certificate of occupancy or certificate of compliance.

WHERE DO I GET A BUILDING PERMIT?

Building permits are issued by the Building Inspector in the Department of Planning and Building at City Hall, 62 Washington St., Second Floor. Office hours are 8:30am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday.

HOW TALL CAN AN ACCESSORY STRUCTURE BE?

Accessory buildings in residential districts may not exceed 12 feet in height. In a non-residential district, an accessory structure must comply with height restrictions of the zoning district.

ARE THERE SIZE RESTRICTIONS?

There are no specific size restrictions on accessory structures. However, they may not occupy more than 30% of the required rear yard in a residential district and must meet all setback requirements. Additionally, accessory structures with a footprint of over 400 square feet or 50% of the size of the primary structure, whichever is lesser, must receive a special use permit from the Planning Commission.

HOW DO I OBTAIN A SPECIAL USE PERMIT?

An application is available from the Department of Planning and Building at City Hall, 62 Washington St., Second Floor. Office hours are 8:30am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday.

WHAT ARE THE SETBACK REQUIREMENTS?

In a residential district, accessory structures must be at least 5 feet from rear and side property lines and must meet or exceed the required front yard setback required in the zoning district.

In a non-residential district, accessory structures must comply with front and side yard setback requirements in the zoning district and may not be closer than 10 feet from the rear property line.

ARE THERE ANY DESIGN REQUIREMENTS?

In all districts, design of and exterior materials of the accessory structures must be the same or similar to those used on the primary structure.

WHO DO I CALL WITH QUESTIONS?

You can contact the Building Department with any questions about accessory structures, from what is considered an accessory structure to how to obtain a building permit. Office hours are 8:30am until 4:30pm, and the phone number is (518) 462-5489.