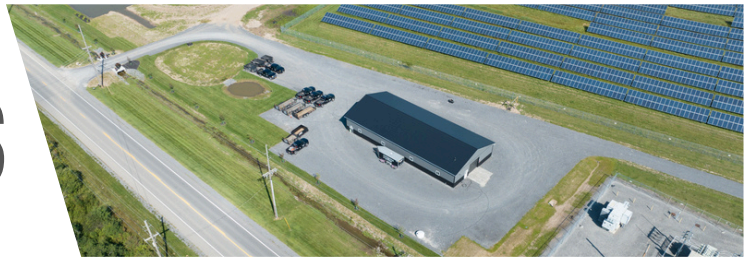
MarksEngineering

NAVIGATING THE PROJECT & APPLICATION PROCESS



Starting a new project can be daunting. Let us walk you through the steps of the process by sharing our experience with you.

- **STEP BY STEP GUIDE FOR NEW CLIENTS**
- **NEW BUILDS - RESIDENTIAL/ACCESSORY STRUCTURES**
- **ADDITIONS AND RENOVATION PROJECTS REQUIRING SITE PLAN APPROVAL**

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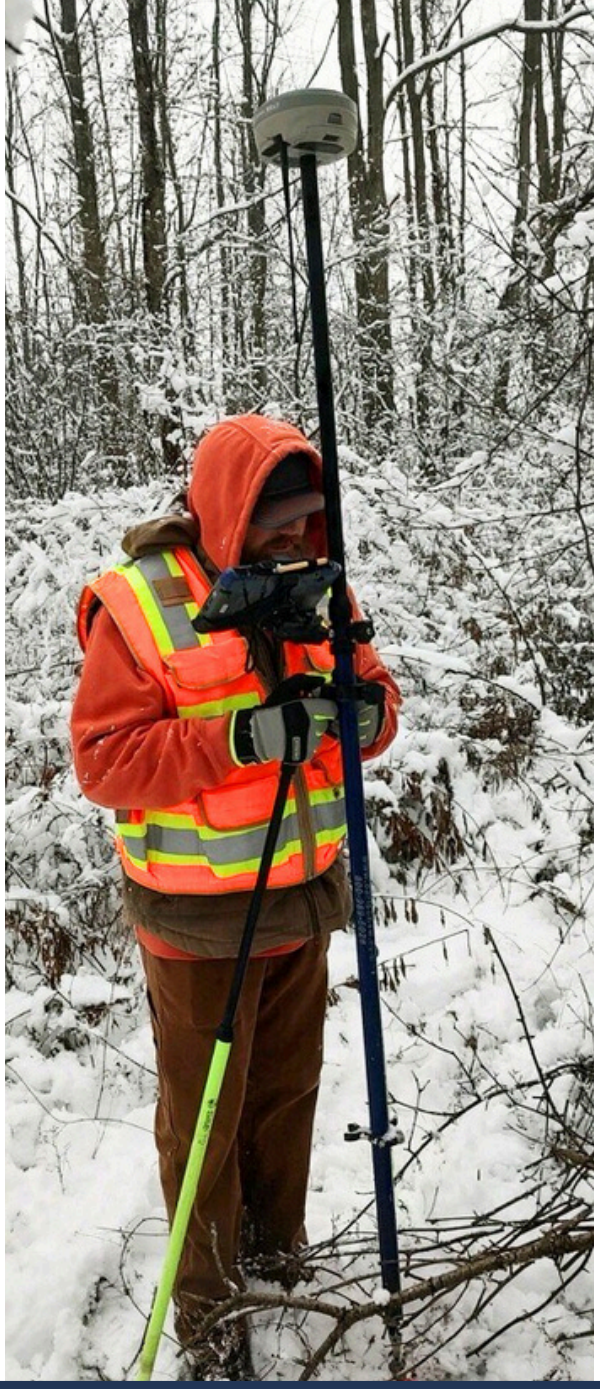

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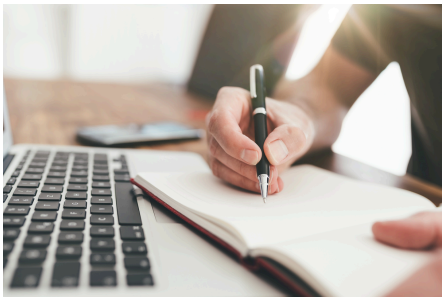
Introduction

Marks Engineering is a full-service engineering firm offering civil engineering services, land surveying services, landscape architectural services, and environmental engineering services.

Our office specializes in residential, agricultural/industrial, corporate/commercial and municipal services.

Getting Started



Every incoming project starts with a free consultation by phone as well as receiving a free estimate for services.

If you decide to move forward with Marks Engineering, you will then sign a contract and pay a retainer fee to get your project onto the project log.

Many projects require a topographic and boundary land survey to proceed. Marks Engineering offers land surveying services that can be added into your estimate if required.

Land Surveying & Site Plan Basemaps

If you've accepted your proposal and signed off on the estimate, the next step is getting your project on the schedule with the land surveying department.

The field crew will spend anywhere from 1/2 day to a full or more day(s) at the location of the project to acquire all of the information needed to draft a basemap.

A basemap is required so that when our engineering team starts drafting your site plan, they have topographic and boundary information on the file.

The Drafting Process

- The drafting process begins after the basemap has been completed by the survey department.

- In the drafting phase, your engineer will configure the placement of the structure(s) depending on your project. It may also include utility mapping, septic system replacement, well placement, driveway placement, etc.

- For residential and commercial builds that require a wastewater treatment system:
  - perc test and soil tests are required. The best time to do these calculations is May-October. You can do them any time during the year, however this is not advisable. The results of the perc and soil tests determine whether a standard system is needed, or if a raised bed system is needed (which is more expensive and typically requires approvals from NYSDOH and potentially a Watershed authority).

Project Coordination

Marks Engineering offers project coordination on all projects. Here is a list of items covered under project coordination:

- Completing applications
- Submitting materials to municipalities
- Correspondence with code enforcement/development offices
- Representation and presentation at municipal meetings
- Town engineer responses and revisions

Municipalities: Applications

The application process is unique in each municipality. Marks Engineering has the experience and the capability to take on the application process for the client. We offer work on the following:

- Sketch plan applications
- Site plan applications
- Subdivision applications
- Zoning applications (ZBA)
- Specialty apps such as
  - Steep Slopes
  - Soil and Water
  - Erosion and Sediment Control

Working with the client, ME will complete, submit and follow through with the applications until the approval is granted. Included in this service:

- Correspondence with code enforcement/development offices
- Representation and presentation at municipal meetings
- Town engineer responses and revisions

Municipalities: Under Review

After materials are submitted and accepted by the municipality the application is considered “under review”. The review process may take weeks, or may take months depending on the scope of the project.

Municipalities: Public Hearings, Etc.

What is a Public Hearing?

- A public hearing is held for the purpose of receiving public comment on a particular matter. Examples pertaining to the planning board include. - special use permits, - subdivisions, - preparation of preliminary comprehensive plans, and - site plans (if locally required)

While the project is under review by the town, there may be one or possibly more public meetings to get to the desired outcome of approval on the project.

Town Engineers: Who & Why?

All municipal offices hire an engineering firm to review any projects submitted to the Planning and Zoning Boards. The role of the town engineer is to ensure all projects submitted are falling within the town code.

Revisions and Comments

Town engineers review a project and will submit a comment letter to the firm who made the submission. The firm who submitted must then satisfy all comments in the letter and revise the site plan accordingly. This process may happen 1 or more times during a review depending on the municipality and/or the project scope.

Approvals & Final Documentation

Once all comments from the Town Engineer have been satisfied, the Town may grant an approval. Each municipality is different, and their process may vary.

The Planning Board or Zoning Board will approve the project on condition that all revisions are made per the Town Engineer, or they may wait until the next public hearing to approve the project once all comments are satisfied.

Once the approval has been made, they will ask for final documents, such as copies of the site plan for signature by their board chairperson, etc.

Marks Engineering will assist in coordinating any materials required.

FAQ

1. **Why do I need an engineered site plan?**
    a. An engineered site plan is a crucial component in many construction and development projects for several reasons:
        i. Compliance with Regulations: It ensures compliance with local zoning, environmental, and building regulations. Municipalities often require a professionally engineered site plan before issuing permits.
        ii. Accurate Design and Layout: It provides a detailed and accurate representation of the project's design, including the layout of structures, utilities, landscaping, drainage, and other site features.
        iii. Avoiding Costly Mistakes: It helps identify potential issues early in the planning process, which can prevent costly changes and delays during construction.
        iv. Proper Drainage and Grading: It ensures proper drainage and grading, which are critical for preventing water damage, erosion, and other issues that could affect the stability and longevity of the structures.
        v. Utility Planning: It includes detailed plans for the placement of utilities (e.g., water, sewer, electricity, gas), ensuring they are appropriately located and accessible.
        vi. Coordination with Contractors: It serves as a reference for contractors and other professionals involved in the project, facilitating better coordination and communication.
        vii. Environmental Protection: It helps in assessing and mitigating the environmental impact of the project, ensuring that natural resources and ecosystems are protected.
        viii. Property Value and Marketability: A well-engineered site plan can enhance the value and marketability of the property by demonstrating a well-thought-out and professionally planned development.
        ix. Risk Management: It aids in managing risks associated with construction, such as soil stability, flood risks, and compliance with safety standards.
        x. Stakeholder Communication: It provides a clear visual representation of the project that can be easily communicated to stakeholders, including investors, regulatory agencies, and the public.
    b. Overall, an engineered site plan is essential for ensuring the success, safety, and sustainability of a construction or development project.
2. **Why is my survey/site plan so expensive?**
    a. Complexity of the Project: More complex projects require more detailed and intricate site plans. This increases the time and effort needed for planning.
    b. Professional Expertise: Creating a site plan requires skilled professionals such as architects, engineers, and surveyors. Their expertise comes from many years of education, multiple licensure exams and many many hours of becoming familiar with Town Codes, the land in the area and working with municipalities. You should think of engineers, surveyors and landscape architects in the same way that you think of a doctor, accountant or attorney.

FAQ

c. Regulatory Requirements: Compliance with local zoning laws, building codes, and other regulations are extremely complex and require detailed knowledge The site plan must meet these requirements, often requiring additional research and adjustments.
d. Site Surveying: Accurate site plans often require a detailed survey of the property. This process involves specialized equipment and can be time-consuming, especially for large or irregularly shaped lots.
e. Environmental Considerations: Assessing and planning for environmental impacts, such as drainage, soil stability, and vegetation, can add complexity.
f. Customization: Custom site plans tailored to specific needs and preferences can take many hours to create.
g. Permitting Process: Navigating the permitting process can be intricate and time-consuming, often requiring multiple revisions and interactions with local authorities. Some municipalities are more difficult to work with than others, which can increase the time needed for permitting.
h. Technological Tools: Advanced software and tools used to create detailed and accurate site plans come with their own costs.

3. **Can I use an old land survey for my site plan?**
   a. It depends. Typically most surveys that are used for real estate transactions are boundary surveys, and do not include topography. Most site plans require topography. If you need a site plan that includes topography, Marks Engineering will quote you for a land survey so that all data is current and can be easily transferrable to the engineering department for drafting.
   b. If you've recently had a topographic survey completed, ask your land surveyor if they are willing to share the electronic CAD files. Our team can review the electronic files to ensure that it meets our professional standards. If it does, we are happy to use it and not charge you for another topographic survey.
   c. Please note that certain Towns (e.g. Town of Canandaigua) specifically require a survey to be completed within a year of the application. In most cases, this necessitates a new survey to be conducted.
4. **Does Marks Engineering (ME) cover all meetings with my municipality? What happens if I don't hire ME to attend meetings with my municipality?**
   a. No, Marks Engineering does not cover all meetings, only meetings agreed upon between client and engineer in the signed proposal.
   b. At all meetings with municipalities, a presentation of the site plan is required. Often, the Planning Board or the Zoning Board of Appeals will have technical questions about the plans. If you are not well versed in engineering or surveying, we recommend retaining Marks Engineering to assist you in representation.
   c. Please note that owners should plan to be present at all meetings with their municipality either electronically via Zoom or in person. Although Marks Engineering is happy to send a representative, we require the owner, or a personal representative of the owner to be present at all meetings that Marks Engineering attends.

FAQ

5. **What is an Additional Service Request (ASR) Agreement?**
    a. An ASR stands for Additional Service Request, and quotes the client for additional work that was not estimated in the original scope.
    b. This can happen if the project deviates from the original estimate, or requires review by additional agencies that was not originally planned.
    c. This can also occur if the client requests a revision to the original design that necessitates substantial more work by the engineer (substantial is defined as more than two additional hours of work).
6. **What is Cloudpermit (Town of Canandaigua only)?**
    a. Cloudpermit is the cloud-based system used for the submittal and approval of planning and zoning applications in the Town of Canandaigua. These include: Form based Code Projects, Lot Line Adjustments, Site Plans, Sketch Plans, Special Use Permits, Subdivisions, and Zoning Variances.
    b. This system requires our clients, property owners as well as design offices to create a login and be active in the step-by-step process.
    c. More information can be found at the Town of Canandaigua's website: www.townofcanandaigua.org
7. **What is the PRC (Town of Canandaigua only)?**
    a. PRC stands for Project Review Committee.
    b. The Town of Canandaigua sends every project for approval through the PRC to be reviewed. This allows for the Town to review materials being submitted and determining whether or not the application is complete.
    c. Please visit the Town's website for more information: www.townofcanandaigua.org
8. **What is a watershed and how does it affect my project?**
    a. A watershed is a land area that channels rainfall and snowmelt to creeks, streams, rivers and eventually to outflow points such as reservoirs, bays and the ocean.
    b. If your project is located in a protected watershed, you may need to submit additional applications for approval to watershed offices.
    c. The main watersheds we work with are the Canandaigua Lake Watershed and the Keuka Lake Watershed (which includes shores of Seneca Lake as well).
    d. Marks Engineering will guide you through working in the protected watershed, as we are well versed in the subject matter, and know the watershed inspectors and the process for approvals and review. Often this includes soil testing that is coordinated with the watershed inspectors, and submission of plans to the watershed inspectors for approval and filing.
9. **What is a variance?**
    a. A variance is a relief/waiver of the application of specific requirements to the municipal code.
    b. When a client applies for a variance, they have the burden of showing that the specific conditions are met to allow for such a waiver. This is why municipality meeting attendance by the applicant in addition to the design firm is crucial.
10. **What is a "perc" test?**
    a. A perc test is short for percolation test, and it is a soil test for projects requiring one such as new or replacement wastewater (septic) systems.

FAQ

b. Percolation tests measure how quickly water drains into the ground at a specific location.
c. If you are located in a protected watershed, you may need to have your soil tests witnessed by both an engineer and a watershed inspector.

11. What is a Deep Hole test?

a. A deep hole test is a procedure that analyzes soil drainage and the different types of soil present to help determine the best location for a septic system.
b. The test involves digging holes that are typically 4-6 feet deep using an excavator, collecting soil samples and inspecting and testing them.
c. If you are located in a protected watershed, you may need to have your soil tests witnessed by both an engineer and a watershed inspector.
d. Marks Engineering is able to bring our excavator to your property to complete this test, or you can utilize your own excavator as long as an engineer is present.

12. Do you install septic systems?

a. No, our office strictly designs septic systems. You will need to hire a contractor who installs septic systems to complete the excavation and ground work.
b. We are happy to give you the names and numbers of excavation contractors/installers we work with.

13. Do you design houses?

a. No, our office does not design houses.
b. We work closely with many architects in the Finger Lakes region and are happy to provide you with a list of architects we work with at your request.
c. We partner with the architect you choose to get a footprint for the house you are building to include in the engineered site plan.

14. What determines my project "complete?"

a. When all items outlined in Schedule A – Scope of Services have been fulfilled.
b. Please note that contract fulfillment by Marks Engineering is not contingent on approvals or permits granted by municipalities or government agencies. Furthermore, payment of invoices to Marks Engineering is also not dependent on approvals or permits granted by municipalities or government agencies as per your contract.