

I went through the Act 250 process in 2005. I purchased a 10 acre parcel in the North Springfield Industrial Park to store and process firewood and store and saw lumber with a portable sized sawmill. My property is bounded on one side by a woodworking factory and on the other by residential properties. I have had up to 3 people working on the site and several others either supplying wood or working at the site on and off.

The permit process was intimidating because it seemed like lots of questions but I got through it by being thorough with my answers. The noise issue I believe would have been a problem except that the woodworking factory had a chip silo and blower system that was very loud. During the site visit the blower was running and the commissioners asked if it ran all the time, I said yes it is on at 7 AM and still going at 5PM. I think that blower got me through the hearing easily. I have always wondered what would have happened if the blower was not running that day.

My biggest issue is that I had to provide the same information for the Town of Springfield as for Act 250. It seemed unnecessary when the town had a planning commission to look at projects why Act 250 would also have to look at it in such depth. I am saying a lot of different paperwork and hearings to discuss the same thing. I also felt that some questions, for instance aesthetics, were not necessary in an area zoned industrial with a number of factories surrounding the property.

Another issue arose because the residential properties wanted to purchase land to square out their lots. Currently their lots are so small that they have gardens and driveways etc. on my land. I would have been willing to do it for them but was told I would have to go through the Act 250 process again to do what is basically boundary adjustments.

In summary, Act 250 wasn't too bad to get through for me once I got into it. However at first when I was handed the application it was intimidating and I can certainly understand how someone would give up. It also seemed redundant where the town has zoning regulations covering many of the same issues.

Thank you,
Stephen Kraft