

FINDING THE PERFECT LOT CHECKLIST

While it is impossible to anticipate every unusual site condition, there are some things you can look at to avoid a bad lot purchase. This is not an all-inclusive list but it will help guide you in selecting the right lot for you!

POTENTIAL COUNTY/LEGAL CONCERNS

- Is the lot buildable? Fairfax County lists in their tax records if a property is buildable.
- Is it zoned for the type and size of house you are planning? The zoning will also determine the property setbacks (how far the house must sit from the property lines).
- Where can you build on the site? Does the proposed house plan violate any rules like setbacks, zoning, rights-of-way, covenants, wetlands, floodplain or other regulations? For example, the City of Falls Church, Town of Vienna and Arlington County all have restrictions on how much square footage can be taken up by impervious area (house footprint, driveways, lead walks, patios, etc.).
- What are the Storm Water Management requirements?
- Is there legal access by road or right-of-way? Who maintains the road? If it is a state maintained road, you will likely need to obtain a VDOT permit as part of the permitting process.
- Get a title report that will uncover any easements or other restrictions.

POTENTIAL CONSTRUCTION ISSUES

- Is there adequate access for construction equipment?
- Are there known problem soils, including expansive clay, un-compacted fill, or rock that may require blasting?
- Is there a known 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 and/or retaining walls?

ALSO THINK ABOUT

- Is the land flat or sloping? A gentle slope allowing for a natural basement walkout could be desirable.
- Is the land wooded requiring extensive tree/shrub removal?
- Are there water and sewer connection fees? Lots that don't have public water & sewer connections will likely incur additional fees from the county.
- Septic system: perc testing, system design, and installation
- Well installation: including drilling, pump, plumbing to house, pressure tank, and water treatment, if needed