

Massachusetts House of Representatives Bill Summary

Bill #:	H.2283
Title:	An Act to safeguard municipal permitting
Sponsor:	Rep. Kevin Honan
Committee:	Municipalities and Regional Government
Hearing Date:	July 22, 2025
Prior History:	H.2067 (2023-2024) placed in a study order
Current Law:	<p>Mass. General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 6 is a section of the Zoning Act which regulates existing structures, uses or permits and certain subdivision plans.</p> <p>The second paragraph of Section 6 states: "A zoning ordinance or by-law shall provide that construction or operations under a building or special permit shall conform to any subsequent amendment of the ordinance or by-law unless the use or construction is commenced within a period of not more than 12 months after the issuance of the permit and in cases involving construction, unless such construction is continued through to completion as continuously and expeditiously as is reasonable."</p>
Summary:	<p>This legislation would strike the second paragraph and replace it with new language that requires construction or operations under a special permit or site plan approval to conform to a revision in the zoning ordinance, by-law or other local land use regulations unless the use or construction begins within 3 years after the permit has been issued. In the case of construction, such activity would still need to continue through to completion in a more-or-less continuous manner.</p> <p>If the use or construction begins within that time period, then they would only need to adhere to the zoning ordinance, bylaw or land use regulations that were in effect at the time the permit was issued. Currently, the law only gives the permit holder a "grace period" of 12 months in which to commence operations or construction.</p> <p>The bill also allows for redevelopment of previously disturbed land to be considered as having commenced when the permit holder has invested in site preparation and related infrastructure for construction. It also accounts for situations in which such construction proceeds in phases.</p>