

# **BYLAWS OF THE SUFFIELD ZONING AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

The objectives and purposes of the Zoning and Planning Commission of the Town of Suffield, Connecticut, are those set forth in Chapters 124 and 126 of the Connecticut General Statutes, 1985 Revision, as the same have been and may be amended from time to time and those powers and duties delegated to the Suffield Zoning and Planning Commission by the aforementioned statutes and by ordinances enacted pursuant to such statutes.

## **ARTICLE II NAME**

The Commission shall be known as the Suffield Zoning and Planning Commission (ZPC). (REVISED 12/3/01)

## **ARTICLE III OFFICE OF AGENCY**

The office of the Suffield Zoning and Planning Commission shall be located at 230C Mountain Road, and shall be in the trust of the Secretary and all Commission books and records shall be kept in that office (REVISED: 12/6/93, 12/3/01, 8/18/08).

## **ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP**

The membership and terms of office of the Commission shall be as specified in the Town Charter, and shall consist of six (6) regular members plus three (3) alternate members. (REVISED 12/3/01)

## **ARTICLE V OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES**

- Section (1) The officers of the Commission shall be the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary. (REVISED 12/3/01)
- Section (2) The Chairman shall preside at all meetings and hearings of the Commission and shall have the duties normally exercised by Chairman of Zoning and Planning Commissions in the State of Connecticut. The Chairman shall have the authority without prior approval of the Commission, to appoint committees, to certify expenditures of funds, to pay all advertising fees required to be paid, to call special meetings and generally to perform such other duties as may be prescribed in these bylaws.

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- Section (3) The Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary shall be chosen from among the regular members of the Commission. The Vice Chairman may also act as the Secretary. They shall have all the rights of any other Commission member, including the right to vote. If the Chairman, Vice Chairman, or Secretary ceases to be a member of the Commission, a vacancy shall be deemed to exist in said office which shall be filled in accordance with the provisions of Article VI, Section 5, hereof. (REVISED 12/3/01)
- Section (4) The Secretary shall keep the minutes and records of the Commission and with the assistance of such staff as is available, shall prepare the agenda of regular and special meetings under the direction of the Chairman, shall provide notice of all meetings to Commission members, shall arrange proper legal notice of such hearings and of Commission decisions and orders, shall attend to correspondence of the Commission and shall perform such other duties as are normally performed by a Secretary of a Zoning and Planning Commission in Connecticut.
- Section (5) In the absence of the Secretary, the Chairman shall appoint a Secretary Pro Tem.
- Section (6) The Secretary or a duly appointed Commission member or staff personnel shall act as public relations or publicity director for the Commission. His duties shall include the preparation of all news releases to be distributed to the communications media. All information releases shall reflect the thinking of the majority of the Commission.
- Section (7) In case of the absence, disqualification, or unfilled vacancy in the office of the Chairman, the  
Vice Chairman shall act as Chairman Pro Tem. He shall appoint a Secretary Pro Tem for the meeting if the Secretary is temporarily performing the duties of another office.  
(REVISED 12/3/01)

### **ARTICLE VI ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

- Section (1) A biennial organizational meeting shall be held in odd numbered years, before the first regularly scheduled meeting following the legal certification of the elected members, at which time officers shall be elected and the Commission Bylaws in effect at the previous meeting shall be reviewed and either readopted in their then existing form or readopted as amended at such meeting; provided however, that in the event the Commission shall fail to adopt Bylaws at said meeting, the Bylaws in effect at the previous meeting shall continue in full force and effect as if readopted at such meeting; and in any event the Bylaws so adopted shall be made a part of the minutes of said meeting. Alternate members shall not participate in the election of officers, except that in the case of a tie, alternates shall be eligible to break the tie. Any regular member of the Commission not able to be present at said biennial organizational meeting may cast his ballot by a proxy given to any other regular member in attendance at said meeting, provided that the proxy is signed by the absent member, specifically authorizing the regular member to whom the proxy has been given to vote for the election of officers and said proxy has been filed by said present member holding the proxy with the presiding officer at such organizational meeting prior to the commencement of voting on the nominees for office (AMENDED: July 18, 1988).

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- Section (2) Nominations shall be made from the floor at the biennial organizational meeting and elections of the officers specified in Article V, Section 1, shall follow immediately thereafter.
- Section (3) The candidate receiving a vote equal to a majority of the entire regular membership of the Commission shall be declared elected and shall serve for two (2) years, or until his successor has been elected and duly qualified. He shall take office immediately upon elections. (REVISED 12/3/01)
- Section (4) Resignations from the Commission shall be in written form and shall be transmitted to the Chairman or, in case the resignation is that of the Chairman, to the Secretary. The officer receiving such resignation shall immediately forward it to the Board of Selectmen. Resignations shall be effective upon their delivery to the Chairman or, in the case of the resignation of the Chairman, to the Secretary.
- Section (5) Should any office become vacant, the Commission shall elect a successor from its membership at the first meeting of the Commission after the Board of Selectmen has acted to fill such vacancy and the person so elected shall fill the unexpired portion of the term of the person he is succeeding. (REVISED 12/3/01)

**ARTICLE VII  
MEETINGS**

- Section (1) Regular meetings shall be held on the third Monday of each month at 7:00 P.M. in the Town Hall. In the event of conflict with holidays or other events, a majority at any meeting may change the date of any future meeting. The Secretary shall notify the membership of regular meetings not less than forty-eight (48) hours in advance of such meeting. (REVISED 12/3/01)
- Section (2) In the event a regular member of the Zoning and Planning Commission is absent or is disqualified, an alternate member shall be designated in accordance with the provisions of General Statutes §8-1b, as the same may be amended from time to time and shall have all powers and duties therein set forth.
- Section (3) All Commission meetings shall be open to the public and in all other respects, including but not limited to the calling of Executive Sessions, the meetings shall be governed by the provisions of General Statutes §1-200, et.seq., as the same may be amended from time to time. (REVISED 12/3/01)
- Section (4) Unless otherwise specified, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings at the meetings of the Commission.
- Section (5) In the event that the Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be unable to attend any meetings, the Chairman may designate a member of the Commission to act as temporary Chairman for such meeting. In the event the Chairman does not designate a member of the Commission to act as temporary Chairman, the members shall appoint a Chairman Pro Tem for that meeting. (REVISED 12/3/01)

**ARTICLE VIII  
DISQUALIFICATION**

The Disqualification of members of the Zoning and Planning Commission shall be governed by the provisions of General Statutes §8-11, as the same may be amended from time to time.

**ARTICLE IX  
ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Section (1) Unless otherwise determined by the Chairman, the order of business at regular meetings shall be as follows: (REVISED 12/3/01)

- a. Roll Call
- b. Informal Discussions
- c. Public Hearing(s), if any scheduled
- d. Old Business
- e. New Business
- f. Reports of Officers and Committees
- g. Approval of Minutes
- h. Correspondence
- i. Miscellaneous
- j. Adjournment

Section (2) A motion from the floor must be made, seconded and passed in order to dispense with any item on the agenda or to change the order of business.

Section (3) A two-thirds vote is required to add new business to the agenda of a regularly scheduled meeting. (REVISED 12/3/01)

Section (4) Any application that requires a public hearing shall be officially received at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission. Upon receipt of a complete application by the Commission, at such meeting, the matter shall be set down for public hearing.

**ARTICLE X  
HEARINGS**

Section (1) The Commission may hold such other public hearings in addition to regular public hearings as it decides to be in the public interest.

Section (2) All public hearings prescribed by law shall be held in accordance with the requirements set forth by law for such hearings.

Section (3) The matter before the Commission shall be presented in summary by the Chairman or a staff member and parties in interest shall have the privilege of the floor.

Section (4) Evidence at such hearings shall be taken in the manner prescribed by General Statutes §8-7a, as the same may be amended from time to time. Proceedings of the hearing shall be incorporated into the minute book of the Commission and be a permanent part of that record or tape recorded.

**ARTICLE XI  
CONDUCT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING**

- Section (1) The Chairman of the Commission shall preside at the public hearing. In the event of his absence or disqualification, the Vice Chairman or a member duly appointed by the Commission shall act as presiding officer at such hearing. (REVISED 12/3/01)
- Section (2) The Secretary or Chairman shall read the legal advertisement and note the dates on which and the newspapers in which the advertisement appeared.
- Section (3) A summary of the question or issue shall be stated by the presiding officer at the opening of the public hearing. The Chairman shall describe the method of conduct of the hearing. Comments shall be limited to the subject advertised for hearing.
- Section (4) The Chairman shall first call for statements from the proponents. The opponents shall be given equal opportunity to comment. The order of statements may be reversed at the discretion of the Commission. Whichever order is adopted, each side shall make its presentation in succession without allowing an inter-mixture of comments for and against the proposition. Each side shall have an initial maximum period of one hour, and each succeeding period shall consist of a maximum of one-half hour for each side. All questions and comments shall be directed to the Chair and may be made only after the person so questioning or commenting has been properly recognized by the presiding officer.
- Section (5) All persons recognized may be requested to approach the hearing table in order to facilitate proper recording of comments. Before commenting on a matter before the hearing, each person shall give his name and address.
- Section (6) The presiding officer shall assure an orderly hearing and shall take necessary steps to maintain order and decorum at the hearing at all times. The presiding officer may terminate the hearing in the event the discussion becomes unruly or unmanageable.
- Section (7) The show of hands by those persons present shall not be allowed of any general question presented at the public hearing. The hearing shall be conducted only for the purpose of taking testimony to be considered by the Commission in its deliberations at its regular meeting. If a general consensus of the meeting is desired, the Commission may provide properly identified sheets on which voters and property owners may signify in writing their opinion as either in favor of or opposed to the proposition before the public hearing.

**ARTICLE XII  
RULES GOVERNING PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO/AUDIOTAPING OF MEETINGS  
(ADOPTED 12/17/01)**

Any individual or entity may record, broadcast, or photograph any public session of the Suffield Zoning and Planning Commission (the "Commission") providing the following procedures and limitation are adhered to [as provided in Sec. 1-226 of the Connecticut General Statutes as amended]: (REVISED 8/18/08)

- Section (1) Notification. The person or entity wishing to record, broadcast, or photograph any meeting of the Commission shall notify the Chairman of their intentions before any device is turned on or activated to accomplish that purpose. The individual or entity must provide signage

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at a location approved by the Chairman that will inform anyone attending the meeting that the meeting is being recorded and by whom.

Section (2) Location and Use of Equipment. Such equipment as required to accomplish the recording, broadcasting, or photographing of any meeting of the Commission shall be located and operated so as to not interfere with the proceedings of the meeting. Such equipment shall be located in the last or back row of the Town Hall meeting room, or at a distance of at least 20 feet from the Commission table when in larger rooms. All power sources associated with such equipment shall be provided by battery source only, and no artificial light shall be used in connection with the operation of such equipment.

Section (3) Removal of Equipment. If in the opinion of the Chairman, undo disturbance is created because of the recording, broadcasting, or photographing of a Commission meeting, the person or entity operating equipment associated with such activity shall be asked to stop and the equipment removed.

Section (4) Availability of Copies. Any person or entity recording, broadcasting, or photographing any

meeting of the Commission shall make copies available to any person in attendance at that meeting or with an interest in any application or item on the agenda of that meeting. The cost of this copy shall be at the expense of the person requesting the copy but shall not exceed the cost of the media upon which it is made and any shipping expenses incurred in making or delivering the copy.

Section (5) Commercial Use. No commercial use other than display on a public news broadcast may be made of any record made, broadcast produced, or photograph taken during a meeting of the Commission without the express written permission of the Commission and the parties appearing before them. No fee may be charged or accepted other than those outlined for the copying of said recording, broadcast, or photograph.

**ARTICLE XIII**

General Statutes §1-200 et. seq. as the same may be amended from time to time, shall govern the proceedings of the Commission. (REVISED 12/3/01)

**ARTICLE XIV  
AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the entire voting membership of the Commission and only after the proposed change has been read and discussed at a previous regular meeting, except that the bylaws may be changed at any meeting by the unanimous vote of the entire voting membership of the Commission.

REVISED: 10/21/85, 7/18/88, 12/06/93, 12/18/95, 12/03/01, 12/17/01, 8/18/08