



The Planning Commission

Town of New Fairfield
New Fairfield, Connecticut 06812

BYLAWS FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION

ARTICLE I

Purpose and Authorization

The objectives and purposes of the Planning Commission of New Fairfield are those set forth in Chapter 126 of the Connecticut General Statutes, 1981 Revision, as amended, and those powers and duties delegated to the Planning Commission by the aforementioned statute.

ARTICLE II

Name

The Commission shall be known as New Fairfield Planning Commission.

ARTICLE III

Office of Agency

The office of the New Fairfield Planning Commission shall be at New Fairfield Town Hall where all Commission records will be kept. Copies of all official Minutes, Records, Maps will be filed or recorded in the Office of the Town Clerk.

ARTICLE IV

Membership

The membership and terms of office shall be as specified in Chapter 26, Section 8-19 of the Statutes Governing Municipal Planning Commissions. When a vacancy exists, the most senior alternate, depending on Party, moves into that position as dictated by State regulations. The alternate vacancy is filled by the Commission's endorsement of the Party's recommendation.

ARTICLE V

Officers and Their Duties

Section 1. The officers of the Commission shall consist of a Chairman and a Secretary/Vice Chairman.

Section 2. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings and hearings of the Commission and shall have the duties normally conferred by parliamentary usage on such officers, as prescribed by the Robert's Rules of Order. The Chairman shall have the authority to appoint committees; to approve expenditures of funds within the limits of the Commission's annual budgetary appropriations or as may be prescribed by the Commission's contractual obligations; call special meetings, and generally perform duties as may be prescribed in these bylaws.

Section 3. The Chairman shall be one of the Commission members. He shall have the privilege of discussion all matters before the Commission and of voting thereon.

Section 4. The Secretary/Vice Chairman shall act for the Chairman in his absence and have the authority to perform the duties prescribed for that office. He shall be a Commission member.

Section 5. In all matters relative to the discharge of duties, obligations and responsibilities, Commission members and Commission staff shall act and/or proceed in accordance with all applicable provisions of the "Code of Ethics for the Town of New Fairfield."

ARTICLE VI

Election of Officers

Section 1. An annual organization meeting shall be held on the first regular meeting during the month of December at which time officers will be elected and these bylaws may be reviewed and revised and any action in connection thereto or thereof shall be made a part of the minutes of the annual meeting."

Section 2. Nominations shall be made from the floor at the annual organization meeting and elections of the officers specified in Section 1 of Article V shall follow immediately thereafter.

Section 3. A candidate receiving a majority vote from the entire membership of the Commission shall be declared elected and shall serve for one year or until his successor shall take office.

Section 4. Vacancies in offices shall be filled by regular election procedure as prescribed in the ordinance establishing the Commission.

Section 5. Resignations from the Commission shall be in written form and transmitted to the Chairman, who will then forward same to the executive officer of the community.

ARTICLE VII

Meetings and Special Meetings

Section 1. Regular meetings shall be held on dates and at times as shown on the schedule of Commission meetings posted annually in the office of the Town Clerk except that, as provided under Sec. 2, Chapter V, the Chairman shall retain the right to call special meetings. In the event of conflict with holidays or other events, a majority at any meeting may change the date of said meeting.

Section 2. A majority of the voting membership of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, and the number of votes necessary to transact business shall be a majority of members of the Commission. The notice of such a meeting shall specify the purpose of such a meeting, and no other business may be considered except by majority consent of the Commission.

Section 3. All Commission meetings shall be open to the public when in session and shall be open to the public when in executive session when so voted by the majority of the Commission members present and voting.
(Chapter 3, Section 1-21 of General Statutes 1958 Revision as amended)

ARTICLE VIII

Disqualification

"No member of any municipal commission or agency shall appear for or represent any person, firm or corporation or other entity in any matter pending before the Commission whether or not he is a member of the commission hearing such matter. No member of the Commission shall participate in the hearing or decision of the commission of which he is a member upon any matter on which he is directly or indirectly interested in a personal or financial sense. In the event of such disqualification, such fact shall be entered on the records of the commission, and the remaining members of the commission, unless otherwise provided by special act, shall choose an elector to act as a member of such commission in

the hearing and determination of the particular matter or matters in which the disqualification arose." (Chapter 126, Section 8-21, General Statutes 1958 Revision, as amended). When disqualification is questionable, the Chairman shall make the final decision.

ARTICLE IX

Order of Business

Section 1. Unless otherwise determined by the Chairman, the order of business at regular meetings shall be:

- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call and Appointment of Alternates
- c. Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting
- d. Communication/Correspondence
- e. Bond Releases
- f. Public Comments
- g. Old Business
- h. New Business
- i. Adjournment

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

Section 3. No new business submitted for action by the Commission shall be acted upon unless it is submitted 14 days prior to a regular meeting date. Provisions of this Section may be waived by the unanimous vote of the members present.

ARTICLE X

Hearings

Section 1. The Commission may hold public hearings, in addition to required hearings, when it decides that such hearings will be in the public interest.

Section 2. All public hearings prescribed by law shall be held in accordance to the requirements set forth for such hearings in Chapter 126.

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

Section 4. A competent stenographer shall take the evidence, or the evidence shall be recorded by a sound-recording device, at each hearing before the Commission in which the right to appeal lies to the Court of Common Pleas.

Proceedings of the hearing shall be incorporated into the minute book of the Commission to be a permanent part of the record.

(Chapter 126, Section 8-71, General Statutes).

Section 5. To better expedite the proceedings of the hearing and to cause a better understanding of the issue involved, the Commission shall have prepared prior to the hearing a hearing agenda, and visual aids for display and presentation during the discussions of the hearing.

ARTICLE XI

Conducting the Public Hearing

*PUBLIC
HEARING*

Section 1. The Chairman of the Commission shall preside at the public hearing. In event of this absence, the Vice Chairman or a duly appointed commission member shall act as presiding officer.

Section 2. An officer shall read the legal advertisement and note the dates and 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. Comments shall be limited to subject advertised for hearing. In any event, the Commission shall have the privilege of speaking first. The Chairman shall describe the method of conduct of the hearing.

Section 4. The Chairman shall first call for statements from the proponents. The opponents shall be given equal opportunity to comment. The order is reversible, the discretion of the Commission prevailing. Whichever the case may be, each group shall make its presentation in succession without allowing an intermixture of comments pro and con.

Section 5. It shall be made clear to the hearing that all questions and comments must be directed through the Chair only after being properly recognized by the presiding officer.

Section 6. All persons recognized shall approach the hearing

table in order to facilitate proper recording of comments. Before commenting on the matter before the hearing, each person shall give his name and address.

Section 7. The presiding officer shall assure an orderly hearing, and shall take the necessary steps to maintain the order and decorum of the hearing at all times. The presiding officer shall reserve the right to terminate the hearing in the event the discussion becomes unruly and unmanageable.

Section 8. The show of hands by those persons present shall not be allowed on any general question presented at the public hearing. The hearing shall be conducted only for the purpose of taking testimony to be considered in deliberations of the regular meeting of the Commission. If a general consensus of the meeting is desired, the Commission may provide properly identified sheets on which the electors may signify in writing their opinion as either in favor or opposed to the question before the public hearing.

ARTICLE XII

Employees

Section 1. Within the limits of the funds available for its use, the Commission may employ such staff personnel and/or consultants as it sees fit to aid the Commission in its work. Appointments shall be made by a majority vote of the entire membership.

ARTICLE XIII

Public Relations

Section 1. The Chairman or a duly appointed commission member of staff personnel shall act as public relations or publicity director for the Commission. His duties 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.

ARTICLE XIV

Amendments

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

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meeting by the unanimous vote of the entire membership of the
Commission.