

Ulster County Planning Board



Bylaws

PREAMBLE

The mission of Ulster County Planning Board ("the Board") is to promote, encourage and support solutions among levels of government, agencies and other stakeholders in matters affecting conservation, preservation, and development. In pursuing this mission, it is of critical importance that the Planning Board and its staff be widely accessible to the public, comprised of technically and professionally experienced members, broadly represented geographically, and independent from political influence. The very nature of the Board's duties and the responsibilities of its staff require a non-partisan approach in order to work for the benefit and welfare of Ulster County. The following bylaws are intended to provide a written framework for organizing and implementing policies and programs to enable the Planning Board to carry out its functions.

I. PURPOSE of the BOARD

1. To provide and promote physical, economic, environmental, and human resource planning in Ulster County.
2. To make available education and outreach, to disseminate information to public officials and others engaged in or interested in planning and community development.
3. To encourage citizen participation at all levels of the planning process.
4. To encourage and assist municipalities to work collaboratively and creatively to develop and implement plans.
5. To consider the use of resources and the consequences of growth and development for the county, region and the state, as well as the community in which it takes place.
6. To foster and implement meetings, conferences, and educational programs relating to planning and development
7. To publish, promote and support the development of planning materials and publications relating to planning and community development and other pertinent subjects.
8. To develop understanding, cooperation, coordination, and support necessary for progressive planning and development throughout Ulster County.
9. To respond to the technical assistance, policy, and program needs of the Ulster County Legislature.
10. To function as a County Planning Board consistent with the powers and duties conveyed on a County Planning Board pursuant to New York State Law and the Ulster County Legislature.

II. POWERS AND DUTIES

A. Statutory Responsibilities

1. The Board shall have all the powers and duties, organization, membership and tenure as derived from Ulster County Legislature Resolution Number. 99, adopted July 11, 1963, Resolution Number 259 of 1996; as enumerated under New York State General Municipal Law, Article 12-B, Sections 239-b thru 239-n, and any other powers and duties conferred on the Ulster County Planning Board pursuant to state statute or the Ulster County Legislature.

B. Technical Assistance

1. The Board shall provide technical assistance and support to local officials, including elected officials, planning and zoning boards, government agencies, non-profit organizations, neighborhood associations, and private parties, in the furtherance of its mission. Such assistance may be in the form of educational and informational seminars, community meetings, geographic information systems, data dissemination, topical publications, meetings with project applicants, and other means.

C. Legislative Assistance

1. The Board shall provide technical assistance and program support to the Legislature as it may request on matters and issues concerning comprehensive planning, economic development, housing, open space, transportation, agriculture, environment, county facilities, and related special projects.

D. Community and Public Education

1. The Board shall conduct community and public education and outreach programs including seminars, public presentations, and presence at meetings and hearings in furtherance of planning policies, programs, and its statutory responsibilities.
2. In furtherance of its community and public education efforts, the Board may develop special programs geared to particular audiences including students, businesses, neighborhood groups, environmental groups, etc.

E. Program and Project Management

1. The Board may authorize staff to provide program administration and support including management of work programs and staff for Councils, Consortia, local governments, etc.

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II. MEMBERSHIP

A. Appointment

1. The membership of the Board shall be as provided for in Resolution #99 of 1963 and Resolution # 259 of 1996 of the Ulster County Legislature. All terms shall be for four years.
2. Members may continue in office beyond their appointed terms until they are replaced.
3. Members of the County Planning Board are considered officers of the County and will file the necessary oath of office.

B. Responsibilities & Duties

1. Members of the Board shall have all the powers and duties, as derived from the Ulster County Legislature Resolution Number. 99, adopted July 11, 1963, Resolution Number 259 of 1996; as enumerated under New York State General Municipal Law, Article 12-B, Sections 239-b thru 239-n, and any other powers and duties conferred on a member of the Ulster County Planning Board pursuant to state statute or the Ulster County Legislature.
2. Members of the Board shall report Board activities to local officials as requested by the Board.
3. Members of the Board shall remain informed of current planning practices and Board plans and policies.
4. Members of the Board shall recuse themselves as required under article 12B of the General Municipal Law.
5. Alternate members shall have the same responsibilities and duties as regular members, but may only exercise voting rights in the absence of the regular member.

C. Basis for Withdrawal of Membership

1. If a member misses three consecutive Board meetings without prior notification or a total of five Board meetings in any given calendar year, the Chairman shall, with approval of the Board, request the appropriate committee of the County Legislature to replace the absent member.
2. If a member is guilty of any crime, misconduct or offense bringing discredit to the Board, the Chairman shall, with approval of the Board, request the County Legislature to remove said member and provide a replacement.

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III. ORGANIZATION

A. Officers

The officers shall be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary who shall be elected annually at the organization meeting in December or at the next regular meeting whenever a vacancy exists.

1. Chairman
 - a) Preside at all meetings and hearings of the Board.
 - b) Appoint Committees.
 - c) Be an ex-officio member of all committees.
 - d) Perform all duties incidental to the office or as otherwise required.
2. Vice-Chairman
 - a) Perform all the duties of the Chairman in case of his absence.
3. Secretary
 - a) Responsible for certifying resolutions and official documents.
 - b) Perform all duties of the Chairman in the absence of the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman.

B. Committees

1. Executive Committee
 - a) Shall be a minimum of six members comprised of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and immediate past three chairpersons, if current members of the Planning Board. Absent a minimum membership, the Chairman shall appoint members as needed.
 - b) May establish Planning Board policies, present the annual budget, streamline operations, and recommend priorities for conducting Planning Board affairs.
2. Nominating Committee
 - a) Shall be appointed annually by the Chairman
 - b) Shall prepare a slate of officers to be presented at the annual organizational meeting
3. Other Committees
 - a) Standing or ad hoc may be appointed by the Chairman.

C. Staff

1. Planning Director
 - a) Shall be appointed by the Board
 - b) Shall be a non-competitive civil service position with qualifications subject to approval of the Board.
 - c) Act as Executive Secretary to the Board.
 - d) Be ex-officio member of all Board committees.
 - e) Supervise and operate the Planning Board office within established policies, and accordance with the principles, and ethics of the planning profession.
 - f) Be responsible for the preparation of the annual budget, annual report, and other work items as authorized by the Board.
 - g) Be the authorized spokesman for the Board. Public statements, press releases, etc., on matters not covered by Board policy or County Plans shall be cleared with the Board Chairman and/or the 'Executive Committee.
 - h) Represent the Board in its dealings and responsibilities with the County Legislature, local governments, agencies and private parties.
 - i) Serve on membership organizations as required by title or at the discretion of the Board.
 - j) Perform duties and respond to directives as required by the Ulster County Legislature.
2. Deputy Director
 - a) Shall be appointed by the Board.
 - b) Shall be a competitive civil service position with the qualifications subject to approval of the Board
 - c) Shall act as Planning Director in the absence of the Director including service on boards and commissions as permitted.
 - d) Shall exercise supervisory responsibilities as authorized by the Director.
3. Other Staff
 - a) Shall be competitive civil service positions with the qualifications subject to approval of the Board and as authorized by the County Legislature and appointed by the Planning Director.

IV. MEETINGS/HEARINGS

A. Schedule & Type

1. Regular meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. The meetings will be held generally in the Ulster County Office Building, Kingston, NY. If the first Wednesday is a holiday, then the meeting date shall be determined by the Chairman. All meetings are open to the public, except Executive Sessions, pursuant to State Law, where personnel matters may be discussed. Notification and conduct of regular meetings will conform to the New York State Open Meetings Law.
2. Annual Organizational meeting shall be the December meeting at which:
 - a) A slate of officers shall be offered to the Board by the nominating committee after which nominations may be offered from the floor. If there are no further nominations, the slate of officers presented by the committee will be voted on and, pending the receipt of a majority vote of the Board, will be elected.
 - b) These bylaws shall be reviewed and updated as may be necessary.
3. Special Meetings - may be called by the Chairman, by the Executive Committee, or by any five members who shall deliver a signed request to the Chairman. Members shall be notified either in writing, by e-mail, or telephone of such special meetings. Such notification will include the purpose of the meeting and be a minimum of forty-eight hours in advance. Special meetings will conform to notification requirements under the New York State Open Meetings Law.
4. Executive Session - The Board may meet in closed session in accordance with the New York State Open Meetings Law for discussion of personnel matters. However, all meetings or portion of meetings at which official action is taken shall be open to the general public.

B. Quorum

1. A majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting.
2. Actions of the Board require a quorum to be present and a majority of the Board's voting members, to vote in the affirmative, except as may be otherwise specifically provided by law. If a quorum shall not be present at any meeting of the Board, the Chairman may, by his/her own initiative or at the request of five (5) Board members present, schedule a later date to transact such business as may otherwise have been presented at the meeting.

C. Notice

1. Notice of Meetings - Written notice of every meeting of the Board, stating the place, date, hour, agenda, and, in the case of a special meeting, the purpose of the meeting, shall be given either personally, by mail, or by email delivered to each member not less 3 days before the date of the meeting. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed delivered when deposited in the United States mail.

D. Hearings

1. The Board may hold public hearings, in addition to those required by law, when it is deemed that such sessions would be in the best interest of the public and other parties concerned.

E. Records

1. Minutes of the events of the meeting shall be taken and shall include the names of members in attendance, persons appearing before the Board, a brief description of the topics discussed, and a record of any actions taken. Such minutes shall be available for public inspection within two weeks of the meeting. The meeting shall also be recorded by a sound recording device and such recording shall be kept on file as part of the public record until the minutes from the meeting are approved. Minutes of any Executive Session shall be made available within one week.

F. Conduct

Roberts Rules of Order, as revised, when not in conflict with applicable County or State statutes, and except as specified otherwise by these bylaws, shall govern the Board's proceedings:

1. Order of Business
 - a. Roll Call
 - b. Approval of Minutes
 - c. Financial Report
 - d. Public Comment
 - e. Communications
 - f. Old Business
 - g. Special Topics Discussion
 - h. New Business
 - i. Adjournment
2. The order of business may be altered at the pleasure of the Chairman.

Adopted by resolution of the Ulster County Planning Board at its April 5, 2006 meeting.

Robert Pritchard, Chairman

Date