

1 **BYLAWS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**
2 **COUNTY OF SKAGIT, WASHINGTON – DRAFT 4/27/21**
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6 **ARTICLE I - NAME**

7 The name of this organization shall be "Skagit County Planning Commission," or for the purposes of
8 this document, hereinafter referred to as the "Planning Commission."
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10 **ARTICLE II - AUTHORIZATION AND PURPOSE**

11
12 The Planning Commission was created under the authority of RCW 36.70.040 by Resolution No.
13 3078, adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on July 24, 1961. The powers and duties of
14 the Planning Commission shall be as expressed in the Planning Enabling Act, RCW 36.70, as now
15 exists or hereafter amended (SCC 14.02.080(5)). Pursuant to RCW 36.70.040, the Planning
16 Commission:

17
18 shall assist the planning department in carrying out its duties, including assistance in the
19 preparation and execution of the comprehensive plan and recommendations to the
20 department for the adoption of official controls and/or amendments thereto. To this end,
21 the planning commission shall conduct such hearings as are required by this chapter and
22 shall make findings and conclusions therefrom which shall be transmitted to the
23 department which shall transmit the same on to the board with such comments and
24 recommendations it deems necessary.

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26 To this end, the Planning Commission shall work to promote the County's best interest over time.
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Commented [PG1]: PC Meeting 04/13 – Hughes

29 **ARTICLE III - GENERAL RULES**

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31 General rules regarding membership, term of office, vacancies, removal, organization, meetings,
32 powers and duties, shall be in accordance with SCC 14.02.080 and 14.08.080.

33 ~~Planning Commission members will strive to attend all regular and special meetings. If unable to~~
34 ~~attend, the Planning Commission member will notify the Planning & Development Services as~~
35 ~~soon as possible prior to the meeting.~~
36

Commented [PG2]: Moved to Attendance in Article V

37 **ARTICLE IV - ORGANIZATION, OFFICERS AND DUTIES**

38
39 Section 1 - General

40
41 The Planning Commission shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair from among its membership, at the
42 first regular meeting of each calendar year. Officers shall be eligible for re-election. Vacancies in
43 unexpired terms of office shall be elected at the first regular meeting following announcement of
44 the vacancy.

45
46 Section 2 - Chair
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1 The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Planning Commission, enforce the rules of
2 procedure, and execute the will of the Commission. More specifically:

- 3 • The Chair shall appoint all sub-committees.
- 4 • The Chair shall authenticate by his or her signature, when necessary, all acts, orders, and
5 proceedings of the Planning Commission.
- 6 • To declare the meeting adjourned when the Planning Commission so votes or – where
7 applicable – at the time prescribed in the program, or at any time in the event of a sudden
8 emergency affecting the safety of those present.
- 9 • To enforce the rules relating to debate and those relating to order and decorum within the
10 Planning Commission. Formal disciplinary procedures should be reserved for serious or
11 potentially serious situations and should be handled properly and tactfully. Prior to
12 initiating any formal disciplinary procedure, the Chair, accompanied by another member,
13 will discuss discreetly and informally with the offending member in an effort to reach a
14 satisfactory resolution. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the Chair will
15 forward the matter to the Director of Planning and Development Services and the Chair
16 of the Board of County Commissioners.

Commented [PG3]: Thurston Bylaws

18 Section 3 - Vice Chair

19 The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair and during his/her absence act as Chair until the Chair is
20 able to resume his/her duties.

23 Section 4 - Recording Secretary

24 The Director of the Planning and Development Services Department or his/her designee shall
25 serve as Secretary. The Secretary shall:

- 27 a. maintain the Planning Commission calendar, agenda, public notices and attendance
28 records;
- 29 b. notify Planning Commission members of regular meetings, special meetings,
30 and schedule changes;
- 31 c. keep minutes ~~(if requested by the Chair);~~
- 32 d. create an electronic recording of all meetings and hearings and create a transcript
33 (when appropriate) in order to maintain an adequate record of proceedings, collect
34 and number exhibits;
- 35 ~~d. ;~~
- 36 e. ~~collect and number exhibits;~~
- 37 e. provide to the Planning Commission proposed legislation, staff reports (with
38 findings, conclusions and recommendations), pre-hearing correspondence, draft
39 recorded motions, and all documentation necessary for an adequate record and an
40 informed decision or recommendation. Such materials shall be transmitted to the
41 Planning Commission at the same time as they are made available to the public;
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Commented [PG4]: PC Recommendation 10/6 meeting

Commented [PG5]: Mitchell 10/6

Commented [PG6]: Lacks context, consider moving or deleting?

- f. [provide quasi-judicial, site specific rezones to the Planning Commission and the appropriate criteria from which evidence and testimony in the record should be evaluated.](#)
- g. record the Planning Commission's findings of fact, motions, and votes and preparing draft recorded motions for review by the Planning Commission members prior to final approval by the Chair;
- h. [submit the approved plan, plan amendment or development regulation recommendation, together with the recorded motion to the Board not later than 14 days following the date the recorded motion is signed by the chairperson of the Commission, together with the statement of findings and conclusions, with such comments and recommendations it deems necessary.](#)
~~provide the Planning Commission's approved recorded motions to the Board of County Commissioners;~~
- i. notify the Planning Commission members of the proposed schedule for consideration of approved recorded motions by the Board of County Commissioners;
- ~~j. notify the Planning Commission members of any staff proposed changes to an approved recorded motion not less than 1 business day prior to any action by the Board of County Commissioners;~~
- j. provide Planning Commission members copies of Board of County Commissioners recorded motions, ordinances and resolutions on matters previously before or relating to the Planning Commission.
- k. [Make relevant training opportunities available to Planning Commission no less than annually.](#)

Commented [PG7]: From SCC 14.08.080(8): "A copy of any plan, plan amendment or development regulation recommendation, together with the recorded motion shall be submitted to the Board not later than 14 days following the date the recorded motion is signed by the chairperson of the Commission, together with the statement of findings and conclusions."

Commented [PG8]: Pursuant to RCW 36.70.040, the Planning Commission: "shall make findings and conclusions therefrom which shall be transmitted to the department which shall transmit the same on to the board with such comments and recommendations it deems necessary."

Section 5 - Chair Pro-Term

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, a Chair pro-tern shall be elected informally by the members present to conduct the meeting.

[Section 6 – Legal Advisor](#)

[The Prosecuting Attorney is the sole legal advisor for the Planning Commission. The Prosecuting Attorney shall serve as legal counsel to the planning commission; prepares memoranda of law as requested by the planning commission, and reviews drafts of ordinances, resolutions, and by-laws, and their amendment.](#)

Commented [Pg9]: Mitchell 10/6

ARTICLE V - MEETINGS

Section 1 - Rules of Procedure

Meetings of the Planning Commission shall be conducted according to the Simplified Rules of Procedure, attached as Appendix A. Procedural disputes ~~may shall~~ be settled by [current](#) Robert's Rules of Order.

Commented [Pg10]: Lundsten 10/6

1 **Section 2 - Quorum**

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3 A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the membership of the entire Planning
4 Commission. In the absence of a quorum, no action shall be taken, except to adjourn the
5 meeting to a subsequent date, place and time, unless the lack of a quorum occurs due to
6 challenges made under the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine. Pursuant to RCW 42.36.909, in
7 the event challenges would make a quorum impossible, those challenged members may return to
8 their seats and participate fully in the debate or decision, provided that the member fully
9 discloses the reason for his/her disqualification before the Planning Commission renders a
10 decision. Electronic participation in a meeting shall constitute presence in person at such
11 meeting, and that presence shall count toward a quorum of the Commission for all purposes.
12

13 **Section 3 - Voting**

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15 Each member is entitled to cast one vote. Pursuant to RCW 36.70.400 and .600,
16 recommendations on any official control, development regulation, comprehensive plan, or
17 amendments thereto shall be by an affirmative roll call vote of not less than a majority of the
18 total members of the Planning Commission, not simply a majority of the quorum. Pursuant to
19 the Washington State Open Public Meetings Act, all votes must be public.
20

21 **Section 4 - Regular Meetings**

22
23 Unless otherwise stated in a public notice, all meetings shall be held in the Commissioners
24 Hearing Room of the County Administration Building, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon,
25 WA. Not less than one regular meeting shall be held each month unless no matters are pending
26 on the Commission calendar (SCC 14.02.080(4)). Meetings shall commence promptly at 6:00
27 p.m. A meeting may be lengthened or adjourned with approval of the Commission a motion and
28 second. Meeting schedule will be posted annually no later than the first business day of the new
29 year, and no less than two weeks prior to any regular meeting.
30

31 Electronic Participation: Remote access to meetings by individual members is allowed
32 periodically. Access shall be through technology available at the meeting location that
33 enables all persons participating in the meeting to communicate with each other
34 simultaneously and instantaneously. Members who wish to participate in such a meeting
35 must notify Staff before the scheduled start time for the meeting, allowing adequate time for
36 Staff to make necessary preparations. Electronic participation in meetings shall not be used
37 on a regular basis; it should be used to accommodate special needs of the Commission as
38 may be determined by the Chair or to accommodate members whose physical presence at the
39 meeting is prevented due to prior obligations, personal illness or disability, a family or other
40 emergency, or unforeseen circumstances.
41

42 **Section 5 - Special and Emergency Meetings**

43
44 The presiding officer, or a majority of members, or the Director of Planning and Development
45 Services, may call a special meeting in accordance with RCW 42.30.080. Discussion and
46 action during special meetings is limited to items indicated on the agenda. The notice
47 requirements of this section may be dispensed with in the event a special meeting is called to
48 deal with an emergency pursuant to RCW 42.30.080.
49 In the case of an emergency, the Planning Commission may hold electronic meetings of the
50 entire membership. These meetings shall provide access to the public and comply fully with
51 the Open Public Meetings Act.

Commented [PG11]: Add language that a quorum is not needed if just receiving information.

Commented [PG12]: PC 10/6

Commented [PG13]: From City of Tacoma

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3 Section 6 -- Joint Meetings of the Planning Commission and the Board of County
4 Commissioners

5 The Planning Commission shall request to meet with Board of County Commissions at least once
6 annually. Annual or semi-annual meetings should be considered to review the Planning
7 Commission's work program, facilitate candid two-way feedback, and build understanding, trust and
8 mutual support.

Commented [PjG14]: Added 10/20

9
10 Section 7~~6~~ - Adjournments and Continuances

11
12 Any regular meeting, special meeting, or public hearing may be adjourned to a specified time
13 and place in accordance with RCW 42.30.080.

14
15 Section 8 – Training

16
17 Planning Commission members must complete training requirements on the Open Public Meetings
18 Act within 90 days of assuming office or taking the oath of office. Additional training in land use
19 planning, the Growth Management Act, and similar state planning laws is encouraged. Renewal of
20 Open Public Meetings Act training shall occur in intervals of no less than four years.

21
22 These Bylaws shall be sent electronically to new Planning Commission members within seven days
23 of appointment by the Recording Secretary.

24
25 Section 9 – Attendance

26 Planning Commission members will strive to attend all regular and special meetings. If unable
27 to attend, the Planning Commission member will notify the Planning & Development Services
28 as soon as possible prior to the meeting. Four consecutive absences, except in the case of sudden
29 illness or other unforeseen hardship, in any calendar year by any member obligates the Chair to
30 notify the Board of County Commissioners of a potential vacancy.

Commented [PjG15]: PC Edited 10/6

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32 Section 10 – Public Remarks

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34 Opportunity for public participation at Planning Commission meetings is encouraged. A public
35 remarks agenda item may be added to the agenda once a month or more frequently. This time on the
36 agenda is an opportunity for anyone to speak to the Planning Commission about any topic except
37 items scheduled on the agenda for a public hearing that same day, or items that have had a public
38 hearing and are still under Planning Commission deliberation. Public Remarks, which is not part of
39 the formal public participation process for any development regulation or comprehensive plan
40 amendment project, is limited to three minutes per speaker and up to fifteen minutes total, or as
41 allowed by the Chairperson.

Commented [PG16]: Consistent with language typically used on the agenda.

42
43 Section 11 – Public Media Statements

44
45 No release to the public or media on behalf of the Planning Commission shall be made without
46 approval of the Planning Commission Chair or by vote of the Planning Commission.

Commented [PjG17]: Approved PC 10/20

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48 Section 12 – Communication with the Board of County Commissioners

Commented [PjG18]: Motion to remove approved 4/27/21

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ARTICLE VI - COMMITTEES

The Chair may appoint from among the members of the Planning Commission whatever committees are deemed necessary. The Chair shall appoint committee chairpersons as appropriate and may dissolve any such committees. To ensure compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, no committee may include a quorum of the Planning Commission.

Commented [PG19]: End of 10/6 PC Meeting review.

ARTICLE VII - ETHICS AND RULES OF CONDUCT

Commented [PG20]: New Sections 1 – 4 inserted PC Meeting 4/13 – Tim Raschko

Section 1 - Statement of Ethical Principles

A. Serve the public interest.

- 1. Recognize the rights of citizens to participate in planning decisions.
- 2. Give citizens full, clear, and accurate information.
- 3. Expand choice and opportunity for all persons.
- 4. Assist in the clarification of community goals.
- 5. Ensure that information available to decision makers is also available to the public.
- 6. Pay special attention to the interrelatedness of decisions and the long-range consequences of present actions.

B. Strive to achieve high standards of integrity and proficiency.

- 1. Exercise fair, independent, and honest judgment.
- 2. Publicly disclose any personal interests.
- 3. Define personal interest broadly.
- 4. Abstain from participation in a matter in which you have a personal interest and leave the chamber when the matter is being deliberated.
- 5. Seek no gifts or favors.
- 6. Abstain from participating as an advisor or decision maker on any plan or project in which you have previously participated as an advocate.
- 7. Serve as advocates only when the objectives are legal and serve the public interest.
- 8. Not participate as an advocate on any plan or program in which you have previously served as an advisory or decision maker except after full disclosure and in no circumstance earlier than one year following termination of the role as advisory or decision maker.
- 9. Not use confidential information to further a personal interest.
- 10. Not disclose confidential information.
- 11. Not misrepresent facts or distort information.
- 12. Not participate in any matter unless prepared.

1 13. Respect the rights of all persons.

2
3 These principles are aspirational in nature and they seek to inspire voluntary commitment through
4 appeals to conscience. They are a positive obligation.

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6
7 Section 2 - Conduct of the Members of the Planning Commission

- 8
9 • Members of the planning commission shall take such time as to prepare themselves for
10 hearings and meetings.
- 11 • Any member of the planning commission absent from three consecutive regular meetings or
12 any six regular meetings within a calendar year, without being excused by the Chairperson,
13 may be removed for cause.
- 14 • A planning commission member with a conflict of interest in an item before the commission
15 must state that a conflict of interest exists and withdraw from participation in the public
16 hearing, working session, emergency meeting, or regular meeting on that item.
- 17 • The interests of that planning commission member may be represented before the planning
18 commission by a specifically designated representative or legal agent at the public hearing or
19 working session, and testimony entered into the public record.
- 20 • Participation of a planning commission member with a conflict of interest is cause for removal.

21
22 Section 3 - Censuring a Member

23
24 The censure of a member of a governing body is public statement condemning the member's
25 inappropriate behavior with the hopes of reforming him or her so that he or she will not behave in the
26 same way again. Members can be censured for:

- 27 • misconduct at meetings,
- 28 • failing to follow proper procedures,
- 29 • violating confidentiality,
- 30 • moral misconduct,
- 31 • absenteeism,
- 32 • lying,
- 33 • disloyalty,
- 34 • working against the organization, including the undermining of a decision of the
35 organization,
- 36 • conspiracy, and
- 37 • violating other values that the governing body holds dear.

38
39 Censure is one way for the other members of the governing body to avoid the appearance of
40 agreement with the objectionable behavior of a fellow member. The presiding officer cannot censure
41 a member of the governing body for misbehavior; only the body can do so. The presiding officer can
42 also be censured for not following parliamentary rules in meetings, and for denying members their
43 basic rights to make motions, participate in debate, and vote.

44

1
2 Section 4 - Support for Decisions of the Planning Commission

3
4 Local governments and public bodies are different from private organizations. Under the First
5 Amendment to the Constitution, elected officials and citizen volunteers have the right to speak out
6 when they hold a different view from the body. At the same time, they may not try to undermine the
7 body's decision.

8
9 Section ~~5~~4 - Quasi-Judicial Actions

10
11 Planning Commissioners shall comply with the provisions below in addition to the Appearance
12 of Fairness Doctrine articulated in RCW 42.36.

13
14 Pursuant to RCW 42.36.060, during the pendency of a quasi-judicial proceeding, members
15 should avoid any outside communications about the proposal when all participants in the
16 matter are not present. ~~ex parte communications about the proposal.~~ If a member has had *ex*
17 *parte* communication with either proponents or opponents of the project during the pendency
18 of the proceeding, the member shall make a public announcement of the content of the
19 communication at each hearing and provide an opportunity for parties to rebut the substance of
20 the communication.

Commented [PG21]: PjG inserted per PC request to define terms and use common language 4/13.

21
22 Section ~~6~~2 - All Actions

23
24 Any member of the Commission who in his or her opinion has a pecuniary-financial interest in
25 any matter before the Commission that would prejudice his or her actions shall so publicly
26 indicate and shall step down, leave the hearing room and refrain from voting and any manner
27 of participation with respect to the matter in question so as to avoid any possible conflict of
28 interest or violation of the appearance of fairness.

Commented [PG22]: PjG inserted per PC request to define terms and use common language 4/13.

29
30 If a member of the Commission or his/her immediate family has a pecuniary-financial interest
31 in the matter at hand but does not think that this would prejudice his/her opinion the member
32 should publicly disclose this interest on the record prior to the start of the hearing and allow
33 persons to challenge his/her participation in the hearing. If so challenged the member shall step
34 down, leave the hearing room and refrain from voting and any manner of participation with
35 respect to the matter in question. If not challenged the member may participate.

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38 **ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS**

39
40 The Planning Commission shall review its bylaws as needed periodically. The initial draft of a
41 proposed amendment must be provided to the Commission at least one meeting before adoption.

Commented [PG23]: PC Meeting 04/13 – Henley

42
43 Any changes to bylaws require a majority vote of the Planning Commission members and approval
44 by the Board of County Commissioners (SCC 14.02.080(6)).

45
46 These bylaws, upon approval by the Board of County Commissioners, repeal and supersede all
47 previous bylaws.
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2 **APPENDIX A - SIMPLIFIED RULES OF PROCEDURE**
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4 A. Intent

5
6 These procedures are adopted to provide the Chair with guidelines for conducting
7 orderly public hearings and meetings ~~in lieu of Robert's Rules of Order~~. The Planning
8 Commission reserves to the Chair the authority to make reasonable changes or modify
9 these guidelines to facilitate legitimate special needs and to promote a fair- and
10 orderly proceeding.

Commented [Pg24]: 10/20 Alternative is "as set forth in current Robert's Rules of Order."

11 In all matters of parliamentary procedure not specifically governed by these Bylaws or
12 otherwise required by law, the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised)
13 shall apply.

Commented [Pg25]: 10/20 PC Meeting

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16 B. Public Hearings (Legislative and Quasi-Judicial)

17
18 1. General Hearing Procedures

- 19
20 a. Chair declares the public hearing open.
21
22 b. Chair reads the following statement as a guideline, prepared by staff in
23 advance:

24
25 *The purpose of this public hearing is to [state purpose].*
26 *Everyone present will be given an opportunity to speak.*
27 *However, if this hearing extends beyond [state hour], the*
28 *hearing will be continued to a later date and time.*

29
30 *[For legislative hearings] Those of you who wish to*
31 *provide public comment are asked to sign in on the*
32 *speakers list so that you may have an opportunity to*
33 *comment. Those who may not elect to sign in will*
34 *nevertheless be given an opportunity to speak following*
35 *those who have signed in.*

36
37 *Comments [may] will be limited to a [state time period].*

38
39 *Written comments are encouraged and will be received*
40 *until the close of this public hearing.*

41
42 *[If applicable] A court reporter is present to record your*
43 *comments. Before you testify, clearly state your name,*
44 *spell your last name for the record, and indicate where*
45 *you reside.*

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47 c. Appearance of Fairness Issues (Quasi-Judicial hearings only)
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49 i. Chair requests anyone who objects to the Chair's participation,

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or any other Planning Commission member's participation, to please state so now and give the reasons for objection.

n. Chair asks the Planning Commission members if any have an interest in the property or issue. Chair asks Planning Commission members if they can hear and consider this matter in a fair and objective manner.

iii. Chair requests any Planning Commission member to place on record the substance of any communication each has had outside of the hearing with opponents or proponents on the issue to be heard. After the communication is placed on the record, the Chair should request whether any interested parties wish to rebut the substance of the communication.

d. Chair requests staff to make its presentation (15-minute limit).

e. [Follow procedures in subsection 2 or 3 below, as appropriate to the type of proceeding.]

f. Chair declares the public hearing closed and thanks members of the public for their testimony.

g. Planning Commission deliberates on the record, discussing findings of fact, conclusions, and recommendations (See "C - Public Meetings" below). The Planning Commission may take all information under advisement and postpone deliberation until a later meeting, provided the meeting is properly adjourned.

2. For quasi-judicial hearings, or for legislative proposals of a site-specific nature, the procedures shall be as follows:

a. Following the staff presentation, the applicant or his/her representative is invited to comment. If there is an organized group of opponents to a proposal, then the representative of that group is also invited to comment. Notwithstanding subsections (e) and (f) below, the Chair may decide on the timing of cross-examination, depending on the circumstances of the particular hearing, and the availability of the expert witness.

b. Chair invites comments from citizens for and against the proposal.

c. The chair invites the applicant to rebut the opposition.

d. Additional comments from those against and those for the proposal should be recognized, if needed.

e. Cross-examination of experts and staff by representative of applicant or opponents.

f. Chair requests whether the Planning Commission members have questions of the applicant, citizens, or staff.

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3. For legislative proposals that are not of a site-specific nature, the procedures shall be as follows:
 - a. Following the staff presentation, the chair invites comments in the order of names on a sign-up sheet.
 - b. Chair invites comments from latecomers or others who may not have signed up.
 - c. Chair requests whether the Planning Commission members have questions of citizens or staff.
- C. Public Meetings
1. Order of Business
 - a. Call to order
 - b. Roll call (optional. In any case, Secretary records attendance)
 - c. Approval of minutes of last meeting, if applicable
 - d. Officers and Committee reports, if applicable
 - e. Special orders - Important business previously designated for consideration at this meeting
 - f. Unfinished business
 - g. New business
 - h. Announcements
 - i. Adjournment
 2. Process
 - a. Before Deliberations
 - i. The Planning Commission should not begin deliberation on matters before them until the Chair calls for a motion. However, the Chair may allow Planning Commission members to seek additional information or clarification on a matter before them prior to opening debate on such matter.
 - ii. Before making a motion, a Planning Commission member must request to obtain the floor from, and be recognized by, the Chair.
 - iii. Absent a second on any motion, the motion is lost, without any further discussion.
 - b. Deliberations

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- i. After a motion is made and seconded, the Chair repeats the motion and calls for discussion on the motion. The Chair may set a time limit for discussion at his/her discretion.
 - ii. The Planning Commission member making a motion is always allowed to speak first.
 - iii. All comments and debate must be directed to the Chair.
 - iv. The Planning Commission member making a motion may speak again only after other speakers have finished, unless called upon by the Chair.
- c. Voting
- i. If there is no more discussion, the Chair asks if the Planning Commission is ready to vote. Alternatively, a Planning Commission member may move to end debate and call for a vote (call the question).
 - u. Voting may be by roll call or voice vote.
 - iii. When a motion is not likely to be opposed, a motion may pass by general consent. The Chair says, "if there is no objection..." The membership shows agreement by their silence. However, if there is an objection, the item must be put to a vote.
- d. Types of Motions
- The following is a list of the various types of motions, and their use.
- i. Main Motion: The formal proposal for consideration and action. A main motion cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor, and yields to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
 - ii. Subsidiary Motions: Their purpose is to change or affect how a main motion is handled. These motions are voted on before a main motion. Examples are:
 - Motion to Amend: Used to suggest an addition or revision to the main motion.
 - Motion to Divide the Question: Breaks the motion on the floor into two parts, in a manner suggested by the mover.
 - Motion to Refer to Committee: Applies only to the main motion. The Chair may appoint committees pursuant to Article VIII above.
 - Motion to Extend Debate: Can be general, or for a specific time or number of speakers. Not debatable.
 - Motion to End Debate and Vote or Call the Question: Applies only to the motion on the floor. Not debatable.

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- iii. Privileged Motions: Their purpose is to bring up important or urgent matters or needs, such as a motion to recess or adjourn. Not debatable.

- iv. Incidental Motions: Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before any other business is taken up. Some examples are:
 - Motion to Suspend the Rules: Suspends the formal process for dealing with a specific question (such as time limits, motions, etc.) Debatable.
 - Motion to Appeal Chair's Decision: Allows the Planning Commission to overrule a decision made by the Chair. Not debatable.
 - Point of Order: A question about a process, or objection and suggestion of alternative process. May include a request for the Chair to rule on process.
 - Point of Information: A request for information on a specific question, either about process or about the content of a motion. May not be used to obtain the floor for debate.

3. Other Meeting Guidelines

- a. **When a topic is first introduced** or a main motion is made, the Chair should allow all questions for information purposes to be asked before opening to debate.

- b. **Discourage the repetition of arguments.** The Chair should attempt to call on people who have not yet spoken before those who have already spoken. The Chair should also discourage dialogues that start up between two individuals in debate.

- c. If **debate carries on too long**, the Chair should impose time limits on speakers.

- d. **Do not speak in jargon, initials or acronyms** - unless all present are familiar with common terms, avoid such usage.

- e. **Be respectful.** Differences of opinion are inevitable. It is up to each Planning Commission member to balance the needs of his/her constituents with the needs of the community as a whole. Agree to disagree. Lose gracefully. Win honorably.

- f. **Be prepared.** Read staff reports and other materials provided before coming to a meeting. Ask questions of each other or staff in advance to avoid spending meeting time becoming familiar with the issue being addressed.

- 1 g. **Be objective.** Planning Commission members must be able to distinguish
2 between fact and opinion, and to support decisions based on facts,
3 regardless of personal opinion.
4
- 5 h. **Speak in turn.** Public proceedings are recorded. Speaking out of turn may
6 prevent someone's testimony or comments from being recorded, which may
7 unfairly exclude such testimony or comments from the record. Planning
8 Commission members and staff must speak directly into the microphone,
9 and only when in turn, as granted by the Chair.

