

## **Bylaws to Implement Sammamish Municipal Code Chapter 2.60**

### **ARTICLE I: MEMBERS**

The Planning Commission consists of seven (7) members who are appointed by the City Council.

### **ARTICLE II: OFFICER**

The elected officers of the Commission consist of a Chair and Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair serves in the absence of the Chair. In the absence of both, the Chair and Vice-Chair, the members present shall elect a Chair Pro-Tempore.

The terms of office for Chair and Vice-Chair shall be one year; for Chair Pro- Tempore, the term shall be only for the meeting at which appointed. In the event of a vacancy from office, a replacement Chair and/ or Vice-Chair shall be elected to serve the unexpired term of the vacant office(s).

#### **Process/ Timeline:**

- During the last meeting in January of each year the following process is conducted for the new Chair and Vice Chair positions:
  - o Commission members nominate for Chair by voice.
  - o Nominees confirm their willingness to serve and if desired are allowed to make a brief statement.
  - o A voice vote is taken for each nominee in the order of nomination until a Chair is selected by majority vote. Nominees may not vote for themselves.
  - o The process is repeated for Vice Chair
  - o New Chair and Vice Chair assume their responsibilities immediately once they are selected.
  - o In the event that the Commission is unable to select Chair or Vice Chair by voice vote, then a written ballot will be distributed and collected by the Planning Commission Coordinator, with the nominated Commissioner receiving the most votes selected for the position. All Commissioners may vote in this process.
  - o In the event that Chair and Vice-Chair are not reappointed, the subsequent meeting will be chaired by the longest serving existing Planning Commissioner until such time as a Chair and Vice-Chair are selected.
- One year terms for Chair and Vice Chair take effect at the 1st meeting in February.
- Repeat cycle annually.

#### **Chair/ Vice Chair Duties:**

- Run/Facilitate Planning Commission meetings in a fair, efficient, productive, informative manner;
- Act as spokesperson to City Council and when necessary, to the public and/or media;
- Work with Community Development Director on schedule/calendar and meeting agendas.

The Vice Chair is to attend meetings with staff and Chair and to fulfill duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence.

The Director of Community Development and/or designated staff representative shall provide other staff services necessary to carry on the work of the Planning Commission. The Administrative Assistant to the Community Development Director shall act as Secretary of the Planning Commission.

### **ARTICLE III: MEETINGS**

The regular meetings of the Commission are normally held on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every calendar month at a time set in advance by the Commission so as to ensure reasonable public participation. Meetings are not held during the month of August. Staff is responsible for notice to the public and to generate and update a calendar for upcoming Planning Commission meetings.

If a regular meeting falls on a legal holiday, that meeting will normally be held on the following Thursday or on a special meeting date which is not a holiday.

At any meeting, the Commission may set a date for a special meeting. To provide adequate public notice, such special meeting shall not occur any sooner than 7 days after the Commission sets such a meeting.

All regular and special meetings of the Commission are open to the public.

### **ARTICLE IV: AGENDA AND STAFF REPORTS FOR MEETINGS**

A copy of the agenda and accompanying materials for each meeting should be provided to each member not less than six (6) days prior to the date of the meeting.

The Director, Deputy Director, or designee from the Department of Community Development should provide regular reports, verbally or in writing, to the Planning Commission on actions taken by the City Council.

### **ARTICLE V: MINUTES AND RECORDS**

The approved action minutes and video recording serve as the record of actions taken. The proposed

final minutes will be distributed to the entire Planning Commission for review. Approval will occur at a subsequent Planning Commission meeting.

#### **ARTICLE VI: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The Planning Commission's role is to advise the City Council on growth management issues, land use policies and development regulations. High quality public input is needed to help inform the Commission's analysis and recommendations.

The Commission goals for public involvement are to:

1. Undertake a fair, meaningful and effective outreach to affected parties for each work item, with opportunities for all interested parties to participate in a comfortable setting.
2. Use a consistent and adaptable process that allocates limited time efficiently and encourages input that is relevant, clear and specific.

When speaking to the Commission the following rules will apply:

1. Everyone who wishes to do so will be given the opportunity to speak.
2. Speakers are expected to focus their remark to the specific question being discussed by the Commission at that time and avoid extraneous issues.
3. Speakers must state their views respectfully without personal attacks, insults or disparaging comments.
4. Everyone is expected to respect the views of others even when they disagree with those views. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Any person who persists in disrupting the proceedings will be asked to leave.
5. Everyone will be expected to respect the person speaking and interruptions will not be allowed.

The Commission uses a variety of required and optional mechanisms to achieve its stated goals, including:

- Public comment opportunities at each Commission meeting
- Formal public hearings with advertised notice
- Round tables and other interactive mechanisms to promote dialog
- Outreach to stakeholder and interest groups
- Material in the monthly city newsletter and on the city website
- Survey(s) when appropriate and affordable

- Postcard mailings and GovDelivery mechanisms
- Field trips
- Review of peer city, state agency and Tribal comments
- Each work item may need some or many of these mechanisms, and the public involvement plan can be adapted as needed

The Planning Commission shall allow for any party to provide written and/or verbal public comment following the rules and format for public comment established by the city clerk and used by the City Council. The Planning Commission shall allow for a 3-minute non-agenda public comment period at the start of meetings following the Order of Business in Article X. Public hearings will have a 5-minute public comment period. The Planning Commission shall also allow a 5-minute agenda-topic-related public comment period at the end of the meeting, following the Order of Business in Article X. Testimony during this comment period must be related to agenda items and shall be non-repetitious of comments given at the start of the meeting or during a public hearing. Public comments shall be administered by the Chair with assistance from department staff. The following best practices should be employed:

- The Chair will direct to conclude through summary once the time limit is reached and shall direct the meeting administrator to take measures necessary, such as cutting the microphone, to suspend commenters that have run over time.
- Chair will ask commenters provide their name and city of residence
- Commenters are encouraged to provide written materials by close of business the day prior to the meeting to allow Commission members adequate time to review such materials prior to the meeting.

**ARTICLE VII: PUBLIC STATEMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION**

Any member of the Commission has a right to express personal views and opinions. However, statements representing the views or recommendations of the Commission must be authorized by a majority or consensus of the Commission. Minority views or positions may be conveyed as well.

**ARTICLE VIII: EX-PARTE CONTACTS AND SHARING OF INFORMATION**

It is in the public interest that, to the greatest extent possible, all members of the Planning Commission have an opportunity to be aware of and act upon the information that is available to other members. All members should place upon the record of the Planning Commission the substance of all ex-parte contacts that have occurred during the time a matter has been introduced and is still before the Planning Commission for a recommendation.

**ARTICLE IX: CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

If an actual or perceived conflict of interest exists that affects the work of the Commission, it is each member's responsibility to openly describe the issue, and refrain from any subsequent Commission participation, deliberation or voting on the subject.

**ARTICLE X: ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chair may adjust or amend the order of business as needed. The regular meetings normally use the following format;

- Call to order
- Roll call
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Public Comment (Non-Agenda)
- Old Business (If carried over from a previous meeting)
- New Business
- Public Comment (Agenda)
- Any miscellaneous comments or information by Staff when relevant to function of the Planning Commission
- Review of Planning Commission Work Program Calendar
- Adjourn

The Chair should conduct meetings in an open, fair and transparent manner. In the event of a procedural question, the Chair may refer to Roberts Rules of Order for guidance.

**ARTICLE XI: ATTENDANCE**

Regular meeting attendance and active meeting participation are fundamental to the function of the Planning Commission. Each Planning Commission member shall strive to attend all Commission meetings, to read materials beforehand and to participate fully.

SMC 2.60.020 Membership – Defines the number of planning commission members, the appointment process, term limits, and removal.

Except in instances of sudden illness or other unforeseen hardship, members shall advise the staff and

the Chair/Vice Chair, of their intended absence at least prior to 4:30 p.m. on the day prior to the meeting. Absences following this procedure shall be considered excused. Excused absences will be noted for the record at the roll call.

Four or more consecutive unexcused absences may result in removal from the Planning Commission pursuant to SMC 2.60.020(4). Additionally, SMC 2.60.020(4) includes 'neglect of duty' as reason for removal. A Planning Commissioner shall be considered in neglect of duty if:

- They have four or more unexcused non-consecutive absences within a term; or,
- They have a demonstrated and consistent history of poor meeting preparation and participation.

#### **ARTICLE XII: RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMISSION**

The Planning Commission's goal is to provide a consensus recommendation to the City Council. When a consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote is taken. Minority positions may be conveyed as well.

To document the actions taken by the Planning Commission, staff will prepare a written statement or memorandum, including the facts, findings and rationale for the final recommendations and include a minority report as appropriate. This statement is then signed by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Commission whose responsibility it is to present the recommendations to the City Council on behalf of the Planning Commission.

#### **ARTICLE XIII: DEFINING SUCCESS**

The Planning Commission has identified the following standards for use in determining success:

1. The public process should be transparent and fair, and outreach should use a variety of media types so that all interested parties have the chance to participate.
2. All participants should have a chance to offer comments and suggestions. Meetings should be conducted in a productive and efficient manner.
3. The Planning Commission's submission to the City Council should contain a statement of findings and facts, a summary of viewpoints received by the Commission during the public comment process, and a set of recommendations along with the reasoning behind those recommendations.
4. The Planning Commission's process and products should be sufficient such that the City Council is able to take action on the recommendations without the need for substantial further research or fact-finding work. The recommended regulations should be easy to read and implement.

#### **ARTICLE XIV: NORMS**

The Planning Commission has developed the following 'group norms' to define the expectations for conduct by Commissioners and the interaction among members. It is the intent that these be simple, self-explanatory and self-enforced. The Chair is empowered to remind members as the need arises to employ these norms. Commissioners will demonstrate respect for members of the public, staff and other Commissioners by:

- Attending each meeting and arriving on time (if late arrival is necessary, please call or email ahead)
- Reading materials in advance, coming to the meeting prepared, and submitting questions in advance
- Respectful and attentive listening to the speaker (minimal side discussions)
- Speaking respectfully to and about the public, staff and other Commissioners
- Allowing all Commissioners the opportunity to speak and to speak without interruption
- Minimizing unnecessary distractions (e.g., phones, screens) during Commission meetings