

**TOWN OF ANDOVER, CONNECTICUT
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
BYLAWS**

Adopted date: July 30, 2019

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Section 1
PURPOSE AND AUTHORIZATION

- 1.1 The Town of Andover Conservation Commission exists for the development, conservation, supervision and regulation of natural resources, including water resources, within the Town of Andover, CT as stated in Chapter 97, Section 7-131a through 7-131e of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended.
- 1.2 The commission has those powers and duties delegated to the Town of Andover Conservation Commission by the aforementioned state statutes. Specifically, the commission shall:
- a) Conduct research into the utilization and possible utilization of land areas of the municipality;
 - b) Keep an index of all open areas, publicly or privately owned, including open marshlands, swamps and other wetlands, for the purpose of obtaining information on the proper use of such areas; and
 - c) Keep records of the meetings and activities and make an annual report to the municipality in the manner required of other municipal agencies.
 - d) Serve in an advisory capacity to planning and zoning and inland wetlands commissions regarding proposed new development and land use applications within designated open space corridors in the Plan of Conservation and Development.

In addition, the Commission may:

- e) Coordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for the purpose of conducting land use research;
- f) Advertise, prepare and distribute books, maps, charts, plans and pamphlets necessary for its purposes;
- g) Propose a greenways plan for inclusion in the plan of conservation and development of the municipality prepared pursuant to section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes;
- h) Inventory natural resources and formulate watershed management and drought management plans;
- i) Recommend to the Planning and Zoning Commission plans and programs for the development and use of all open areas;
- j) Make recommendations to the Planning & Zoning Commission, Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, and other municipal agencies on proposed land use changes.

With the approval of the Board of Selectmen, the Commission may also:

- k) Enter into conservation-related intermunicipal projects or cooperatives on behalf of the town, including but not limited to, a Hop River corridor or watershed partnership;
- l) Acquire land and easements in the name of the municipality;

- m) Promulgate rules and regulations for the use of land and easements, including but not limited to the establishment of reasonable charges for the use of land and easements, for any of its purposes;
- n) Supervise and manage municipally owned open space and town parks;
- o) Receive gifts in the name of the municipality for any of its purposes and shall administer for the purposes subject to the terms of the gift;
- p) Apply for private grants to support conservation initiatives;
- q) Apply for state grants to preserve or restrict to conservation or recreation purposes, the use of open space; and/or
- r) Approve, prior to submission, state grant applications for programs to preserve or restrict the use of open space land to conservation or recreation purposes;

Section 2
NAME OF THE COMMISSION

- 2.1 The Commission shall be known as the Town of Andover Conservation Commission, hereafter called the Commission.

Section 3
OFFICE OF COMMISSION

- 3.1 The office of the Commission shall be the Town Office Building at 17 School Road, Andover, CT 06232, where all Commission records will be kept. Copies of all official documents, records, maps, etc., will be filed in the land use/building department. Meeting agendas, minutes and motions will be recorded in the office of the Town Clerk.

Section 4 MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 The Commission shall be composed of five (5) regular members and up to (2) alternates appointed in accordance with the Town Charter.
- 4.2 Members are expected to be familiar with the goals for protecting natural resources and the open space plan included within the Plan of Conservation and Development.
- 4.3 The membership and the terms of membership shall be as specified in the Town Charter and in the aforementioned general statutes. Specifically, members shall serve two-year terms.
- 4.4 Members are expected to attend all meetings of the Commission. In the event that a member cannot attend for good cause, they will notify the Chairperson in advance, preferably with a minimum of 24 hours notice.
- 4.5 Following a two-thirds vote of the Commission members present, including alternates, the Chairperson may recommend to the Board of Selectmen the removal of any member who misses more than three (3) consecutive meetings or six (6) meetings in a calendar year.
- 4.6 Vacancies in the Commission's membership shall be filled by the procedure prescribed in the Town Charter.
- 4.7 Resignations from the Commission shall be in writing and transmitted to the Town Clerk as outlined in the Town Charter.
- 4.8 The Freedom of Information Act, Chapter 14 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, provides the public with rights of access to records and meetings of public agencies. Members and staff of the Commission shall familiarize themselves with this Act. The Freedom of Information Act can be accessed at <https://www.foia.gov/foia-statute.html> or by requesting a copy from the Freedom of Information Commission, 18-20 Trinity Street, Hartford, CT 06106.

Section 5
OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

- 5.1 The officers of the Commission shall consist of a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, and a Bookkeeper.
- 5.2 The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings and hearings of the Commission and shall have the duties normally conferred by parliamentary usage on such officers. The Chairperson shall have the duty to appoint committees, call special meetings, and generally perform other duties as may be prescribed in these bylaws. The Chairperson shall have the privilege of discussing all matters before the Commission and of voting thereon. The Chairperson shall:
- (a) Prepare the agenda of regular and special meetings under the direction of the Chairperson, or in the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson;
 - (b) Provide notice of all meetings to Commission members, alternates and staff;
- 5.3 In absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall preside and have all the powers and duties of the chairperson as stated in these bylaws. In the event that both Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are absent at the start of the meeting, any regular member may be elected as acting Chairperson for the meeting by a majority vote of those members present.
- 5.4 The Book Keeper shall be responsible for providing a budget status report at each regular meeting.

Section 6
ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- 6.1 The first meeting in July of each year shall be an annual organization meeting, at which time officers will be elected.
- 6.2 All members must be notified of the annual meeting before election of officers can take place.
- 6.3 A candidate receiving a majority vote from the Commission members present, including Alternate Members, shall be declared elected and shall serve one year or until his or her successor takes office.

Section 7 MEETINGS

- 7.1 Regular meetings shall be held on the last Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Andover Town Hall Community Room unless rescheduled by the Commission, and the agenda shall be filed in the office of the Town Clerk not less than 24 hours before any such meeting.
- 7.2 If at any time any regular meeting falls on a holiday, such regular meeting shall be held on the following Tuesday unless otherwise scheduled in the yearly calendar.
- 7.3 If it not possible to meet in the place designated, the meeting may be held at such place as is designated by the Chairperson, provided a copy of the minutes of any such meeting adequately setting forth the reason for relocation and the proceedings occurring at such meeting be filed with the Town Clerk not later than 72 hours following the meeting.
- 7.4 A majority of the voting membership of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, and the number of votes necessary to transact business shall be three (3) seated members, which constitutes a majority of members of the Commission.
- 7.5 The notice of a meeting other than a regular meeting (i.e., Special Meeting) shall specify the purpose of such a meeting and no other business shall be considered. The Chairman shall give notice of the special meeting not less than 24 hours in advance of the meeting by filing in the office of the Town Clerk the agenda which shall include the time and place of the meeting.
- 7.6 All Commission meetings shall be open to the public unless closed by a two-thirds vote of the Commission members for an executive session.
- 7.7 Executive sessions closed to the public shall be limited to types of discussions specified in the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act, Chapter 14 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, including but not limited to:
 - (a) Strategy relating to negotiations regarding pending claims to litigation;
 - (b) Security matters;
 - (c) Real estate acquisition.
- 7.8 Unless otherwise specified, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings at all Commission meetings. The Chairman determines the extent to which the procedures are followed and should be flexible enough to vary the levels of intensity to which they apply to the specific occasion.
- 7.9 Alternate members of the Commission who are seated at the beginning of a meeting shall not be replaced by another member who arrives late.

- 7.10 Unseated alternates may take part in Commission discussions but shall not vote except for election of officers. Alternates shall be seated in rotation so that they shall act as nearly equal a number of times as possible.
- 7.11 Meeting minutes be submitted to the Chairman within 48 hours by the member who recorded the minutes. Upon receipt the Chairman will submit the minutes to the Town Clerk and their Assistant as required by Town Charter.
- 7.12 In the event that a regularly scheduled meeting conflicts with a Town meeting, the Chairperson may, at his or her discretion or upon written request of three (3) or more Commission members, cancel the meeting or postpone the meeting to the next business day provided that the public can be given at least 48 hours notice of such change or cancellation.

Section 8
ORDER OF BUSINESS

8.1. Unless otherwise determined by the Chairperson, the order of business at regular meetings shall be:

- (a) Call to Order;
- (b) Seat Alternates;
- (c) Additions/Changes to Order of Agenda;
- (d) Public Speak;
- (e) Approval of Minutes;
- (f) Old Business;
- (g) New Business;
- (h) Adjournment.

Section 9
CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND DISQUALIFICATION

- 9.1 No member or alternate member of the Commission shall participate in a decision of the Commission upon any matter in which he or she (or any member of his or her family) is directly or indirectly interested personally or financially. In the event of such disqualification, such fact shall be entered on the records of the Commission and a replacement shall be selected from alternate members to act as a member of the Commission in the meeting and determination of the particular matter or matters in which the disqualification arose.

Section 10
SUBCOMMITTEES & TECHNICAL SUPPORT REQUESTS

- 10.1 Subcommittees may be appointed by the Chairperson for purposes and terms that the Commission approves. Subcommittees of the commission may include non-committee members, including but not limited to, other town citizens, outside experts, and volunteers.
- 10.2 The Commission may exchange information with the Commissioner of the Connecticut DEEP, may request technical expertise and personnel from the Commissioner for the assistance and planning of its overall program and for coordinating State and local conservation actions.
- 10.3 The Commission may utilize available town funds to obtain legal counsel from an approved land use attorney as to support activities including, but not limited to land acquisition and development proposal review.

Section 11
PUBLIC RELATIONS

- 11.1 The Chairperson or their designee shall act as spokesman for the Commission. Duties include the preparation of news releases to be distributed to the communications media. Information releases shall reflect a consensus of the views and opinions of the Commission.

Section 12
RECORDS RETENTION

- 12.1 The Commission and the Town Clerk shall retain complete administrative records of the Commission actions and dispose of such records in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Office of the Public Records Administrator of the State of Connecticut Library (www.cslib.org), in the Records Retention and Disposition Schedules.

Section 13
AMENDMENTS

- 13.1 These bylaws will be reviewed annually for necessary changes and updates.
- 13.2 These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the Commission's entire voting membership, including alternates, only after the proposed change has been read and discussed at a previous regular meeting.
- 13.3 The bylaws may be changed at any meeting by the unanimous vote of the Commission's entire voting membership.

Section 14
EFFECTIVE DATE

14.1 These Bylaws are effective upon filing in the Office of the Town Clerk.

Section 15
DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

- 15.1 The Conservation Commission Bylaws are intended to provide internal procedures of the Commission and do not supersede any Town of Andover ordinance or charter, town regulations, or any regulation presented in the Connecticut General Statutes. In the event a conflict arises, these Bylaws shall be amended immediately.