

MEREDITH PLANNING BOARD
RULES OF PROCEDURE
Adopted May 28, 1991
Amended July 26, 2016
Amended September 27, 2022

I. AUTHORITY

These Rules of Procedure are adopted pursuant to the enabling authority of New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated (RSA 676:1).

II. ORGANIZATION

A. The Planning Board (Board) shall meet each year within thirty (30) days after the Annual Town Meeting. The organizational meeting shall be called to order by the Board member present having the greatest longevity as a Board member. Officers of the Board shall be nominated and selected by a vote of the Board. A Board representative required for volunteer committees shall be selected by a vote of the Board. The Capital Improvements Program Committee shall be appointed by a vote of the Board.

B. Officers of the Board shall consist of:

1. Chairman- Conducts all Board meetings and hearings as provided for by statute. When unavailable to act as Chairman, he shall direct the Vice-Chairman, Secretary or other experienced member, in that order, to act as Chairman. In addition, the Chairman shall meet with the Town Planner to review agendas and other Board matters; call special meetings of the Board as deemed necessary; and appoint subcommittees of the Board as deemed necessary.
2. Vice-Chairman- Acts to fulfill the Chairman's duties in the event of illness, absence or recusal of the Chairman. The Vice-Chairman may countersign all plan endorsements made by the Chairman if the Secretary is not available.
3. Secretary- Acts to fulfill the Chairman's duties in the event of illness, absence or recusal of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Secretary shall certify the approved meetings minutes and countersign all plan endorsements made by the Chairman.

C. Election of the officers by the Board shall be by a majority vote of the Board present and sitting. If requested by a majority of those present and sitting, voting shall be by written ballot.

- D. The officers of the Board shall constitute an Executive Committee, which meet as necessary and shall have only those powers specified herein.

The function of the Executive Committee shall be to supplement and broaden the contact provided between the Board and the Planning Department on a week-to-week basis, beyond the normal range of duties of the Board Chairman. The Executive Committee shall act in an advisory manner only, to offer guidance on possible concerns of the Board at large, and shall have no final authority. All matters subject to Executive Committee discussion shall be referred ultimately to the Board for formal action. The Executive Committee shall have only the following responsibilities hereby delegated by the Board at large:

1. To meet with the Town Planner and Community Development Director at an administrative level to provide policy guidance in formulating the Planning Department's work program for the upcoming fiscal year.
2. To meet with the Town Planner and Community Development Director at an administrative level to provide policy guidance in formulating the Capital Improvements Program for the upcoming fiscal year.
3. To review any complaints received as to Board, Staff Review Committee, and technical review process. Such complaints should have a bearing on the Board's rules and regulations and not on personnel or administrative matters which are under the jurisdiction of the Town Manager.

III. MEMBERSHIP

- A. The Board shall consist of seven (7) regular members and up to five (5) alternate members.
- B. The regular membership shall include one Selectman to serve as the ex-officio member with the power to vote.
- C. Whenever a regular member of the Board is absent or whenever a regular member disqualifies himself, the chairman shall designate an alternate, if one is present, to act in the absent member's place.
- D. All members shall be appointed by the Board of Selectmen for 3 year terms.
- E. Each newly appointed member, including re-appointed members, shall be sworn in and take an oath of office as required by RSA 42:1.
- F. Selection, qualification, term, removal of members and the filling of vacancies shall

conform to RSA 673.

IV. MEETINGS

- A. Regular meetings shall be held at least monthly.
- B. Regular meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7PM. Changes to the dates, time and place of the regular meeting schedule shall be determined by majority vote of the Board.
- C. Four (4) voting members (including alternates sitting in place of regular members) shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of official business. A motion, duly seconded, shall be carried by an affirmative vote of a majority of members present and sitting. Voting shall be by voice vote and shall be recorded in the minutes.
- D. Executive sessions shall be held only in accordance with RSA 91-A:3.
- E. The Board shall have the right to exercise attorney-client privilege and meet with Town Counsel in a private matter not governed by RSA 91-A:3.
- F. If any regular Board member is absent from a meeting or hearing, or disqualifies himself from sitting on a particular application, the Chairman shall designate one of the alternate members to sit in place of the absent or disqualified member. Such alternate shall have all the powers and duties of a regular member in regards to any matter under consideration on which the regular member is unable to act. The alternate may continue until the specific matter is completed in which case, the regular member would not vote on that matter.
- G. If any member finds it necessary to be disqualified from sitting on a particular case, as provided in RSA 673:14, they shall notify the Chairman as soon as possible so that an alternate may be requested to fill the place. The disqualification shall be announced by either the Chairman or the member before the discussion on the application begins. The member disqualified shall leave the Board table during all deliberations and the public hearing on the matter. If there is uncertainty relating to the disqualification of a Board member, the Board may vote on the question of whether a member should be disqualified. The vote shall take place prior to the commencement of any public hearing.
- H. All Board members shall make every reasonable attempt to familiarize themselves with all sites in anticipation of a scheduled public hearing. Any Board member may request a site inspection by the entire Board.
- I. Order of Business shall be as follows:
 - 1. Call to order and introductions by Chairman

2. Review and Approval of Minutes
 3. Application Submissions
 4. Public Hearings- continuation of a public hearing is scheduled first
 5. Pre-Application Reviews
 6. Review of Correspondence/Public Comment
 7. Town Planner's Report
 8. Adjourn and Plan Signatures
- J. If any member fails to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the Board and/or fails to attend at least seven (7) regular meetings in any one calendar year, said Board member shall be considered removable by the Board of Selectmen pursuant to the provisions of RSA 673:13. The Secretary or his designee may advise the Board of Selectmen of any member failing to attend the minimum number of meetings specified herein.

In the event a Board member can anticipate their absence at an upcoming meeting, they shall make every reasonable attempt to contact the Planning Department directly.

V. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

A. Applications

Applications for hearings before the Board shall be made on forms provided by the Board and shall be filed with the Community Development Department. Application forms shall be adopted and revised by a majority vote of the Board.

Notice shall be given as required in RSA 676:4, I(d) 10 days before a completed application is submitted to the Board.

Completed applications shall be accepted by a majority vote of the Board and shall be scheduled for consideration within 30 days of acceptance. The Board shall reject all applications not properly completed. The Board grants the Town Planner administrative discretion to refuse applications missing information required per the application checklist.

In the event that a question arises as to whether site plan approval is required for a certain project, the Town Planner shall have the authority to determine the necessity of a site plan application. The decision may be appealed to the Board within 30 days of the decision by either the applicant or by an aggrieved party.

B. Agenda

The Board agenda is determined by the Town Planner on behalf of the Board.

The filing of an application with the Planning Department does not guarantee that the application will be placed on a specific agenda.

Factors affecting the scheduling of applications for submission and/or public hearing may include, but is not necessarily limited to, completeness of the application, back log of new applications, etc.

C. Notice Requirements

Notice to the public, abutters and the applicant shall be given as required in RSA 676:4, 1(d).

Personal Notification to the applicant and abutters shall be made by certified mail.

Public Notice of application submissions and/or public hearings shall be given in the Meredith News and/or Evening Citizen and by posting at the Meredith Town Hall, Town Hall Annex and the Meredith Post Office.

D. Public Hearings

Prior to opening the Public Hearing, the Chairman shall read into the record the summary of the application as it appears on the agenda. The Town Planner reports on the completeness of the application and the Board shall vote on acceptance of the application(s).

The Chairman shall begin the Public Hearing with the applicant or authorized agent(s) to present the proposal. Board members may ask the presenter questions.

The Town Planner shall be called to present the staff summary. Board members may ask the Town Planner questions.

The Chairman shall ask if there are comments from the public including, abutters, representatives of committees, or other interested parties.

Any applicant, abutter or person with a direct interest in the matter may testify in person or in writing. Written testimony shall be recognized in the minutes. Other persons may testify as permitted by the Board at each hearing.

Each person who speaks shall be required to state their name, address and indicate whether they are an abutter, a party to the matter, or an agent or counsel.

Any party wishing to speak or to ask a question of another party must go through the Chairman.

The Chairman shall indicate whether the hearing is closed or continued pending the submission of additional material or information or the correction of noted deficiencies. In the case of a continuance, additional notice may not be required if the date, time and place of the continuation is made known at the time of adjournment. However, the Board reserves the right to require re-notification of abutters. Any such re-notification shall be at the expense of the applicant.

E. Decisions

1. The Board shall render a written decision within 90 days of the date of submission of a completed application, subject to extension or waiver as provided in RSA 676:4.
2. The Board shall act to approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove.
3. Notice of decision will be made available for public inspection at the Planning Office, Municipal Building, Main Street, Meredith, within 5 business days after the decision is made, as required in RSA 676:3. If the application is disapproved, the Board shall provide the applicant with written reason. If the application is approved or conditionally approved, a Notice of Decision shall be provided to the applicant stating any conditions precedent or subsequent to final approval.

F. Joint Meetings

1. The Board may hold joint meetings and hearings with other "land use boards." Each Board shall have discretion whether or not to hold such joint meeting or hearing as provided for in RSA 676:2.
2. Joint business meetings with another local land use board may be held at any time when called jointly by the chairmen of the two boards.
3. A joint public hearing must be a formal public hearing when the subject matter of the hearing is within the responsibilities of the boards convened.
4. The Board chair shall chair all joint meetings and public hearings when the subject matter involves the Planning Board.
5. The rules of procedure for joint meetings and hearings, the subject matter of which involves the Board, shall be the same as these rules of procedure except that the order of business shall be as follows:
 - a. Call to order by Chairman of the Board

- b. Introduction of members of both Boards by Chairman
 - c. Explanation of reason for joint meeting/hearing by Chairman
 - d. In the case of a public hearing relative to a requested permit or an application for a plat approval, or both, the applicant shall be called to present his proposal.
 - e. Adjournment
6. Each Board involved in a joint public hearing makes its own decision, based on its criteria for the particular matter.

VI. RECORDS

- A. The records of the Board shall be kept by the Planning Board Clerk and shall be made available for public inspection at the Planning Office as required by RSA 676:3, II.
- B. Minutes of the meetings including the names of Board members, persons appearing before the Board and a brief description of the subject matter shall be open to public inspection within 5 business days after the public meeting as required in RSA 91-A:2 II.

VII. AMENDMENT OF RULES OF PROCEDURE

- A. A two-thirds majority of the full Board is needed for an amendment.
- B. The amendments shall be presented at a regular monthly meeting prior to the regular meeting at which it is to be considered. In both instances, proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure shall appear as an item on the posted agenda.
- C. The Meredith Planning Board Rules of Procedure, as amended, shall be placed on file with the Town Clerk for public inspection.