

# Memorandum

**TO:** Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Amy Brooks, AICP | Executive Director  
**DATE:** April 9, 2024  
**SUBJECT:** Amendments to the Bylaws of the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission  
**FILE:** 4-B-24-OB (Agenda # 36)

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**The Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission Executive Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed minor amendments to the Bylaws at their April 9, 2024 meeting.**

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Knoxville-Knox County Planning staff recommend approval of the proposed minor amendments to the Bylaws of the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**

Proposed amendments to the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission Bylaws are summarized below.

- 1 Section 8. Order of Meeting:** Removed the word “printed” from this section, as the agenda now gets posted online and may be digital.
- 2 Section 10. Commission Action, Postponement:**
  - a. Clarified that item D references automatic postponements as described in section 10.A.
  - b. Removed “or via email”
- 3 Section 10. Commission Action, Withdrawal:** Removed the S from Withdrawal header.
- 4 Section 10. Tabling:** Removed “or emailed”.
- 5 Section 10. Commission Action, Applications Requiring Legislative Action:**
  - a. Provided list of applications requiring legislative approval.
  - b. Removed “hearing the appeal” from Subsection C since more than just appeals also go to the legislative bodies.
- 6 Section 9. Election of Officers:** Elected officers shall be eligible to serve for up to three consecutive terms, with additional eligibility after a minimum one-term break in service.
- 7 Section 10. Commission Action, Applications Not Requiring Legislative Action:** Added language clarifying that the Sector Plans are a component of the general plan.
- 8 Article V. Executive Committee:** Corrected spelling error of coterminous.
- 9 Article VI – Executive Director:** Removed reporting on the fiscal status of Planning.
- 10 Article VII. Conflict of Interest**
  - a. Changed “proposal” to “request”
  - b. Added language that commissioners with a conflict of interest shall disclose the conflict during the meeting so it is on record.
  - c. Deleted Subsection B (describes relation of request to the subject property of an application) and combined it with Subsection A.

RESTATED

**BYLAWS OF THE KNOXVILLE-KNOX  
COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

AS AMENDED THROUGH APRIL 11, 2024



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# **ARTICLE I – NAME AND PURPOSE**

The name of this regional planning commission is The Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission (“the Commission”). The Commission provides all the services and benefits of a regional planning commission to the City of Knoxville and to Knox County, Tennessee, (excepting only the Town of Farragut) in accord with the provisions and authorities set forth in Title 13, Chapter 3 of *the Tennessee Code Annotated*.

# **ARTICLE II – FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the Planning Commission shall begin on July 1 and shall end on June 30.

# **ARTICLE III – MEETINGS**

## **SECTION 1. REGULAR MEETINGS**

All proposals or applications requiring Commission action shall be considered in a public hearing that invites public comment.

Regular meetings of the Commission shall be held on the second Thursday of each month at 1:30 p.m. in the Main Assembly Room of the City-County Building in Knoxville, Tennessee. When conflicts arise, such as holidays or inclement weather, the regular meeting shall be held at such other time and place as may be designated by the Commission Chair, after appropriate notice.

## **SECTION 2. ANNUAL MEETINGS**

An annual meeting of the Commission shall be held on the regular June Commission meeting date or such other date as specified by the Commission Chair, with the specific date, hour, and location to be designated by the Commission Chair. Written notice of the date, hour, and location shall be given by the Executive Director of the Commission to each member of the Commission not less than five (5) business days prior to the meeting date.

The following business shall be conducted at the annual meeting:

- A. The Executive Director shall present a report on activities of Knoxville-Knox County Planning (“Staff”) for the previous year and a statement of the financial status of the Commission.
- B. The Commission shall elect officers for the year beginning July 1.

C. The Commission may conduct such other business as may properly come before the Commission.

### **SECTION 3. SPECIAL MEETINGS**

Special meetings of the Commission may be called by the Commission Chair or by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Commission (not less than eight (8) votes). Written notice of any special meeting, stating the date, hour, location, and purpose of the meeting shall be given to each member of the Commission not less than five (5) business days prior to the meeting date.

A member of the Commission, either before or after any special meeting, may waive notice of the meeting, and such waiver shall be deemed the equivalent of giving notice. Attendance at a special meeting by a member of the Commission shall constitute a waiver of notice of the special meeting, unless that member attends for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of business on the grounds that the meeting was not lawfully convened.

### **SECTION 4. OPEN MEETINGS LAW**

All meetings of the Planning Commission convened in order to make a decision or to deliberate toward a decision on any matter shall be an "open meeting," in accordance with the provisions set forth in Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-44-101. et seq.

### **SECTION 5. PROXIES**

Members of the Planning Commission shall not be permitted to vote by proxy.

### **SECTION 6. QUORUM**

The presence of eight (8) members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum at a duly convened meeting.

### **SECTION 7. ADJOURNMENT**

Any meeting of the Commission may be adjourned. Notice of the adjourned meeting or of the business to be transacted, other than an announcement at the meeting adjourned, shall not be necessary. Any business which could have been transacted at the meeting originally called may be transacted at the adjourned meeting.

## **SECTION 8. ORDER OF MEETING**

The monthly public meeting of the Commission shall be conducted in the order of the meeting agenda, which shall be prepared in advance, and approved by the Commission at the public meeting. Amendments to the order in which matters appear on the agenda may be permitted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Commission members present at the meeting.

## **SECTION 9. DISCUSSION AND DEBATE**

- A. Commissioners shall consider the views of the applicant, other interested parties, staff reports, and the standards set forth in the Knoxville Zoning Ordinance, the Knox County Zoning Ordinance, and/or the Knoxville-Knox County Subdivision Regulations, as is appropriate, and all applicable plans and formal policy statements.
  
- B. Each matter on the agenda will be considered in the following order:
  - 1** Staff recommendations.
  - 2** Applicant comments. Provided, however, any applicant has the option to defer comments until hearing first any comments of opposition.
  - 3** Opponents' comments.
  - 4** Rebuttals.
  - 5** Discussion among Commissioners.
  - 6** Motion.
  - 7** Second.
  - 8** Discussion among Commissioners.
  - 9** Vote.
  
- C. Public participation in the discussion and debate shall be conducted in conformity with the following:
  - 1** Those in favor of an application will be allowed a total of five (5) minutes to address the Commission. The Commission Chair may grant additional time to those speaking in favor of an item, in the absence of objection by a majority of Commissioners present.



- 2 Those in opposition to an application will be allowed a total of five (5) minutes to address the Commission. The Commission Chair may grant additional time to those speaking in opposition to an item, in the absence of objection by a majority of Commissioners present.
- 3 Any group wishing to speak will be encouraged to select a spokesperson.

## **SECTION 10. COMMISSION ACTION**

### **POSTPONEMENT**

Commission may postpone action on any application or other matter properly on its agenda, in accord with the following:

- A. Any matter appearing on Commission's agenda for the first time shall, upon the prior request of the applicant, be automatically postponed until the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting without debate or the necessity of a vote or other formal action by Commissioners. The applicant's request to postpone in such instance must be submitted to Staff in writing and received by Staff not later than noon on the Thursday immediately prior to the Commission meeting date at which the application is scheduled for hearing. Any request for postponement failing to meet the deadline will require Commission action.
- B. Any matter appearing on the Commission's agenda may be postponed to a subsequent meeting upon a majority vote of the Commission. Provided, however, any application for Final Plat approval may not be postponed without the concurrence and consent of the applicant.
- C. Every motion to postpone shall include the date of the Commission meeting at which the matter will be heard.
- D. Any matter postponed in accord with this Section may not be subject to a motion for reconsideration.

### **DENIAL**

If the Commission votes to deny any application for Rezoning, Use on Review, Special Use, or Plan Amendment, a new application for the same proposal shall not be accepted by Staff for a period of one (1) year from the date of the denial.

If, on appeal from Commission action, either the City Council or the County Commission denies an application for Rezoning, Use on Review, Special Use, or Plan Amendment, a new application for the same proposal shall not be accepted for a period of one (1) year from the date of the denial.

For purposes of Subsection 10.B, “same proposal” is defined as the same zone for Rezoning, or the same land use classification for a Plan Amendment, or substantially the same use or design for a Use on Review, a Special Use, or a One-Year Plan classification.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

Commission may permit or approve withdrawal of any application in accord with the following:

- A. Prior to Public Notice – Automatic withdrawal of an application shall be permitted upon written request by the applicant, provided that neither public notice of the application has been published, nor signs have been posted. In such instance, the application shall not be placed on the Commission’s agenda, and the applicant’s fee shall be subject to the Planning’s refund policy. A new application for the same proposal may be filed thereafter without restriction.
- B. After Public Notice – After public notice of an application has been published, the relief available under the subsection above is not available, and the application shall be placed on the Commission’s agenda.
- C. Withdrawal without Commission Action – If Planning receives a written request from an applicant for withdrawal of an application not later than noon on the Thursday the week prior to the Commission date at which the application is scheduled for hearing, the application will be withdrawn from consideration by announcement at the Commission meeting, without debate or the necessity for a vote or other formal action. Any request for withdrawal received after this deadline will require Commission action.
- D. Withdrawal by Commission Action – Upon the request of an applicant, any application may be withdrawn at the Commission meeting by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.
- E. Any withdrawal of an application placed upon Commission’s agenda is deemed a denial of that application. A new application for the same proposal shall not be accepted for a period of one (1) year from the date of the withdrawal.

## **TABLING**

- A. Review - All tabled applications shall be listed on each month's agenda for the purposes of review only.
- B. Twelve Month Limit - All tabled matters must be removed from the table and acted on by the Commission within twelve (12) months after being placed on the table. If a tabled matter has not been acted on by the Commission within such twelve (12) month period, Staff will place the application on the Commission's agenda for the next regularly scheduled monthly meeting for consideration of withdrawal only. Public notice of the application by publication, posting, or otherwise, shall not be required. No application will be permitted to remain on the table longer than twelve (12) months.
- C. Removal from the Table – All applications may be removed from the table upon written request by the applicant to Planning, and upon an affirmative vote by Commission. If the applicant requests removal from the table for purposes of withdrawal, Commission may vote on the withdrawal request at the same meeting at which the application is removed from the table. In all other instances, any application removal from the table will be placed on the Commission's agenda for the next regularly scheduled monthly meeting, and public notice of the untabled application will be made in accord with the Administrative Rules and Procedures, and general law.

## **APPLICATIONS REQUIRING LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

Rezoning, plan amendment, planned development, and street name change applications require legislative approval, and action by the Commission on such applications constitutes a recommendation to the appropriate legislative bodies.

Subsequent to the Commission acting on an application requiring legislative action, Planning shall:

- A. Forward copies of the Commission's recommendations, together with related reports, letters, and maps, to the appropriate City or County agency responsible for preparation of the legislative agendas.
- B. Advise the applicant in writing of the Commission's action on the application, and the date, time, and location the application will be considered in public hearing by the legislative body.

- C. Arrange for publication of required public notice of the hearing before the legislative body.

## **APPLICATIONS NOT REQUIRING LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

- A. Uses on Review, Special Uses, Development Plans, and Similar Use Determinations - Upon Commission approval of any Use on Review, Special Use, Development Plan, or Similar Use Determination, application, Planning shall notify:
  - 1 The appropriate building official(s) of the approval and any conditions imposed by the approval.
  - 2 The applicant of the approval, any conditions imposed on the approval, and the effective date.
  
- B. Other Matters Not Requiring Legislative Action – Commission approval or amendments to the General Plan,, Capital Improvements Program, Recreation and Greenway Plan, Major Road Plan, or similar comprehensive plans, do not require legislative adoption for validation, but shall be submitted to the appropriate legislative body for adoption, review, or other action. In such instances, Planning shall:
  - 1 Arrange for publication of the required public notice of the hearing before the legislative body
  - 2 Forward copies of Commission approval and recommendation, together with related reports, documents, and maps, to the appropriate City or County agency responsible for preparation of the legislative agendas.

## **SECTION 11. VOTING**

All matters to be voted on by the Commission shall be put in the form of a motion, duly seconded. The Commission Chair shall conduct the voting by asking those in favor to signify by saying "Yes," and those opposed to signify by saying "No." The Commission Chair shall inform the recording secretary of the number of "Yes" votes and the number of "No" votes. If there is any question about the results of the vote, or upon the request of any member of the Commission, a roll call vote shall be taken. Any vote to "Pass" shall be deemed and recorded as a "No" vote. Except as is provided otherwise in these Bylaws, a majority of the votes cast shall be sufficient for the adoption of any motion that is in order. If a motion fails adoption by a majority vote, another motion upon which there is an affirmative vote shall be necessary for resolution of the issue.

Any motion considered by the Planning Commission which fails adoption may be reconsidered at any time prior to adjournment, upon a motion, duly seconded, and without the necessity of a precedent Motion to Reconsider.

## **SECTION 12. MINUTES**

A record, or minutes, of the proceedings of all meetings shall be kept by a recording secretary, appointed by the Executive Director.

The minutes shall reflect:

- A. Every motion upon which a vote is taken by the Planning Commission.
- B. The names of the members of the Planning Commission making and seconding any such motion.
- C. The number of "Yes" votes and "No" votes on each motion.
- D. A record of any roll call vote taken.
- E. The name of any member of the Planning Commission that abstains from the discussion and vote on any matter.

When published, the minutes shall be signed by both the Chair and the Executive Director.

## **ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS**

### **SECTION 1. OFFICERS**

Officers of the Planning Commission shall consist of a Chair and a Vice-Chair, chosen by the Planning Commission at the annual meeting of the Commission, and a Secretary, who is the Executive Director of Planning.

### **SECTION 2. VACANCIES**

When a vacancy occurs in the office of Chair or Vice-Chair, the Planning Commission shall elect a successor. The successor shall serve the remainder of the term for that office.

### **SECTION 3. REMOVAL**

An officer may be removed by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Planning Commission (not less than eight (8) votes) when, in its judgment, the best interests of the Planning Commission will be served by the removal.

### **SECTION 4. COMMISSION CHAIR**

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Planning Commission and shall perform such duties as the Planning Commission shall from time to time prescribe. The Commission Chair may participate in all discussion and shall be entitled to vote as any other member of the Planning Commission.

### **SECTION 5. VICE-CHAIR**

In the absence of the Commission Chair, the Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair.

### **SECTION 6. SECRETARY**

The Executive Director, or their designee, shall serve as Secretary of the Planning Commission, and shall be responsible for maintaining a full record of all proceedings of the Planning Commission. The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings of the Planning Commission, and shall perform such other duties as the Planning Commission may direct.

### **SECTION 7. DELEGATION OF DUTIES**

The power and duties of any officer may be delegated to any member of the Planning Commission by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Planning Commission (not less than eight (8) votes) whenever, in its judgment, the best interests of the Planning Commission will be served by the delegation.

### **SECTION 8. NOMINATION OF OFFICERS**

During or before April of each year, the Chair shall appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of three (3) members of the Planning Commission, none of whom are incumbent officers. The Nominating Committee shall identify and present a slate of nominees for the offices of Chair and Vice-Chair at the regular Planning Commission meeting in May. In addition to the slate of nominees offered by the Nominating Committee, nominations for elected officers may be made from the floor.

## **SECTION 9. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The Chair and the Vice-Chair shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Planning Commission in June. All elected officers of the Planning Commission shall serve a term of one (1) year beginning July 1, or until a successor has been elected. Elected officers shall be eligible to serve for up to three consecutive terms, with additional eligibility after a minimum one-term break in service.

## **ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

In July, the Chair shall appoint an Executive Committee, consisting of the elected officers and three (3) other members of the Planning Commission. The appointment shall be for one (1) year, coterminous with the Chair's term, or until a successor committee is appointed. Members of the Executive Committee may be reappointed.

The duties of the Executive Committee are:

- A. To review and to recommend the annual budget and work program, and any amendments thereto, to the Planning Commission for adoption. Any request for a study, research program, or planning project made by the City or County governments shall be adopted by the Executive Committee and incorporated into the work program prior to any Staff work on the request.
- B. To review and to resolve Planning employee grievances in accordance with the provisions of the adopted Employee Handbook.
- C. To provide consultation and to advise on such matters as the Executive Director shall bring before the Committee.
- D. Other duties as assigned by the full Commission and/or the Mayors of Knox County and the City of Knoxville.

A record, or minutes, of all Executive Committee meetings shall be kept by a recording secretary, appointed by the Executive Director, which, when published, shall be signed by the Chair.

## ARTICLE VI – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### SECTION 1. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director is the Secretary of and chief advisor to the Commission. The Executive Director shall provide monthly reports on Planning activities of Planning.



## ARTICLE VII – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Any member of the Planning Commission having a conflict of interest regarding an application before the Commission shall advise the Chair of such conflict prior to the meeting at which the request is scheduled to be heard and shall disclose this conflict during the meeting so it appears on the record. The Commissioner shall abstain from all discussion and voting on the application and will not be considered present for purposes of establishing a quorum.

A conflict of interest shall exist under the following conditions:

- A. When a member of the Planning Commission or any member of their immediate family has a financial interest in property that is the subject of, contiguous to, or closely associated with, property that is the subject of an application being considered by the Planning Commission.
- B. When a member of the Planning Commission or any member of their immediate family has a financial interest in a company or other entity that is seeking consideration of a proposal by the Planning Commission or is actively working for or against the proposal that is before the Planning Commission.
- C. When a member of the Planning Commission or any member of their immediate family may receive some private benefit, either direct or indirect, from the approval or the disapproval of a proposal being considered by the Planning Commission.
- D. When a member of the Planning Commission determines in their own mind that there are compelling reasons that will prohibit them from acting in the best interest of the community, or that their participation will create the impression of impropriety in the eyes of the general public.

## ARTICLE VIII – ADMINISTRATIVE RULES AND PROCEDURES

**The Planning Commission shall adopt and maintain Administrative Rules and Procedures to govern the conduct of business before the Commission, and by the**



**Executive Director and Planning Staff. The Administrative Rules and Procedures may be adopted, amended, repealed, or suspended by the affirmative vote of not less than a majority of the entire membership of the Commission (not less than eight (8) votes).****ARTICLE IX – RULES OF ORDER**

When a parliamentary matter not covered by the Bylaws arises, Simplified Rules of Order may be applied at the discretion of the Commission Chair.

**ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS**

The Bylaws may be amended, repealed, or suspended by the affirmative vote of not less than a majority of the entire membership of the Planning Commission (not less than eight (8) votes). Provided, no amendment or repeal shall be adopted until five (5) days’ notice of the proposal has been provided to all members of the Planning Commission.