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TOWN OF ORANGE  
RECORDS & CLERK'S OFFICE

**ORANGE CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**BY-LAWS**

**Revised February 2019**

**Authorization**

The Conservation Commission of the Town of Orange exercises the powers set forth in Chapter 97, Section 7-13 1a for the Connecticut General Statutes. Sec. .13. A Conservation Commission was founded in Orange on May 28, 1963. The formation of which is as described in Article VI Section 6.60, and Section 6.61. Conservation Commission of the Charter of the Town of Orange.

**Meetings**

The Commission shall hold regular meetings, at least once a month, open to the public. The agenda for each of the regular meetings shall be posted in the Town Clerk's Office.

The commission may hold special meetings as the need arises. Such meetings shall be called by the Chairman. These meetings shall be open to the public. The town clerk shall be notified of them 24 hours in advance.

**OFFICERS AND DUTIES**

**Section 1**

There shall be three officers of the commission. A Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary. Their terms of office shall be one (1) year, or until a successor has been elected. They shall be elected by the members of the commission at the regular July meeting. The members may fill any vacancy in the position of any of the officers.

**Section 2**

The Chairman shall have the duties normally conferred by parliamentary usage on said officer, and shall have the privilege of voting and discussing all matters before the Commission.

### **Section 3**

The Vice Chairman shall act for the Chairman in his absence or if he/she steps aside and when so acting, shall have the same powers, duties and privileges as the Chairman.

### **Section 4**

The Secretary shall take minutes of the meetings and then provide the Town Clerk with copy of minutes. In the absence of the Secretary, the Chairman shall appoint an Acting Secretary.

All meetings will be run by the chairman in an informal roundtable fashion unless the Commission decides to follow parliamentary procedures.

While meetings are open to the public they are not public hearings. The agenda shall contain a Public comment section where the public shall have the right to address the Commission on matters not otherwise on the agenda. Requests to speak on items on the agenda shall be made to the Chairman. Decisions on such requests shall be made by the Chairman unless objection is raised by any member, in which case, a vote of the Commission shall decide.

At a meeting the Commission may vote to go into Executive Session only for those purposes identified in the Freedom of Information Act. The minutes must record the times at which an Executive Session begins and ends.

### **Procedures**

All activities of the Commission shall be in accord with the applicable sections of the Connecticut General Statutes, as revised.

### **Members**

The Commission is comprised of seven regular members.

All board members are expected to attend every regular meeting of the Commission. Non-attendance at three consecutive meetings without a valid reason given to the Chairman shall be considered a resignation.

A quorum consists of four voting members. Neither proxies nor telephone votes shall be accepted.

All votes of the Commission shall be decided by simple majority, except as otherwise required by statute. There will be no secret ballots. In the event of a tie vote, the question shall be considered rejected.

In the event of a conflict of interest, either real or apparent, members affected shall recuse themselves from participation in decisions of the Commission.

### **Duties of Officers**

The Chairman shall set the dates of Commission meetings and shall notify the Town clerk of the dates of all regular and special meetings. The Chairman shall establish the agenda for each meeting. The Chairman shall arrange that a record of all meetings be made available to the Town Clerk.

The chairman shall sign all plans of subdivision approved by the Commission.

The Chairman shall assign members and/or agents of the Commission, to investigate areas of concern, to make site inspections, to sign administrative documents of behalf of the Commission, and to carry out other duties as are necessary for efficient operation of the Commission.

In the Absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman shall have the powers of the Chairman.

### **Committees**

Committees shall be established by vote of the members of the Commission for any purpose deemed necessary for the fulfillment of the purposes of the Commission. Ad hoc committees to investigate specific projects maybe established and appointed by the Chairperson. Each Committee shall report to the Commission at each regular meeting or at such other times as the Commission may require. The standing committee shall be the Land Acquisition Committee.

### **Acceptance of Gifts**

Although the receipt of gifts by the Commission is Authorized by RSA 36-A: 4, the Commission shall vote whether to accept any gift at a Regular meeting. The Commission may refuse a gift for any reason, and shall refuse any gift which in the Commission's judgment is discriminatory or self-serving in any way that might be detrimental to the interests of the town.

### **Public Hearings**

Public Hearings held by the commission shall be chaired by the Chairman or any member designated by the Chairman.

All who have an interest in the matter being heard shall have the right to speak at Public Hearings of the commission. They shall speak in rotation in the order in which their request to speak has been recorded in date and time order. The chairman shall have the power to rule statements or questions out of order if they are beyond the scope of the Hearing or if they require legal opinions which should be referred to legal counsel.

At Public Hearings written statements may be accepted from the public in lieu of verbal statements. Such written statements shall be read into the record, and filed with the minutes of the hearing.

A record of Public Hearings shall be filed in the records of the Commission.

### **Recommendation on the Acquisition of Land**

As an official advisory body for the Town, the Commission will make formal recommendations on the acquisition of open space land. As such, the Commission will maintain information on remaining tracts of undeveloped land and work to develop constructive working relationships with landowners about their future management and ownership plans.

### **Annual Report**

The Commission shall prepare an Annual Report for inclusion in the Annual Town Report. Such report shall include major actions taken by the Commission and the plans for the following years.

### **Budget**

The Commission may present justified funding requests through Finance Director for inclusion in the Departments budget.

### **Amendments**

These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the commission. Such amendments shall be effective immediately after being passed at two consecutive meetings.