

**RULES AND REGULATIONS
OF THE
BALTIMORE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

(Amended and approved on July 27, 2017)

Preamble

In addition to the power and authority granted by law and pursuant to the mandate of Article VII, Section 72(a) of the [Charter of Baltimore City](#), these rules are hereby adopted.

ARTICLE I – MEETINGS

Section 1 – General

(a) *Regular meetings.*

Regular meetings of the Commission shall be held in accordance with a schedule presented annually by the Director of Planning to the Commission and duly adopted by the Commission. Meetings will normally begin at 1:30 p.m., in the Commission Board Room, or at such other time and location as may be designated by the President (also known as the Chairperson).

(b) *Special meetings.*

A special meeting of the Planning Commission will be called by the Chairperson at the written request of three Commission members.

(c) *Cancellation of meetings.*

The Chairperson may cancel any meeting with the concurrence of a majority of Commission members, and by posting cancellation notice on the [Department of Planning’s webpage](#) not less than 48 hours prior to the scheduled start of the meeting.

Section 2 – Notice of meetings

(a) *Publication of meetings.*

Notice of regular and special meetings shall be published on the [Department of Planning’s webpage](#) and published at the [Department of Legislative Reference](#) at least ten days before the scheduled start of the meeting.

(b) *Distribution to Commissioners.*

A schedule of regular meetings shall be distributed to the Commission members following the annual adoption of the schedule, after changes to the annual schedule are made, and to new Commissioners following their appointment to the Planning Commission.

Section 3 – Open Meetings

All regular and special Commission meetings shall be open to the general public. In addition to the public notice requirements of Section 2 above, the Director of Planning shall comply with the requirements of the [Maryland Open Meetings Act](#).

Section 4 – Working sessions

The regular meetings or special meetings of the Commission may be preceded by a Working Session that shall be open to the general public, at which the Commission may discuss matters of general interest, hear staff presentations on departmental activities, or hear presentations by citizens or representatives of other governmental agencies, by invitation of the Chairperson on matters of general interest and concern to the Commission.

Section 5 – Rules of Order

Meetings shall be conducted according to Robert’s Rules of Order Revised, unless a different procedure is adopted by a majority of the Commissioners.

Section 6 – Public Comments

Any citizen or party in attendance wishing to make statements regarding matters under consideration by the Commission may do so under procedures established by the Chairperson at the beginning of the meeting, or at the beginning of a specific agenda item.

Section 7 – Agenda

(a) *Regular meeting agenda.*

The Director of Planning is responsible for establishing the Planning Commission agendas for each regular meeting.

(b) *Special meeting agenda.*

For special meetings called at the request of three or more Commissioners, the agenda will be proposed for consideration by those members.

(c) *Consent Agenda.*

Matters requiring action by the Commission may be placed on a consent agenda within either a regular meeting or special meeting agenda. Items scheduled for the consent agenda may include items previously reviewed by the Commission or that are consistent with the previous actions by the Commission, Minor Subdivision Final Plans, and any other items designated by the Director of Planning. Unless there is an objection from a Commissioner, consent agenda items shall be acted upon in accordance with the staff recommendation.

Section 8 – Reports and Minutes

Staff reports and meeting minutes are posted to the [Department of Planning’s webpage](#) within a reasonable amount of time after the meeting.

Section 9 – Posted Notice

(a) *When required.*

(1) *Site-specific actions.*

Applicants will be required to post public notice of Planning Commission meetings in a conspicuous location for regular agenda items in accordance with the requirements of [Article 32 – Zoning](#), §5-604 {“Planning Commission consideration of site-specific projects”}.

(2) *Non-site-specific actions.*

Posting for non-site specific items may be requested by staff where there is the potential for significant impact to surrounding property owners and residents, or when required by other regulation or law.

(3) *Consent agenda items.*

Posting for consent agenda items will not normally be required, unless there is the potential for significant impact to surrounding property owners and residents or when required by other regulation or law.

(b) *Duration of posting.*

The property will be posted continuously for a minimum of ten calendar days preceding the meeting, in accordance with the requirements of [Article 32 – Zoning](#), §5-604 {“Planning Commission consideration of site-specific projects”}, and as directed by Department of Planning staff.

(c) *Posting template.*

The sign providing posted notice will be made using a [common style of template](#) that will be provided to the applicants by Department of Planning staff.

(d) *Evidence of posting.*

Evidence of posting will be submitted to Department of Planning staff as soon as practicable after posting, normally in the form of digital photographs showing both the placement and context of the posting on the property.

Section 10 – Consideration for the Postponement of Action on Agenda Items

The Commission reserves the right to postpone consideration of a matter if the applicant or a representative of the applicant is not present, and/or additional persons or information are required to reach a fair and equitable decision.

ARTICLE II – COMMITTEES
AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 – Commission Committees

The Commission may establish committees to investigate and to report back to the whole Commission on such matters as the Commission may determine. The composition and chairperson of such committees shall be designated by the Commission Chairperson.

Section 2 – Chairperson

The Chairperson may designate a Vice Chairperson to act as temporary Chairperson at meetings where the appointed Chairperson will be absent, or for individual agenda items where the Chairperson must recuse. In the event that the designated Vice Chairperson is also absent, or must recuse, the Chairperson may appoint another Commissioner to act as temporary Chairperson.

Section 3 – Executive Secretary

The Director of Planning shall be the Executive Secretary to the Commission. The Executive Secretary shall maintain the records and minutes of all meetings of the Commission as required by Section 72(e) of Article VII of the [Charter of Baltimore City](#). Among other matters, such records and minutes shall specifically reflect attendance by Commissioners and the action taken on all matters before the Commission. A copy of the meeting minutes shall be filed with the Department of Legislative Reference. In the absence of the Director of Planning, an Assistant Director or other designee shall act as temporary Executive Secretary for the Commission.

The Director is responsible for delivering Commission reports to the City Council or others in a timely manner. The Director may report to the Council a preliminary staff recommendation prior to a Commission review if requested by the Council.

ARTICLE III – QUORUM AND VOTING

Section 1 – Quorum

A majority of five members shall constitute a quorum of the Commission.

Section 2 – Voting Rules

For matters concerning zoning changes, a 2/3 vote of the membership, or six persons, in the affirmative shall be required to carry the motion (*cf.* [Charter, Art. VII, Sec. 72\(l\)](#)). For all other matters, a simple majority of the membership voting in the affirmative shall be required to carry the motion.

Section 3 – Motions

Motions shall be restated by the Chairperson before a vote is taken. The names of the Commissioners making the motion and seconding the motion shall also be restated and recorded in the minutes.

ARTICLE IV – ATTENDANCE

All Commission members are expected to attend Commission meetings. If a Commissioner has three unexcused absences within one year, the Chairperson may communicate to the Mayor a recommendation to have the Commissioner replaced. In the case of the City Council representative, the President of the City Council shall be notified. (*cf.* [City Code Art. 1, Sec. 6-2](#))

ARTICLE V – AMENDMENTS OR SUSPENSION OF RULES

Section 1

These rules may be amended by a majority vote of the entire Commission (i.e. five members).

Section 2

These rules may be suspended by a majority vote of the entire Commission (i.e. five members).