

Northfield Township
Planning Commission By-Laws

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STATEMENT OF BY-LAWS

Northfield Township Planning Commission

ARTICLE I - PREAMBLE

SECTION 1.1 - BASIS:

Pursuant to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act 33 of 2008 and the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act 110 of 2006, as amended. The Northfield Township Board created the Northfield Township Planning Commission by resolution with the power to make, adopt, extend, add to, or otherwise amend, and to carry out plans for the unincorporated portions of Northfield Township.

SECTION 1.2 - TITLE:

The official title of this Commission shall be the "Northfield Township Planning Commission."

ARTICLE II - AREA

SECTION 2.1 - AREA:

The area served by the Northfield Township Planning Commission shall include all lands legally within the present or future boundaries of Northfield Township.

ARTICLE III - PURPOSES

SECTION 3.1 - PURPOSES:

The purposes of the Commission shall be to:

- A. Promote and carry out policy and physical planning actions regarding the preservation, protection, and appropriate use of the township's resources.
- B. Manage suitable development of the economic, social, physical, natural, and cultural resources of Northfield Township.

- C. Promote and protect public health, safety, and general welfare of the people residing in Northfield Township.
- D. Encourage use of township resources in accordance with their character and suitability.
- E. Prepare a master plan pursuant to Act 33 of the Public Acts of 2008, as amended, for the purpose of guiding the “planned and orderly” physical development of Northfield Township.
- F. Carry out research and responsibilities as directed by the Township Board.
- G. Promote cooperation between governmental units and private entities towards the fulfillment of these bylaws.
- H. Facilitate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, recreation, and other public improvements.
- I. Affect economies in the Township through the recommendation of expenditure of funds in order to implement plans prepared for sound and orderly development of the Township.
- J. Promote the adoption and execution of plans by the Township, School Districts, County, State, Federal, and other governments and agencies responsible for making or influencing public or other improvements in the Township.
- K. Encourage and assist public and private entities in improving the attractiveness of the Township.
- L. Preserve and protect fragile lands, natural features, water resources, and the environmental safety of Northfield Township.

ARTICLE IV - RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

SECTION 4.1 - ADOPTION OF A MASTER PLAN

The Planning Commission shall make and adopt a master plan pursuant to statute as a guide for the management of the unincorporated portions of the Township. The contents of the plan shall include maps, plats, charts and descriptions, explanations, and other related materials and shall show recommendations for the physical development of the Township.

SECTION 4.2 - THE CONTENTS OF THE PLAN MAY INCLUDE:

- A. A statement of community goals and policies.
- B. A land use plan and implementation program.
- C. Recommendations as to the general location, character, and extent of traffic ways, waterways, flood prevention works, and sewer and water systems, and public utilities and structures.
- D. Recommendations as to the redevelopment or rehabilitation of blighted districts.
- E. Recommendations for the removal, widening, narrowing, vacating, abandonment, changes, or use of extension of ways, grounds, open spaces, buildings, utilities, or other facilities.
- F. Recommendations for the protection of important natural features, resources, and fragile lands.
- G. Recommendations for implementing any of the Planning Commission's proposals.

SECTION 4.3 - REVIEW OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Planning Commission shall formally review the adopted Master Plan every five (5) years and shall take action by resolution to make amendments of the plan, in whole or in part, or may determine that no amendments are in order as a result of the review.

SECTION 4.4 - AMENDMENT OF MASTER PLAN

Any amendment to the Master Plan must include notice, publishing, or posting of text, and a public hearing, and must be adopted pursuant to statute.

SECTION 4.5 - PUBLIC WORKS REVIEW

The Commission may make recommendations of either approval or disapproval to the Township Board concerning large expansions of public works projects.

SECTION 4.6 - REVIEW PUBLIC DIRECTIVES

Review and make recommendations to The Township Board on those directives of federal, state, and local public agencies that affect the physical development of the community. Examples of activities with which directives may deal are highways, airports, public transit, urban renewal and housing, parks, public buildings and structures, commercial and industrial developments, utilities, and all other public facilities or services.

SECTION 4.7 - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

In lieu of the Township Board accepting responsibility for the preparation of a Capital Improvements Plan, the Planning Commission shall create a public works Capital Improvements Plan containing all projects identified in the master plan, including public needs, estimated cost, and proposed method of financing.

SECTION 4.8 - ZONING ORDINANCE

Prepare a zoning ordinance to be submitted for adoption and/or review to the Township Board, and make recommendations on all amendments or changes to be made in the zoning maps or the regulations of a zoning ordinance. It shall be the responsibility of the Planning Commission to review and make recommendations on special types of development permitted under the zoning ordinance.

SECTION 4.9 - SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Prepare subdivision (plat) regulations to be submitted for adoption by the Township Board; review, make recommendations, and participate in the approval or disapproval of all subdivision plats, street openings and other developments which involve expansion of the community's developed area.

SECTION 4.10 – DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Review, revise, recommend, approve, and/or deny plans and programs presented to the Planning Commission.

SECTION 4.11 - ANNUAL REPORT

By March 1 of each year, the Commission shall make an annual report of its activities to the Northfield Township Board concerning its operations and the status of planning activities, including recommendations regarding actions by the legislative body related to planning and development.

SECTION 4.12 - SPECIAL STUDIES

Initiate or make special studies and reports on all matters that may be referred by the Township Board, by an operating department federal or state agency, subject to the approval of the Township Board.

SECTION 4.13 - INQUIRIES

Make inquiries, investigations, and surveys of all the resources of the Township.

SECTION 4.14 - ASSEMBLE DATA

To assemble and analyze data and formulate plans for the proper conservation and uses of

all resources; including a determination of lands having various use potentials, and for services, facilities, and utilities required to equip such lands.

SECTION 4.15 - CONSULT

In the adoption of a Master Plan, the Planning Commission shall consult with representatives of the adjacent Townships, Washtenaw County, and the regional Planning Commission (SEMCOG).

On other issues of Township concern, the Commission may consult with adjacent communities.

SECTION 4.16 - ADOPT RULES

The Planning Commission shall adopt rules and regulations for the transaction of its business. The regulations may address but are not limited to such matters as forms and number of copies of material to be submitted to the Commission and requirements as to time such materials must be submitted.

Such regulations shall be adopted by resolution of the Commission and shall be published and readily available to all citizens having business before the Commission.

SECTION 4.17 - APPOINTMENT:

The Commission may appoint and authorize advisory committees whose members may consist of governmental officials and individuals whose experience, training, and interest in the Commission's work qualifies them to lend valuable assistance to the Commission. The Commission may also appoint various committees of citizens to collect information and prepare reports to the Commission on the various phases of the comprehensive planning program for which the Commission is primarily responsible.

SECTION 4.18 - TRAINING:

Encourage attendance at training sessions, conferences, or meetings for which appropriate funds have been approved by the Township Board as needed.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 5.1 - NUMBER:

The Northfield Township Planning Commission shall consist of 5, 7, or 9 members who shall be qualified electors of Northfield Township except that one member may be an individual who is not a qualified elector of the Township. Members shall be representative of important segments of the community, such as the economic, governmental, educational, and social development, as well as the entire geography of the Township to the extent practicable. One member of the Township Board shall be a member of the Planning Commission. One member of the Planning Commission shall be appointed to the Zoning

Board of Appeals.

SECTION 5.2 - APPOINTMENT:

All members of the Planning Commission shall be appointed by the Township Supervisor with the approval of the Township Board. The Township Board may remove a member of the planning commission for misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance in office upon written charges and after a public hearing.

SECTION 5.3 - TERM:

The term of each member shall be for three (3) years such that, as nearly as possible, the terms of 1/3 of all the planning commission members will expire each year. A commissioner may keep his or her seat past the end of the appointed term until replacement nominations have been accepted. The term of the member of the Township Board shall expire with his or her elected term.

SECTION 5.4 - SUCCESSION:

Each member shall serve until his/her term shall expire. Members may be re-appointed by the Township Supervisor with the approval of the Township Board. Vacancies resulting from resignation and/or removal shall be filled in the same manner and shall be appointed for the remainder of the term of the resigning member.

SECTION 5.5 - COMPENSATION

- A. Planning Commissioners may be compensated as provided by the Township Board.
- B. Planning Commissioners may be compensated for travel expenses incurred as travel to conferences and meetings.

SECTION 5.6 - COMMISSION EMPLOYEES

The Township Board may employ appropriate and other employees and/or contract for part-time or full-time service of individuals or firms to assist the Planning Commission in its responsibilities and duties.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

SECTION 6.1 - SELECTION:

The first meeting in January shall be considered the Planning Commission's organizational meeting, at which the Planning Commission shall elect from its membership a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and any other officers deemed necessary. All officers are eligible for re-election. The Township Supervisor shall not serve as Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

SECTION 6.2 - TERM:

The term of all officers shall be one year and each officer shall serve until re-elected or his/her successor shall have been elected.

SECTION 6.3 - ELECTION:

The chair, vice chair, and secretary shall be elected by a majority vote of the membership of the Commission present at the time of election.

ARTICLE VII - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 7.1 - CHAIRPERSON:

The Chairperson shall be the chief executive officer of the Commission and shall preside at all meetings of the Commission. The Chairperson shall appoint, with the approval of the Commission, all committees or advisory committees established and provided by the Commission and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees. The Chair shall have a vote on all resolutions as a commissioner. The Chair has no authority to sign contracts or legal documents authorized by the Commission, but shall refer such to the Township Board. The Chair shall also be responsible for such other duties as outlined herein.

SECTION 7.2 – VICE CHAIRPERSON:

In the event that the office of Chairperson becomes vacant by death, resignation, or otherwise, the Vice Chairperson shall serve as Chairperson until a new Chairperson is elected. A new Chairperson shall be elected by the Planning Commission at its next regular or special meeting. In the event of the absence of the Chairperson or inability to discharge the duties of that office, such duties shall, for the time being, devolve upon the Vice Chairperson.

SECTION 7.3 - SECRETARY:

The secretary shall serve as the liaison between the commission and the designated Northfield Township staff responsible for the execution of documents in the name of the commission and such other duties as the Commission may direct including but not limited to:

- A. Signing approved minutes.
- B. Submitting attendance records of Planning Commission meetings to Township Clerk.
- C. Reading, upon request, correspondence at Planning Commission meetings.

D. Calling and noticing special meetings.

E. Restating Planning Commission motions made prior to a vote, in the absence of an employed recording secretary.

In the event of the absence of both the chairperson and vice chairperson, such duties shall, for the time being, devolve upon the Secretary. In the event of the absence of the Secretary, the Chair shall appoint a deputy Secretary to perform such duties.

A recording secretary may be employed to record and prepare proposed meeting minutes. Compensation for the recording secretary shall be recommended by the Planning Commission and approved by the Township Board.

ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS

SECTION 8.1 - REGULAR MEETINGS:

The regular meetings of the Commission shall be held at 7 p.m. on the first and third Wednesday of each calendar month at the Northfield Township Office, excluding legal holidays.

A schedule of regular meetings for the forthcoming year will be approved during the December meeting. This schedule and time of meetings will be delivered to the Township Clerk and posted in general view of the public at the Township Hall. The Chairperson in consultation with the Vice-Chair and the Secretary, or a majority vote of the members, may cancel a meeting for lack of agenda.

SECTION 8.2 - AGENDA:

The Planning Commission shall establish deadlines for items to be included on the agenda. Applications may only be considered for placement on the agenda when all required documentation has been submitted and included for review in the Planning Commissioners' packet. Unless proper notice is required or necessary, items may be added to the agenda upon the majority consent of the Commissioners present at a regular meeting. Agenda items shall be listed in order of those items closest to needing deadline action.

SECTION 8.3 - SPECIAL MEETINGS:

Special meetings may be held as required, subject to the call of the Chair or by two (2) members upon written request to the Secretary. Special meetings may be requested by members of the public by making application for said meeting with the Township Clerk. Notice of Special meetings shall be given by the Secretary to members of the Planning Commission at least forty-eight hours prior to such meeting and shall state the purpose and time of the meeting.

Agenda items that may be legally added without public notice may not be added at a

special meeting unless all Commissioners are present and unanimously approve an addition to the agenda.

SECTION 8.4 - WORKSHOP MEETINGS

Workshop meetings for the purpose of performing Commission studies or preparing planning reports or documents may be called at the request of the Chairperson or any three members of the Planning Commission. No formal action by motion or resolution may be voted upon at a workshop meeting.

SECTION 8.5 - PUBLIC

All regular, workshop, and special meetings shall be open to the public. All meetings of the Planning Commission, hearings, records, and accounts are subject to the Open Meetings Act and shall be properly publicized prior to being held.

SECTION 8.6 - QUORUM:

A majority of the total number of members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business and the taking of official action for all matters. A majority vote of members present at a regular or special meeting may effectuate an action or a decision of the Planning Commission in all other matters of business.

SECTION 8.7 - ORDER OF BUSINESS:

The order of business for regular and special meetings shall be:

- A. Call to order by the Chair
- B. Pledge of Allegiance
- C. Roll call
 - Determination of a quorum
- D. Adoption of agenda.
- E. Call to Public
- F. Clarifications from Commission
- G. Correspondence
- H. Public Hearings
- I. Reports of committees
- J. Unfinished business
- K. New business

- L. Approval of the minutes of the last preceding meeting
- M. Final Call to Public
- N. Comments From Commission
- O. Adjournment

SECTION 8.8 - MOTIONS

Motions shall be restated by the Secretary before a vote is taken. The name of the maker and the supporter of a motion shall be recorded for the minutes.

SECTION 8.9 - VOTING

Voting on minutes, opening and closing of public hearings, election of officers, adoption of agenda, recess and adjournment shall be by voice and shall be recorded by yeas and nays, unless a roll call vote is requested by any member of the Commission. Roll call votes will be recorded on all other matters before the Commission. A member of the Planning Commission can only abstain from voting on a motion if he/she finds a conflict of interest on a motion.

Before casting a vote on a matter on which a member may reasonably be considered to have a conflict of interest, the member shall disclose the potential conflict of interest to the planning commission. The member may abstain from voting on the matter, and may absent him- or herself from the room in which discussion of the matter takes place. In addition, the member may be disqualified from voting on the matter if so provided by the bylaws or by a majority vote of the remaining members of the planning commission. Failure of a member to disclose a potential conflict of interest as noted above constitutes malfeasance in office.

Potential conflict of interest is defined by the Northfield Township Planning Commission as involving:

- A. Property the Commissioner owns, leases, or rents.
- B. Property owned by a Commissioner's relative or employer.
- C. A party with whom a Commissioner shares pecuniary interests (such as partner, employer, lender, renter, or investor).

The affirmative vote of a majority of Commissioners shall be necessary for the adoption of a master plan or any part thereof.

SECTION 8.10 - NOTICE OF DECISION

A written notice containing the decision of the Planning Commission will be transmitted to petitioners and originators of a request for the Planning Commission to study an issue within the purview of the Commission. Such notice shall be transmitted by the Planning Commission Secretary or staff.

SECTION 8.11 - ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Planning Commission meetings should adjourn no later than 10:00 pm. New agenda items shall not be taken up after 10:00 p.m. unless an agenda item is approaching an ordinance deadline for Planning Commission action or Commissioners decide by majority vote to continue with one or more agenda items after 11:00 p.m.

ARTICLE IX - FISCAL YEAR

SECTION 9.1 - FISCAL YEAR:

The fiscal year of the Commission shall be the same as the fiscal year of the Northfield Township Board.

ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS

SECTION 10.1 - AMENDMENTS:

The bylaws, in whole or in part, may be altered, amended, added to, or repealed by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Commission at any regular or special meeting provided that notice of proposed alterations, amendment, or repeal shall be submitted by regular or electronic mail to all members of the Commission at least fifteen (15) days before the regular or special meeting of the Commission at which they are to be considered. Public notice of any proposed alteration, amendment, or repeal shall be posted in general view at Township Hall and on the homepage of the Township website at least 15 days prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered. The notice shall either publish the text of the proposed change or advise the public of when and where the text may be inspected.

ARTICLE XI - PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICE

SECTION 11.1 - PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICE:

For meetings of the Commission and the advisory committees, the rules of parliamentary practice shall be adopted at the Commission's organizational meeting in January and shall govern in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with the provisions of these bylaws and not contrary to any existing laws of the State of Michigan. Copies shall be provided to each Planning Commission member.

ARTICLE XII - CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

SECTION 12.1 - CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

For meetings of the Commission and the advisory committees, any person shall be allowed to address the Commission on items unrelated to the adopted agenda or items scheduled for Commission discussion. Individual citizens shall be allotted three (3) minutes to speak on their own behalf. An individual citizen, recognized as representing an organization or group as their spokes person, shall be allotted five (5) minutes to address the Commission. Commission discussion of any raised issue may result in questions directed back to the individual or representative of an organization or group addressing the Commission. Time limits in this regard shall be at the discretion of the Commission.

ARTICLE XIII - EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 13.1 - EFFECTIVE DATE

These bylaws of the Township Planning Commission, Township of Northfield Washtenaw County, Michigan were adopted at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission held on _____ . The rules shall have immediate effect.

ARTICLE XIV - EFFECT AND INTERPRETATION OF BYLAWS

SECTION 1.1 - EFFECT AND INTERPRETATION OF BYLAWS

All bylaws and parts thereof which conflict with any of the terms of these bylaws, specifically the bylaws enacted March 19, 2014 are hereby rescinded. The catch line headings which precede each section of these bylaws are for convenience and reference only and shall not be taken into consideration in the construction or interpretation of any of the provisions of these bylaws.

The rules were adopted following a motion by _____ and supported by _____. The following Commissioners voted for adoption of the rules of procedure:

Dated

Chair - Planning Commission

Secretary - Planning Commission