

TOWN OF RICHMOND
NEW HAMPSHIRE
Zoning Board of Adjustment



**RULES OF PROCEDURE
RICHMOND BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**

AUTHORITY

1. These rules of procedure are adopted under the authority of New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated, 1983, Chapter 676:1, and the zoning ordinance and map of the town of Richmond.

OFFICERS

1. A **chairman** shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the board in the month of April following the Town meeting. The chairman shall preside over all meetings and hearings, appoint such committees as directed by the board and shall affix his/her signature in the name of the board.
2. A **vice-chairman** shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the board in the month of April following Town meeting. The vice-chairman shall preside in the absence of the chairman and shall have the full powers of the chairman on matters, which come before the board during the absence of the chairman.
3. All officers shall serve for one year and shall be eligible for re-election.

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

1. Up to **five alternate members** shall be appointed, as provided for by the local legislative body, and should attend all meetings to familiarize themselves with the workings of the board to stand ready to serve whenever a regular member of the board is unable to fulfill his/her responsibilities.
2. Members must reside in the community and are expected to attend each meeting of the board to exercise their duties and responsibilities. Any member unable to attend a meeting shall notify the chairman as soon as possible. Members, including the chairman and all officers, shall participate in the decision-making process and vote to approve or disapprove all motions under consideration.

MEETINGS

1. **Regular meetings** will be held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Civil Defense Building or the Veteran's Hall as determined by Public Notice. Other meetings may be held on the call of the chairman provided public notice and notice to each member is given in accordance with RSA 91-A: 2, II.
2. **Joint meetings/hearings** will follow RSA 676:2.

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2. **Quorum.** A quorum for all meetings of the board shall be three members, including alternates sitting in place of members.

The board will make every effort to ensure that a full five-member board is present for the consideration of any appeal. In all cases, at least three members of the ZBA must concur in the decision. The board will provide the applicant with an opportunity to continue the hearing until a date certain in order to provide for a decision by the full membership of the board.

If any regular board member is absent from any meeting or hearing, or disqualifies himself from sitting on a particular case, the chairman shall designate one of the alternate members to sit in place of the absent or disqualified member, and such alternate shall be in all respects a full member of the board while so sitting.

3. **Disqualification.** If any member finds it necessary to disqualify himself from sitting in a particular case, as provided in RSA 673:14, he shall notify the chairman as soon as possible so that an alternate may be requested to sit in his place. When there is uncertainty as to whether a member should be disqualified to act on a particular application, that member or another member of the board may request the board to vote on the question of disqualification. Any such request shall be made before the public hearing gets underway. The vote shall be advisory and non-binding.

Either the chairman or the member disqualifying himself before the beginning of the public hearing on the case shall announce the disqualification. The disqualified member shall absent himself from the board table during the public hearing and during all deliberation on the case.

4. **Order of Business.** The order of business for regular meetings shall be as follows:

- a. Call to order by the chairman
- b. Roll call by the chairman
- c. Minutes of previous meeting
- d. Public hearing
- e. Unfinished business
- f. New business
- g. Communications and miscellaneous
- h. Other business
- i. Adjournment

(Note: Although this is the usual order of business, the board may wish to hold the hearings immediately after the roll call in order to accommodate the public).

APPLICATION/ DECISION

1. **Applications.**

a. Each application for a hearing before the board shall be made on forms provided by the board and shall be presented to the Land Use Assistant or secretary at the office of the selectmen who shall record the date of receipt over his or her signature.

Appeals from an administrative decision taken under RSA 676:5 shall be filed within 30 calendar days beginning with date after the date of decision.

At each meeting, the chairman shall present to the board all applications received by him or her at least 7 days before the date of the meeting.

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b. All forms and revisions prescribed shall be adopted by resolution of the board and shall become part of these rules of procedure.

2. Public Notice.

a. Public notice of public hearings on each application shall be given in *The Keene Sentinel* and shall be posted at the Town Hall, inside and out, and at the CD Building not less than five days (5) before the date fixed for the hearing. Notice shall include the name of the applicant, description of the property to include tax map identification, action desired by the applicant, provisions of the zoning ordinance concerned, the type of appeal being made and the date, time and place of the hearing.

b. Personal notice shall be made by certified mail to the applicant and all abutters not less than five (5) days before the date of the hearing. Notice shall also be given to the planning board, town clerk and other parties deemed by the board to have special interest. Said notice shall contain the same information as the public notice and shall be made on forms provided for this purpose.

3. Public Hearing. The conduct of public hearings shall be governed by the following rules:

a. The chairman shall call the hearing in session and ask for the clerk's report on the first case.

b. The chairman shall read the application and report on how public notice and personal notice were given.

c. Members of the board may ask questions at any point during testimony.

d. Each person who appears shall be required to state his name and address and indicate whether he is a party to the case or an agent or counsel of a party to the case.

e. Any member of the board, through the chairman, may request any party to the case to speak a second time.

f. Any party to the case who wants to ask a question of another party to the case must do so through the chairman.

g. The applicant shall be called to present his appeal.

h. Those appearing in favor of the appeal shall be allowed to speak.

i. Those in opposition to the appeal shall be allowed to speak.

j. The applicant and those in favor shall be allowed to speak in rebuttal.

k. Those in opposition to the appeal shall be allowed to speak in rebuttal.

l. Any person who wants the board to compel the attendance of a witness shall present his request in writing to the chairman not later than 3 days prior to the public hearing.

m. The board of adjustment will hear with interest any evidence that pertains to the facts of the case or how the facts relate to the provisions of the zoning ordinance and state zoning law.

n. The chairman shall present a summary setting forth the facts of the case and the claims made for each side (see Findings of Facts form in appendix C). Opportunity shall be given for correction from the floor.

o. The hearing on the appeal shall be declared closed and the next case called up.

Decisions. The board shall decide all cases within 30 days of the close of the public hearing

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and shall approve, approve with conditions, or deny the appeal. Notice of the decision will be made available for public inspection within five (5) business days per RSA 91-A: 2, II, as required by RSA- 676:3, and will be sent to the applicant by certified mail. If the appeal is denied, the notice shall include the reasons therefore.

The notice shall also be given to the planning board, the board of selectmen, town clerk, property tax assessor and other town officials as determined by the board. Notice shall be posted at the Town Hall.

5. **Reconsideration by the Board.** The board may reconsider a decision to grant or deny an application or grant or deny a motion for rehearing provided such reconsideration is within the appeal period of the original decision as per 74 Cox Street LLC v. City of Nashua, September 21, 2007.

RECORDS

1. The records of the board shall be kept by the town clerk and made available for public inspection at the town clerk's office in accordance with RSA 673:17.
2. Final written decisions will be placed on file and available for public inspection within 5 business following the day after the date of decision is made. RSA 676:3.
3. Minutes of all meetings including names of board members, persons appearing before the board, and a brief description of the subject matter shall be open to public inspection within five (5) business days [676:3] of the public meeting. RSA 91-A: 2 II.

AMENDMENTS

These rules of procedure may be amended by a majority vote of the members of the board provided that such amendment is read at two successive meetings immediately preceding the meeting at which the vote is to be taken.

WAIVERS

Any portion of these rules of procedure may be waived in such cases where, in the opinion of the board, strict conformity would pose a practical difficulty to the applicant and waiver would not be contrary to the spirit and intent of the rules.

See **RSA chapter 677** for more detail on rehearing and appeal procedures. Reference materials are available at the Richmond Town Hall or on line at www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa

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