



Job Description For Planning Commissioner

Planning & Building Department
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Job Description

PLANNING COMMISSIONER

DEFINITION:

The Planning Commission is a public advisory board, and its purpose is to review and advise the City Council on public and private activities involving the physical, social, and economic development of the City and to review and make a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the City. The Commission also reviews and advises the City Council on matters concerning long range planning for land within the City boundaries and areas outside the City boundaries which relate to the City's long-range planning. This is a volunteer position.

The Planning Commission affords residents the opportunity to actively participate in the planning of the City and its welfare; to learn all facets of the regulations governing such functions; interact with a wide variety of citizens participating in shaping Lafayette's future; and assume an active role in regulation changes involving zoning and subdivision activity.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES: The following duties of the Planning Commission are illustrative only and are not intended to be all-inclusive:

The Planning Commission has the primary responsibility for approving the City's comprehensive plan. This document includes City policy statements on annexation, growth, transportation, economic development, parks and open space and the environment. The Commission reviews all proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan and periodically conducts special studies to keep the plan current or assigns related studies to city staff or to consultants.

The Commission advises the City Council on annexations, zoning related issues, subdivision development, special use reviews, and architectural and site plan reviews.

The Commission serves as the City's Board of Adjustment and reviews requested variances to the City's zoning code standards.

The Commission cooperates with other municipal or regional planning commissions, and other agencies or groups, to further local planning programs and to assure harmonious and integrated planning for the area.

The Commission has representatives that serve as a liaison to the Historic Preservation Board and Lafayette Open Space Advisory Committee. The role of the Planning Commission liaison is an ex-officio non-voting member that provides a bridge between the various boards mentioned by reporting activities of the Board to the Planning Commission and providing Planning Commission's point of view to the Board.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES:

May attend conferences and/or training sessions to keep abreast of current trends in municipal planning and/or to better understand the role of a Planning Commission.

May conduct field trips, either as a Commission or individually as Commissioners, to view property that may be proposed for development or annexation to better understand the relationship of the proposed development or annexation with surrounding land uses.

May attend other meetings such as the City Council's, or other various boards or committees, as deemed necessary.

TIME REQUIREMENTS:

A minimum of two (2) nights per month, (the second and fourth Wednesday of each month), attending Planning Commission meetings. One additional evening per month for the individual liaison to other Boards or committees, as necessary.

An average of four (4) to six (6) hours per month reviewing agenda items submitted in the Planning Commission packets.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED:

The Commission receives direction from, and is responsible to, the City Council, and is supported by staff of the Planning & Building Department.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED:

In the preparation of plans the Commission has the authority to conduct open public hearings, investigations, studies, surveys, prepare maps, charts, exhibits, reports, and to perform all other acts and duties necessary to the promotion of public interest and understanding of the Commission's programs and plans.

WORKING CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL AND MENTAL EFFORT:

This position primarily conducts business indoors (99%) completing tasks such as reading and reviewing reports, plans, and other documents plus listening to presentations by staff, applicants, and the public. This position requires a lengthy attention span and involves intermittently sitting (90%), walking (5%), and standing (5%).

RESTRICTIONS:

No member of the City Council may also serve as a member of the Planning Commission.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Candidates for the Planning Commission must be a citizen of the United States, registered voter, and must have resided within Lafayette for at least one year.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

There are no minimum skills and abilities that an applicant must have to be appointed as a Planning Commissioner, however, the following list has been identified as those skills and abilities that make a quality Planning Commissioner:

- Attention to detail;
- Patience;
- Ability to think in abstract terms;
- Open mindedness;
- Willingness to listen and learn;
- Willingness (obligation) to contribute (speak in a public forum);
- Ability to compromise and work within a team framework;
- Ability to make decisions based on the best interests of the community, rather than the interests of the applicant, or other special-interest groups;
- A rudimentary understanding of the development process; and
- Ability to read drawings, blueprints, and architectural plans.

TERMS OF OFFICE

As of July 1, 2002, the City Planning Commission consists of seven (7) members who are appointed by the City Council after appropriate interviews. Planning Commission members serve terms of four (4) years; however, the terms are initially staggered so that the terms of no more than two (2) members of the Planning Commission expire at any one time. For those members of the Planning Commission appointed effective July 1, 2003, the City Council shall determine who shall initially have a four-year, three-year, and one-year term, to maintain staggered terms as required herein.