



Revision of Wards 4 and 7 Bylaws
in Accordance with the Resolution Relating to

MAINTAINING OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE
NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING ASSEMBLIES

Adopted 10/23/23



Resolution Relating to

MAINTAINING OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE
NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING ASSEMBLIES

RESOLUTION 8.9

Sponsor(s): City Council
Introduced: 10/23/23
Referred to: _____

Action: adopted
Date: 10/23/23
Signed by Mayor: 10/30/23

CITY OF BURLINGTON

In the year Two Thousand Twenty-Three

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Burlington, as follows:

- 1 That WHEREAS, by resolution enacted more than forty years ago, the City of Burlington established
2 Neighborhood Planning Assemblies ("NPAs") in each ward; and
3 WHEREAS, the resolution provided that NPAs shall be "open and accessible" to all residents; and
4 WHEREAS, to support the goals of the NPAs, the resolution provided that each NPA shall elect
5 officers, develop bylaws, and establish meeting operating procedures; and
6 WHEREAS, each NPA has since acted to independently develop its own bylaws and meeting
7 operating procedures, resulting in inconsistencies between each NPA's governing documents and, in some
8 cases, governing documents that lack the elements necessary to maintain the goal of being "open and
9 accessible" to all; and
10 WHEREAS, the resolution tasked all city staff personnel to cooperate in the implementation of NPAs;
11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that on or by January 31, 2024, or as soon as practicable
12 thereafter, the NPAs will work to adopt new bylaws and meeting procedures as necessary to consistently
13 include the following minimum elements:
14 1. Non-discrimination. A non-discrimination statement, providing that each NPA will promote
15 and work to sustain an open and accessible environment, and shall not harass or discriminate
16 against any individual because of gender, gender identity or expression, sex, sexual orientation,
17 race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, place of birth, pregnancy, age, disability, or any
18 other characteristic protected by law.
19 2. Election and Removal of Officers. A clear process by which each NPA's membership may
20 elect and remove their NPA officers, and fill any vacancy.
21 3. Open Meeting Law. A statement committing the NPA to comply with all applicable public
22 meeting requirements.
23 4. Conflict of Interest. To further support the fair review of matters without prejudice or bias, a
24 conflict of interest policy requiring that NPA members disclose any conflict of interest prior to
25 voting on or taking action with respect to any related agenda item; and



History

- The Resolution Relating to MAINTAINING OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING ASSEMBLIES was the city's response to what occurred in our NPA last fall when a SC member refused to use another SC member's pronouns.
- The city informed all NPAs that each would be required to include a nondiscrimination policy (amongst other things) in their bylaws.
- This requirement resulted in the resignation of the entire steering committee.



Resolution Relating to

MAINTAINING OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING ASSEMBLIES

Adopted 10/23/23

1. That WHEREAS, by resolution enacted more than forty years ago, the City of Burlington established
2. Neighborhood Planning Assemblies ("NPAs") in each ward; and
3. WHEREAS, the resolution provided that NPAs shall be "open and accessible" to all residents



To Ensure NPA's Remain “Open and Accessible to All”

The resolution requires NPAs to implement bylaws and meeting procedures “on or by January 31, 2024, or as soon as practicable” that include the following minimum elements:

1. **Non-discrimination.** A non-discrimination statement, providing that each NPA will promote and work to sustain an open and accessible environment, and shall not harass or discriminate against any individual because of gender, gender identity or expression, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, place of birth, pregnancy, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.
2. **Election and Removal of Officers.** A clear process by which each NPA's membership may elect and remove their NPA officers, and fill any vacancy.
3. **Open Meeting Law.** A statement committing the NPA to comply with all applicable public meeting requirements.
4. **Conflict of Interest.** To further support the fair review of matters without prejudice or bias, a conflict of interest policy requiring that NPA members disclose any conflict of interest prior to voting on or taking action with respect to any related agenda item; and



Process of Draft of Revised Bylaws

- Bylaws Working Group members (during publicized open forums) studied
 - Original bylaws from Wards 4 & 7
 - CEDO's "base" bylaws example
 - All of the other Wards' bylaws
- Cultivated and prioritized an inclusive vision for Wards 4 & 7 Bylaws in alignment with the city's 10/23/23 Resolution
- Collaborated extensively on each element included to ensure the sanctity of what was in the original Wards 4 & 7 Bylaws remained *and* in an inclusive manner
- The format centers language and values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (what we want to move *towards* or *to* do) to balance out the strong statement of nondiscrimination (what we want to move *away* from or *not* do) by the city

Overview of Format

- **Brief introduction about what NPAs are** – *now* including the goal of inclusion (“NPAs seek to be diverse and inclusive grassroots...”)
- **Guiding Principles** – these identify ways of being that uphold the goal and value of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging as a means to ensure we are “Maintaining Open and Accessible Neighborhood Planning Assemblies”
- **Article I: The Purpose of the NPA**
- **Article II: Membership**
- **Article III: Meetings**
- **Article IV: Steering Committee** – including Election (under “Terms”) and Removal of Officers and Conflict of Interest
- **Article V: Miscellaneous Provisions** – Including nondiscrimination policy and compliance with meeting requirements



We love these inclusive bylaws, and we hope you do too!

- A copy is (or soon will be) available on the city's website for your review
- Voting on the adoption of these bylaws at our April 24th meeting.

“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”

~ Margaret J. Wheatley

