

**VERMONT PLANNERS ASSOCIATION  
BYLAWS**

[as amended and adopted **December 14, 2023**]

**ARTICLE I:           NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Vermont Planners Association, hereinafter referred to as the Association, the Section, or VPA. The Vermont Planners Association shall be a Section of the Northern New England Chapter of the American Planners Association.

**ARTICLE II:           PURPOSE**

The primary purpose of this Section shall be to provide leadership in the planning field in Vermont through the professional development of planners; education and coordination with the community at large; and effective representation to local, state and federal governments and agencies.

**ARTICLE III:          NONPROFIT STATUS**

In addition to the foregoing, the Section may engage in any activity not inconsistent with the laws of the State of Vermont, within the purposes for which nonprofit corporations may be organized under the Vermont Non-Profit Corporation Act.

In any taxable year in which the corporation is a private foundation as described in IRC §501(a), the corporation shall distribute its income for said period at such time and in such manner as not to subject it to tax under IRC §4942, and the corporation shall not (a) engage in any act of self-dealing as defined in IRC §4943(c); (b) make any investments in such manner as to subject the corporation to tax under IRC §4944; or (c) make any taxable expenditures as defined in IRC §4945(d) or corresponding provision of any subsequent federal tax laws.

No part of the net earnings of the Section shall inure to the benefit of any member, trustee, director, of the Section, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the Section, and no member, trustee, director of the Section or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the Section's assets on dissolution of the Section.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the Section is organized exclusively for one or more of the purposes as specified in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (hereinafter "IRC"), and shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from Federal income tax under IRC §501(c)(3) or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Federal tax laws.

No substantial part of the activities of the Section shall be carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation (except as otherwise provided by IRC 501(h) and does not

participate in, or intervene in (including the publication or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidates for public office.

**ARTICLE IV:           RELATIONSHIP TO THE NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND  
CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION  
(APA)**

The Vermont Planners Association shall be a Section of the Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association (“NNECAPA” or the “Chapter”), which also includes a New Hampshire Section and a Maine Section.

**ARTICLE V:           ACTIVITIES**

Programs and activities in addition to those listed below may be developed by the directors and/or membership. The directors shall approve any activity.

**Section 1. Annual Awards**

The Association shall sponsor an Annual Vermont Planners Association Awards Program and may recognize: a Project of the Year, a Plan of the Year, a Citizen Planner and/or Board of the Year, a Professional Planner of the Year, and any other awards as determined by the Executive Committee. Recipients of the Vermont Planners Association Awards will be nominees to the Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association Annual Awards Program.

**Section 2.     Vermont Planners Association Annual Meeting**

The Vermont Planners Association shall hold an annual meeting in the fall of the year.

**Section 3.     Other Meetings**

Other meetings of VPA may be held as needed. These may be: quarterly topic specific meetings held throughout the state, meetings for specific groups of planners (e.g. Planning Commissioners, Municipal Planners), and/or monthly meetings held in Montpelier during the legislative session. The Executive Committee will arrange meetings that address the needs of planners and recognize their resources and geographic distribution.

**Section 4.     Newsletter/Website**

VPA shall distribute information on activities of interest to its members. It may use the NNECAPA quarterly newsletter, develop and distribute a newsletter of its own, use an e-mail listserve or utilize other distribution methods. This information shall also be distributed to non-members by request. In addition, VPA maintains a website to provide members and the public with information about VPA and planning issues.

## **Section 5. Coordination with Other Associations**

Every effort shall be made to coordinate activities and information with other groups and associations including but not limited to: State agencies, departments and staff; the Vermont Community Development Association; the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT); the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies (VAPDA); the Vermont Society of Landscape Architects; the Vermont Downtown Development Board; the Land Use Education and Training Collaborative; the Vermont Chapter of the American Institute of Architects; the Vermont Natural Resources Council; the Vermont Law School; the University of Vermont; legislative committees and other organizations. VPA recognizes the importance of working with other organizations to advance the profession and practice of planning.

## **ARTICLE VI: MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION**

### **Section 1. Eligibility**

Any individual involved in any aspect of planning in Vermont may be a member of VPA. The VPA Executive Committee may, with approval of the membership at the annual meeting, establish separate categories of membership to include individual, organizational and student.

Any member of the American Planning Association whose address of record is in Vermont shall be a member of this Section and of the Northern New England Chapter of APA. Section members, however, do not need to join APA to participate fully in the Section.

### **Section 2. Dues**

The dues shall be set by the Executive Committee with the approval of the membership at the annual meeting.

### **Section 3. Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee of the Vermont Planners Association shall be comprised of the directors as identified in Section 4. The immediate past-president may continue their membership on the Executive Committee.

In addition to the statutory duties given to a Board of Directors under Vermont Statutes Annotated Title 11B, the Executive Committee shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

1. It shall be the custodian of all VPA property.
2. It shall authorize contracts and purchases, but shall not incur any liabilities exceeding the amount of un-appropriated funds in the hands of the Treasurer. The signatory on all contracts shall be the President, or Vice-President if authorized by the Executive Committee.
3. It shall authorize use and distribution of VPA membership lists, in accordance with adopted policies and federal and state statutes.

4. It shall carry out the direction of the membership.
5. It may transact all ordinary and routine business not requiring action by the membership as a whole.
6. It may adopt governing policies and protocols, relating to matters including, but not limited to, accepted accounting practices and financial controls, procurement practices, rules of procedure, conflicts of interest and legislative activities.
7. It may appoint committees comprised of the membership to focus on appropriate issues and to carry out the duties of the organization under the direction of the Executive Committee.
8. It shall fulfill all other duties imposed by these bylaws.
9. It shall have the authority to appoint individuals to fill vacancies on the Executive Committee.

#### **Section 4. Directors and Appointees**

The Association shall have directors and appointees as presented below:

##### **DIRECTORS:**

**President.** The President shall call and preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee and VPA, represent VPA at other meetings and in legislative matters, and fulfill all other duties imposed by these bylaws.

**Vice-President.** The Vice-President shall assist the President in carrying out their duties. The Vice-President shall carry out the duties of the President when the President is unable to do so.

**Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall be responsible for the accounting of all VPA funds. The Treasurer shall ensure that financial reports are prepared and distributed as necessary and that an annual report of the finances of VPA is presented at the annual meeting. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the filing of such annual reports and other matters as are necessary to maintain the status of VPA as a nonprofit corporation with the State of Vermont, Secretary of State and as a tax exempt entity with the Internal Revenue Service.

**Secretary.** The Secretary shall ensure that minutes, agendas and a brief summary of Executive Committee meetings for the membership are prepared and distributed as necessary, and that an annual report of activities of VPA is presented at the Annual Meeting.

**Conference Representative.** The Conference Representative shall be a member of the Executive Committee, may hold another position on the VPA Executive Committee and shall represent the Section as a voting member of the NNECAPA Executive Committee. The Conference Representative serves as the Section's representative on the Chapter's Standing Conference Committee.

**At-Large Directors.** There shall be six (6) at-large directors on the Executive Committee. These positions are to ensure a regional balance and representation of various land use and development concerns on the Executive Committee.

## **APPOINTEES:**

**Vermont Legislative Liaison.** The Vermont Legislative Liaison shall exhibit a strong interest in legislative issues and coordinate legislative activities of VPA, consistent with VPA's nonprofit status. The Legislative Liaison shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and may be either a current VPA member or hold another position on the VPA Executive Committee. The Liaison shall be charged with representing any adopted VPA positions or policies where they exist and for transmitting APA or NNECAPA legislative requests or proposed legislative policies and positions to the membership of VPA.

**Vermont Downtown Development Board Representative.** The Vermont Downtown Development Board Representative shall be responsible for representing VPA on the Vermont Downtown Development Board pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 2792. The Representative should exhibit a strong interest and experience with growth center issues, and they shall be charged with representing any adopted VPA positions or policies where they exist. The Vermont Downtown Development Board Representative shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and may be either a current VPA member or hold another position on the VPA Executive Committee. The Representative shall report the activities of the Downtown Development Board at least quarterly.

**Vermont Downtown Development Board Alternate.** The Vermont Downtown Development Board Alternate shall be responsible for representing VPA on the Vermont Downtown Development Board pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 2792 if the Vermont Downtown Development Board Representative is unavailable. They shall be charged with representing any adopted VPA positions or policies where they exist.

**Section Representative.** The Section Representative shall be a member of the VPA Executive Committee and is appointed by the Executive Committee each year following the election of Directors. The Section Representative shall represent the Section as a voting member of the NNECAPA Executive Committee. The Section Representative serves as the Section's liaison to the Chapter and carries out duties on behalf of the Section as assigned by the Chapter President or the Chapter Executive Committee.

Following the Annual Meeting, the Executive Committee may appoint a VPA member as an alternate to the Legislative Liaison, an alternate to the Vermont Downtown Development Board Representative and to any legislative study committee or other "ad hoc" position as required, provided such appointees shall report to the Executive Committee at least quarterly.

## **Section 5. Terms of Office**

With the exception of the Conference Representative, all directors and appointees, including but not limited to the Vermont Legislative Liaison, the Vermont Downtown Development Board

Representative and the Vermont Downtown Development Board Alternate, shall serve a two-year term.

The President, Secretary, and three At-Large Directors shall serve two-year terms starting in years that end in even numbers. The Vice-President, Treasurer, and three At-Large Directors shall serve two-year terms starting in years that end in odd numbers.

The Conference Representative shall serve a three-year term. This term will be staggered with those of the other two NNECAPA Conference Representatives, such that one of the three representatives is elected each year of the triennium.

All terms of office described herein shall begin on January 1<sup>st</sup> following the election at the annual meeting.

All directors may be re-elected to the same office.

#### **Section 6. Elections; Nominations**

Elections for all directors shall be held at the annual meeting in the fall in accordance with the terms of each director position. Directors shall be elected by the plurality of votes cast. Voting shall be by ballot or acclamation as decided by the membership at the time.

The President shall appoint a nominating committee, which shall present a slate of directors when appropriate. The nominating committee shall make every effort to solicit membership input and shall strive to present a slate that reflects the wide diversity of membership in all respects. Nominations shall also be taken from the floor at the time of elections. Every third year beginning with the 2020 Annual Meeting, the nominating committee's proposed slate shall include a nominee for Conference Representative. If a vacancy occurs in the middle of any director's term, the Executive Committee will appoint an individual to fill the vacancy until the next Annual Meeting, at which point an individual will be elected to fill the remaining years of the original term corresponding to the position.

#### **Section 7. Secretariat**

VPA may enter into a contract with an organization to serve as its secretariat. In doing so, VPA is not formally joining the organization and is not represented by it in any matters of program or policy.

#### **Section 8. Budget**

The Executive Committee shall prepare an annual budget for consideration and approval by the membership. VPA's annual budget shall be adopted at the annual meeting by a majority of those members present and voting. The budget will be based on the calendar year. Following each calendar year, the Treasurer shall reconcile the previous calendar year's annual budget with the actual income and expenses of VPA for the previous calendar year. The Treasurer shall present

the reconciled annual budget for the previous calendar year to the Executive Committee no later than the Executive Committee's March meeting. The budget format and reports shall be consistent with those required by NNECAPA.

#### **ARTICLE VII:       AMENDMENT TO BYLAWS**

Proposed amendments to the Bylaws of VPA may be offered from time to time as necessary by the membership or the Executive Committee with as much advanced consideration as feasible. Bylaw amendments may be proposed by any VPA member. Proposed amendments shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee and submitted to the membership by regular or electronic mail at least three (3) weeks prior to the annual meeting or three weeks before the vote is called. Voting on proposed bylaw amendments shall be by ballot, which shall be mailed or electronically submitted between at least three (3) weeks before the annual meeting in the fall or before any other deadline established by the Executive Committee. Ballots shall be returned by mail or electronic means to the secretary at least three (3) days before the annual meeting or any other deadline established by the Executive Committee. Proposed bylaw amendments shall be adopted if approved by a majority of the votes cast. The secretary shall announce the results of the vote on any proposed bylaw amendments following the vote.

#### **ARTICLE VIII:     INDEMNIFICATION**

VPA shall indemnify and hold harmless its Directors to the fullest extent provided by Vermont Statutes Annotated Title 11B, Chapter 8, Subchapter 5 and as the same may be amended from time to time.

#### **ARTICLE IX:       DISSOLUTION**

At a special meeting of the members called for that purpose, the members may dissolve VPA by a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting in person or by written ballot, received by the Secretary prior to the time for such special meeting. The Executive Committee shall dispose of all VPA's remaining assets by causing same to be transferred, conveyed, distributed, or assigned to an organization and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Executive Committee shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Superior Court of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.