

# UNIVERSITY AREA COMMISSION

## BY LAWS

*As adopted on August 16, 2023*

### **PREAMBLE**

WE, residents of the City of Columbus in the University Area, in order to: study problems and needs of the area, recommend solutions and bring these needs to the attention of proper government agencies; determine the need for, and recommend legislation affecting the area; provide communication within the area and between the area and city government; solicit cooperation of all segments of the community; afford additional voluntary citizen participation in decision-making in an advisory capacity to the city administration and city council; and, develop techniques for creating and promoting a community dialogue so that the different values and interests of residents can be articulated and understood; and, therefore, we do establish and ordain these By Laws.

### **Article I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the University Area Commission, herein referred to as "Commission".

Section 2. The boundaries of the University Area shall be: starting at the Glen Echo Ravine and the Olentangy River, proceeding east along Glen Echo Ravine to the Penn Central Railroad, south on the Penn Central Railroad tracks to Fifth Avenue, west on Fifth Avenue to the Olentangy River, and north along Olentangy River to the Glen Echo ravine.

Section 3. These by-laws establish the procedure under which the University Area Commission shall execute those duties and functions set forth in and with authority granted under chapters 121, 3109, 3111 of the Columbus City Codes (herein abbreviated as C.C.) and the Columbus City Charter sections 60 and 61.

Section 4. The Commission, and all its bodies thereof, shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, except as inconsistent with these By Laws and except that:

- a. The motion "to reconsider and enter on the minutes" shall never be in order;
- b. The President may vote on a motion as any other member;
- c. A roll-call vote on a motion may be ordered by one-fourth of the Commissioners present
- d. The division of a motion may be ordered by any one Commissioner;
- e. A motion to reconsider may be made by any Commissioner;
- f. A quorum shall be eleven commissioners for all meetings with the exception of the annual meeting. The quorum at the start of the annual meeting shall be 60% of the Commissioners with terms that are not expiring at the start of the annual meeting. Once a quorum is established,

business can be conducted unless the number of commissioners present drops below nine, at which time the meeting is declared adjourned.

Section 5. No Commission member shall represent the Commission in its official actions before any other public body or official, except as specifically authorized by the Commission. This shall not be construed as a restriction upon the right of the individual members to represent their own views before public or private bodies, whether in agreement or disagreement with the official action of the Commission, provided they do not represent themselves as speaking for the Commission.

Section 6. No monies shall be expended or encumbered save pursuant to the Annual Budget.

- a. Within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the draft annual agreement with the City of Columbus, the Treasurer shall propose the annual budget to the executive committee. At the next regular meeting, the executive committee shall recommend to the Commission approval of the proposed annual budget. The annual budget shall be adopted when approved by a majority of the Commission.
- b. Any monies received shall be deposited immediately by the Treasurer.
- c. All purchases must follow the guidelines allowed in current Columbus City Code for commissioners.
- d. For purchases for Commission activities that are not itemized in the approved annual budget that are twenty-five dollars (\$25) or less, any commissioner may request reimbursement by providing the Treasurer with a written, dated request which explains the purchase and also provide a paper copy of the receipt. Permission to grant reimbursement may be given by the Treasurer.
- e. For purchases for Commission activities that are not itemized in the approved annual budget that are more than twenty-five dollars (\$25), any Commission member may request reimbursement from the President and the Treasurer by providing the Treasurer a written, dated request which explains the purchase and also provide a paper copy of the receipt. Permission to grant reimbursement may be given by agreement of the President and the Treasurer which then shall report the expenditure at the next regular meeting.
- f. Any commissioner may request a full Commission vote on any expense reimbursement not itemized in the approved annual budget.

Section 7. Any election required in these By Laws shall be conducted by written ballot, which shall be tallied immediately, and the Recording Secretary shall read each commissioner's name and how they voted aloud into the meetings minutes. A voice vote may be held if an election is uncontested.

Section 8. Ballots for internal elections shall be held until such time as the minutes are approved for the meeting in which the election occurred. Upon approval of the minutes, the Commission has 30 days to destroy the ballots.

Section 9. The Commission shall also facilitate communication, understanding and cooperation among citizens, neighborhood groups, city officials and staff, and other stakeholders by performing those functions and duties set out in C.C. 3109.13.

## **Article II. MEMBERS**

Section 1. There shall be twenty (20) members of the Commission.

- a. Three members to be known as "District Commissioners" shall be elected from each of four districts.
- b. One member to be known as "Organization Commissioner" shall be appointed by each of the following Organizations:
  1. The Ohio State University;
  2. The Undergraduate Student Government of the Ohio State University;
  3. The Council of Graduate Students of the Ohio State University.
  4. The University Community Association;
  5. The University District Organization Inc; and
- c. One member, to be known as a "Group Commissioner", shall be appointed by the Commission upon nomination by each of the following area groups:
  1. Social, religious and charitable groups;
  2. Business groups; and
  3. Residential rental property owner groups.

A group is defined as a number of individuals who are considered as one or acting as one with membership and/or a common mission related primarily to a Group Commissioner category.

Section 2. Members shall serve the following terms of office:

- a. A term of office for a commissioner shall be three years, with the positions in each of the district commissioner seats rotating, so that each year, a seat in each district shall be open for election. The three-year terms are to expire as provided in these by-laws.

Section 3. Members shall take office at the beginning of the Annual Meeting following the Board of Elections official report as set forth in Article IV, Section 2.

- a. By September 1 of each year, the Corresponding Secretary shall notify in writing all represented organizations that the term of their member shall end at the start of the annual meeting; and that it should submit in writing a representative to the Commission for the new term as set forth in Article II, Sections 1(b) and 1(C). This must be done by October 1 so that the Commission may certify the new members before the next annual meeting.
  1. Organizations in 1(b) shall be notified to appoint a commissioner.
  2. Organizations in 1(c) shall be notified to nominate a commissioner.

Section 4. Vacancies shall be filled as follows:

- a. If a vacancy occurs in a district seat on the Commission because of resignation, death, disqualification, or other means, the Corresponding Secretary shall give public notice of the vacancy at least thirty (30) days before the date on which the Commission will vote to recommend a candidate to fill the vacancy. After providing an opportunity for persons interested in filling the vacancy to indicate their interest to the Commission, the following documents will be required for review one week prior to the Area Commission meeting where a vote will be taken on the opening.
  1. Official petition form, signed by 30 individual who are qualified as set forth in 4.6.3 of the University Area Commission Election Rules
    - a. Petition forms shall provide a space for the printed name and address of the signer, his or her signature, and the date. The name and address of the candidate shall appear prominently on the top along with a signed statement that the candidate will observe the Election Rules and the By Laws.
  2. City of Columbus Legistar form; and
  3. City of Columbus Area Commissioner Profile
- b. The Commission shall vote according to article I section 7 to select a candidate to fill the vacancy for the remainder of that term.
  1. Notice of a vacancy shall be given in the agenda, given to each unsuccessful candidate, including write-in candidates, from that district in the last election and shall be made to the public.

- c. If a vacancy occurs in an organization seat as defined in 1(b), the Corresponding Secretary shall give notice to the organization to appoint someone to serve the remainder of that term.
- d. If a vacancy occurs in an organization seat as defined in 1(b), the Corresponding Secretary shall give notice to the organization to appoint someone to serve the remainder of that term.
- e. The Corresponding Secretary shall send written notice of the candidate endorsed by the Commission to the Office of the Mayor and the Department of Development, pursuant to C.C. 3109.08.

Section 5. District commissioners shall retain their residence within the district from which they were elected. Failure to maintain their residence shall constitute resignation from the Commission. Upon petition by that Commissioner, the Commission may grant waiver to this By Law by a two-thirds vote. Notice of this waiver must be given in the meeting. If a waiver is granted, the commissioner shall retain that seat only until the next Commission election.

Section 6. Three unapproved absences from regular Commission meetings between annual meetings shall constitute resignation from the Commission. In addition to regular monthly meetings, Commissioners may not have more than three unapproved absences from each committee on which each commissioner serves between annual meetings. The First Vice President shall notify in writing or electronic correspondence a commissioner who has been absent from two such meetings within fifteen days of the second absence. Absent commissioners may petition the President for approval of an absence from Commission and may petition the appropriate committee chair for approval of an absence from an assigned committee meeting. This petition for approval of an absence as excusable shall be in writing or electronic form and submitted to the President thirty (30) calendar days prior to the absence or within thirty (30) calendar days after the absence.

Section 7. The members of the Commission shall be approved and appointed by the Mayor of Columbus in accordance with Chapter 3109.07 of the City Code. The Corresponding Secretary shall notify the Mayor and the Department of Development of all appointments, elections, and vacancies within thirty (30) days of such action.

- a. Should the Mayor neither approve nor disapprove within thirty days (30) of notification then the action shall be deemed approved.
- b. A copy of each such notice shall be sent to the City Council (care of the City Clerk) and to the proper official of the Department of Development.
- c. New members of the Commission will attend a four (4) hour orientation training as provided by the City of Columbus or by the Commission. Failure of new members of the Commission to meet this requirement six (6) months from their date of appointment shall constitute resignation from the Commission.

### **Article III. OFFICERS**

Section 1. The officers of the Commission shall be a President, a First and a Second Vice President, a Treasurer, and a Recording and a Corresponding Secretary.

- a. The officers shall be elected by the Commission at the meeting following the annual meeting and shall take office upon election.
- b. All officers shall serve a term of one year, or until their successors are elected and qualified.

Section 2. The President shall:

- a. Chair all meetings of the Commission;
- b. Coordinate the actions of all officers and representatives of the Commission;
- c. Chair all public hearings called by the Commission;
- d. Select, supervise, direct or delegate any volunteers or staff hired by or assigned to the Commission; and represent or appoint a Commissioner to represent the University Area Commission at City Council meetings and other meetings affecting the University Area.

Section 3. The Two Vice Presidents:

- a. The First Vice President shall:
  1. Assist the President;
  2. Preside at meetings in the absence of the President.
  3. Have responsibility for managing all committees; and
  4. Assist the President in establishing and distributing the monthly agenda.
- b. The Second Vice President shall:
  1. Assist the President and the First Vice President, as requested and assigned;
  2. Support and direct use of the UAC computer; and
  3. Manage and direct digital and physical storage of Commission records.
  4. During commission meetings shall keep track of order of speakers for the President by acknowledging a person wanting to speak who is raising their hand and monitor time limits for speaking according to these by laws.

Section 4. The Two Secretaries:

- a. The Recording Secretary shall:
  1. Keep and permanently file all resolutions considered by the Commission, as well as a record of all actions taken; and
  2. Call the roll at each meeting of the Commission and record times of arrival and departure of commissioners after roll has been taken or before the adjournment of the meeting.
- b. The Corresponding Secretary shall:
  1. Shall correspond at the direction of the Commission.
  2. Keep on file all correspondences of the Commission;
  3. Provide copies of any Commission documents at a reasonable charge to any person requesting them;
  4. Forward weekly meeting schedules to OSU facilities for HVAC consideration.
  5. Notify the Mayor and the Department of Development of all appointments, elections, and vacancies within thirty (30) days of such action.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall:

- a. Receive all monies and approve all payments for the Commission in accordance with Article I, Section 6;
- b. Prepare and present an Annual Budget for the Commission in accordance with Article I, Section 6;
- c. Report on the financial condition of the Commission at each regular meeting;
- d. Submit a written report of the finances of the Commission at the Annual Meeting;
- e. Participate in the preparation of budget of expenditure of any grant moneys; and
- f. Manage the distribution and administration of grant moneys.
- g. And shall exercise all duties incident to the office of Treasurer, including compliance with all fiscal requirements within the memorandum of agreement with the city.

Section 6. A vacancy in the office of President shall be filled by the First Vice President. A vacancy in any other position shall be filled in the same manner as the original selection as set forth in Article III, Section 1.

Section 7. Additional officers or representatives may be created by the Commission. Representatives shall be elected by the Commission.

## **Article IV. MEETINGS**

Section 1. The Commission shall hold a regular monthly meeting on the third Wednesday of each month.

- a. A regular meeting may be cancelled or rescheduled by two-thirds vote of the Commission at the regularly scheduled prior meeting of the Commission.
- b. A commissioner may speak twice on any unique debatable motion or presentation per meeting. Each time, the commissioner may speak for up to three (3) minutes. A commissioner cannot save time for their second round or transfer their remaining time to someone else. A commissioner cannot let someone else speak on his or her time.

Section 2. The regular meeting in January shall be the Annual Meeting at which new Commissioners take office, and annual reports from the committees are received.

- a. An officer nomination committee shall be appointed by the President, representing a cross section of the Commission, to develop and gather a slate of officers for the coming year.
- b. Any current commissioner may be a voting member of the officer nomination committee. Membership on this committee shall not exclude a commissioner from consideration for an office.
- c. The proposed slate of officers must be included with the meeting following the annual meeting notice.
- d. First item of business for the meeting following the annual meeting will be election of Commission Officers with additional or write-in nominations accepted from any member of the Commission.
- e. The election of officers shall be conducted by written ballot, which shall be tallied immediately by two commissioners not running for an officer position. The two commissioners will be chosen by random chance at the start of the meeting. One of the vote counters will read aloud each commissioner's name and how they voted into the official record kept by the Recording Secretary. Official tally of votes will include name of Commissioner and the number of votes they received. A voice vote may be held if there are no contested offices.

Section 3. At least a five-day notice of all meetings shall be given, such notice to include the agenda. All meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public. All Commission meetings shall comply with the Ohio open meeting law and the open meeting requirements pursuant to C.C. 121.01.

Section 4. The Commission shall consider no business unless introduced by a commissioner or a committee of the Commission. No person shall speak during a Commission meeting except when recognized by the presiding officer. This can be subject to approval of the Commission by a majority vote.



- a. Allowance shall be made for public comment on any issue to be voted on by the Commission or a committee of the Commission. Each speaker shall be limited to three (3) minutes. This limit may be extended by vote of the members present upon a motion of any commissioner to do so. Time shall be allowed following each presentation for commissioners to discuss and ask questions of the speaker. At their discretion, the presiding officer may limit the number of speakers to three (3) on each side of an issue. Such limitation shall be announced at the beginning of public comments on that issue.

Section 5. Special meetings may be called by the President; or the President upon receiving a petition signed by one-third of the Commissioners in office.

- a. Any such petition shall specify the date, time and place of the special meeting and shall include all business to be conducted at the meeting.
- b. No business shall be conducted at a special meeting, unless explicitly included in the notice of such meeting.

Section 6. A Public Hearing may be directed to be held by either: a majority vote of the Commission, or a committee (with the approval of the President).

- a. With the permission of a majority vote of the Commission, a public hearing may be held in conjunction with a Commission meeting.
- b. A record shall be made of each public hearing by the Recording Secretary or other provided recording officer from the directing committee.
- c. If a committee has called a public hearing, it shall provide the presiding and recording officer.
- d. At least a fifteen (15) day public notice shall be given for all public hearings.

Section 7. The Commission shall not consider zoning cases received by the Zoning Committee Chair less than 7 calendar days before a regular monthly Zoning Committee meeting. Cases received less than 7 calendar days before a regular monthly Zoning Committee meeting will be considered at the following month's meeting.

- a. Commissioners shall be notified of upcoming Zoning cases and of the scheduled committee meeting no less than 12 calendar days before a regular monthly Commission meeting.
- b. The Commission shall notify all property owners within 125 feet of each zoning case, including appeals. All such owners shall be listed on the attachment provided by the applicant.

- c. The Committee bringing the zoning recommendation forward must state that all appropriate procedures have been followed before a vote of the Commission is allowed. These procedures include proper notification of Commissioners, adherence to deadlines for case evaluation, and all other such procedures contained within these By-Laws and defined by the City of Columbus.
- d. In the event an applicant appeals a previous decision by the Area Commission, the applicant or their designee must inform the Zoning Committee Chair 7 days prior to the regular monthly Zoning Committee meeting. The Area Commission shall not entertain any appeal applied for more than 20 days after the date of the previous vote. The process to file an appeal is as follows:
  - 1. Applicant must provide the following to the Zoning Committee (found on Area Commission website):
    - a. Application form
    - b. Statement of Appeal
  - 2. Zoning Committee will review the statement of appeal to ensure all required information is provided including:
    - a. Reason for the appeal;
    - b. If any changes have been made since the original case was voted on;
  - 3. A signature certifying the appeal information is accurate and complete is required from the Zoning chairperson.
  - 4. Once requirements for appeal are met the Full Area Commission may reverse, affirm, or modify their previous decision upon presentation of the appeals documents to the Full Commission.
- e. The following time limits will be adhered to for all zoning cases heard before the commission:
  - 1. Prior to presenting the Zoning case to the full Commission the Zoning Chair will ask the applicant if they are prepared to have the case voted on by the Area Commission, only an acknowledgement in the affirmative by the applicant or their appointed representative will allow for the case to proceed. Once the Zoning Committee presents the facts of the case only a motion by a commissioner to Postpone Definitely is permissible to suspend taking the motion to conclusion. A request or motion from the applicant to postpone a vote is never in order once the Commission has taken up the motion from the Zoning Committee.
  - 2. A motion to extend the max time limits can be made at the beginning of the case stating which portion(s) should be extended and by how long. The motion must pass by two-thirds (2/3) majority with no debate on this motion.

3. Zoning Committee presents the facts of the case: 5 min (max)
4. Applicant presentation: 7 min (max)
5. Zoning committee report: 5 min (max)
6. Public comment (max 3 people each pro/con): 2 min each (max)
  1. Only those who complete speaker slips prior to the case being heard will be considered for speaking based on the order the slips were received
7. Commission discussion: Commissioner who wishes may speak once per round for 1 min (max) for 2 rounds
  1. A Commissioner cannot save time for their second round or transfer their remaining time to someone else
8. Applicant response: 3 min (max)
9. Commission vote
10. The zoning committee chairperson or designee will provide a copy of this section to each zoning applicant prior to his or her appearance at a commission meeting.

## **Article V. COMMITTEES**

Section 1. The President shall appoint Commissioners to the standing committees subject to approval by the Commission. The President shall consider requests for assignments from all commissioners but is not bound by those requests. The standing committees are as follows: Community Relations; Zoning; Governance; Planning & Development; and Executive.

- a. The initial appointments shall be made at the meeting following the annual meeting.
- b. The President shall be ex officio a member of all committees and may elect to be a voting member of any committee at the meeting following the annual meeting.
- c. The President shall designate a member of each Committee to convene each Committee.
- d. Each committee shall select a chair, and may select other officers and adopt internal rules.
- e. All Committees shall meet on a monthly basis and report at each Commission meeting with a written report.
- f. All Committees are required to establish an agenda for yearly activities by the April meeting as well as write a summary of completed activities for the next Annual Meeting.
- g. The terms of office of all members of all committees shall end the beginning of the annual meeting.
- h. A vacancy in a committee shall be filled in the manner of the original selection.

- i. Each commissioner will be required to sign up for one (1) committee, but due to potential imbalance of committee membership, at the President's direction, a commissioner can be reassigned to another committee.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall meet in February, May, August, November and:

- a. Consist of the President, both Vice Presidents, both Secretaries, immediate past President (if still a commissioner), Treasurer and all Committee Chairpersons;
- b. Develop the annual budget;
- c. Evaluate and plan the direction and scope of Commission activities.
- d. All Executive meetings will be held at the end of the full Area Commission Meeting.

Section 3. The Planning & Development Committee shall:

- a. Conduct research, analysis, and make proposal recommendations on planning and development issues and any city plans that affect the area;
- b. Encourage, support, conduct research, and make recommendations on historic preservation issues within the area;
- c. Research, monitor, and make recommendations on any federal, state, or local funds and grant moneys that are available to implement plans in the area; and,
- d. Conduct research, analysis and make recommendations on quality of life issues relative to City Code and regulations.

Section 4. The Community Relations Committee shall:

- a. Promote the activities and existence of the Commission to the community and other groups throughout the city;
- b. Assist the board of elections with promotion of elections upon request;
- c. Distribute a monthly Commission activity fact sheet on Commission activity;
- d. Oversee maintenance and development of the Commission website.
- e. Develop and maintain a list of persons, departments or groups for the Commission to contact related to Commission business. This information will be posted to the Commission website.

Section 5. The Zoning Committee shall:

- a. Regularly receive, review with each applicant, and make recommendations to the Commission on all applications for rezoning, variances, graphics and other zoning adjustment appeals, and special permits located wholly or partially in the area; and,
- b. Shall review, monitor, and vote on all requests for demolitions. The decision of this committee on all such requests is final and must be reported to the Commission at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 6. The Governance Committee shall:

- a. Implement these by laws and elections rules as required;
- b. Research the effectiveness and applicability of these by laws and make recommendations to the Commission for amendments to the by laws;
- c. Conduct the orientation of new commissioners;
- d. Coordinate the internal activities of the Commission.

Section 7. An ad hoc committee may be established or dissolved by a majority vote of the Commission. Its size, powers and duties shall be specified by the creating resolution. Unless otherwise specified, the term of a special committee shall be one year.

Section 8. All reports to the Commission shall be delivered by the person chairing the committee (unless the committee directs otherwise). If a minority of a committee wishes to make a report, it may do so after the committee reports and as an addition to the report.

Section 9. In the event a matter overlaps the area of two or more committees, the President of the Commission shall have the authority to assign such issues to a specific standing committee, or charge two or more of the committees to work as a special combined committee for the issue.

## **Article VI. ELECTIONS**

Section 1. Elections shall be held on a Saturday between the last Saturday in October and the second Saturday in November. The final date will be set based on method established under Article VI Section 10 of these by laws. Elections shall be determined by plurality vote.

Section 2. Any person eighteen years of age or older and is a resident in the University Area, shall be an elector. Electors need not be registered with the Franklin County Board of Elections.

Section 3. All nominations shall be by petition as provided in the Election Rules. All candidates must be qualified to vote for themselves, and be a resident of the district as set forth in the Election Rules.

Section 4. All candidates and electors must provide identification and proof of residence in their district in which they intend to run or vote. Such identification may include, but is not limited to a valid driver's license, state-issued id, or a university id. Other identification may be accepted at the discretion of the majority vote of the Board of Elections, whose determination shall be final. Affidavits and other sworn statements, by themselves, shall never be sufficient.

Section 5. A statement of the identification provided by electors in instances in which the sufficiency is uncertain shall be written by the poll worker on the envelope in which the ballot is placed. The Board shall determine the sufficiency of each identification before the envelope is opened. If it is the decision of the Board that the identification is not sufficient, the envelope shall be retained unopened.

Section 6. Electors shall provide identification before they are permitted to vote. Successful candidates shall provide identification at the meeting of the Commission in which the election results are reported and approved. Should it be determined by vote of the Commission that the candidate has not established verification of residency, the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes in that district shall be declared the winner.

Section 7. At any time prior to the first day of elections, any commissioner may dispute the residency of any candidate by so informing the board of elections. In such case, the Board shall contact the candidate to verify residency.

Section 8. There shall be a Board of Elections, consisting of five persons appointed by the President at the June meeting prior to the next election with the approval of the Commission, none of whom shall be connected in any way with a candidate for the Commission. The Board shall perform all duties set forth in the Election Rules.

Section 9. The Board of Elections shall adopt Election Rules for governing the elections.

- a. Such rules shall be adopted by a majority vote of the Board.
- b. Such rules shall be in conformity with these By Laws.
- c. Such rules shall not be changed within the thirty (30) days after an election or within forty-five (45) days before an election.
- d. Any adoption or amendment of the Election Rules shall be presented to the Commission at the beginning of two regularly scheduled meetings. Should the Commission not disapprove of them by the end of that second meeting, they shall take effect.
- e. The Commission may amend the Election Rules without action by the Board of Elections in the same manner as amending by laws as set forth in Article VII.

Section 10. The Board of elections shall establish the date of elections for the year within the restrictions set by Article VI Section 1 as part of the Boards report provided to the Commission at the start of the Annual meeting. Upon acceptance of the Boards report the Board will be discharged from its responsibilities.

## **Article VII. AMENDMENT**

Section 1. As permitted per C.C. 3109.13, these by-laws may be amended in part or in whole at any regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission by an affirmative vote of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of all Commission members provided that the amendments were submitted in writing at the previous regularly scheduled meeting. The Corresponding Secretary shall file any approved amendments immediately after its adoption with the city clerk for publication in the City Bulletin. Such amendments shall take effect ten (10) days after such publication per C.C. 121.05.