

BYLAWS OF THE SONOMA COUNTY PROJECT REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Amended:

ARTICLE I PURPOSE

Section 1. To provide guidelines and rules of operation for the Project Review Advisory Committee (PRAC) which are part of the Sonoma County Permit Sonoma created by the Sonoma County Code as adopted by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors (Board).

To provide definitive guidelines for the conducting of public hearings in order to insure fair, understandable and effective procedures.

To publish these rules and procedures for public hearings in accordance with Section 65804 of the California Government Code.

PRAC serves as technical advisory committee on subdivisions, takes referrals from the Board and Planning Commission, approves minor subdivisions, oversees them, and makes recommendations to the Board and Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) concerning them. PRAC also examines certain projects to determine necessity of preparing an Environmental Impact Report and recommends on environmental issues. PRAC replaces and performs the functions of the Environmental Protection Committee, the Engineering Advisory Committee, and the Mineral Resources Committee.

ARTICLE II ORGANIZATION

Section 2. There are seven PRAC members representing: 1. Environmental Health Div. of Public Health Dept. 2. Storm Water Division of Sonoma County Water Agency 3. Road Division of the Public Works Dept. 4. Sanitation Division of Water Agency 5. Permit and Resource Management 6. County Surveyor's Office 7. Agricultural Commissioner.

The Director of Permit Sonoma has sole authority and approval to appoint committee members to PRAC.

Substitutes for committee members shall be approved by the sole direction of the Director of Permit Sonoma.

ARTICLE III MEETINGS

Section 3. Regular Meetings – Project Review Advisory Committee (PRAC)
There shall normally be two regular meetings of PRAC each month, on the first and third Thursday, starting at 9:00 a.m. <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Project-Review-and-Advisory-Committee/>

If there is a fifth (5th) Thursday in a month, there shall be a regular meeting held on that day.

Section 4. Special Meetings
Special meetings shall be held on the call of the Chairperson of PRAC.

- Section 5. Notification - Regular Meetings
Each member shall be notified of the time and place or electronic venue of each regular meeting. Said notice shall be given by the Secretary and shall be served by email one (1) week before the meeting.
- Section 6. Notification - Special Meetings
Each PRAC committee member shall be notified of the time, place or electronic venue and purpose of each special meeting. Said notice shall be given by the Secretary and shall be served by email at least twenty-four hours before the time appointed for such meeting.
- Section 7. Quorum
Four (4) of the voting members of PRAC shall constitute a quorum.
- Section 8. State Laws
All provisions of the Government Code (including Sections 54950-54960, Ralph M. Brown Act) shall be followed in the scheduling, notification and conduct of all PRAC meetings.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

- Section 9. Officers
The Director of Permit Sonoma appoints PRAC members. The officers of the PRAC shall be a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and a Secretary.

The Director of the Permit and Resource Management Department or his/her designee shall be the Secretary of the Project Review Advisory Committee.
- Section 10. Term of Office
The officers shall hold office for one year from January 1st through December 31st and thereafter until their successors take office.
- Section 11. Duties of Officers
The Chairperson shall chair the respective meeting. In the absence of the Chairperson the Chairperson shall appoint another officer to run the meeting.

The Secretary shall perform the duties required by law, and he/she shall have a true and complete record of PRAC proceedings, as prescribed in the procedural rules for conduct of public meetings, and have charge of all books and documents, and papers which property belong to his/her office, as well as signing of official documents.

ARTICLE V CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

- Section 12. The rules of parliamentary procedures as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all meetings of the PRAC, except as provided otherwise in these rules.
- Chairperson at Meetings
Meetings of PRAC shall be called to order by the Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall call the meeting to order.

The Chairperson will require that parliamentary procedure be adhered to by all who wish to be heard.

During the hearing, committee members, staff members, proponents, opponents, and other interested persons will direct all questions through the Chair. Direct questioning of witnesses may be allowed at the discretion of the Chair. The Chair will recognize and accept testimony from all who wish to be heard. However, repetitious, and irrelevant testimony will not be accepted, nor will the reading of repetitious letters and petitions be permitted. Speakers may be limited at time of presentation.

Section 13. Meeting Attendance and Records

The Secretary shall keep a record of those committee members present and those absent. Due to the importance of PRAC business, members should make every effort to attend regular and special meetings.

All meetings will be recorded by mechanical means. If a verbatim transcript is desired, the persons requesting the transcript shall employ and pay the fee or fees of a reporter. Staff shall tape a record of the proceedings which are held in the regular meeting room or electronic venue. However, tapes/recordings are held only for a period of two years after final approval by the Project Review Advisory Committee.

Section 14. Order of Business - Planning Commission

The order of business at regular PRAC meetings unless otherwise ordered by the Chair or provided by law, shall be as follows:

1. Call to order
2. Presentation of Permit Sonoma staff on project
3. Discussion of committee members
4. Applicants' presentation of project
5. Open Public Hearing for comments
6. Final discussion of committee members on project
7. Motion and Seconded
8. Roll call vote and call out vote for record
9. Adjournment

The above order of business may be suspended or varied at any time upon order of the Chair when he/she deems it is in the public interest to do so.

It is PRAC's responsibility to scrupulously guard the right of the public to a fair and impartial public meeting and to maintain the dignity and personal integrity of all who participate. Personal abuse of any meeting participant will not be tolerated by PRAC.

When conducting public hearings, PRAC acts in a quasi-judicial capacity.

The order of business at PRAC hearings unless otherwise ordered by the Chair or provided by law, shall be as follows

1. The Chair shall open the public hearing.
2. The staff will make a report covering the facts and background of the application or matter being heard, including reasons or criteria for recommendations.
3. The Secretary or other staff member will present communications concerning the application.
4. The applicant or his representative will then be given an opportunity to make a presentation or make comments relative to his application first. Then other members of the public will be given an opportunity to comment.

5. The applicant, or his representative, may then respond to previous testimony, at the discretion of the Chair.

6. The public portion of the hearing will then be closed, and no further testimony (including testimony from staff) taken except for questions by PRAC of staff and the public, unless a determination is made that the hearing shall be reopened and continued.

7. PRAC shall then proceed with discussion.

8. Action Alternatives

PRAC may then:

- or
- a. votes upon the matter by either approving or disapproving as presented;
 - b. grants a permit or tentative map subject to conditions; or
 - c. defers taking action on the matter and continue for further discussion and appropriate action. (If a continuance is suggested prior to commencement of the public hearing, the Chair shall determine if those witnesses present prefer to present their testimony during the hearing as called or delay to the date of continuance.)

Final decision shall include written findings required by statute or ordinance with reasonable factual determination pertinent to the issues involved.

The Chair will then call for the next agenda item.

Section 15. Motions and Voting

All actions shall consist of a motion and second. An "aye" vote by a majority of the members present shall be necessary to carry a motion. A quorum (4 members) shall be present to effectuate a vote. An abstention shall count as neither an aye or a no vote. An appeal is denied if it fails to receive the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present.

Section 16. Amending Bylaws

These bylaws may be added to or amended at any regular meeting on motion, duly seconded and carried by majority vote of a quorum of the Project Review Advisory Committee (7 members, 4 for quorum).

Section 17. Authority

Respective Departments: Ordinance Nos. 2217 and 2218, 04/11/77. Abolishes the Engineering Advisory Committee and Environmental Protection Committee and creates in their place the Project Review and Advisory Committee.

The Director of Permit Sonoma has sole authority to appoint and approve committee members.