

Natural Resources Advisory Committee

Purpose:

The purpose of the committee shall be to serve as an advisory body to the Town Council on issues related to the protection and enhancement of the community's natural resource base.

Membership:

The committee shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the Town Council for their interest in and concern for the Town of Windham, all of whom shall be residents or property owners of the Town. Membership shall be derived from a wide spectrum of interests and stakeholder groups; knowledge of environmental issues is helpful, but not required. Appointments shall be made for staggered three (3) year terms.

The committee shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair annually, at its first regular meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, from within its membership. In addition to the seven (7) voting members appointed by the Town Council, a Town Councilor shall serve on the committee as a non-voting member.

Meetings and Procedures:

The committee shall elect a Chair from its membership, as indicated above. The Chair shall have the authority to convene meetings of the committee, which shall be conducted in accordance with Maine's "Freedom of Access" law (1 MRSA § 401 et. seq.), with due notice to the members. The committee shall adopt, subject to the review and approval of the Town Council, such other reasonable rules of procedure as may be necessary for the efficient conduct of its business while allowing for public input, accountability and due process; however, the committee shall not have the authority to conduct public hearings.

Charge:

At the direction of the Council, it shall be the responsibility of the committee to:

1. Identify problems, recommend solutions and propose policy goals for consideration by the Town Council which will preserve, protect, and enhance the community's natural resources.

2. Update the Town Council on the status of the community's natural resources and to identify short-term and long-term threats.
3. Assist with the investigation of current and/or potential threats to the community's natural resources.
4. Comment on proposed ordinances or ordinance amendments regarding their consistency with the preservation, protection, and enhancement of the community's natural resources.
5. Establish and maintain an index of open areas within the town for the purpose of obtaining information in relation to the proper protection, development or use of those open areas.
6. Collaborate with Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to make recommendations to the Town Council to:
 - i. Acquire land by purchase, gift, foreclosure, condemnation, and/or conservation easement.
 - ii. Allocate Open Space Impact Fee funds for the acquisition of land or conservation easement by the Town or a qualified association which has as its principal purpose the conservation or preservation of land in essentially its natural condition.
7. Offer input and recommendations to the Town Council regarding any proposed development of Town-owned property or any significant proposed change in use of Town-owned property.
8. Educate the public on short-term and long-term threats to the community's natural resources.
9. Collaborate with other Town Committees to implement the Open Space Master Plan and natural resource or conservation-related goals in other Town planning documents, such as the Comprehensive Plan, and report implementation progress of the Open Space Master Plan to the Town Council and community at large.
10. Meet with the Town Council on a regular basis, or as needed, regarding its activities.

Amended June 15, 2021 by Order 21-130
Amended June 25, 2019 by Order 19-118
Amended September 12, 2017 by Order 17-169
Amended May 10, 2011 by Order 11-074
Approved by Town Council 97-88
June 24, 1997