

# Remote Participation Information

## Planning Board Meetings

### 2020

## Why is the Planning Board Holding Remote Meetings?

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Planning & Economic Development Department and Planning Board have moved most operations to online platforms. City staff are working daily to continue to provide efficient service and remain accessible for community members. We appreciate your willingness to learn this technology and value your participation.

## Are Remote Meetings Allowed?

- ***Your Right to Know:*** Because of public health concerns, the State of Maine has passed emergency legislation that allows municipalities to host remote meetings. Please see this link for Freedom of Access information: [Your Right to Know](#).
- ***Your Input is Valued:*** The Planning & Economic Development Department and Planning Board want to ensure that the meetings are run as smoothly as possible and that those who are attending for the public hearings have the opportunity to be heard in a respectful and efficient manner. Also, written correspondence can be submitted in advance of any public hearing and will be sent to the Board for review.

## How Will the Board Meetings Work?

- ***How are Remote Meetings Different from In-Person Meetings?*** Remote meetings will be run similarly to how in-person meetings are run. However, in remote meetings the Board will rely on technology, and as such, will adapt certain aspects of its meetings. At the beginning of each meeting, the Chair will verbally report the present Board members and City Staff for the record.
- ***What Will the Board be Doing to Effectively Use this Technology?*** Before Board members speak, they will direct all comments through the chair, with the phrase: “Mr. Chair,” and will wait to be recognized by the Chair. This will help reduce the potential of Board members accidentally talking over one another.
- ***How Will Votes be Taken Since Everyone May Not be Able to See Each Other?*** There will be only roll call votes. The Chair will also ask each Board member if they have any discussion on each motion before a vote is taken.

## What Software is the Board Using to Host Remote Meetings and How Can I Learn More About It?

- ***Zoom:*** The Board is using Zoom. Here is the link to Zoom: [Zoom.us](#).
- ***Installation:*** For those using tablets to access the remote meetings, please download the Zoom application from the Apple App Store [here](#), or from Google Play [here](#), depending on your device. You can download the Zoom application for laptop/desktop [here](#).
- ***Trainings:*** You can learn more about Zoom with these videos:
  - [Join A Meeting](#) (1 minute)
  - [Joining & Configuring Audio & Video](#) (1 minute)

## How and When Can I Speak During a Meeting?

- ***When Can I Participate?*** Members of the public will be able to listen to the meeting. Members of the public will be allowed to speak only during public hearings. The Board will make a motion to open the public hearing before receiving input from the public. Each member of the public is asked to limit their comment to no more than five minutes and to not repeat items that have been previously discussed during the hearing.
- ***Participating by Desktop, iPad or Other Mobile Device?*** When the public hearing is open, members of the public participating on desktop and mobile devices must use the “raise hand” feature in Zoom to be recognized by the Chair before their microphone will be enabled and they are able to speak. When members of the public speak, they are asked to state their name and address for the record. There may be a slight pause as the host mutes or unmutes microphones; please do not be alarmed, as this is a normal function of the software.
- ***Participating by Phone?*** Members of the public who are participating by phone will be muted by the host until the Board opens the public hearing. During the public hearing, the Chair will ask if there are members of the public participating by phone that would like to address the Board. At that time, those participating by phone will be recognized by the host and Chair to speak before addressing the Board. Members of the public who are participating by phone are asked to keep their phone microphone muted (if possible) until the public hearing is open, to reduce background noises.

## Questions?

Please contact the Planning & Economic Development Department with any questions: #207-282-3487. You can also contact the City Planner at [Eprescott@sacomaine.org](mailto:Eprescott@sacomaine.org).