



COUNTY OF AMHERST



Department of Community Development *Building Safety and Inspections Division*

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AMHERST COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
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AMHERST COUNTY APPEALS BOARD CHARTER

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of the Appeals Board is to assist the Board of Supervisors by providing information, advice, recommendations, and reports in the area of Building Code Enforcement and Fire Code Enforcement. In particular, the interpretation of code by the Building Code Official or Fire Code Official, as required by the Uniform Statewide Building Code of Virginia and Uniform Statewide Fire Code of Virginia.

2. **Goals.** The goals of the Appeals Board are to provide specific, measurable, reasonable and timely recommendations and reports on matters requested by the Board of Supervisors, or otherwise within its purview. The Appeals Board may have other specific goals provided to it by its applicable initiating statute or regulation.

The Appeals Board may expect to receive specific objectives for each year from the Board of Supervisors, which it will be expected to achieve and report its progress.

3. **Membership.** The Building Appeals Board will consist of 5 voting members. Each voting member will serve at the pleasure of the Board of Supervisors, or until such time as the 4-year appointment expires. The voting members will all be selected as at large and professional occupation representatives. The voting members will be selected by the Board of Supervisors. The voting members may be representatives of specific organizations or may be individuals named for their professional or educational experience. Public advertising to fill vacant seats is required. Voting members must be sworn into office by the Clerk of the Circuit Court. Additional alternate or non-voting members of the Appeals Board may be invited by the Board of Supervisors to participate in specified, limited, non-voting capacities.

4. **Meetings.** Regular meetings of the Appeals Board will be held at a convenient time and place as needed. The regularly scheduled meeting time may be changed by unanimous consent of the members of the Appeals Board, but must be held within 30 days of the receipt of an appeal. Special meetings may be announced and called as needed. Regular meetings will be held, at a minimum of annually, and on an as-needed basis as determined by the Building Code Official. Summarized minutes will be taken in the format specified by the County Administrator, and submitted to the County Administrator no later than 30 days from the date of the meeting. The agenda for each meeting is determined by the Chairman with the assistance of the Secretary.

5. **Reports.** The Amherst County Appeals Board is required to provide a written report of its activities to the County Administrator on an as necessary basis. The County Administrator will direct the format and content of the report. An annual report summarizing all prior reports during the year is also required. On occasion, the County Administrator may seek specific information, guidance, input or recommendations from the Appeals Board on a matter being prepared for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. The County Administrator will specify the format of the information sought.



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6. **Structure.** The Appeals Board will be organized pursuant to ACR 1-3.10 except that if there are temporary members that participate for a limited time or purpose their selection, purpose and duration should be specified.

7. **Youth Participation.** The Appeals Board will attempt to have two youth member(s) who will serve for a period of one year. They are selected by the Chairman, who will employ a selection process if there is more than one applicant for each seat. The youth participant(s) will not be voting members of the Appeals Board. They shall receive all meeting announcements, agendas, and preparatory information as a normal member so they may participate and provide input as full members regardless of whether they hold a vote. They are subject to the same membership requirements as the adult members and may be removed for the same causes. Youth may be recruited from the school system or other specified organizations. They are to receive a letter or certificate at the end of their term to memorialize their service.

8. **Staff Support.** The Appeals Board can expect to receive support directly from The Building Safety and Inspections Division or the Department of Public Safety, as may be required. A staff member will serve as the Appeals Board's secretary. The County Attorney is also available to answer legal questions. County email accounts will be opened for each member to facilitate communications. Copier, postage, and other support can be made available through the County Administrator's Executive Assistant.

9. **Authority.** The Appeals Board may represent the County of Amherst to Region 2000 and its partner organizations with the understanding that all final decisions regarding County business resides solely with the Board of Supervisors. The Appeals Board may not represent the County to state, federal, nonprofit or commercial and industrial organizations without coordination with the County Administrator. As a separate entity with the legal right to contract, issue decisions, and/or otherwise run its own affairs, the Appeals Board is expected to keep the County Administrator apprised of any and all activities it undertakes which may have a significant effect upon the County or its interests, especially its budget.

10. **Official Acts.** Acts of the Appeals Board shall be performed by majority vote and recorded in official minutes. Only the Chairman of the Appeals Board, as an individual, may speak for the body but must be careful not to overstep the bounds of consensus within the Appeals Board. Decisions shall be reached according to ACR 1-3.8

11. **Virginia Freedom of Information Act.** The Appeals Board is a "public body" under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. It is the responsibility of the Chairman, with the assistance of the Secretary to ensure compliance with all facets of this law.