

POSITION DESCRIPTION**GE-19****Town of Needham****Assistant Town Planner****10/2016*****Duties:***

Provides professional staff support to the Director of Planning and Community Development in carrying out planning, zoning and subdivision programs under the provisions of state law and the Town of Needham Bylaws. Under the general supervision of the Director of Planning and Community Development, provides regulatory, technical and design support for various boards, committees and other departments; assists applicants in working through the regulatory process of the Planning Board, Board of Appeals and Design Review Board, as assigned. Incumbent is responsible for maintaining and improving upon the efficiency and effectiveness of all areas under his/her direction and control. Performs varied and responsible duties requiring a thorough knowledge of departmental operations and the exercise of judgment and initiative in completing tasks, particularly in situations not clearly defined by precedent or established procedures. Incumbent is called upon to handle a significant amount of detail, each varying from the other in substance and content, requiring incumbent to approach workload with flexibility. Incumbent provides management of part-time office staff, including customer service.

Assists the Director of Planning and Community Development in administering the Planning Board's permit activities and related public hearings for all Preliminary and Definitive Subdivision Plans, Site Plans, Residential Compounds, Planned Residential Developments, and Scenic Road applications. Coordinates the review of applications on proposed projects; assimilates and summarizes comments from other departments and identifies issues with proposed projects, applying applicable zoning and State laws and recommends alternative courses of action and conditions and provides comments and recommendations to the Director on all pending applications. Prepares draft decisions for all special permits, subdivisions, and scenic roads applications. Assures that approved permit conditions are met or adhered to including building and occupancy permit reviews and oversees maintenance of a computerized permit tracking database for the department.

Meets with applicants to answer questions and to discuss or assist to identify potential solutions; guides applicants through the permitting process.

Answers questions and concerns related to projects and/or regulations; ensures the planning process and land use decisions are transparent and open to the public.

Attends various town board and/or committee meetings as assigned and provides technical support as necessary.

Administers and monitors performance bonding for all subdivisions, special permits, and scenic road projects and performs routine compilation of data for official statements on project bonding status.

Assists in the preparation of grant applications and the undertaking of planning studies, including the preparation of maps and graphic materials and the collection of data, as needed. Assists in the

preparation and maintenance of reports, maps, records and files in support of department operations. Prepares study maps, sketches, charts, and graphs as needed and as instructed by the Director.

Oversees preparation of Planning Board's agenda and compilation of information and background packets and coordinates the provision of administrative support to committees and sub-committees of the Board.

Provides senior level assistance to internal and external customers of the Town, including members of the public, staff of the Town, board and committee members. Provides information to Town departments, officials, developers, community groups, and the general public related to projects and/or regulations.

Develops, recommends, and implements new office systems to improve the efficiency of the Department's office operation, with a primary focus on automated systems.

Assists the Director with the preparation of the annual budget.

Assists in developing initial drafts of amendments to the Zoning By-Laws and coordinates the hearing process. Assists in preparing the Planning Board's hand-out materials and presentations for the annual and special Town Meetings; responsible for overseeing reprinting of the Town's Zoning By-Laws, including compilation, production, and distribution.

Ensures that the Town's planning databases are maintained and updated.

Oversees daily administration of the West Metro Home Consortium; attends all meetings and prepares for related public hearings; monitors budgets, prepares requisitions and the Annual Consolidated Plan. Collaborates with Needham Opportunities Inc. on projects designated for Home funding.

Performs special projects and related responsibilities as initiated and requested.

Performs other related duties as required, directed or as the situation dictates.

Basic Knowledge:

Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of planning and associated laws, bylaws, rules and regulations. Good working knowledge of and proficiency in the use of office automation, planning materials and tools, research technology and other resources. Skill in interpreting plans, maps and charts.

Excellent interpersonal skills; ability to communicate both verbally and in writing; ability to effectively deal with all members of the public in a courteous and tactful manner; ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with coworkers.

Ability to recognize town-wide priorities and work cooperatively to support their accomplishment, to identify and analyze complex issues and to develop appropriate recommendations, to collaboratively

problem solve with a group on complex and emotional issues. Ability to conduct independent research and to analyze and interpret results.

Ability to work with a high level of detail; ability to prioritize multiple tasks and deal effectively with interruptions.

Experience:

Bachelor's Degree in planning or related field and three to five years of progressively responsible related experience; Master's Degree preferred; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Effective communication skills, especially writing skills, are essential. Knowledge of state and federal regulations and procedures, and state zoning and subdivision acts is helpful. Experience with design or construction review or management, as well as computer skills, is a plus.

Independent Action:

Incumbent functions independently under general supervision, developing work schedule and setting priorities, referring complex or policy issues to Director of Planning and Community Development.

Supervisory Responsibility:

Responsible for the supervision of one part-time administrative assistant and temporary office support as needed.

Physical and Environmental Responsibility:

- Normal office environment, not subject to extremes in temperature, noise, or odors.
- Regular interruptions to assist citizens.
- Frequently subjected to the demands of other individuals and the volume and/or rapidity with which tasks must be accomplished.
- May spend extended periods at computer terminal, on telephone, or operating office machines.
- Work requires travel within Town and to neighboring towns and requires attendance at evening meetings.
- Regular lifting and carrying of files, documents, records, etc.