

WESTERLY ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
RULES OF PROCEDURE
Revised December 3, 2020

1. “Robert’s Rules of Order” as amended or revised shall govern questions of order and procedures in cases not provided for in these rules.
2. The Westerly Architectural Review Board (also referred to as the ARB) shall consist of five (5) sitting members and two (2) alternate members (a/k/a auxiliary members), appointed by the Westerly Town Council, and the terms of their appointment shall be as provided by Article V, Section 5-63 of the Westerly Code of Ordinances.
3. The purpose of the ARB is “to provide guidance in the form of an advisory opinion with regard to the design of buildings, structures, landscaping and site layout, with the objective of promoting development projects ...” (§5-61). The ARB advises the Planning and Zoning Boards, “providing commentary on submitted architectural plans and site plans [] for development plan review applications” (§5-62A) as specified in the Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 260) and the Development Regulations (Chapter A261). The ARB may provide an opinion on a change to the Zoning Ordinance or Zoning Map, any amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, any proposals for alterations or additions to transportation routes and streets, changes to public utility systems, redevelopment or rehabilitation plans, in support of the Planning Board and Town Council decision-making.
4. The ARB shall organize once a year in July, and shall elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary from among its membership. The standing Secretary shall conduct an election for Chairman after which the Chairman shall conduct elections for Vice-Chairman and Secretary. The standing Secretary shall review meeting minutes prior to submission to the Architectural Review Board for approval.
5. The regular monthly meeting of the ARB shall be held on the first Thursday of the month, at 4:00 P.M., except where voted by the Board to take place at an alternate time or day. A list of all regularly scheduled meetings will be determined by the Board and is to be filed with the Town Clerk by December thirty-first, for the following year.
6. Application and submission requirements shall be as specified in accordance with the applicable checklist and the administrative procedures established by the Office of Planning. All supporting materials intended for review and consideration by the Board, must be received by the Administrative Officer before 1:00pm (EST/EDT) on the submission date posted at the Office of Planning. At least five (5) days prior to a scheduled meeting, the Administrative Officer/Town Planner will deliver to all ARB members the meeting agenda and supporting materials.
7. The Administrative Officer shall have the authority to waive submission of any portion of the application deemed appropriate. The Administrative Officer’s decision to waive submission of any portion of the application, or to deny a request to waive any required submission, may be appealed by the applicant and the ARB. The Administrative Officer may seek input from the ARB Chair if the appropriateness of the waiver request is unclear.

8. “The ARB shall submit a written report to the Planning and Zoning Boards for each application not less than 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting or public hearing at which the application will be heard.” (§5-62[E]) With consent from the applicant, the ARB may extend its review period if additional documentation is needed to provide a proper advisory opinion. If such a review period extension is not granted, the ARB may reserve the right not to provide an advisory opinion to the Planning or Zoning Board, or may identify in its report items that were requested but not provided during ARB review.
9. The ARB “shall not conduct its review relative to zoning regulations governing use of a property, the granting of variances, or building code compliance” (§5-62[B]), nor shall it conduct its review relative to fire code or ADA compliance. However, if the ARB is aware of conflicts that the presented plans may have with such regulations and codes, the ARB may share its concerns with the applicant. If the ARB believes these conflicts may result in significant modification of the architecture of the proposed plans, the ARB may provide architectural guidance and/or recommend redesign.
10. Meetings of the ARB shall be conducted consistent with the Rhode Island Open Meetings Law. All meetings of the ARB, including special meetings, emergency meetings and workshops, shall be noticed and open to the public, and minutes shall be recorded and maintained. Special meetings may be held at any time upon the call of the Chairman or upon the request of any two (2) Board members.
11. A quorum shall consist of three (3) members of the ARB. In cases where a quorum is not present, the members present may only vote to open the meeting and adjourn to another definite date and time that a quorum can be present and allows for the required 48-hour public notice. A decision by the ARB shall be made by the simple majority vote of the five (5) member ARB. Any member who knows that they will be absent from a Board meeting shall notify the Administrative Officer/Town Planner at the earliest possible time to ensure a quorum.
12. The Chairman, and in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairman, and in the absence of both, the Secretary, shall preside at all meetings of the ARB. In the event of the absence or the disability of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary, the senior member of those members present shall preside. The Chairman shall distinctly state and put to vote all motions. When a voice vote is not unanimous, a poll vote of each member shall be recorded.
13. The Chairman of the ARB shall note for the record all members present at the opening of all public hearings. At the continuation of any such hearing, the Chairman shall also note for the record those members present and only those ARB members present at all hearings and continuations thereof shall be eligible to vote upon completion of the hearing.
14. No member of the ARB shall vote in any proposition through which the member, directly or indirectly could financially benefit and/or as governed by State of Rhode Island Ethics Code. A ARB member who has recused himself shall leave the ARB’s area and shall have all the rights of any citizen to address the ARB from the floor.
15. Any ARB member or technical support staff desiring to speak shall address the Chairman, be recognized to speak, and shall not be interrupted while speaking except by a call to order, or for the correction of a mistake or to yield to another ARB member.

16. Any person addressing the ARB shall do so in a respectful and courteous manner. A member of the ARB may interrupt speakers for the purpose of asking a question or obtaining information. Persons addressing the ARB shall not interrupt any ARB member while he is speaking or while the ARB is discussing the issue at hand.
17. Any citizen group or group of citizens shall have the right to petition the ARB about any matter within its jurisdiction provided a final vote has not been taken on the matter. The group or a representative shall submit its request in writing setting forth specifically the purpose of the petition and the relief desired to the Administrative Officer to be scheduled for the next available regular meeting.
18. All decision documents resulting from ARB action shall be signed by the Chairman of the Board, or another officer in his/her/their place, if the Chairman is unavailable for signature.
19. The Order of Business at each meeting shall be as follows unless scheduled otherwise by the Administrative Officer or Chairman:
 - A. Call to Order
 - B. Approval of Minutes
 - C. Old Business
 - D. New Business
 - E. Reports
 - F. Discussion
 - G. Adjournment