

STATE OF NEW YORK

3475

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 27, 2025

Introduced by Sen. HELMING -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Cities 2

AN ACT to amend the general city law, the town law, and the village law, in relation to authorizing the use of mediation in land use decisions

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 20 of the general city law is amended by adding a
2 new subdivision 39 to read as follows:

3 39. To provide by local law for the use of voluntary and nonbinding
4 mediation pursuant to guidelines established by the unified court system
5 or such other procedure as determined by its legislative body. When
6 utilizing such mediation, the applicant and the legislative body may
7 mutually agree, in writing, to stay or extend the statutory time periods
8 for review of such application, and said agreement shall specify the
9 date on which the stay or extension will end. The legislative body shall
10 make such written agreement available to the public by filing a copy
11 thereof in the city clerk's office.

12 § 2. Subdivision 3 of section 81-a of the general city law, as added
13 by chapter 208 of the laws of 1993, is amended to read as follows:

14 3. Assistance to the board of appeals. (a) Such board shall have the
15 authority to call upon any department, agency or employee of the city
16 for such assistance as shall be deemed necessary and as shall be author-
17 ized by the legislative body. Such department, agency or employee may be
18 reimbursed for any expenses incurred as a result of such assistance.

19 (b) The zoning board of appeals may be authorized by the legislative
20 body to provide for the use of voluntary and nonbinding mediation as an
21 aid in fostering land use decisions, pursuant to the guidelines estab-
22 lished by the unified court system or such other procedure as determined
23 by the legislative body.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD07385-01-5

1 § 3. Paragraph b of subdivision 14 of section 27 of the general city
2 law, as amended by chapter 418 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read
3 as follows:

4 b. The planning board may review and make recommendations on a
5 proposed city comprehensive plan or amendment thereto. In addition, the
6 planning board shall have the full power and authority to make investi-
7 gations, maps, reports, and recommendations in connection therewith
8 relating to the planning and development of the city as it deems desira-
9 ble, providing the total expenditures of said board shall not exceed the
10 appropriation provided therefor. The planning board may be authorized
11 by the legislative body to provide for the use of voluntary and nonbind-
12 ing mediation as an aid in fostering land use decisions, pursuant to the
13 guidelines established by the unified court system or such other proce-
14 dure as determined by the legislative body.

15 § 4. Section 64 of the town law is amended by adding a new subdivision
16 26 to read as follows:

17 26. Mediation. Is authorized to provide by local law for the use of
18 voluntary and nonbinding mediation pursuant to the guidelines estab-
19 lished by the unified court system or other procedure as determined by
20 the board. When utilizing such mediation, the applicant and the town
21 board may mutually agree, in writing, to stay or extend the statutory
22 time periods for review of such application, and said agreement shall
23 specify the date on which the stay or extension will end. The town board
24 shall make such written agreement available to the public by filing a
25 copy thereof in the town clerk's office.

26 § 5. Subdivision 3 of section 267-a of the town law, as amended by
27 chapter 248 of the laws of 1992, is amended to read as follows:

28 3. Assistance to board of appeals. (a) Such board shall have the
29 authority to call upon any department, agency or employee of the town
30 for such assistance as shall be deemed necessary and as shall be author-
31 ized by the town board. Such department, agency or employee may be reim-
32 bursed for any expenses incurred as a result of such assistance.

33 (b) The zoning board of appeals may be authorized by the town board to
34 provide for the use of voluntary and nonbinding mediation as an aid in
35 fostering land use decisions, pursuant to the guidelines established by
36 the unified court system or other such procedure as determined by the
37 board.

38 § 6. Paragraph b of subdivision 14 of section 271 of the town law, as
39 amended by chapter 418 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read as
40 follows:

41 b. The planning board may review and make recommendations on a
42 proposed town comprehensive plan or amendment thereto. In addition, the
43 planning board shall have full power and authority to make investi-
44 gations, maps, reports and recommendations in connection therewith
45 relating to the planning and development of the town as it seems desira-
46 ble, providing the total expenditures of said board shall not exceed the
47 appropriation provided therefor. The planning board may be authorized
48 by the town board to provide for the use of voluntary and nonbinding
49 mediation as an aid in fostering land use decisions, pursuant to the
50 guidelines established by the unified court system or other procedure as
51 determined by the board.

52 § 7. Subdivision 3 of section 4-412 of the village law is amended by
53 adding a new paragraph 14 to read as follows:

54 (14) Mediation. May provide for the use of voluntary and nonbinding
55 mediation pursuant to the guidelines established by the unified court
56 system or such other procedure as determined by the board of trustees.

1 When utilizing such mediation, the applicant and the board of trustees
2 may mutually agree, in writing, to stay or extend the statutory time
3 periods for review of such application, and said agreement shall specify
4 the date on which the stay or extension will end. The board of trustees
5 shall make such written agreement available to the public by filing a
6 copy thereof in the village clerk's office.

7 § 8. Subdivision 3 of section 7-712-a of the village law, as amended
8 by chapter 248 of the laws of 1992, is amended to read as follows:

9 3. Assistance to board of appeals. (a) Such board shall have the
10 authority to call upon any department, agency or employee of the village
11 for such assistance as shall be deemed necessary and as shall be author-
12 ized by the village board of trustees. Such department, agency or
13 employee may be reimbursed for any expenses incurred as a result of such
14 assistance.

15 (b) The zoning board of appeals may be authorized by the board of
16 trustees to provide for the use of voluntary and nonbinding mediation as
17 an aid in fostering land use decisions, pursuant to the guidelines
18 established by the unified court system or such other procedure as
19 determined by the board of trustees.

20 § 9. Paragraph b of subdivision 14 of section 7-718 of the village
21 law, as amended by chapter 418 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read
22 as follows:

23 b. The planning board may review and make recommendations on a
24 proposed village comprehensive plan or amendment thereto. In addition,
25 the planning board shall have the full power and authority to make
26 investigations, maps, reports, and recommendations in connection there-
27 with relating to the planning and development of the village as it seems
28 desirable, providing the total expenditures of said board shall not
29 exceed the appropriation provided therefor. The planning board may be
30 authorized by the board of trustees to provide for the use of voluntary
31 and nonbinding mediation as an aid in fostering land use decisions,
32 pursuant to the guidelines established by the unified court system or
33 such other procedure as determined by the board of trustees.

34 § 10. This act shall take effect on the first of July in the calendar
35 year next succeeding the calendar year in which it shall have become a
36 law, and shall not affect any local laws or ordinances providing for the
37 mediation of zoning and planning decisions which were enacted prior to
38 such effective date.