TOWN OF PUTNAM, NEW YORK
LOCAL LAW NO. 2 OF 2026

A LOCAL LAW FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF HILLSIDES AND SHORELINE AREAS

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the Town of Putnam, Washington County, New York, as follows:

Section 1. Legislative Intent and Purpose

The Town Board finds that steep slopes and shoreline areas surrounding Lake George and Lake Champlain are environmentally sensitive and subject to erosion, sedimentation, and slope instability. Activities such as blasting and excessive excavation pose risks to water quality, public safety, and property. This local law is enacted pursuant to the Town's police powers to protect public health, safety, and the environment, and is not intended to regulate land use or establish zoning districts.

Section 2. Authority

This local law is adopted pursuant to Municipal Home Rule Law §10 and the Town's authority to protect its physical and visual environment.

Section 3. Definitions

Regulated Area: All lands within 5,280 feet of the mean high-water mark of Lake George or Lake Champlain.

Blasting: The use of explosives to break or move rock, soil, or other materials.

Steep Slope: Land area with a natural grade of 15% or greater.

Excavation: Any man-made cut, cavity, or trench formed by removal of earth, rock, or other materials.

Section 4. Regulated Activities

BLASTING: No person shall engage in blasting within the Regulated Area, except as may be permitted by the Town Board. The Town Board may authorize blasting only upon a finding that such activity will not adversely affect public health or safety, will not cause undue erosion, sedimentation, or degradation of water quality, will not result in damage to neighboring properties, wells, or structures, and that no feasible non-explosive alternative exists.

EXCAVATION: No person shall conduct excavation, grading, or filling on a Steep Slope within the Regulated Area, except as may be permitted by the Town Board. The Town Board may issue a permit upon a determination that the proposed activity will not increase erosion or sediment transport, will not destabilize slopes or create a risk of landslide or subsidence, will incorporate appropriate stormwater management practices, and will not adversely impact water quality or neighboring properties. The Town Board may require the submission of engineering or environmental reports and may impose reasonable conditions, including but not limited to erosion controls, drainage measures, revegetation requirements, and monitoring, to ensure compliance with this local law.

5. Permitting

Applications for permits pursuant to this local law shall be filed with the Town Clerk not less than ten (10) days prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Town Board at which the application is to be considered. The application shall include, at a minimum, a description of the location of the proposed activity, including tax map parcel number and a map or sketch showing the affected area; a detailed description of the proposed activity, including the nature and extent of any excavation, grading, or filling; the methods to be used, including the type of equipment and, in the case of blasting, the type and quantity of explosives and blasting techniques to be utilized; proposed measures to control erosion, sedimentation, and stormwater runoff; the anticipated duration of the work; and any other information reasonably required by the Town Board to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed activity. The Town Board may refer the application to an engineer, environmental consultant, or other professional for review, the cost of which may be charged to the applicant. The Town Board may conduct a public hearing if it deems appropriate. The Town Board shall have the authority to approve, approve with conditions, or deny any application, and may deny such application upon a finding that the proposed activity would adversely affect water quality, increase erosion or sedimentation, destabilize slopes, impair the natural character or scenic value of the shoreline area, create a risk to public health or

safety, result in damage to neighboring properties, wells, or infrastructure, or otherwise be inconsistent with the purposes of this local law. In making its determination, the Town Board may consider the cumulative impacts of the proposed activity in conjunction with existing or reasonably foreseeable conditions within the regulated area. Any determination of the Town Board shall be based upon the record before it

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Section 6. Exceptions

This law shall not apply to emergency work performed by the Town of Putnam Highway Department necessary to protect public infrastructure or to stabilize hazardous conditions.

Section 7. Variances

The Town Board may grant a variance upon a showing of practical difficulty and upon finding that the proposed activity will not result in significant environmental harm.

Section 8. Enforcement and Penalties

Violations shall be punishable by a fine of not less than $2,500 nor more than $10,000 per day. The Town may also require restoration of disturbed land.

Section 9. Severability

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part of this Local Law shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered.

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Section 10. Effective Date

This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon filing with the Secretary of State of the State of New York in accordance with § 27 of the Municipal Home Rule Law.