

Here's a structured guide for formatting and documenting evidence:

1. Cover Letter

Start with a cover letter that briefly describes the submission, the project it relates to, and your intent. The cover letter should include:

- Date of submission.
- Your name, address, and contact information.
- A reference to the project and its application number (if applicable).
- A summary of the evidence you are submitting.
- The specific decision or request that the evidence supports.

Example:

[Date]

[Planning Board Name]

Town of [Town Name]

[Town Address]

Re: Submission of Evidence for Project [Project Name/Number]

Dear Members of the Planning Board,

I am submitting the following documents as evidence in / not in support of [project description or purpose]. I believe this information will assist the Board in making an informed decision on [specific issue].

Attached, you will find the following:

- Exhibit A: [Document Name/Description]

- Exhibit B: [Document Name/Description]

- ...

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Contact Information]

2. Organize Documents into Exhibits

Each piece of evidence should be clearly labeled as an Exhibit. Use a numbering system to keep track of each piece of evidence, and ensure that the documents are submitted in the order you refer to them in the cover letter.

- **Exhibit A: [Document Title]**
- **Exhibit B: [Document Title]**

You can further organize exhibits by category:

- Exhibits related to **environmental impact**
- Exhibits related to **site plans or drawings**
- Exhibits related to **traffic studies, etc.**

Example:

- Exhibit A: Environmental Impact Study for [Project Name]
- Exhibit B: Site Plan (Version Dated [Date])
- Exhibit C: Traffic Study Conducted by [Firm Name] (Dated [Date])

3. Document Formatting Guidelines

Font: Use a legible font such as Times New Roman or Arial, size 12.

- **Margins:** Keep 1-inch margins on all sides.
- **Numbering:** Number each page, either by section or consecutively across the entire submission.
- **Spacing:** Use single or 1.5 line spacing for clarity.
- **Headers/Footers:**
- Include your name, the project name, and exhibit number in the header or footer of each page.
- **File Format:** If submitting electronically, use PDF format for documents to preserve formatting.

4. Provide Clear, Concise Summaries

For each exhibit, provide a short summary at the beginning of the document that outlines the key points and relevance of the evidence to this project / application.

Clearly cite statutory references:

1. Local Zoning Criteria – state how the criteria are satisfied / not satisfied
2. Statutory Criteria – state how the criteria are satisfied / not satisfied

Example of an Exhibit Summary:

Exhibit A: Environmental Impact Study

This study, conducted by [Consultant Name], assesses the potential environmental impact of the proposed [project]. The study concludes that the project will not negatively affect the surrounding wetlands or protected areas as required under [ZONING BY-LAW ## Section, Sub-section, paragraph] . Detailed analysis of water runoff, wildlife habitat, and vegetation preservation is included.

5. Cite Sources and Reference Materials

If your submission includes research or information from other reports, studies, or regulations, make sure to cite these properly. Use footnotes or a bibliography, depending on the complexity of the document.

Example of a Citation:

1. Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, Wetlands Protection Act (310 CMR 10.00)

6. Provide Visual Aids

Site Plans, Maps, and Diagrams:

If you're submitting any visual documents (e.g., site plans, architectural drawings), label them clearly and include a legend if necessary.

Ensure all drawings are to scale and properly labeled with titles and dates.

7. Digital Submission Tips

Naming Files:

Name each file according to its exhibit number and title for easy reference (e.g., Exhibit_A_Environmental_Study.pdf).

File Size:

Check if the Planning Board has file size restrictions and compress files if necessary without losing resolution, especially for images or diagrams.

8. Final Review

Compliance:

Ensure that your submission complies with all local Planning Board rules and submission deadlines.

Completeness:

Double-check that all referenced exhibits are included, and all documents are signed and dated as necessary.

9. Submission and Follow-Up

- Submission Method: Submit via the method specified by the Planning Board (physical, email, or online portal).
- Confirmation: Request confirmation that the Board has received your documents.

- Follow-up: Be prepared to attend Planning Board meetings to provide additional context or clarification regarding your submission.