



Legislation Text

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TO: Board of Mayor and Aldermen

FROM: Eric Stuckey, City Administrator
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Emily Hunter, Planning and Sustainability Director
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SUBJECT:

Presentation And Discussion Of Recommended Changes To Neighborhood Meetings Required As Part Of The Planning Review Process.

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information to the Franklin Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) concerning neighborhood meetings required as part of the Planning Review process.

Background

Neighborhood meetings required as part of the Planning Review Process are often less productive than desired. All too often:

- Citizens arrive frustrated and leave frustrated
- Groups are able to gang up on individuals

The goal of the Neighborhood Meeting is to:

- Make neighboring properties aware of a potential development in their area,
- Provide a forum for citizens to learn about the potential development early in the process, and
- Allow an opportunity for citizens to suggest small-scale changes that could make the development more palatable for the neighborhood

Staff recommends the following changes:

- A varied meeting format to allow one-on-one dialogue, a formal presentation, and group Q&A
 - 1st 15 minutes: Informal Q&A-allows for drop-ins, close-up examination of the plan
 - 2nd 15 minutes: Formal presentation by applicant
 - Last 30 minutes: Formal Q&A-where the public asks questions from the podium
 - Meetings shall generally be limited to one hour per occurrence
- Changes to the notification letters to provide better information

- describe the project in laymen's terms
- explain the neighborhood open house meeting format
- include a one-page sketch of the proposal
- Emphasize the timing in review process and highlight future opportunities for public comment

Some other ways that would help facilitate transparency and understanding are to:

- Produce a formal pamphlet, outlining the life cycle of a development from early discussions with staff, all the way through building permit-high level, pointing out public engagement opportunities
- Include the neighborhood meeting public notice letter and proposed plan on the City's website public calendar for all to view

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact to the City associated with this item. Development teams may occur some increased costs to staff the open house format meeting.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the proposed changes to the format and structure of neighborhood meetings be implemented.