

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE: Neighborhood Meeting Process Improvement
DEPARTMENT: Planning & Development Services
PRESENTED BY: Joseph W. Tovar, FAICP, Director

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

At the January 9, 2006 Council meeting, the Council passed Ordinance 406 (Attachment A), which enacted changes to the City's Neighborhood Meeting requirements. The code changes were intended to improve and clarify the process for the participants. These "Neighborhood Meetings" are required by the Code to oblige the applicant for a development permit to first review his or her draft proposal with the neighbors and to solicit their input before then submitting an application.

At that time, several Council members expressed concerns that the code changes then before them would not sufficiently improve the Neighborhood Meeting process. One suggestion was to have PADs staff members attend all Neighborhood Meetings called by permit applicants/developers. Because such a step would have committed the Department well beyond our present resources, I asked the Council that we be given an opportunity to develop a series of administrative improvements to the process. This report outlines the result of our efforts.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The financial impact of implementing these administrative changes are minimal and include in-house publication development.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is required. For Council's information only.

Approved By: City Manager  City Attorney _____

INTRODUCTION

With Council's agreement, the Staff has developed a series of administrative methods to improve the Neighborhood Meeting process, without having to further amend the ordinance. This report contains a background discussion of the "pre-application" process, then outlines what staff has done to further improve and clarify the process for both the applicant and members of the public who participate.

BACKGROUND

The process for early development review begins with the pre-application meeting. City staff meets with the potential applicant to discuss project feasibility. At this point staff gives the applicant information on the City's requirements, including the requirement for conducting the Neighborhood Meeting, and the review process and timing.

The purpose of the Neighborhood Meeting is explained to the applicant as an opportunity for the applicant to inform the neighborhood about the project early in its planning stages. The idea is to give property owners in the area an opportunity to learn about the proposals that affect them and to try to identify concerns in the early stages of the application process. The issues identified may be able to be addressed by the applicant before drawing up formal plans for the application. A handout explaining the purpose and how to conduct a Neighborhood Meeting is given to the applicant at the pre-application meeting. The particular neighborhood where the project site is located is identified. The applicant is instructed to invite property owners within 500 feet of the project site to the meeting, as well the appropriate neighborhood committee contact person.

The Neighborhood Meeting is an informal meeting conducted by the potential applicant before a formal application is made to the City. Representatives from the City generally do not attend these meetings, so as to avoid the appearance of the City as an advocate for the project. As a practical matter, we lack sufficient staff resources to send a staff member to all such meetings.

After the applicant conducts the Neighborhood Meeting, an application can be submitted to the City. The City sends a notice of application to the same property owners within 500 feet of the project site. This begins the "public process". The notice opens a two-week period for citizens to comment on the project. These comments are taken into consideration during the decision analysis.

Depending on the nature of the comments and the type of application, the applicant may be required to modify the proposal or mitigate project impacts. Once the City has made a decision on the project, a notice of decision is issued. The notice is provided to the applicant, parties of record and persons who may have requested being notified of the decision. The issuance of this notice opens a two-week period during which aggrieved parties may appeal the decision.

DISCUSSION

In discussing how the process could be improved, Staff determined that there has been somewhat of a lack of understanding about the purpose of the Neighborhood Meeting and the roles of the applicant and the meeting attendees. In addressing these issues, staff has developed the following publications, attached.

Handouts

Staff improved the existing informational handout on Neighborhood Meetings (Attachment B) by clarifying the purpose and the roles of both the applicant and the neighbors and by updating the handout to reflect the ordinance changes.

Staff also developed a "Frequently Asked Questions" section (Attachment C), to be added to the handout, as well as a process flowchart (Attachment D) that outlines the public participation steps in the permit process. These publications further explain the intent of the ordinance and how the public may provide input into the permit decision.

Applicant Packet Materials

A form has been included for the applicant to hand out at the Neighborhood Meeting for the public to use for written comment (Attachment E). These forms become a part of the required Neighborhood Meeting Report. The form contains an explanation and instructions for members of the public to use. There is also a note that written comments may be turned in directly to the City, instead of to the applicant at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is required. This is for Council information only.

ATTACHMENTS

- A: Ordinance 406, excerpt (changes to the Neighborhood Meeting Ordinance)
- B: Revised Neighborhood Meeting Informational Handout
- C: Frequently Asked Questions
- D: Process Flowchart
- E: Public Comment Form

20.30.090 Neighborhood meeting.

Prior to application submittal for a Type B or C action, the applicant shall conduct a neighborhood meeting to discuss the proposal.

A. The purpose of the neighborhood meeting is to:

- 1.** Ensure that potential applicants pursue early and effective citizen participation in conjunction with their application proposal, giving the applicant project proponent the opportunity to understand and try to mitigate any real and perceived impact their proposal may have on the neighborhood;
- 2.** Ensure that the citizens and property owners of the City have an adequate opportunity to learn about the proposal that may affect them and to work with applicants project proponents to resolve concerns at an early stage of the application process.

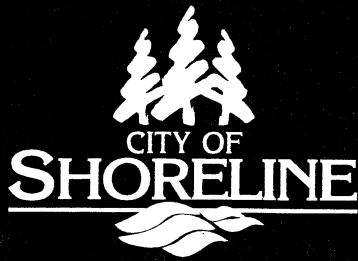
B. The neighborhood meeting shall meet the following requirements:

- 1.** Notice of the neighborhood meeting shall be provided by the applicant and shall include the date, time and location of the neighborhood meeting and a description of the project, zoning of the property, site and vicinity maps and the land use applications that would be required.
- 2.** The notice shall be provided at a minimum to property owners located within 500 feet of the proposal, the Neighborhood Chair as identified by the Shoreline Office of Neighborhoods (Note: if a proposed development is within 500 feet of adjacent neighborhoods, those chairs shall also be notified), and to the City of Shoreline Planning and Development Services Department.
- 3.** The notice shall be postmarked at least 10 to 14 days prior to the neighborhood meeting.
- 4.** The neighborhood meeting shall be held within the City limits of Shoreline.
- 5.** The neighborhood meeting shall be held anytime between the hours of 5:30 and 9:30 p.m. on weekdays or anytime between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. on weekends.
- 6.** The neighborhood meeting agenda shall cover the following items:
 - a. Introduction of neighborhood meeting organizer (i.e. developer, property owner, etc.);
 - b. Description of proposed project;
 - c. Listing of permits that are anticipated for the project;
 - d. Description of how comments made at the neighborhood meeting are used; and
 - e. Provide meeting attendees with the City's contact information.
 - f. Provide a sign-up sheet for attendees.

C. The applicant shall provide to the City a written summary or checklist of the neighborhood meeting. The summary shall include the following:

1. A copy of the mailed notice of the neighborhood meeting with a mailing list of residents who were notified.
2. Who attended the meeting (list of persons and their addresses).
3. A summary of concerns, issues, and problems expressed during the meeting.
4. A summary of concerns, issues, and problems the applicant is unwilling or unable to address and why.
5. A summary of proposed modifications, or site plan revisions, addressing concerns expressed at the meeting. (Ord. 299 § 1, 2002; Ord. 238 Ch. III § 4(b), 2000).

Staff will mail the summary of the neighborhood meeting to all persons who attended the neighborhood meeting, signed in and provided a legible address.



Planning and Development Services

17544 Midvale Ave. N.
Shoreline, WA 98133-4921
(206) 546-1811
Fax (206) 546-8761
pds@ci.shoreline.wa.us
www.cityofshoreline.com

Attachment B

Neighborhood Meeting

The process for early development review begins with the pre-application meeting. The City meets with the applicant to discuss project feasibility. At this point the applicant is provided information on the City's requirements, including the requirement for conducting the Neighborhood Meeting, the review process, and timing.

The purpose of the Neighborhood Meeting is to provide an opportunity for the applicant to inform the neighborhood about the project early in its planning stages and ensure that the applicant pursue early citizen participation. The idea is to give property owners in the area an opportunity to learn about the proposals that affect them and to try to identify concerns in the early stages of the application process. Accordingly, the issues identified may be addressed by the applicant before preparing formal plans for the application.

Meeting Requirements

- Notice of the neighborhood meeting must be provided by the applicant and must include the date, time, and location of the neighborhood meeting and a description of the project, zoning of the property, site and vicinity maps and the land use applications that would be required.
- The Notice must be mailed, at a minimum, to property owners located within 500 feet of the proposal, the Neighborhood Chair as identified by the Shoreline Office of Neighborhoods, and to Shoreline Planning and Development Services Department. If a proposed development is within 500 feet of adjacent Neighborhoods, those chairs must also be notified.
- The Notice must be postmarked 10 to 14 days prior to the Neighborhood Meeting.
- The Neighborhood Meeting must be held within the city limits of Shoreline
- The Neighborhood Meeting must be held anytime between the hours of 5:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on week-days or anytime between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. on week-ends.
- The Neighborhood Meeting agenda is to cover the following items:
 - ✓ Introduction of the meeting organizer (i.e. developer, property owner, etc.)
 - ✓ Description of proposed project
 - ✓ Description of how comments made at the Neighborhood Meeting are used
 - ✓ Provide meeting attendees with the City's contact information
 - ✓ Provide a sign-up sheet for attendees

Note: This handout is for informational use only and is not to be substituted for the Shoreline Development Code.

**Shoreline
Development Code
20.30.080
20.30.090**

03/2006

- The applicant must provide to the City a written summary of the neighborhood meeting. The summary must include the following:
 - ✓ A copy of the mailed notice of the Neighborhood Meeting with a mailing list of residents who were notified.
 - ✓ A list of meeting attendees and their addresses.
 - ✓ A summary of concerns, issues, and problems the applicant is unwilling or unable to address and why.
 - ✓ Comment forms should be provided to the attendees and any completed forms are to be submitted to the City with the summary report.
 - ✓ A summary of proposed modifications, or site plan revisions, addressing concerns expressed at the meeting.
- The City will mail the summary of the meeting to all persons who attended the Neighborhood Meeting, signed in and provided a legible address.

Sample of a Neighborhood Meeting Notice

Dear Neighbor:

Please come hear a presentation for a proposed development at *(fill in the address of your site)*. At this meeting we will discuss the specific details and solicit comments on the proposal from the neighborhood.

Meeting Information:

Proposal: 4,000-sq. ft. addition for assembly with 20 stalls of parking
(Note: Description should include basic information and data)

Date: Thursday, July 1, 2006 *(Note: Notice must be post marked 10 to 14 days prior to this date)*

Time: 6:00 p.m. *(Note: Meetings must be held anytime between the hours of 5:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. weekdays and anytime between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. on weekends)*

Location of Meeting: The Community Room at the Shoreline Library, 345 NE 175th Street, Shoreline, WA *(Note: The applicant can choose any location within the City of Shoreline to hold the meeting)*



Planning and Development Services

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

Q: What is the purpose of a neighborhood meeting?

A: Neighborhood meetings are designed to provide citizens with early notification that a project may be proposed in their neighborhood and to allow citizens to provide initial comments on the project at an early stage of the application process.

Q: Who is notified of the meeting?

A: All property owners within 500 feet of the project site are required to be notified via mail of the neighborhood meeting. Neighborhood Association representatives for the area are also notified.

Q: Will attendees get to approve or deny the project?

A: No. Attendees will be able to provide comments to the applicant which the applicant can then choose whether or not to incorporate those comments into his/her proposal.

Q: How does the neighborhood meeting fit into the permit process?

A: The neighborhood meeting is one of the initial steps in the process towards making an application with the City. Neighborhood meetings are held prior to applicants submitting their project with the City. Applicants are required to provide documentation from the neighborhood meeting as part of their application submittal.

Q: Will I be notified when a project is applied for?

A: All property owners within 500 feet of the project site will be notified once an application is submitted with the City.

Q: Will the neighborhood meeting be my only opportunity to comment on the project?

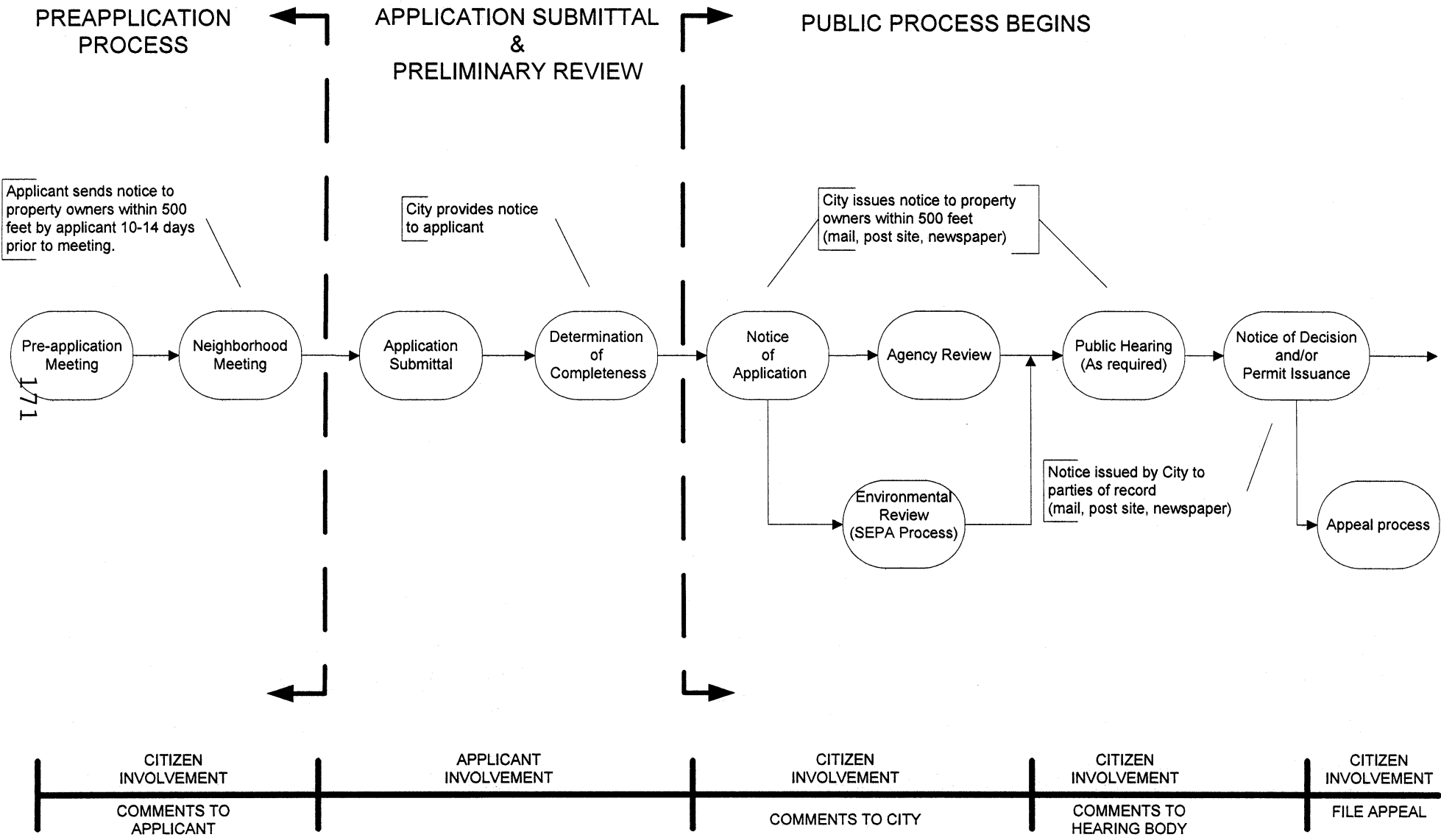
A: No. When the application is submitted to the City a "Notice of Application" will be sent out to all property owners within 500 feet. This notice will also indicate the beginning of the public comment period which typically lasts 14 days. Anyone who wishes to submit written comments regarding the project may do so at that time. All comments will be included with the file for review.

Q: Will I be able to view the project file and where can I view it at?

A: Once an application has been filed with the city any interested citizens may come in, view the file and discuss the application with the project manager. All files can be found at the Planning and Development Services office located at: 1110 N 175th ST Suite 107.

Attachment D

Citizen Guide to City of Shoreline Permit Process (For permit applications subject to public noticing provisions)



Note: Not all components of this process apply to all permits. (e.g. Public Hearings)



Planning and Development Ser

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING COMMENT FORM

IF YOU HAVE AN OPINION, PLEASE TELL US.

Proposed Project: _____

Your Name _____

Address _____

E-mail (optional) _____

This written comment will be submitted by the applicant and included in the file for staff review. If you prefer, you can submit it to the City yourself.