

Reading and Responding to a Notice of Proposed Development

The City of Portland is required to send out notice of development proposals within your neighborhood in order to give the neighborhood an opportunity to comment on the proposal. The city sends out a few different types of notices, including “proposed land uses,” “Notice of Decision,” and other notifications for land use hearings. Provided is a sample notice of proposal pointing out relevant parts of the notification. Should you decide to comment on the proposal, these are some guidelines you should follow:

- Contact the Land Use Chair of your neighborhood association. This information can be found on the first page of the land use notice from the city.
- Work with SE Uplift’s Neighborhood Land Use Program Manager who can explain how the Zoning Code is organized and how to navigate it.
- Make sure you are referencing the most up-to-date zoning code. Updated zoning code can be found through the Auditor’s Office through the City of Portland website:
<http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?c=28197>
- Know your rights: You have the right to comment on the development; You have the right to receive notice of the decision; You have the right to appeal the decision if you don't agree with it. Appeals fees are waived for neighborhood associations.
- Create a response that addresses the needs of your neighborhood. If you feel the proposed land use principally does not fit into your neighborhood, then explain this in the letter. Each zoning code section as a “Purpose” section at the beginning of the chapter. This will give you the principles behind the rules and allow you to speak to the principle of the zoning regulations. Make sure you have your response in writing so you can submit it to the record for the hearing.
- Letters of support are okay too! If you think the proposed development will make your neighborhood a better place, then tell the assigned planner that as well. It helps keep your neighborhood in regular contact with the city.

Tips for Testimony

- Be aware of deadlines for community input. Comments will not be accepted by the City after the established deadline.
- Have a prepared statement. Practice it! Submit it to the record before or after you testify.
- Keep in mind time limits! In most cases, you will only have 3-5 minutes to testify at a hearing or council session.
- Avoid emotional statements, stick to the facts and the current zoning code.
- Remember your audience: Hearings Officers are hired land use attorneys, but Council members are elected officials who may not have the depth of knowledge about a subject you do. Keep it simple, clear, and concise.

Lowdown For Land Use

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