

July 2020
PLANNING DIVISION

HOLDING A PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

From time to time, developers conduct public information meetings at the request of the Planning & Development Department or on their own initiative. The main purpose of such meetings is to provide information about their proposed development to area residents and to obtain feedback so that issues and concerns can be identified and addressed early in the development approval process. When holding public information meetings, the proponents should observe and comply with the following guidelines:

1. Meeting Notice

Notice of meetings should be distributed to owners and strata councils of all properties located within 100 metres (300 ft.) of the subject site, as well as local community associations, ratepayers associations, and other known interest groups in the community. The proponents may choose to cover a larger area under certain circumstances, for example, when the proposal has wider implications. The Planning & Development Department will provide applicants with the mailing addresses of property owners as well as mailing labels, if requested. The notice of the meeting should be sent by mail through Canada Post or through a courier company engaged exclusively to serve notice of the proposed development. The notice should be distributed to 10 to 14 days in advance of the meeting date.

2. Time of Meeting

The meeting should be held, in, or extended into, the evening on weekdays so that residents who work during the daytime may attend. Meetings during weekends, holidays and special seasons should be avoided.

3. Location of Meeting

The meeting should be held at a suitable location in close proximity of the project site and should be large enough to accommodate the anticipated turnout. Some of the appropriate venues are community halls, schools and churches.

4. Meeting Format

The format of the meeting may include a combination of, but not limited to, the following options:

- Open house;
- Presentation;
- Display;
- Small group discussion;
- Question and answer period; and
- Questionnaire survey.

The developers should consider involving appropriate consultants in the public information meeting as organizers, resource persons and/or facilitators.

Virtual Public Information Meeting (PIM) / Guidelines/Options for Applicants

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic situation, the City and applicants are focusing on virtual public engagement in the development application planning process while adhering to social distancing parameters. This may involve one or more of the engagement options listed below for applicants to consider instead of traditional in person Public Information Meetings (PIM). Applicants should discuss an appropriate consultation approach with the project's City Planner prior to undertaking the following options:

- Applicant provides a site plan and project description, along with specific information with the consultation/engagement invitation letter;
- The consultation/engagement invitation letter is to include the applicant's email contact info and phone number for citizens to submit comments and questions;
- Applicant creates a website where the application information is available at least 1 week prior to "public meeting time";
- City may potentially assist in hosting a web page if the applicant is unable to provide either a page on their own website or a dedicated project website;
- Applicant produces a video presentation describing the application to be posted on an applicant website;
- Applicant is available, along with key City staff for one or more "live" sessions in a webinar or "live chat" setting;
- Applicant has some "live" options for answering questions or commits to responding to citizen questions within a specified timeframe (recommend 24 hours); and
- Applicant develops an on-line survey or other option(s) to receive public comments, questions and feedback.

5. Record of Meeting and Public Response

A detailed record of the meeting, including the number and representation of the attendees, should be kept. For the latter, participants may be requested to sign-in, printing their names and addresses. In order to gauge public responses, distribution of a questionnaire on different aspects of the proposed development at the meeting is recommended. Contact persons and necessary follow-up should also be provided to the public. After the meeting, the proponents should submit a summary report to the Planning & Development Department for review as soon as possible. The report should include the meeting record, an analysis of the results of the questionnaire survey and a discussion on how the issues and concerns identified from the public information meeting and questionnaire survey are to be addressed in the project.

6. Staff Attendance

Staff from the Planning & Development Department may attend the meeting as an observer, at the discretion of the General Manager, Planning and Development.

7. Applicable Fees

A Public Information Meeting fee of \$459 is required to be paid to the Planning and Development Department.

For further information on specific development proposals, contact the Planning and Development Department, 13450 - 104 Avenue, Surrey, BC, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday or call 604-591-4441.