



City of Ann Arbor Public Notice & Input Process

One of the most important jobs of the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission is to provide an opportunity for the public to offer constructive comments on items before it, and then to take those comments into account when making decisions. The Planning Commission usually meets the first and third Tuesdays of every month.

HOW NOTICE IS PROVIDED

Notice of upcoming public hearings is provided in several ways in order to reach the people most likely to be affected by or interested in proposals.

For all public hearing items:



- 15 days before a hearing, a hearing notice is published in the "Public Notices" section of the Washtenaw County Legal News.



- During the week preceding a hearing, the Planning Commission agenda is broadcast on Community Television Network Channel 16.



- On the Friday afternoon preceding the Planning Commission meetings, staff reports are available in the Planning and Development Services Unit.



- On the Friday late afternoon preceding the Planning Commission meeting, the meeting agenda and packet is posted in the City's Legislative Information Center www.a2gov.legistar.com/calendar.

A reminder that the agenda is available in the City's Legislative Information Center is sent to subscribers of the City's email notification service, GovDelivery. To sign up for this service, go to www.a2gov.org and click on the red envelope.

In addition to each of the steps just mentioned, the following notices are provided for development petitions:



- Upon receipt of a petition, usually about seven weeks before a hearing, the area plan or site plan is displayed in the lobby of City Hall.



- Any project that requires a public hearing needs to comply with the City's Citizen Participation Ordinance. The ordinance was adopted to facilitate ongoing communication between petitions and interested or potentially affected citizens throughout the application review process. The ordinance can be downloaded (www.a2gov.org/planning) from the planning page of the City's Web site.



- Two weeks before a Planning Commission hearing, letters are sent to property owners, residents and registered neighborhood and business groups who are within 300 feet of the property being considered;



- One week before the hearing, an orange sign is prominently posted on the property being considered. The sign contains:
 1. the name of the petition
 2. the time and place of the hearing
 3. how to get more information
 4. the date the property was posted



- Prior to a development petition going back for Planning Commission consideration after it has been postponed, an e-mail notification is sent to each person who signed up to be notified at the Planning Commission meeting when the petition was postponed. The email notification will include the agenda for the meeting and the staff report for the petition.

HOW TO PROVIDE COMMENTS



There are several opportunities for the Planning Commission to be made aware of the concerns of individuals and groups. It is especially helpful if persons with questions or concerns call or write to the Planning and Development Services Unit before a meeting. This gives both staff and Commission maximum opportunity to consider comments. Letters received at least five days before a meeting will be included in the Planning Commission's agenda packet, and those received less than five days before a meeting will be copied and distributed at the meeting.

At the beginning of each business and regular meeting, individuals may speak to the Commission for up to three minutes about any item that is not on the public hearing agenda for that meeting.

At public hearings, individuals are permitted to speak for up to three minutes, and people who represent an organized group may speak for up to five minutes. The first person identifying him/herself as the petitioner is permitted up to five minutes, and subsequent speakers associated with the petitioner may speak for up to three minutes. Written statements are also appreciated and are entered into the record.

Finally, there is time provided at the end of every Planning Commission meeting for public comments on any topic. Each person may speak for up to three minutes.

The City Planning Commission considers comments to be most constructive when they relate to:

- 1) City Code requirements and land use regulations,
- (2) consistency with the City Master Plan, or
- (3) additional information about the area around the petitioner's property and the extent to which a proposed project may positively or negatively affect that area. Being "for" or "against" a project without saying "why" generally does not provide useful information to the Commission.

HOW TO REGISTER YOUR GROUP

To register your neighborhood association or business group in order to receive mailed notices, it is necessary to fill out a simple form and submit it to the Planning and Development Services Unit.



If you are interested in registering your association, please call the Planning Services Unit at 734.794.6267.



Write them at P.O. Box 8647, Ann Arbor Michigan 48107.



E-mail them at planning@a2gov.org



Stop by their office on the first floor of Larcom City Hall located at 301 E. Huron Street (the corner of Fifth Avenue and Huron Street) in downtown Ann Arbor.



Thank you...

Thank you for your interest. We hope this description helps you understand the public notice and input process. Your input is important to us.

For questions about the process please call the City of Ann Arbor Planning & Development Services staff at 734.794.6265.

Prepared by the City of Ann Arbor Planning & Development Services Unit, Fall (2009).