

Neighborhood Meeting Guidelines

Last updated on December 8, 2022

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline requirements for communicating and holding neighborhood meetings that fulfill the Neighborhood Meeting requirement pursuant to UDO Section 3.2.3.

2. Meeting Scheduling

- A. Applicants must hold a neighborhood meeting prior to submitting their application, but no earlier than six months prior to application submittal.
- B. The meeting must begin no earlier than 6:00 PM and no later than 8:00 PM on a weekday or no earlier than 10:00 AM and no later than 7:00 PM on a weekend.
- C. The meeting must not be held on a Sunday morning, holiday, a holiday weekend, or the day before a holiday or holiday weekend. A holiday is defined as legal holidays recognized by the City of Durham and/or Durham County.
- D. The meeting must be scheduled and noticed for at least an hour.

3. Meeting Content

- A. Applicants must present the following information during their meeting:
 1. A clear explanation the proposal, including the proposed zoning district(s);
 2. An explanation of the type of approval process involved;
 3. When the application is anticipated to be submitted;
 4. How interested parties can stay informed and engaged in the process; and
 5. The applicant's contact information.
- B. The Planning Director may designate staff to attend the meeting to observe, answer procedural questions, or in some cases facilitate the meeting.

4. Meeting Format

Applicants may choose the format for a neighborhood meeting, either virtual or hybrid following the requirements below.

A. **Virtual Meetings**

1. Virtual neighborhood meeting must be held using an interactive online video conferencing software such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, WebEx, or other similar platforms as approved by the Planning Director.
2. As some members of the public do not have internet access or are otherwise unable to access digital platforms, the meeting platform must have the ability for attendees to call into the conference using a telephone. If a platform can only be accessed via the internet, it cannot be used to hold the virtual meeting.
3. Those who access the meeting via telephone must be given the same information, graphics, maps, and any other pertinent information as those accessing the meeting via the internet. If the applicant intends to screen share presentation slides or graphics during the video conference, that material must be included in hardcopy format in the virtual meeting notification packet.

4. Meetings attendees, whether online or on the phone, must have an opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns about the proposal.
5. The meeting must be recorded in its entirety and must be held open for a minimum of one hour regardless of the number of participants that attend.

B. Hybrid Meetings

1. In-person venues for hybrid meetings must be held at one of the following locations:
 - a. On the subject property; or
 - b. At the nearest available public meeting place such as a school, library, community center, place of worship, or other meeting facility that is easily identified by the public; or
 - c. At a publicly accessible location approved by the Planning Director or designee.
2. In-person components of hybrid meetings must follow current health and safety recommendations issued by the Center for Disease Control and/or local health officials. If in-person meetings are permitted during times of public health concern they must be held in venues large enough to allow participants to gather safely, and all proper safety and cleaning measures must be taken, including providing masks or other protective supplies to participants.
3. Meeting venues must provide ADA compliant accessibility for meeting attendees.

5. Meeting Notice

As specified in paragraph 3.2.3.C. of the UDO, applicants must provide notice of a neighborhood meeting as follows:

- A. The applicant must utilize the meeting notice template developed by the Planning Department, which will include the following information:
 1. The applicant's name, telephone number, and email address;
 2. The meeting format (virtual or hybrid);
 3. The time and date of the meeting, including the start and end times;
 4. A URL to allow attendees to access the online platform that is hosting the virtual meeting;
 5. Meeting location, if offering an in-person option;
 6. A phone number to allow attendees to call into the virtual meeting platform, including a clear explanation that the meeting can be accessed by calling a telephone number if an attendee is unable to access the meeting via the internet, and instructions on how to do so;
 7. The name, telephone number, and email address of a contact dedicated to providing technical support to attendees before and during the virtual meeting. (To minimize interruptions, it is recommended that the technical support contact be different from the applicant or the person primarily responsible for running the presentation.); and
 8. The street address of the site with an identification map.
 9. A clear explanation of what the applicant is proposing, including the type of approval process involved and how interested parties can stay informed and engaged in the process
- B. The notice must include paper copies (in color) of any maps, plots, slides, or graphics that will be presented by the applicant by video during the virtual neighborhood meeting.
- C. The applicant must provide the Planning Department the information to access the meeting, and a copy of the notification letter and materials, at least two weeks before the scheduled

meeting so that it can be shared in the weekly email newsletter published by the Planning Department.

- D. Notice must be sent by first class mail, at least ten days prior to the date of the neighborhood meeting.
- E. Notices must be mailed to all properties within 600 feet of the property for which the development approvals are sought. Where the tax records reflect a different mailing address for an owner of the property and the actual property address, then notification shall also be mailed to the address of the property itself in addition to the property owner address.

6. Post-Meeting Procedures

- A. The applicant must submit the following materials to Planning staff as part of their initial application submittal:
 - 1. A list of names and addresses of attendees. For virtual participants the applicant should create an attendance list by having each attendee verbally introduce themselves when they join the meeting or by having each attendee type their name in the meeting chat;
 - 2. A summary of the issues raised by the attendees, including summarized verbal comments and a copy of any text submitted to the applicant via the online platform;
 - 3. As part of the submittal, the applicant should describe how the proposal addresses the issues raised at the meeting;
 - 4. A copy of the meeting notification, including all attachments;
 - 5. A list of who was notified of the meeting;
 - 6. A copy of all materials distributed or presented at the meeting; and
 - 7. A recording of the full duration of the meeting.
- B. If the proposal changed before submittal in response to feedback either from the community or during the meeting, the completion and submittal of the Record of Community Feedback form is required. This form should be updated every time a proposal changes based on community feedback. Link to form: <https://durhamnc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/34545/Record-of-Community-Engagement?bidId>
- C. The Planning Director may require a second meeting for projects that generate a high level of community interest or concern, when an application changes significantly, or if there is a defect in neighborhood meeting notice.
- D. **Notice of Application Submittal**

To provide additional transparency and follow-up with the community, applicants must provide public notice of the submittal of their application as follows.

 - 1. The applicant must utilize the meeting notice template developed by the Planning Department, which will include the following information:
 - a. The applicant's name, telephone number, and email address;
 - b. The street address of the site with an identification map;
 - c. A clear explanation of what the applicant is proposing, explaining any changes made since the neighborhood meeting; and

- d. The Land Use Engagement Initiative (Social PinPoint) website address with information on how to use the site (this information will be provided by Planning staff in the notice template).
2. Notice must be sent by first class mail no later than five business days after the application is submitted and is verified as a complete application. Proof of mailing is required to be submitted to the Planning Department before the application is distributed for review.
3. Notices must be mailed to all properties within 600 feet of the property for which the development approvals are sought and all participants from the neighborhood meeting. Where the tax records reflect a different mailing address for an owner of the property and the actual property address, then notification shall also be mailed to the address of the property itself in addition to the property owner address.