



## **COMMUNITY MEETING GUIDELINES**

### **For ZMAs, SPs, CCPs, and CPAs**

#### **1. Requirement for community meeting**

- a. A community meeting is required for all applications for Zoning Map Amendments (ZMAs), Special Use Permits (SPs), public requests for a Compliance with the Comprehensive Plan (CCP) review and requests for Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPAs) in accordance with Section 33.4.j. of the Zoning Ordinance. The meeting is particularly important if the proposal is likely to generate public concerns because of the nature of the request, acreage affected, proposed density and/or scale, potential impacts, such as traffic, noise, etc., or due to the history of the proposal/property.

#### **2. Purpose of community meeting:**

- a. The purpose of the meeting is to provide interested members of the public the opportunity to receive information about the proposed project, the applicable procedures, and the policies of the Comprehensive Plan, other relevant policies, and regulations applicable to the proposed project.

#### **3. Timing for the community meeting**

- a. The community meeting should be held no later than 31 days after the application fee is paid. This will allow information from the meeting to be included in lead reviewer's first round of comments, if necessary). The meeting may be held at a later date, if circumstances warrant.
- b. The community meeting may be scheduled in advance of the application, if desired. The applicant should verify with County staff that their meeting will meet community meeting requirements to avoid hosting another meeting after the application has been made.
- c. Public hearing notice signs *may* be posted at the proposed project site before the meeting is held to assist in notification, if deemed appropriate or necessary. These signs will only be posted after the application fee is paid, which activates the review.

#### **4. Setting the date for the community meeting**

- a. Setting up a community meeting is the responsibility of the applicant.
- b. Before the community meeting date is scheduled, the lead reviewer should forward email correspondence with the applicant about the meeting to the Planning Commissioner (PC) and member of the Board of Supervisors (BOS) in whose district the project is proposed. If a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) exists for the project area, then the chair of the CAC should also be included in the email correspondence.
- c. The applicant should then proceed to coordinate the meeting date, place and time with the lead reviewer, the Community Engagement Specialist, the PC member, BOS member and, if applicable, the CAC chair. The PC and BOS member may not choose to attend, but the lead reviewer needs to be present at the meeting.

- d. If there is an active CAC which covers proposed site, strong consideration should be given to using a CAC meeting for the venue for the community meeting and discussion. Other standing/"recognized" community bodies *may* also be acceptable, such as a neighborhood association or community associations like EARL (Earlsville Area Residents League).
- e. Holidays or days near holidays (such as the Wednesday before Thanksgiving) or a religious holiday (such as Christmas Eve), should not be used for community meetings.
- f. Community meetings should be held during times when the majority of the community may be able to be present, usually between the hours of 5:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on a weeknight.

#### **5. Location for the community meeting**

- a. The meeting should be held in a location deemed reasonably accessible to residents in the area of the proposed project. If it is to be held in conjunction with a CAC meeting, the location has already been established.
- b. If a separate meeting is to be scheduled, the place for the meeting can be a known community center or meeting place, a public school or building, or other building that the applicant can arrange near the proposed project. The applicant is responsible to arrange for the meeting place.

#### **6. Notification of the meeting**

- a. As a rule, notification of meetings should be sent to all property owners of record within a ¼ to ½ mile radius in a Development Area, ½ to 1 mile radius in the Rural Area, or such other area as deemed appropriate for the proposed project. However, there may be exceptions to these distances, depending on the geography of the area.
- b. The specific area to be notified shall be determined by the Planning Staff based on the specifics of the proposal and the County will provide the list of property owners to whom notification letters should be sent.
- c. The County can provide the applicant a sample invitation letter.
- d. The applicant must sign the invitation letter and send it at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting. The letter should be sent either by certified mail or regular mail. The invitation must also be sent to staff, PC and BOS members for the district in which proposed project is located. If the letter is sent by regular mail, the applicant must provide verification to staff he/she mailed the invitation to all on the list provided by the County.

#### **7. Waiver of Community Meeting**

- a. The requirement for the community meeting may be waived if:
  - 1. The proposed project is not likely to generate public concerns, is or such a small scale as to have negligible impacts to surrounding properties/area **and** if
  - 2. The Board member from the district in which the proposal is located has agreed to waive the requirement.
  - 3. Staff is to provide information on whether the project is eligible to pursue a waiver of this requirement in the mandatory preapplication comment letter.

#### **8. Conducting the meeting**

- a. The community meeting is to be facilitated by applicant. If the meeting is held in conjunction with a CAC meeting, then the chair of the meeting will recognize the applicant during the meeting as indicated on the agenda.

- b. The applicant is expected to provide an overview of the proposal and answer questions about the proposed project. Location maps, concept plans are to be provided. Additional narratives, a code of development, or other information may also be provided.
- c. Staff is to provide general information on applicable County policies and the review process but is not expected to provide comments about the proposal itself, because review of the project will have just begun.
- d. Various formats for the meeting are acceptable such as an open house, a presentation at a meeting with a Q & A period or other suitable format.

**9. Meeting follow-up**

- a. Staff will document issues identified in the meeting and provide this information to the applicant and to the PC and BOS in the staff report, as appropriate.
- b. The applicant is not required to revise his/her proposed project based on public questions and comments, but, may, at their own discretion, make changes before an initial application or with a resubmittal.

**10. Questions concerning community meetings**

- a. Questions concerning times, dates, and locations of upcoming CAC meetings should be referred to Emily Kilroy, Community Engagement Specialist at 434-296-5842 ext. 3422 or [ekilroy@albemarle.org](mailto:ekilroy@albemarle.org).
- b. Other questions concerning procedures for community meetings should be referred to the planner who is coordinating the review of the project.