

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS

To ensure the efficient operation of Planning Commission meetings, Commissioners agreed to the following procedures and expectations at their November 9, 2023 meeting:

- 1) Review staff reports and materials as soon as possible, but no later than three days prior to the meeting (typically Monday) to ensure enough time to work with staff to address any questions or information that may be missing.
- 2) If any questions or concerns are present, advise the appropriate staff member(s) as soon as possible. If questions are simple an e-mail will suffice, but sometimes it may be necessary to schedule a call for more complex issues.
- 3) If requesting that a specific staff member or representative of a county department be available for an item (other than those already assigned to the item), contact the planning staff member assigned to the item. A request by a commissioner does not guarantee that a particular staff member or department representative will be available.
- 4) During the meeting, bear in mind that while many items are routine for commissioners and staff, they are significant and often stressful events for in the lives of applicants and interested residents. Commissioners should take care to maintain professional decorum and respect all parties involved.
- 5) Except as otherwise designated (such as a workshop), the purpose of planning commission meetings is to make decisions on the items before the commission. Questions and comments made during the meeting should be in the service of that outcome.
- 6) Commissioners should trust staff to accurately compile the administrative record and provide appropriate background information (including the staff report and exhibits) for the public. Unless there are specific public comments submitted that demonstrate misunderstanding or lack of context, commissioners should not dwell upon or ask staff to discuss topics for the benefit of public education. Comments attempting to restate or paraphrase analysis in the staff report should be avoided as such comments often have the unintended effect of clouding the record. If a commissioner feels that an item is missing from the Legistar, the concern should be raised for staff prior to the meeting when feasible.
- 7) In the event that the Chair feels that a commissioner's line of questioning may not be in the service of assisting the commission in reaching a decision and having asked the Commissioner to explain their line of reasoning (or it is believed to be beyond the scope of the agenda item), the Chair may ask the commissioner to focus their questions on the topic at hand. If a commissioner continues in dialogue that is not in the service of reaching a decision, the Chair (or another commissioner) may move to limit debate subject to the procedures in Rosenberg's Rules of Order. If a Commissioner disagrees with the Chair's handling of the meeting, it is best to schedule a conversation with the Chair after the conclusion of the meeting rather than debate that disagreement during the meeting.