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MEMO

DATE: June 18, 2018

TO: Planning and Sustainability Commission

FROM: Sara Wright, BPS staff

CC: Eric Engstrom, Principal Planner
Joe Zehnder, Chief Planner

SUBJECT: Neighborhood Contact Code Update Project

The Neighborhood Contact Code Update Project proposes changes to Title 33 to simplify, clarify and make more effective the existing Required Neighborhood Contact (33.700.025) rules. This follows changes in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan making more projects subject to this requirement.

Background

The intent of the [current Neighborhood Contact \(33.705\) requirement](#) is to require people developing a property to informally share information and gather constructive feedback about it with people who will experience the development in the neighborhood. This requirement applies to some projects and not others. The process follows this sequence:

- Applicant requests (by certified mail) a meeting with the local neighborhood association.
- The neighborhood association has 14 days to respond if they choose to meet with the applicant to discuss development proposals.
- If a meeting with the neighborhood is held, the applicant must send a follow-up letter to the association to explain any changes in the proposal.
- Applicant submits documentation of compliance with the requirement as part of the application for a building permit.



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Key changes in the proposal

The proposed changes will revise the neighborhood contact process itself and change what kinds of projects trigger the neighborhood contact requirement.

Changes to the process

De-emphasize the formal meeting and emphasize posting of useful information onsite about pending development.

- Delivery method: Allow email or mail contact with the neighborhood association and others. Email is faster and generally preferred by developers and neighborhood associations. Mail will remain an option.
- Burden of responsibility: The proposed changes shift the responsibility for holding a meeting to the project applicant. This will encourage the applicant to plan and present at the meeting in a more consistent and structured way. Applicants will be encouraged to reach out to neighborhood associations to see if they want to host or co-host the meeting. Neighbors will still be able to prepare for and participate in the meetings but will not have to host the meeting.
- Reach: Include a requirement for on-site notice of the project. This will provide a physical notice to anybody who passes by the site, expanding the reach of the notice.

Changes to which projects trigger the process

Provide more consistency across the types of projects that require Neighborhood Contact.

- The proposed changes will add neighborhood contact requirement to all building permit or quasi-judicial procedures (whichever comes first) for projects that:
 - add 10,000 square feet or more of building space in the single-dwelling, multi-dwelling, commercial mixed use, campus and EX zones or
 - divide a parcel into four or more lots.
- The proposed changes also will remove triggers from land divisions, design review and community design standards. The triggers proposed for removal are associated with location (such as specific plan districts) or other code requirements. Under the proposal, many projects that operate under these code sections will still trigger the neighborhood contact requirement based on project size. However, smaller projects in some areas of the city that are already subject to an additional level of review will no longer trigger these requirements.

Next Steps

- PSC Briefing - June 26
- Proposed Draft released, public comment opens - June 28
- PSC Hearing - August 14
- PSC Worksession/Recommendation - August 28

