

RESOLUTION NO. 2010-32

A RESOLUTION of the City of Bainbridge Island, Washington,
to amend the City's public participation program.

WHEREAS, Framework Goal 7 of the City of Bainbridge Island Comprehensive Plan calls for the development of a meaningful process for citizen participation; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2001-11 establishing a voluntary public participation program in order to inform citizens of proposed projects in their neighborhood, and to provide the development community with an awareness of public concerns; and

WHEREAS, on April 7, 2010, the City Council established the Land Use Public Process small steering group, charged with analyzing and reviewing policies and procedures regarding public involvement in land use permits; and

WHEREAS, the steering group began meeting in May 2010, and quickly identified several ways to better solicit public participation in the land use permit process; and

WHEREAS, upon the recommendation of the steering group, the City Council directed staff to develop an ordinance (Ordinance No. 2010-25) making the City's "Public Participation Program," as outlined in Resolution No. 2001-11, mandatory for certain larger development projects; and

WHEREAS, the steering group wanted the public participation program to involve the community at large for development projects of Island-wide significance; and

WHEREAS, the City has decided to adopt a new "Public Participation Program" resolution, instead of amending Resolution No. 2001-11; now therefore,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON, DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

The City Council of the City of Bainbridge Island, Washington, approves the amendments to the City's public participation program, making the program mandatory for larger development projects. The program will be administered by the Department of Planning and Community Development, and is described in Exhibit A attached hereto and made a part hereof by this reference.

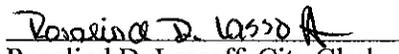
PASSED by the City Council this 13th day of October, 2010.

APPROVED by the Mayor this 13th day of October, 2010.



Bob Scales, Mayor

ATTEST/AUTHENTICATE:


Rosalind D. Lassoff, City Clerk

FILED WITH THE CITY CLERK: October 5, 2010
PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL: October 13, 2010
RESOLUTION NO: 2010-32

The City of Bainbridge Island's Public Participation Program

Purpose: The program is intended to bring developers and community members together early in the development application process, so that the residents can learn about proposed developments in the community, and the applicant can be aware of their concerns, if any.

Format: The program is designed to be simple, informal and of mutual benefit to all the participants. It involves one meeting between the applicant and the neighbors, typically right before or after a pre-application conference is held. The focus of the meetings is the specific development project and its possible impacts. The meetings are intended to be neighborhood-oriented, but larger projects may be appropriate for a larger public outreach effort. The applicant makes a short presentation on the development project, which is followed by a question-answer session.

City's Role: The meetings are organized and advertised by Planning staff. The City will mail notice of the meeting to property owners within 500 feet of the subject property. Additionally, staff identifies the targeted neighborhood (s) on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the size and type of development project, and may mail the meeting notice more widely. The City will provide the applicant with a sign to post on the property, and publish a display ad in the paper of record. A staff member will serve as a neutral facilitator of the meetings. Current Planning staff attends the meeting to answer questions about the City's code and development regulations. Staff also prepares a written summary of the meeting, which is sent to the meeting participants and to the appropriate City reviewing body (Design Review Board, Director, Planning Commission, City Council, Hearing Examiner). A member of the Design Review Board is encouraged to attend the Public Participation meeting to hear the discussion.

Benefits:

- Several recent development projects have shown that good communication between the developer and the neighborhood resulted in general public support and a smoother approval process. This program is designed to increase trust and communication, and to diffuse potentially adversarial situations.
- Recent experience has also shown that some development projects have run into public opposition because neighbors feel they hear "too little, too late." In some cases, their concerns could have been addressed fairly easily if they had been raised early in the process. This program provides the public with accurate and timely information, and allows them to have more input into developments in their neighborhoods. It provides the applicant with the opportunity to understand and possibly address any neighborhood issues.
- This program is not a "hearing" or a separate approval process. It is an informal dialogue, and any modifications that an applicant chooses to make as a result are voluntary.
- The program provides educational opportunities for the public to learn about City development regulations and their relationship to the Comprehensive Plan. In turn, it helps City staff and officials keep abreast of existing and emerging community concerns.