

# **[B6c/D1h] Helpful Tips on Commenting on Land Use Applications**

v. February 23, 2021

## **Submitting comments comes at two major milestones:**

### **1. Providing comments in a Neighborhood Meeting-**

- a) Do your homework by making use of the resources provide in this guide
  - Check out this resource, “Find what can be built next door” **[Link]**.
  - The applicant’s mailed notice may have helpful information about the project.
  - Check out the resource titled “Questions for Applicants/Developers” **[Link]**.
  - Talk to your neighbors.
  - Connect with your Neighborhood Association Land Use Chair **[Link]**.
  - Write your questions out ahead of time.
  
- b) Tips for the meeting
  - *All questions are good questions.* We are all here to learn, and if you are thinking the question, someone else may be thinking it too.
  - Be sure to sign-in on the attendee sheet.
  - Ask the applicant/developer to provide written answers to the questions brought up in the meeting.
  - You are entitled to an answer to your question, but that doesn’t guarantee you will be satisfied with the answer or the applicant may not be able to give you the answer you want. The applicant is encouraged to respond to your questions.
  - Take notes on what questions are being asked and what answers given.
  - Participate in the recap discussion of the project at the NA board meeting. You do this by showing up at the meeting and deliver a Public Comment, and generally the board will discuss your comments during the meeting.

**2. Providing comments after receiving notice that the application is complete.** It is important to pay attention to the public comment period dates. By commenting during that time, you become a “party of record” and have further rights to participate in the discussion before the project is approved or denied. Here are good resources to get you started with preparing to comment:

- a) “Find information about a specific application” **[Link]**
- b) “Path to reviewing an application” **[Link]**.
- c) “Criteria for making land use decisions” **[Link]**.
- d) “Sample Comment Letter” **[Link]**.
- e) This guide has many other resources which may be of help in the section titled, “Resources”.

### **3. Tips for making verbal testimony:**

- a) Write out what you intend to say. You may be limited to 3 minutes. Typically, it will take about 3 minutes to read 1½ page.

- b) Use the format demonstrated in the sample comment letter. The decision maker needs to be given evidence on why you feel the applicant is either not in compliance with the Bend Development Code or should not be allowed a variance or exception
- c) Planning decisions are not based on emotions or opinion of the majority of the attendees. They are based on strict interpretations of the Bend Development Code.