Text File

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Ordinance amending and supplementing the Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances, Title One, Administrative, Article Nine, Boards, Commissions and Authorities, Chapter 178E, Registered Community Organizations, by updating standards and responsibilities.

The Council of the City of Pittsburgh hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. The Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances, Title One, Administrative, Article Nine, Boards, Commissions and Authorities, Chapter 178E, Registered Community Organizations, is hereby amended and supplemented as follows:

§ 178E.01 Purpose.

It is the intent of the City of Pittsburgh to obtain informed and inclusive participation from as many neighborhood stakeholders as possible through the creation of a framework to improve cooperation between the various agencies and departments of the City and community organizations representing a geographic area or field of interest by improving the flow of information between these groups and the City, enabling such organizations to **[~~participate in civic affairs, and~~]** **present their positions before certain decisions affecting their neighborhoods are made by Boards and/or Commissions of the City** **[~~enhancing the livability and character of the City and its neighborhoods~~]**. The City of Pittsburgh values the benefits these organizations bring to the community and holds each in equal regard. The City of Pittsburgh encourages community organizations to work cooperatively with adjacent or overlapping community organizations **to determine positions on issues affecting the neighborhood** and to conduct business in an organized, representative and fair manner, in order to include as many neighborhood stakeholders as possible. Community organizations are also encouraged to cultivate neighborhood participation that reflects the ethnic and socio-economic composition of the neighborhood they represent. Registration of organizations with overlapping boundaries is allowed but the formation of numerous overlapping community organizations is strongly discouraged. This chapter sets out the basis for City recognition of such community organizations and the associated responsibilities and benefits.

§ 178E.02 Definitions.

[The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this Chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this Section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:]

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

A voluntary group of individuals organized around a particular community interest or geographic area for the purpose of collectively addressing issues and interests common to that group. A community organization is not a subsidiary of the City of Pittsburgh government.

PUBLIC HEARING
A meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, Planning Commission, Historic Review Commission, Art Commission or other legislative or quasi-judicial body conducting City business during which the public or other agencies are allowed to give testimony concerning issues under consideration.

§ 178E.03 Minimum Requirements for Registered Community Organizations.

Any community organization and/or coalition of community organizations seeking recognition pursuant to this Chapter must comply with the following standards:
(a) Has properly registered as a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation **[~~in good standing with the State of Pennsylvania,~~]** or obtained fiscal sponsorship with a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation **[~~in good standing with the State of Pennsylvania~~]** via a Memorandum of Understanding;
(b) Has adopted bylaws;
(c) Has adopted a Conflict of Interest Policy;
(d) Has adopted a statement of purpose or mission;
(e) Has an identified geographic boundary, identified either by approved bylaws or passed by another action of the organization;
(f) Has a transparent Board selection process, and defined terms**, which shall include elections for open seats to be held each year for which residents may both run and vote**;
(g) Has a written communication strategy which includes the following provisions:
(1) The methods the community organizations uses to reach out to community;
(2) The reasons they use those methods, including data to support these reasons;
(3) Strategy to inform residents and businesses about the community organization's communication strategy and where the community can access this information;
(4) Strategy to provide outreach to the community of upcoming meetings.
(h) Holds regular meetings, not less than twice per calendar year, which are open to all members of the public in an ADA-accessible space; and
(i) Has adopted a Policy Against Discrimination**.[~~; and~~**
~~(j) Has a website which provides the following information:~~
~~(1) Advance notification of meetings;~~
~~(2) Meeting Agendas, Decisions, and Minutes.~~]

§ 178E.04 Registration.

The Department of City Planning shall maintain an official registration of community organizations recognized under this Chapter. It shall be the responsibility of the community organization to provide updated information and any changes to the registration items of this Section to the Department of City Planning in a timely manner. With the exception of Section 178E.04(c), The Department of City Planning shall make this information

available to the public. Any community organization meeting the requirements of section 178E.03 of this Chapter may register by filing the following **during the months of January through September of any given year:**
(a) Official name;
(b) Boundaries;
(c) The names, mailing addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of its current officers or Board members;
(d) The name, mailing address, e-mail address and telephone number of the individual(s) to serve as the recipient for official communications from the City;
(e) A copy of the organization's IRS Determination Letter or Memorandum of Understanding;
(f) A copy of the Conflict of Interest Policy;
(g) A copy of the statement of purpose or mission of the Organization;
(h) A copy of the bylaws;
(i) Schedule for electing officers or Board members;
(j) Communication Strategy;
(k) Time and place of regular meetings; and
(l) A copy of the Policy Against Discrimination.
(m) A signed letter from the Member(s) of Council whose Council District(s) contain the designated geographical area(s) for each two-year registration period.
After review of a registration request form, the Department of City Planning shall register an organization as an RCO if it finds that the organization meets the requirements of Section 178E.03 and 178E.04. The Department of City Planning shall notify an organization whether its registration request has been granted. If the organization's request has been denied, the Department of City Planning must clearly state, in written form, the reason for such denial. The denial of an application shall not preclude an organization from reapplying during the next or any subsequent registration period.

§ 178E.05 Renewal of Registration.

[~~Biannual~~] Biennial renewal of registration of community organization is mandatory. By December 1 of every other year, each registered community organization must submit a request for renewal of registration **[~~with current information~~] by submitting a new application and each registration item** required in Section 178E.04. Failure to submit such a request by December 31 will result in removal of the community organization from the official registration. Upon approval, a community organization will be registered from January 1 of the next year through December 31 of the following year.

§ 178E.06 Responsibilities of City.

(a) Publication: The City shall maintain a current map of the boundaries and a current list of the official names, boundaries, officers, and contact persons of all registered community organizations. In an effort to notify the public about the existence of registered community organizations and encourage participation in these organizations, at least once a year the City shall make a reasonable attempt to provide a list of all registered community organizations and their contact information to all residents, property owners, business owners, schools and nonprofit agencies in the City of Pittsburgh.

(b) Education: The City shall adequately educate community organizations and the public on city policy, procedures, and actions.
(c) Public Engagement: Each City department shall strive to utilize best public engagement practices to educate, engage, and receive input from the public at a level that is consistent with the scope of impact of a proposal or project.

§ 178E.07 Responsibilities of Community Organizations.
(a) Renew registration with the Department of City Planning on a **[~~biannual~~]** **biennial** basis. Failure to submit such a request by December 31 will result in removal of the community organization from the official registration.
(b) Establish orderly and democratic means for forming representative public input through civil and respectful dialogue.
(c) **[~~Establish and follow a clear method for reporting to the city actions which accurately reflect their position. Include the means by which a recommendation or decision was reached, how many residents and businesses were involved and what the outcome was.~~]** **Following a Development Activities Meeting, a person authorized by the Registered Community Organization shall provide a position statement of the organization regarding the proposed project and include:**

(1) The name of the organization;
(2) The boundaries of the organization;
(3) The number of people, households, institutions and businesses represented by the organization and the basis for determining membership;
(4) The time and date of the meeting when the organization decided on its position;
(5) The nature of the meeting, whether the same was a meeting of the board, of a membership subcommittee, or the general membership;
(6) The number of members present;
(7) A description of the process for reaching the decision, including if and how neighborhood citizens were informed and if and how they were invited to participate; and
(8) The votes cast for and against the proposed position.

(d) By interaction with its members, residents, and the City, foster open and respectful communication between the community organization and representatives of City departments on plans, proposals and activities affecting the interests of the community organization.

§ 178E.08 Roles in Development Activities.

(a) Neighborhood Plan Adoption/Recognition: The City shall develop a Neighborhood Planning Manual which outlines policies and procedures to formally adopt/recognize Neighborhood Plans developed by registered community organizations.
(b) Reregistration Notification: The Department of City Planning shall notify each registered community organization of pending requirements for reregistration prior to December 1 of that year.
(c) Development Activities Meeting: The Department of City Planning shall require an applicant to coordinate with the **[~~applicable RCO~~]** **Department of City Planning** to schedule a time, date and place of a public meeting to discuss the applicant's proposal. That meeting, in which the applicant must participate, must take place at least **[~~thirty (30)~~]** **twenty-one (21)** days prior to the first public hearing. **[~~The applicant shall then~~**

~~notify the Department of City Planning and neighborhood planner of the time, date and place of the public meeting. If there are two or more RCO's whose registered boundaries include the applicant's property, the Department of City Planning shall schedule a time, date and place of a public meeting to discuss the applicant's proposal with the applicable RCO's. That meeting, in which the applicant must participate, must take place at least thirty (30) days prior to the first public hearing. A~~] **Unless waived by the Director of City Planning, a** meeting shall be required **[~~between an applicant and the applicable registered community organization(s)~~]** for any development activity that requires a public hearing and where such projects involve the following:

[~~(1) A new structure erected of a size equal to or greater than two thousand four hundred (2,400) square feet; or~~
~~(2) An existing structure enlarged by a size equal to or greater than two thousand four hundred (2,400) square feet; or~~
~~(3) Any new construction that includes four (4) or more new residential dwelling units; or~~
~~(4) A new or enlarged parking area that contains at least ten (10) parking stalls; or~~]
([~~5~~]1) Use Variances, **excluding Residential Use Variances of three or fewer units; or**
(2) Special Exception for projects that are new construction or additions of 2,400 gross square feet or greater; or
(3) Conditional Uses; or
([~~6~~]4) Zoning Map Amendments **or Geographic Area-Based Text Changes;** or
([~~7~~]5) Project Development Plans - PDP **for projects that are either demolitions or new construction or additions of 2,400 gross square feet or greater** or
([~~8~~]6) [~~Planned~~] Preliminary Land Development**[~~s~~] Plans** - P**L**DP; or
([~~9~~]7) [~~**Planned**~~**]** **Final Land** Development**[~~s~~] Plans -** FLDP **for projects that are either demolitions or new construction or additions of 2,400 gross square feet or greater**; or
([~~10~~]8) Master Development Plans; or
([~~11~~]9) Institutional Master Plans; or
~~[(12) Any application submitted to the Historic Review Commission; or~~
~~(13) Any application submitted to the Art Commission.]~~
(10) Historic Nominations for designation of a new Historic Structure, Historic District, Historic Site, or Historic Object; or
(11) Demolition of City designed historic structures or structures located in City designated historic districts; or
(12) Two thousand four hundred (2,400) gross square feet of new construction or additions to structures located in City designated historic districts or individually designated historic landmarks; or
(13) Percent for Art applications; or
(14) Applications to the Civic Design Committee.

§ 178E.09 De-Listing and Re-Listing.

Any registered community organization which does not meet, or ceases to meet, the eligibility standards and requirements of Section 178E.03 or which does not renew registration as required by Section 178E.05 shall be

no longer considered a registered community organization and shall cease to be listed. Upon demonstrating that it has corrected the deficiency that caused its de-listing, a community organization shall, at that time, be re-listed as a registered community organization.