

Attending Meetings of the Planning Sub-Committee

Introduction

The majority of planning applications for extensions to a home, new shop fronts, advertisements and similar minor development, are decided by Planning Officers.

The Planning Sub-Committee generally makes the decisions on larger planning applications that:

- may have a significant impact on the local community; and
- are recommended for approval by the Planning Officer.

Planning Sub-Committee members use these meetings to make sure they have all the information they need and hear both sides before making a decision.

The Planning Sub-Committee

The Planning Sub-Committee is made up of Councillors from all political parties. One of the Councillors is the Planning Sub-Committee Chair. When making decisions the Planning Sub-Committee will always be:

- open about how they came to a decision,
- fair when making a decision, and
- impartial by not favouring one side over another.

Meetings are held in public at Hackney Town Hall and usually start at 6.30pm on the first Wednesday of the month. Agendas are available at <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1> or from the Committee Officer a week before the meeting.

All Planning Sub-Committee members will keep an open mind regarding planning applications. The meetings are necessarily formal because the Chair and members want to listen to everyone and have the chance to ask questions so that they can fully understand the issues.

Those speaking, either for or against a planning application, are generally given five minutes to explain their concerns/why they believe the application has merit. If there is more than one person for or against a planning application the five minutes is to be divided between all the persons wishing to speak or a spokesperson is to be nominated to speak on behalf of those persons. The Chair will help groups speaking on the same item to coordinate their presentations.

How the Meeting Works

The Planning Sub-Committee will normally consider agenda items in turn. If there are a lot of people for an item the Chair might change the order of the agenda items to consider an item earlier.

At the beginning of each meeting the Chair will explain how the meeting works and what can and cannot be taken into account by Planning Sub-committee members when making decisions. The procedure followed at each meeting is set out below:

- The Chair welcomes attendees to the meeting and explains the procedure the meeting will follow,
- Apologises received,
- Members declare any interests in an item on the agenda,
- Minutes of previous Planning Sub-committees are considered/approved,
- The Planning Sub-committee will consider any proposal/questions referred to the Sub-committee by the Council's monitoring officer,
- The Chair asks the Planning Officer to introduce their report/recommendation to the Planning Sub-Committee. The Planning Officer will also inform Planning Sub-committee members of any relevant additional information received after the report was published,
- Registered objectors are given the opportunity to speak for up to five minutes,
- Registered supporters and the applicant are given the opportunity speak for up to five minutes,
- Councillors who have registered to speak to object or in support are given the opportunity to speak for up to five minutes. The registered objectors or supporters as the case may be will be given the opportunity to speak for a further five minutes in such circumstances to ensure equal time is given to all parties,

Where the applicant is a Councillor they must leave the room after the Planning Sub-committee members have asked them any questions of clarification/discussions regarding an agenda item have been completed so that members can consider and vote on the recommendation relating to the Councillor's planning application.

- Planning Sub-committee members can ask questions of objectors and supporters and ask Council officers for further clarification before considering a Planning Officer's recommendation,

Where Planning Sub-committee members have concerns regarding a planning application that cannot be addressed to their satisfaction when considering the application, the members can resolve to defer determining the planning application until such time as their concerns can be addressed,

- The recommendation, including any supplementary planning conditions/obligations or recommendations proposed during the consideration of an item by the Planning Sub-Committee members, is put to a vote. Where an equal number of votes is cast for and against a recommendation the Chair has a casting vote.

Decisions

Decisions of the Planning Sub-Committee relating to planning applications shall be based on:

- National planning policies set out by Government,
- Regional strategy, the London Plan, set out by the Greater London Authority,
- Development plan documents, such as the Core Strategy, Development Management Local Plan etc., and
- Other 'material planning considerations' such as the planning history of a site.

Non-planning considerations are not relevant to the Planning Sub-committee's decision making and should be disregarded by the Sub-Committee.

Speaking at the Meeting

If you have submitted a written representation to the Council in respect of a planning application you can register to speak at the meeting at which the application is considered by the Planning Sub-committee. To register to speak you should contact the Committee Officer by phone on 020 8356 3338 or email governance@hackney.gov.uk by 4.00pm on the working day before the meeting.

If you wish to present photographs or illustrative material at the meeting, notice of this should be given as the consent of the Chair will be required. Please contact the Committee Officer for more information.