

## HOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS

The Houghton Community Council is a body of seven elected officials who have authority over land use matters within the boundaries of the former Town of Houghton. The Community Council reviews proposals to revise the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code and certain quasi-judicial development permits. The Department of Planning and Community Development and other City departments provide staff support to the Community Council.

### **General**

The Community Council strongly encourages public input. At Community Council meetings, public comments may be provided as described below. Those wishing to speak to the Council are asked to observe the following rules:

- All comments must be provided from the podium.
- Speakers must state their full name and address.
- Comments should be brief and repetition should be avoided.

### **Requests from the Audience**

A time is scheduled near the beginning of each Community Council meeting for the public to address the Community Council about any issue that is not the subject of a hearing at the same meeting. Comments should generally be limited to 5 minutes in length.

### **Study Sessions**

The Community Council usually holds study sessions on Comprehensive Plan or Zoning Code amendments. These meetings provide an opportunity for the Commission to informally discuss the proposals and provide direction to staff. Time permitting, the Community Council may allow comments from the audience on the study topic.

### **Public Hearings on Plan or Code Amendments**

The Community Council may choose to hold a public hearing on Plan or Code amendments. The hearing provides a formal opportunity for anyone to state their opinions or provide information to the Community Council. In order to ensure a fair and orderly opportunity for everyone to speak the Council uses the following procedures:

- After the hearing is opened, the City staff will give a presentation that describes the proposal.
- If a private applicant initiated the proposal, he or she will be allowed to speak first.
- Any other person wanting to speak will be allowed to do so. Speakers will be asked to fill in a speaker sign in sheet, and state their name and address for the tape recording.
- After everyone has had a chance to speak, those wanting to offer a brief rebuttal of others' comments will be allowed to do so.
- Council members may ask questions of speakers during or after their comments.
- When the Council determines they have enough information, the hearing will be closed and the Council will prepare their recommendation to the Planning Commission.

### **Public Hearings on Quasi-Judicial Development Permits**

For quasi-judicial development permits, the Hearing Examiner conducts a Joint Public Hearing with the Community Council. The hearing procedures are the same as above except that anyone presenting oral testimony is required to take the oath of affirmation to present the truth. After the all testimony is taken and the hearing is closed, the Community Council opens a Special Meeting and prepares its recommendation to the Hearing Examiner.

### **Written and/or Oral Testimony**

The Community Council welcomes letters and other written testimony as a supplement to or in place of oral comments. The materials may be submitted to the Department of Planning and Community Development prior to a Council meeting, or directly to the Council at a meeting. It is necessary to either submit written or oral testimony to receive a copy of the Hearing Examiner's decision or to challenge his/her recommendation to the City Council. Petitions are not considered testimony.