



CITY OF
PORTLAND, OREGON

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MEMO

To: Development Review Advisory Committee

From: Claire Adamsick, Senior Policy Advisor

Date: October 13, 2015

Re: City of Portland Short-term Noise Task Force

Commissioner Fritz has convened a short-term Noise Task Force to consider specific changes pertaining to the City's Noise Code (Title 18). The Task Force is comprised of nine volunteer members from the community at-large and the construction/development industry.

The Task Force is meeting between September and November 2015 to discuss three primary concerns that emerged in recent City Council hearings and develop recommendations for Commissioner Fritz to bring to Council on Wednesday, December 9 at 2 p.m. time certain.

Concerns and considerations the Commissioner has asked the Task Force to address include:

EX Zones

- Address the feasibility of changing the allowed decibel level in EX zones from industrial to commercial, to reflect current activity in these areas.
 - Task Force was hesitant to make a decision based on limited opportunity to study actual industrial uses in the Pearl and Central Eastside Industrial District, specifically
 - Task Force acknowledges more participants must be at the table, per input from Central Eastside Industrial Council and Portland Business Alliance representatives
 - Recommendation will focus on need to study a potential noise code change in the context of anticipated EX zone designation changes and the Mixed Use Zones Project

Noise Variance Process – including appeals and notification

- Focus discussion on high-impact variances, and define as needed the difference between low- and high-impact noise events
- Consider routing low-impact variance applications to the bureau currently responsible for permitting specific events (e.g. Parks, PBOT, ONI)
- Consider a requirement that high-impact noise variance requests be submitted directly to the City's Code Hearings Officer
- Develop a cost recovery model to fund additional staff support needed

Pile Driving

- Address the perceived need for more clearly-defined standards regarding decibel level, duration and (if measurable) vibrations generated by equipment that is currently exempt in the Noise Code (18.10.060 A)
- Consider requiring noise variance applications regarding pile driving be routed directly through the City's Code Hearings Officer
- Consider developing a "Noise Impact" fee for approved variances that would be paid to a mitigation fund to provide enforcement staff and grants for neighbors needing assistance