Office of Neighborhood Association Guidelines

The Underlying Principles

by Moshe Lenske

The revised ONA Guidelines were adopted by the City Council in 1992 after an 18-month process of committee meetings, public review, drafts and hearings. The Guidelines describe the basic obligations among ONA, the District Coalitions, and the Neighborhood Associations. The Guidelines anchor the cities' recognized neighborhood association system. The following is the text of the speech by the chair of the committee, Moshe Lenske, as presented to the City Council outlining the underlying principles guiding the committee's work.

I'm very pleased and honored to present before the Council this basic summation of the significant and important Neighborhood Association and citizen involvement program in Portland, the Guidelines. I am truly proud to represent the Guidelines Review Committee which deliberated and crafted this work. They read the documents, circulated drafts, held a public hearing and considered every comment and reply. They matched recommendations with theory as well as with practice and practicality, and looked out for side effects. They're satisfied that they got it right and I must say as a result of great wisdom and very great patience. The entire, varied, committee members, all experienced citizens, staff, and City employees, came with different opinions, different turfs, different agendas, and different egos, but the committee stuck together all these months, with respect, and worked each question out to agreement and understanding—a great team effort from an outstanding group.

The revised Economic Development Element of the Neighborhoods...in their diversity, may develop sense of place, of participation, of confidence and control, and of belonging. neighborhood before and after a grievance. The first requirement is that the complaint be written. Use of mediation is suggested. Ultimately the parties themselves, through the process, have to find a comfort level of understanding of their differences. If they themselves are part of achieving it, it will be the most successful and accepted. But they must realize that is what they desire.

The Guidelines require compliance with Oregon Public Meeting and Public Records Law. We did seek legal advice and have done our best to digest some applicable aspects as they might apply [to typical Neighborhood Associations and District Coalitions situations].

The committee believes the Guidelines are clear because we've discovered that some items cannot be clearer than they are. The committee commends these revised Guidelines as an excellent document for the present. We are alert to areas to watch in the future. We again wish to publicly thank each person who brought forth suggestions; and I want to assure that each was considered. Eighty-five percent of Americans are now urban dwellers, where there are tendencies to come single atoms, lonely, and anonymous (which some prefer). Neighborhoods in such scenarios, in their diversity, may be the best units where people can develop sense of place, of participation, of confidence and control, and of belonging. The Committee wishes to thank the Council for its support and interest in this document which I might term "The Commandments" of the Neighborhood Association and Citizen Involvement Movement so important to the city, to other jurisdicitions and recognized nationally. Maybe it should be translated into languages.

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Office of Neighborhood Associations, Bureau of Planning, and Portland Development Commission staff.

The revised Economic Development Element of the testimony after a 30-day citizen review period possibly as early as July 27th.

Regulatory review of land division code to streamline the regulations to meet developer's concerns has been linked into

GET INVOLVED/ Economic Development Element: Bob Glasscock, Bureau of Planning, 823-7845
Prosperous Portland: Mike Ogan, Portland Development Commission, 823-3309
Regulatory Review: Sam Adams, Mayor's Office, 823-4129

Moshe Lenske is a businessman and long-time neighborhood activist. He is a former chair of Southeast UPLIFT and was a member of both ONA Guidelines Citizen Advisory Committees.