

REGISTRY OF  
NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS AND  
CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS  
INFORMATION PACKET



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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners recognizes that neighborhoods and civic associations have an interest in participating in planning and development issues, which have an effect on them. To provide neighborhood groups with a greater opportunity to participate in the decisions which affect their residents, the Board of County Commissioners approved procedures that interested neighborhoods within one (1) mile of a proposed development activity be notified. Notice will be by mail, concerning the application and the dates for public hearings. This will give the members of your organization an opportunity to consider the proposed development and determine if you wish to comment on it (in *planning* language, "to become a party of record").

Activities which require notice to neighborhood groups and civic associations are:

- A. Requests for rezoning;
- B. Minor Modifications to existing Planned Development zoning districts and Special Use Permits;
- C. Major Modifications to existing Planned Development zoning districts and Special Use Permits; and
- D. Special Use Permit requests for activities, such as liquor stores, solid waste facilities, etc.

## II. HOW THE REGISTRY SYSTEM WORKS

Note: The Office of Neighborhood Relations maintains an extensive database of neighborhood associations. The Registry is a special subset of the larger database, requiring additional information from the neighborhood association to qualify to receive notices of proposed development or changes in land use.

### A. Registry of Neighborhood Organizations and Civic Associations

The Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations will accept registration applications from neighborhood organizations and civic associations. Once approved, the neighborhood organization or civic association will be listed in a database with other neighborhood organizations and civic associations.

1. To register as a Neighborhood Organization that will receive notification of applications for I. A-D, an organization must provide the County with the name and address of its authorized representative, a map which geographically identifies the boundaries of its neighborhood, and any other relevant information as may be required by the County Administrator. To be placed on the Registry of Neighborhood

Organizations and Civic Associations, an organization must provide evidence that they meet the following requirements:

- a. Be an organization made up of residents within a defined geographic area; and
  - b. Establish membership by virtue of ownership or occupancy in the defined area; and
  - c. Maintain officers or representatives, and demonstrate the method by which such officers or representatives are selected. (These can be documented by copies of by-laws or covenants and restrictions to deed, if the procedures are specified in either.); and
  - d. Demonstrate the method(s) by which the officers or representatives are authorized to act on behalf of the organization. (This can also be documented from by-laws or covenants and restrictions to deed); and
  - e. Have a means to appoint a contact person; and
  - f. Be an organization which represents the geographic area of the no less than 50 households. The organization must actually represent 50 percent of those households, or no less than 25 households
2. To register as a Civic Association, the association must be chartered, areawide, with dues-paying members, in order to receive courtesy notice of applications within their area. The association must submit a copy of its charter with the application. However, being on the Registry and receiving notice of a land use application will not qualify the association as a party of record. To become a party of record, the Civic Association must submit written comments or comment in person at the Zoning Hearing Master Hearing.

## B. Application

The following must be submitted in order to be placed on the Registry:

1. A completed application form (page 6) with attachments documenting II. A. 1. a - e above; and
2. A map showing the boundaries the neighborhood organization or civic association represents, with section, township, and range designations.

Registered neighborhood organizations and civic associations will be notified of any of the development activity listed above in I. A-D, if they are within one (1) mile of the organization's or association's boundary.

C. Public Notice

A registry of all approved neighborhood organizations and civic associations will be maintained by the Office of Neighborhood Relations. A list of all affected neighborhood organizations and civic associations will be given to each applicant applying for one of the activities listed in I. A-D. The applicant requesting the zoning activity shall, within 15 days after the closing date for the filing of applications, notify each affected organization and civic association by mail. The notice must give the location, date, and time of the public hearing, as well as a description of the request.

D. Public Input

Notices shall also include a statement requesting that public input be submitted within 14 days to the Development Services Department in order to provide additional information, prior to development of the County staff's report and recommendation. This will allow the public involvement prior to the staff reaching its final recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Master or Board of County Commissioners.

III. SUBMITTAL OF THE APPLICATION (ATTACHED)

A. The registration, with all required information, should be submitted to:

Office of Neighborhood Relations  
County Center  
601 E. Kennedy Blvd., 21st Floor  
Tampa, Florida 33602

Mailing Address:  
Neighborhood Relations  
PO Box 1110  
Tampa, FL 33601

B. Should you have any questions, call the Office of Neighborhood Relations at (813) 307-3564

IV. APPENDICES

The following page is the application form for the Registry of Neighborhood Organizations and Civic Associations.

The final section is a general overview of the rezoning process, condensed from a brochure that was made available by the Development Services Department.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONS  
APPLICATION FOR  
REGISTRY OF NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS AND CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS\*

Name of Organization or Civic Association (indicate which) \_\_\_\_\_  
Section \_\_\_\_\_  
Township \_\_\_\_\_  
Range \_\_\_\_\_

**Authorized Representative (Please Print)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (Day): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Alternative Representative:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone(Day): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of homes: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of members: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of residents: \_\_\_\_\_

Type: (Documentation is required which establishes the organization or civic association as one of the following)

- Neighborhood Association
- County-wide Organization
- Other
- Homeowner's Association
- Civic Association (Chartered)

**Boundary:**

Map showing boundaries is attached:  
Northern Boundary: \_\_\_\_\_ Southern Boundary: \_\_\_\_\_  
Western Boundary: \_\_\_\_\_ Eastern Boundary: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative (Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative (Signature)

Date Stamp  
Received

Approved for Registry

\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Manager, Office of Neighborhood Relations

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\* Receipt of notice will not qualify an area wide civic association as a party of record  
Page 1 of 1-page Application

## THE REZONING PROCESS

The Hillsborough County Land Development Code requires that a public hearing be conducted on land development requests (including rezonings) prior to a final decision by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). Rezoning is a quasi-judicial process, resembling a judicial court system. Having a voice in land rezoning issues involves following an established protocol. Failure to adhere to the procedures may exclude you from the rezoning process altogether.

When the owner of property applies for a change in the allowable use of that property, Hillsborough County requires that applicant to notify certain people. These include all residents within 250 feet or 500 feet of the property depending on the future land use designation, as well as all neighborhood organizations and civic associations on the Registry of Neighborhood Organizations and Civic Associations that are within a mile of the property. The rezoning applicant is to mail these notifications within 20 days of filing. The notice will include the nature of the proposed change and the date of the scheduled public hearing on the application. You can get additional information from the Development Services Department by calling 272-5275.

Once a rezoning application is filed, you cannot talk or write to any County Commissioner about that application.

The public hearing will be scheduled within 60 to 90 calendar days after the rezoning application is filed. A Land Use Hearing Officer (LUHO, also referred to as a Zoning Hearing Master) conducts the public hearing. The Land Use Hearing Officer does not make the final decision. The final decision will be made by the Board of County Commissioners at a subsequent public "land use" meeting.

Between the time you receive the notice of rezoning and up to two business days before the hearing, you may submit documents in support of or in opposition to the rezoning. Submitting your comments early allows the County staff to consider them in their recommendations to the Land Use Hearing Officer. You may also attend the public hearing and register to speak on the rezoning application. At the conclusion of the public hearing, the record is closed and no new evidence or information may be submitted. The Land Use Hearing Officer has 15 working days to file a recommendation. The recommendation is filed with the Clerk of the BOCC, and will be available there and in the Zoning Division of the Development Services Department. To receive a copy of the recommendation, you should supply the Clerk with a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Participants at the public hearing include the applicant, County agencies, proponents and opponents, including the public and witnesses with relevant testimony. The order and time limits for testimony on an application are as follows:

- a. Proposal by applicant and witnesses: 15 minutes (total for all speakers)
- b. County staff findings: 5 minutes
- c. Planning Commission findings of compliance or noncompliance: 5 minutes
- d. Proponents: 15 minutes (total for all speakers)
- e. Opponents: 15 minutes (total for all speakers)
- f. Staff amended recommendations, if any: 5 minutes
- g. Applicant rebuttal and summation: 5 minutes

The Land Use Hearing Officer may grant additional time for "good cause shown", and may call and question any witness deemed "necessary and appropriate." Evidence that is irrelevant, immaterial or repetitious will be excluded. All testimony is under oath. Hearsay is admissible to supplement or explain other evidence, but is not sufficient in itself to support a finding.

No application for rezoning can be recommended for approval unless it is in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Board of County Commissioners will consider the application, the record of the public hearing and the recommendation of the Hearing Officer in a public meeting. Only the evidence submitted before or during the zoning hearing will be allowed. The only exceptions are for evidence that could not have been discovered before the LUHO hearing, or the witness could not appear for reasons beyond his/her control. Such evidence has to be submitted to the Clerk within 10 calendar days of the LUHO recommendation, with the reason for not submitting it at or before the hearing. The evidence has to be submitted on specific forms which are available from the Clerk.

The BOCC does not have to allow testimony at their hearing. If they do, only Parties of Record who have filed a Request for Oral Argument are allowed to speak to the BOCC at their hearing. A Party of Record is:

- a. A person who was present at the hearing before the LUHO and presented either oral or written evidence.
- b. A person who was notified by mail from the applicant of the hearing, except that areawide civic associations are not automatically parties of record just because they received a notice.
- c. A person who submitted documentary evidence for the file at least two business days before the hearing or by proxy during the hearing.

If you qualify as a Party of Record and wish to speak at the BOCC hearing on the rezoning, you must file a Request for Oral Argument at the Records Office of the Clerk of the BOCC, on the 12<sup>th</sup> floor of the County Center; within seven days after the LUHO recommendation is filed. The Clerk will notify you by mail of the date and time of the BOCC hearing. The BOCC does not have to hear oral arguments at their hearing if they choose not to. If they do grant your request, your testimony must be the same as that you gave at the rezoning hearing or submitted in writing. If the BOCC permits oral argument, the order and time allotments will be the same as those for the LUHO hearing.

### Variances and Adjustments

There is another process that utilizes the Land Use Hearing Officer, which is a process to grant a variance or make adjustments to what is allowed on a piece of property without changing its zoning category. This process includes a public hearing, but the LUHO makes the final decision, without having to send it to the Board of County Commissioners. The notice procedures are the same for someone applying for a variance as for someone who has applied for a rezoning. The procedures at the public hearing are also the same as described above for the rezoning.

The decision of the LUHO in matters of variances and special uses must be filed within 15 working days of the public hearing. Appeals of these decisions must be filed within 30 days of the decision filing and will be heard by the Land Use Appeals Board.

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