

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING COMMISSIONER GREATNESS

Understand your role

- Unique position
- Bring broad community Perspective
- Citizen involvement
- Balance interests – not political and not purely technical

Prepare well for commission meetings

- Read and understand the staff report
- Visit the sites under consideration (upon advice by your legal counsel)
- Contact staff with questions if you have them

Have a bias for action

- Decisions are the value you add to the planning process
- Prepare for the meeting with the intent of making a decision
- Avoid unnecessary continuances, a burden to all interested parties

Don't blindside staff with difficult questions at the meeting

- Let staff know prior to the meeting if you have concerns so they can prepare
- Follow the protocol for contacting staff, either through the director or with the staff members directly
- Do expect good staff work and recommendations

Be civil to each other so the public will be civil to you

- Your example establishes the tone for the meeting
- Be respectful

Seek to understand each other's positions and opinions

- Listen carefully to what is being said
- One of your objectives should be to identify points of consensus
- Ask clarifying questions to make sure you understand what is being said

View every meeting as an opportunity to communicate with the residents and to educate

- This may be the first (and/or last) meeting they will attend
- Explain the process and the purpose of the meeting
- What can the commission do and what the commission can't do
- It will establish or reinforce their view of local government

1 page explanations of processes from Institute for Local Govt. or well... good info. for Commissioner Handbook?

Establish new policy or policy modification separately from individual projects

No individual project should dictate your long range goals

Explain your rationale, but don't lecture the public

The public will be more accepting of broad concepts if presented in a different format and venue

Keep the meeting tempo the same at the end as at the beginning

Citizens who waited through earlier items deserve the same courtesy as those heard earlier

Strive for consistency, but acknowledge unique situations in projects

Not every decision sets precedent

Make your final action clear to the public

The public should leave the meeting clearly understanding what you did

Communicate with the city council frequently

Joint study sessions to discuss key issues

Planning for the Future

Who are you planning for?

Are your community needs being met?

Who will be residents in years to come?