



LWV Corvallis

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January 2, 2018

To: Mayor Traber and Members of the City Council

From: League of Women Voters of Corvallis, Laura Lahm Evenson, President

Re: Applicant Neighborhood Meeting (LDT16-00002)

In April, the League of Women Voters of Corvallis strongly supported proposed amendments to requirements for Pre-notification in Article 2.0 of the Corvallis Land Development Code (LDC). We also stated at that time that instead of the wording “strongly urge” (Section 2.0.50), that developers be “required” to hold informational meetings in affected neighborhoods.

We support requiring these pre-notification neighborhood meetings for the following reasons:

- For many years, we have asserted that the public needs more time to review large development proposals in advance of public hearings. We understand that a development application may change significantly between this pre-notification and when it is completed, and we trust that the City will make this clear to all interested parties.
- Those attending the neighborhood meeting will have an opportunity to provide information and bring up concerns that the developer does not know BEFORE money and time is spent on the formal application that will be submitted. (Community Development Director Bilotta has provided examples of this happening.) As a result, we anticipate that there will be fewer costly appeals.
- Due to recent state legislation, former opportunities for public input on large developments are becoming more limited. State Land Use Goal 1 Citizen Involvement - calls for "the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process has been overlooked in the attempt to address Goal 10 Housing. Goal 10 specifies that each City “must plan for and accommodate needed housing types (typically, multi-family and manufactured housing).” For instance, Planned Development Overlays (PDOs) are now easily removed by developer request so there are no public hearings required.

Staff research has found that all comparator cities REQUIRE applicants to conduct neighborhood meetings for land-use applications like those in Corvallis’s proposed amendment. These comparator cities are Albany, Bend, Eugene, Lake Oswego, Medford, and Springfield.

The League of Women Voters’ position supports citizen participation in all decision-making processes to assure that land use planning maintains and enhances community livability and protects resource lands. Therefore, we urge you to approve the Land Development Code amendment before you tonight.