



City of Laguna Beach

Community Development
Department

INFORMATIONAL GUIDE FOR:

How to Participate in the ADMINISTRATIVE DESIGN REVIEW Process as a Neighbor

Familiarize Yourself with the Project

Public Notices are mailed out 14 calendar days prior to a scheduled administrative design review hearing. The public notices include the hearing date, project location and description, a contact person for questions related to the proposed project, and some basic procedural information.

In addition to mailed written notices, project sites may be required to be 'staked' with story poles and ribbons before the hearing to provide a visual representation of proposed building improvements. The proposed plans are available through links to the meeting agenda on the City's website, available for review at the Community Development Department if City Hall is reopened to the public and will include a staking plan identifying what each story pole is intended to represent.

Neighbors are encouraged to contact the applicant or City staff/project planner with any questions or concerns they may have related to a proposed project. Our goal is to encourage all interested parties to work together to resolve concerns prior to the initial design review hearing, whenever possible. Neighbors and applicants are equally responsible for working towards a positive outcome.

The proposed project plans are linked online to the Administrative Design Review meeting agenda. City staff members are available via email or telephone to assist you with reading and understanding the plans.

Link: <http://www.lagunabeachcity.net/cityhall/citygov/cityclerk/mam.htm>.

Prior to the Hearing

The City requires that applicants take reasonable steps to contact neighbors prior to scheduling a design review hearing date to resolve potential issues before the initial hearing. **The applicant should make a good faith effort to contact neighbors by telephone, email, or other means to satisfy and document the early communication requirements and is not required to meet in person.** If you have concerns about a project, you are encouraged to let the applicant know as early as possible so that the applicant is given an opportunity to address those concerns.

Submitting Written Comments

In addition to discussing the project with the applicant, you may submit comments in writing. Comment letters should be submitted to the City as early as possible. You may submit comments on any agenda item in writing via mail to the Zoning Administrator at 505 Forest Avenue, Laguna Beach, CA 92651 or by email to rbunim@lagunabeachcity.net. Please email your comments to the Zoning Administrator no later than three days before the Administrative Design Review meeting. Submitting letters near or on the day of the hearing makes it difficult for the approval authority to effectively evaluate your comments.

How Projects are Evaluated

Design Review projects are approved or denied based on sixteen (16) specific criteria. These criteria are described in Municipal Code Section 25.05.040(H) and include the following:

Access

Design Articulation

Design Integrity

Environmental Context

General Plan Compliance

Historic Preservation

Landscaping

Lighting and Glare

Neighborhood Compatibility

Pedestrian Orientation

Privacy

Public Art

Sign Quality

Sustainability

Swimming Pools, Spas and Water Features

View Equity

Neighbor comments and concerns related to a proposed project should be centered on these criteria to be appropriately considered by the approval authority.

Testifying at the Administrative Design Review Hearing

At the hearing, neighbors may testify in support of a project or express their concerns via teleconferencing. Use the following Zoom link: <https://lagunabeachcity.zoom.us/j/96307337890> and click on the raise hand button to comment on an item. When called on, please unmute yourself by clicking on the unmute button on the bottom left portion of the screen. If you do not have a device to access the meeting or are experiencing internet connection issues, call **(669) 900-9128** and type in the **Webinar ID, 96307337890#**. Let City staff know you want to comment on an item that is being discussed by pressing *9 using the keypad on your phone. When you hear, "the host would like you to unmute your microphone," please press *6 to unmute yourself and proceed with your comment. Speaking time is limited, so it is advisable to plan your comments ahead of time. Having notes on hand to stay on topic is helpful. Expressing your comments or concerns within the framework of the design review criteria will help the approval authority appropriately consider your concerns in their deliberations and decision-making.

Approval Authority Referral

Prior to deliberation and action on an administrative design review application, the director of community development or his or her designee may (at his or her discretion) refer the project application to the approval authority (Design Review Board or Planning Commission) for hearing.

Appeals

If you reside within 300 feet of the subject property and disagree with a decision of the approval authority, you may appeal the decision to the City Council. Appeal forms may be obtained from the Office of the City Clerk and must be filed within 14 calendar days of the decision along with a required appeal fee. The City Council will hear the appeal at a noticed public hearing. The appeal hearing is limited to the grounds specifically identified on the appeal form.

