



Public participation in land use and zoning applications during COVID-19

The City of Saint Paul has temporarily adjusted the way it conducts public meetings to respond to the Governor's Stay-At-Home Orders and the COVID-19 pandemic. Hearings of the City's boards and commissions, which members of the public are encouraged to attend and normally are held in City meeting rooms, are being conducted virtually using secure online meeting technology.

Applicants, interested residents, business owners and others, are invited to participate in all hearings scheduled, which are now using online meeting tools, email and conference lines.

Background

Supporting ongoing projects and new development is critical to our City's growth and economic development. Therefore, special hearing arrangements during COVID-19 pandemic have been made to comply with the Governor's Executive Orders.

The Chairs of City boards and commissions have determined that it is not practical nor prudent to meet in person or pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.02. In light of the COVID-19 health pandemic, it is not feasible for any member of the commissions to be present at the regular location(s) and all members of the commissions will attend meetings by telephone or other electronic means.

It is also not feasible for members of the public to attend these meetings at their regular locations due to the pandemic and emergency.

The revised public hearing notices related to specific meetings or hearings each include instructions regarding how to monitor and/or participate.

Zoning-Related Boards or Commissions impacted

The **Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)** holds public hearings on all major and minor zoning variance applications and administrative appeals. The board meets at 3:00 p.m. on Mondays every other week.

The public hearing notices include the following information on how to participate in the hearing:

- A unique Uniform Resource Locator (URL) is generated for the online meeting via Skype for Business, which requires downloading the application in advance of the meeting.
- A list of phone numbers, and a conference call identification number, which allows members of the public to call in if they do not have access to the Internet.

The online meeting URL and conference line number for each public hearing held virtually will be sent to all parties affected by the application at least ten (10) days before the hearing.

Public comment

Public comment can be submitted via email up to 2:00 p.m. the Friday before the scheduled hearing and will be provided to all commissioners and/or board members in advance of the virtual meeting. Name and address must be included in the body of the email to be included in the public record.



Comments sent after 2:00 p.m. the Friday before the public hearing will not be included in materials sent to commissioners due to staffing limitations during this time.

The **Saint Paul Planning Commission and its sub-committees** ([Zoning Committee](#), [Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee](#), and [Transportation Committee](#)) address municipal planning issues as required by law. It reviews and makes recommendations on comprehensive planning and zoning issues, studies, and amendments. The committee websites, linked above, should be consulted for schedules, meeting materials, call-in numbers and the most up-to-date information. You can subscribe to receive agendas via email here:

<https://www.stpaul.gov/connect>

Public Hearings

Public hearings related to plans and zoning studies are held at Planning Commission meetings. Planning Commission meets at 8:30 a.m. every other Friday. Public testimony must be submitted in writing prior to the meeting. Members of the public may monitor this meeting remotely over the telephone using numbers posted on the meeting agenda. Details about upcoming public hearings and where to send comments are posted on the Planning and Economic Development's [Current Activities](#) website.

All Zoning Committee meetings are public hearings. Zoning Committee meets at 3:30 p.m. every other Thursday when there are agenda items. Public testimony may be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. (**Note:** You must include your Name and Address for the public record). Comments should be submitted to: ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us Members of the public may monitor this meeting remotely over the telephone using numbers posted on the meeting agenda. (Note: Telephone numbers change for each meeting). Applicants will have the opportunity to present to the Zoning Committee and respond to questions.

Application Materials

Application materials may be found here:

- [Rezoning](#)
- [Zoning Variances](#)
- [Conditional Use Permits](#)

Applicants may apply for a variance for required petitions during the Governor's Stay-At-Home Orders. It is not advised that applicants go door-to-door seeking signatures during the COVID-19 pandemic.