

Staff Report

Agenda Item: 1

Title: NCEC/NRP Policy Board merger recommendations

Date: November 16, 2016

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Attachments:

Request of the Committee of the Whole

Staff of the Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR) Department is presenting 3 options for combining the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission and the NRP Policy Board into one body.

Staff would like input and feedback regarding the proposed options from the Commission.

Background

In July 2016 the Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee provided the following staff direction:

“Directing the Neighborhood and Community Relations staff to work with the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission and Neighborhood Revitalization Policy Board to identify options for combining their functions and merging into one board or commission and to report back to the Health, Environment & Community Engagement Committee by Jan. 31, 2017.”

Recommendations

Given this staff direction, NCR staff has laid out three potential options to merge the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission and the NRP Policy Board together.

Option 1: Keep the current structure of the NRP Policy Board.

This board could focus primarily on NRP program activities, with a mix of members consisting of representatives from participating jurisdictions as well as community and neighborhood representatives. In addition to reviewing and approving neighborhood plans, a consolidated policy board could take on more technical activities, such as more specific recommendations to participating jurisdictions on implementation of neighborhood plans.

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats please contact the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department at 612-673-3737. People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

Para asistencia 612-673-2700 - Rau kev pab 612-673-2800 - Hadio aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3500.

Option 2: Keep the current structure of the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission and Adjourn on a quarterly basis as the NRP policy Board with additional jurisdictional representatives and necessary jurisdictional powers.

This board could meet on some months in an advisory role (like the current NCEC) and as needed as the NRP Policy Board. The Board could operate at some times as a broader advisory committee to the City Council (as the NCEC does now), and convene as needed as the NRP Policy Board to review and approve neighborhood action plans, neighborhood priority plans, and plan modifications. Representatives from Mayor, City Council, and other jurisdictions would only be required for meetings when meeting as NRP Policy Board.

Option 3: Keep the Current structure of the Neighborhood and Community Engagmeent commission, but add the necessary jurisdictional powers on a full time basis to the board.

A consolidated Policy Board could have broader advisory powers, but would also have authority of NRP Policy Board at any meeting. In this scenario, representatives of Mayor, City Council and other jurisdictions would be an element of all meetings of the consolidated board.

Key points of legal opinions and requirements regarding the NRP Law

Staff is presenting these three options based on a review of legal opinions and legal requirements for the NRP Policy Board. The following is a summary of key points and considerations:

- There is a requirement for a multi-jurisdictional NRP Policy Board in order for NRP funds to be used, now or in the future.
- There is no sunset to NRP activities (as there was for the NRP Joint Powers Agreement). Any funds in the NRP Reserve must continue to be reserved until funds are expended through the process defined in law.
- At a minimum, Policy board members must include a member of the city council, county board, school board, park board, city-wide library board (where they exist), mayor or their designee, a member of the City's Senate Delegation and a member of the City's House delegation.
- The Policy Board may also include representatives of community groups, neighborhood organizations, business owners and neighborhood residents.
- The Policy Board is advisory, but may have more authority if structured as a Joint Powers board.
- The Policy Board has two main duties: to review and approve neighborhood action plans (and forward its recommendations to appropriate governing bodies), and to evaluate program expenditures against adopted plans.

The structure and specific roles and responsibilities of the NRP Policy Board are spelled out in City ordinance and by Council resolution.

It should be noted there are other requirements generally for use of NRP funds:

- Use of funds must meet the statutory housing requirement (52.5% of NRP expenditures go to housing related activities);
- Must be based on neighborhood-based, bottom up planning process;
- Must result in real outcomes based on neighborhood plans;
- A multi-jurisdictional Policy Board must have a formal role in approval process;
- There are minor legal restrictions (e.g. no food; limited purposes) tied to use of NRP funds and identified in various legal opinions.