

Navigating Civics

Leagues Alive 2017

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League Involvement in Civic Matters

Benefits to the league

- ▶ Engage residents
- ▶ Bring people together
- ▶ Improve quality of life
- ▶ Raise league profile
- ▶ Recruit volunteers



League Involvement in Civic Matters

Benefits to the city

- ▶ Mechanism for debate & local recommendations
- ▶ Helps City decision-makers

League Involvement in Civic Matters

Opportunity!

no obligation

League Involvement in Civic Matters

Try to do it well

- ▶ Downsides if not done well
 - Poor decision
 - Diminishing credibility



Four Step Process

- ▶ 1. Determine whether the league should get involved
- ▶ 2. Research the Issue
- ▶ 3. Take a Position
- ▶ 4. Communicate the Position

Step 1: Determine whether to get involved

Create a Procedure:

- ❖ How to bring civic issues to the board
- ❖ Discourage “walk on” agenda items
- ❖ Decide what types of issues will be referred to a standing Committee, if any
- ❖ Decision making method: Vote? Consensus?

Step 1: Determine whether to get involved

ASK

- ❖ Great impact on league or community?
- ❖ Better left to others?
- ❖ Adequate time and people?

Step 1. Determine whether to get involved

Scenario: League newsletter informs residents to contact the President if they would like to speak with the Board about any community issues.

Resident arrives at beginning of board meeting asking the league to protest termination of local bus route.

One board member regularly takes the bus and no one on the board was aware that the City was thinking of discontinuing the route.

The board already has a long agenda.

► Should the league take on this issue or not? How should it decide?



Step 2: Researching the Issue

- ❖ Find researcher(s)
- ❖ Check the facts
- ❖ Perhaps consult experts
- ❖ Consider relevant City policies and laws
- ❖ Inform residents, and
- ❖ Gather input from residents, time & resources permitting

Step 2: Researching the Issue

Scenario: League received a development permit notification stating the owner of the neighbourhood retail strip wants to construct an illuminated digital billboard.

The letter doesn't provide details or drawings.

Deadline to respond is in 10 days.

The league has a Civics Director and Civics Committee who review all development applications.

What should the Civics Committee do to research this issue?



Step 3: Taking a Position

Who decides the position of the league?

- ❑ League if the matter involves league operations only
- ❑ League reflects input of residents if matter impacts neighbourhood - ideally
But the ideal isn't always achievable or necessary

Impact of Issue Timeline	Who Makes Recommendations	How
<p>High community impact</p> <p>Long decision time</p>	<p>Board or delegated Committee <u>reports</u> ‘What was Heard’ from the community</p> <p>Or</p> <p>reports ‘What was Heard’ AND <u>makes recommendations</u> which <u>reflect</u> community views and interests</p>	<p>Facilitated community meeting(s)</p> <p>Community Survey</p> <p>Community Vote</p> <p>Community Visioning</p> <p>Representative Committee</p> <p>More.....</p>

Impact of Issue Timeline	Who Makes Recommendations	How
<p>HIGH Community impact</p> <p>SHORT decision time</p>	<p>Board/Committee</p>	<p>Recommendations based on Board's existing knowledge</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Board requests postponement of City decision</p> <p>Board/Committee consensus or majority vote (electronically?)</p>

Impact of Issue Timeline	Who Makes Recommendations	How
Moderate or localized impact SHORT decision time	Board Or Standing Committee	Board/Committee consensus or majority vote (electronically?)

Impact of Issue Timeline	Who Makes Recommendations	How
<p data-bbox="25 297 555 582">Impact is not immediate or certain</p> <p data-bbox="25 733 723 905">e.g. city-wide policy consultations</p>	<p data-bbox="772 305 1574 476">League rep contributes knowledge, ideas</p> <p data-bbox="772 628 1607 799">League rep may vote on multi-league position</p>	<p data-bbox="1651 305 2390 448">City or EFCL engagement opportunities</p> <p data-bbox="1651 585 2333 728">District or Area Council meetings</p>

Step 3: Taking a Position

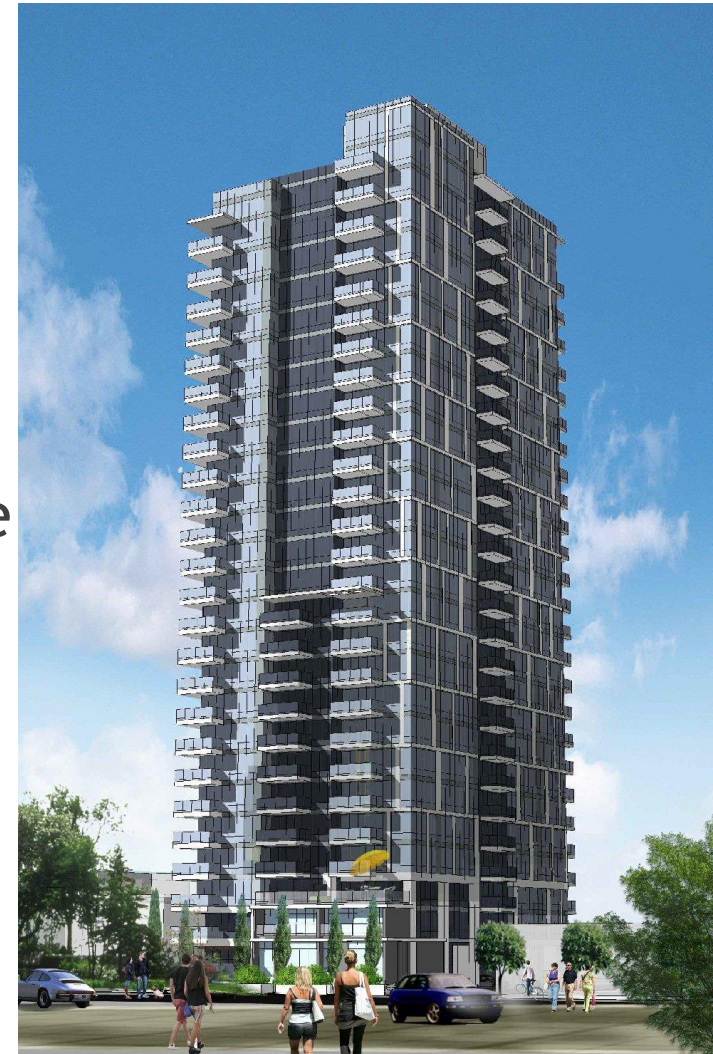
Scenario: High-rise senior's housing being proposed.

Developer and the City have organized some facilitated community meetings.

Some seniors want the project to proceed but they believe the building is too tall. Others oppose the high-rise.

Public Hearing decision in 6 months.

How will your league decide a position?



Step 4: Communicating the Position

What do we say?

- ▶ stance, process, related concerns
- ▶ speak for your league
- ▶ report who you consulted

To Whom?

- ▶ Decision Makers
- ▶ Our people

Step 4: Communicating Position

Scenario: League receives complaints from residents about the unsafe pedestrian crossing to get to the school & park.

Board decides to advocate for a safe crossing.

Board committee did research and spoke with the Office of Traffic Safety & concluded a pedestrian activated light would be the best solution, but city engineers say it is a low priority because data shows no serious accidents.

League decides to continue advocating.

WHO should they communicate to? **WHAT** should they say?



Embrace the opportunity to get involved in Civic Matters

Build League Capacity

- ▶ Urban Planning Basics - EFCL, Dec 2
- ▶ Professional Survey Monkey tool via EFCL
- ▶ Planning Committee resource booklet (handout)
- ▶ EFCL Planning Advisor
- ▶ City's Planning Academy courses March 2018