



January 8, 2020

Kathy Goeddel  
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Mayor Ted Wheeler  
Commissioner Chloe Eudaly  
Commissioner Amanda Fritz  
Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty

Re: Office of Civic Life's Proposed Code change on 3.96

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners,

The Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association (AHNA) supports City Council's goal to include diverse and traditionally underrepresented viewpoints from the community by revising City Code 3.96. AHNA asks Council to reject the resolution because it does not further, and indeed contradicts the goals of the Code revision. We ask that you consider alternatives to ensure an equitable, transparent process that address flaws in the 2019 Draft and extends the funding for Neighborhood Coalitions for 5 years. This letter summarizes our concerns about the resolution and the July 2019 Draft of City Code 3.96.

The Multi-Bureau Work Group resolution does not address problems with the process and wording of the July 2019 Draft. We ask Council to specify and commit to additional measures to revise 3.96 that include community stakeholders, and to clearly state the scope, goals and all future steps to its adoption. We ask Council to compel a Bureau overseeing this process to commit to public meetings, agendas, minutes and input throughout all related processes to achieve transparency, accountability and equity.

The proposed Multi-Bureau resolution authorizes the Work Group to determine a final version of City Code 3.96 and propose it to City Council without requiring public input. According to the resolution, City Council will consider the Group's recommendations and "additional public processes required, if any, for updating...3.96". The resolution allows the Bureau Group to determine "additional engagement processes" and "outline a community engagement plan" for how the City can engage with the community. The resolution creates a closed process for completing the Code 3.96 revision that concentrates authority in the Office of Civic and Community Life and its manager.

The resolution establishes a process that could exclude community engagement from a process dedicated to improving it. A process that does not explicitly require resident stakeholder participation and relies exclusively on internal government conversation is intrinsically biased. The process proposed in the resolution amplifies inequity and fails to ensure that a revised Code 3.96 will improve the current draft.

AHNA asks Council to reject the resolution, to consider alternatives to ensure an equitable, transparent process that address flaws in the 2019 Draft, and to authorize continued funding for Neighborhood Coalitions for five years by a separate resolution. Portland's communities and government deserve a Code 3.96 revision that meets the highest standards, the greatest needs, and represents the values of our city. We deeply appreciate the work already done by Council and the 3.96 Committee and, thank you in advance for your continued attention to public input and dedication to this project.

Best regards,

Kathy Goeddel  
President  
Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association