Registered Community Organizations (RCO) Rights and Responsibilities (October 18, 2018)

Rights

• *Every RCO has the right* to be notified by the applicant of any zoning variance or special exception or any project undergoing Civic Design Review (CDR) within its boundaries.

• *Every RCO has the right* to attend a public meeting for any zoning variance or special exception within its boundaries where the applicant or his/her representative presents the proposal and accepts questions and comments from the public. The same is true for any project undergoing Civic Design Review (CDR) within its boundaries.

• *Coordinating RCOs, in consultation with any other affected RCOs, have a right* to schedule the public meeting for any date within the allotted 45-days from the filing of the appeal or CDR determination. If the applicant does not contact the RCOs and distribute notice to required addresses within 20 days of notice by the Planning Commission, that 45-day period begins from the date that such notice is provided.

• *RCOs have a right* to the assurance that the ZBA and CDR Committee will not issue a decision on a case until after either 1) an RCO meeting has been held or 2) the applicant has both made a good faith effort to meet with the RCO and the 45-day period has expired.

• Where there are multiple overlapping RCOs for a given project, *any affected RCO not-assigned the role of Coordinating RCO has a right* to consult on the scheduling of the public meeting and to participate in that meeting.

• *Any RCO or member of the public has a right* to send a letter or give testimony at a ZBA or CDR hearing, regardless of whether it is assigned the role of Coordinating RCO.
Responsibilities

- **Coordinating RCOs have the responsibility** to make a good faith effort to work with the applicant to either hold a public meeting or work to ensure a public meeting is held within the required 45-day period.

- **Coordinating RCOs have the responsibility** to ensure that all affected RCOs are consulted during the scheduling of the public meeting.

- **Coordinating RCOs have the responsibility** to publicize meetings and ensure that members of the public are invited to attend and participate.

- **Coordinating RCOs have the responsibility** to make a good faith effort to ensure meetings are conducted respectfully and that all voices are heard, including both the applicant and members of the public.

- **Coordinating RCOs have the responsibility** for ensuring that a written summary of the meeting is sent to the City Planning Commission (RCO.Notification@phila.gov), the relevant District Council office, and the ZBA (RCOZBA@phila.gov) and/or Civic Design Review Committee, as applicable.

- If no meeting was held, **Coordinating RCOs have the responsibility** to send an explanation as to why not, along with written documentation of the efforts made to schedule the meeting.

- **All RCOs have the responsibility** for fulfilling all RCO-related functions without engaging in discriminatory practices (as defined by the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations).

- **All RCOs have the responsibility** for fulfilling all RCO-related functions regardless of an applicant's willingness to provide payments/donations to the RCO (monetary or in-kind), attend additional meetings, enter into a Community Benefits Agreement, or agree to any other request not identified in the Zoning Code.

- **Coordinating RCOs have the responsibility** to impartially document what occurred during the public meeting, including whether a vote was taken and, if so, to state and describe the vote count.