

## Registered Community Organizations (RCO) Rights and Responsibilities (May 31, 2025)

### 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 fully 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 affected RCOs are consulted during the scheduling of public zoning meetings.
- *Coordinating RCOs have the responsibility* to publicize meetings and ensure that members of the public are invited to attend and participate. Coordinating RCOs should make a good faith effort to host the public meeting in a place and manner consistent with the City's accessibility standards, found here: <https://www.phila.gov/documents/ada-policies/>
- *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, the relevant District Council office, and the ZBA 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.