

City of Seattle Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

DISCUSSION GROUND RULES

In order to ensure that the Committee's discussions and deliberations are efficient, productive and civil, the Committee, City and facilitator all agree to abide by the following discussion ground rules. The Committee grants the facilitator the permission to remind the group of these ground rules when needed.

Be Respectful

- One person speaks at a time.
- Listen when others are speaking, avoid interrupting and side conversations.
- Keep comments brief so everyone gets a chance to share their thoughts and don't repeat or rephrase what others have already said. Avoid dominating the discussion.
- Ask the speaker to be louder or repeat a comment if you did not hear it clearly.
- Allow time for interpreters when present.
- Hear and respect minority opinions.
- Good allies speak up. Members are encouraged not to ignore inappropriate behavior

Be Constructive

- Acknowledge that all participants bring with them legitimate purposes, goals, concerns and interests, whether or not you are in agreement with them.
- Act in "good faith," seeking to resolve conflicts and identify solutions. Come with the sense that this is a gathering of bright minds working toward a common goal.
- State concerns and interests clearly, listen carefully to and assume the best in others. Leave negative assumptions and attitudes at the door.
- Share comments that are solution focused, rather than repeating past discussions.
- It is OK to disagree.
- It is not OK to make personal attacks or slanderous statements.
- Minimize the use of jargon and acronyms, define and explain when used.
- Work towards consensus. Be willing to compromise.
- Ask for clarification when uncertain of what another person is saying. Ask questions rather than make assumptions.
- If you have a problem with a particular person, take the matter up with that person directly. Talking behind backs does not build community. If unable to resolve the difference, seek assistance from the Chair(s) and/or facilitator.

Be Productive

- Begin and end meetings on time.
- Respect time constraints.
- Adhere to the agenda as much as possible, focusing on the subject at hand.
- Volunteer for the tasks at hand.
- Bring a sense of humor and have fun.