



August 25, 2021

**Virtual Pre-submission Community Meeting Guidelines**  
*Instructions on Applying for and Hosting a Virtual Public Meeting*

In accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidelines which recommends limiting indoor gatherings, presubmission community meetings should be held virtually. To satisfy the requirement under Section 16.128(c)(1) in the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, virtual presubmission community meetings will require approval of an Alternative Compliance Petition, as long as additional steps are taken to allow for extended public input opportunities.

The following steps outline the process for holding a virtual presubmission meeting during this period of emergency and until further notice.

1. The petitioner must request alternative compliance to Section 16.128(c)(1) of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations to host the pre-submission meeting virtually. The alternative compliance petition must be submitted electronically to [planning@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:planning@howardcountymd.gov) and should include the following items:
  - a. The alternative compliance application.
  - b. Web address for the virtual meeting.
  - c. Explanation of how the virtual meeting will be conducted (platform, availability, public access, etc.).
  - d. An exhibit of the proposed development or subdivision that will be presented during the virtual meeting.

There will be no fee collected for this alternative compliance request.

2. Once the alternative compliance is approved, the petitioner should apply for the presubmission community meeting electronically:  
[https://pdox.howardcountymd.gov/ProjectDox/workflowforms/Anonymous\\_Form\\_Infill\\_Presub.aspx](https://pdox.howardcountymd.gov/ProjectDox/workflowforms/Anonymous_Form_Infill_Presub.aspx)
  - a. The website address that will advertise and provide the link to the virtual meeting should be entered in the “meeting place” field on the presubmission community meeting application.
  - b. The “meeting address” is a required field and should be completed with the petitioner’s address.
  - c. The meeting date and time must comply with the requirements in Section 16.128(c)(2) of the Regulations.
3. The property must be posted for at least three weeks immediately before the meeting and in compliance with Section 16.128 of the Regulations.
  - a. The Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) will prepare the poster and will charge the petitioner \$25 per poster. Checks can be dropped off in the metal drop box located outside the George Howard Building, 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043 or in the DPZ Drop Box in the front lobby. Please secure them in an envelope, indicate the purpose of the check, and send them attention to the Department of Planning and Zoning, Division of Land Development.

- b. DPZ will notify the petitioner when the posters are complete. The posters can be picked up at the front desk of the George Howard Building, 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043.
4. Notice shall be sent three weeks prior to the meeting in compliance with Section 16.128(d) of the Regulations. Per Section 16.128(e), the notice shall include:
  - a. Time, date and web address of the virtual meeting. This should include instructions on how to access the virtual meeting and provide comments during the meeting.
  - b. Address and map of the location of the subject property.
  - c. Type of initial plan submittal.
  - d. Type and amount of development, including number of residential units proposed, if applicable.
  - e. Website address of the Department of Planning and Zoning plans in process webpage or central interdepartmental webpage for searching all projects assigned a three-digit alphanumeric code.
  - f. Information about how to sign-up to receive minutes and subsequent correspondence if unable to attend the meeting.
  - g. To satisfy Section 16.128(f)(1) of the Regulations, the notice shall include a copy of these instructions and a copy of the county's subdivision and land development review process.
5. The petitioner must present the project proposal during the meeting, record the meeting, and post it on their website, along with any plans or materials that were presented at the meeting for at least two weeks after the meeting to allow for further community input and response by the petitioner. The website must include the recording, plan proposal and information on how to provide comments on the proposal. Any questions or comments submitted via the website should be included in the minutes, along with the responses. The petitioner must present and record the meeting even if there are no attendees in the virtual meeting.
6. The petitioner must maintain a record of the names, addresses and electronic mail addressed for all attendees and anyone unable to attend the meeting who contact the petitioner requesting to be added to the list.
7. The petitioner must compile comprehensive minutes of the meeting. This includes a written response to all questions not verbally answered at the virtual meeting and responses to comments that were received by the applicant in the two-week period immediately following the meeting. The minutes must be sent to all meeting attendees and anyone unable to attend the meeting who contacts the petition requesting to receive information, within 30 days of the meeting either electronically or by first class mail.
8. With the initial submission of the plan, the petitioner must provide DPZ certification that the meeting notices and minutes were sent, that the meeting recording was posted on the petitioner's website for at least 2 weeks after the meeting, and the meeting attendees' contact information.

All additional items and timelines noted in Section 16.128 not mentioned above must still be followed to satisfy the pre-submission community meeting requirement.