

## DISCRETIONARY REVIEW REFORM

Sue Hestor suggestions 2/10/09

### Emphasize improving process at the beginning

1. Field inspection to verify conditions at site AT START. In discussions with DBI and Planning, convened by Sup. McGoldrick a couple years ago, DBI had agreed to have field inspectors verify the accuracy of existing conditions shown on plans (including relation to adjacent properties, slopes, etc). This field inspection could be covered by a fee paid to DBI as part of the permit application. Such verification can head off problems where conditions are not shown accurately on plans and allow correction BEFORE 311 notice is sent out.
2. Notes of staff review meetings (at bare minimum dates, attendees, instrux given to sponsor) must be attached to plans, and put in case file if one is opened.
3. Story pole requirement. Additions at sloping sites or where conditions make it difficult for lay person to understand relationship of proposal to neighbors shall erect story poles NO LATER at least 3 weeks before 30 day notice period expires. The existence of the story poles shall be EXPLICITLY described in 311 notice. To be done at sponsor's cost. To be done for all NEW construction.
4. Staff to require compliance with Residential Design Guidelines PARTICULARLY re setbacks BEFORE the 311 notice goes out. This includes showing all side windows facing project on abutting sites. No longer optional, depending on individual planner.
5. BEFORE the 311 notice is issued, Planning staff shall discuss issues with DBI staff, such as whether a project will require structural upgrades that will result in a de facto demolition. When questions arise after 311 notice, or while DR is pending, Planning shall seek that information and not defer issues until AFTER the plans have been approved by Planning.  
This shall also include issues re exiting requirements and other matters that could affect the building envelope.
6. There is a perception that some staff persons value "numbers," i.e. getting cases off their desk, rather than doing a thorough analysis of major alterations. That their client is the developer, not the public. Adjust staff attitudes.

7. Establish a feedback system that solicits written input from the public on how they are being served to help the Department see where it is doing well and what could be improved. DBI and the Board of Appeals already solicit that input.