City of San Antonio

Legislation Details (With Text)

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Type:	Staff Briefing - Without Ordinance
	In control: Culture and Neighborhood Services Committee
On agenda:	2/10/2020
Title:	Staff briefing on the Neighborhood Association & Community Organization Registration Policy. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Verónica R. Soto, Director, Neighborhood and Housing Services]
Sponsors:	
Indexes:	
Code sections:	
Attachments:	

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result

DEPARTMENT: Neighborhood and Housing Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Verónica R. Soto, AICP, Director

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-Wide

SUBJECT:

Neighborhood Association & Community Organization Registration Policy Update

SUMMARY:

The Neighborhood and Housing Services Department administers the Neighborhood Association Registry and has developed an internal policy that regulates its administration. Staff will brief the Culture and Neighborhood Services Committee on the history and intent of the Registry and is seeking the Committee's input on improvements to the policy and the administration of the Registry. Staff will return to the Committee in March or April with recommendations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Neighborhood and Housing Services Department administers the Neighborhood Association Registry and has developed an internal policy that regulates its administration. The Neighborhood Association Registry was

established by Chapter 35-408 of the City's Unified Development Code (UDC) as a communication tool for notification of zoning and permitting requests. In addition, Chapter 35-408 establishes procedures for the registration of neighborhood associations and requires that neighborhood associations provide the City the following information:

• A map or written description of the neighborhood boundaries.

• A list of the officers in the association, including their address and phone number.

• A signed copy of the adopted by-laws.

• A regular meeting location and a regular meeting date.

• Date the association was founded.

• Number of association members.

• Approximate number of housing units in the area.

• Approximate population of neighborhood.

Per Chapter 35-403 of the City's Unified Development Code (UDC), the Development Services Department shall notify all property owners and registered neighborhood association(s) that are within 200 feet of any property that is the subject of a zoning application or is pursuing any other development permit that requires a public hearing. The Development Services Department uses the Neighborhood Association Registry to identify the neighborhood associations it must notify.

ISSUE:

NHSD administers the Registry and has developed an administrative policy that regulates its administration. The intent of the Neighborhood Association Registry is to facilitate communication and transparency. However, the intent has been compromised unintentionally due to a requirement in the administrative policy that states that a neighborhood association that would like to be on the Registry cannot have a boundary that overlaps with a neighborhood association that is currently on the Registry unless that neighborhood association consents to the boundary overlap. As a result of this requirement, there is typically only one neighborhood association per geographic area on the Registry because the neighborhood associations for the most part do not agree to the overlap. Therefore, only the first registered neighborhood association receives notifications, while the other associations have no mechanism to receive notifications tailored to their geographic area of interest.

Another unintentional consequence of the requirement regarding boundary overlap is that some neighborhood associations are using the Registry as validation that their association is the official association of the geographic area. The Neighborhood Association Registry was never intended to validate the existence of an association but some neighborhood associations have been identifying their organization as the "official" association of the neighborhood. As a result some community members have expressed concern that policy makers may give more weight to their comment than other organizations that come to speak on a specific neighborhood issue. However, several neighborhood associations are adamant that there be only one voice of

the neighborhood for which City Council Members and developers work with on projects and zoning cases.

City staff is in the process of amending the administrative policy that governs the Registry. Based on the analysis and feedback to date, staff will identify a way for all neighborhood associations to receive zoning notifications tailored to their geographic area of interest regardless if they are on the Neighborhood Association Registry or not. However, staff is seeking the input from the members of the Culture and Neighborhood Services Committee regarding the issue of overlapping boundaries for neighborhood associations on the Neighborhood Association Registry.

Another issue that has come up during stakeholder interviews is a concern that the leadership of some neighborhood associations on the Registry do not live in the boundaries of the neighborhood association. City is also seeking input on whether or not the City should require that the majority officers of any neighborhood association on the Neighborhood Association Registry live in the neighborhood association's boundary.

The purpose of today's presentation and discussion is to solicit the Committee's feedback on this important issue. Staff will return to the Council Committee in March or April with a recommendation regarding the administration of the Neighborhood Association Registry.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for discussion purposes only. Staff will return to the Committee in March or April with recommendations and alternatives.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for discussion purposes only. Staff will return to the Committee in March or April with recommendations and alternatives.