

# VOICE YOUR OPINION

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## More Information

For more information regarding land use planning in Carmel, see other pamphlets in this series about the Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals, available at City Hall, One Civic Square, Carmel, or call the Department of Community Services at 317.571.2417 or access the City web page at [www.carmel.in.gov](http://www.carmel.in.gov).

## Tips When Addressing the Board

- When the Chairperson asks if any one from the public wants to speak, raise your hand.
- Walk to the podium and talk directly into the microphone.
- State your name, community in which you reside, and if applicable, who you are representing.
- State your position clearly.
- Do not repeat previous testimony. Simply state that you agree with the preceding speaker.
- Make one point at a time.
- Be factual; rely on personal experience and not hearsay.
- Do not make personal attacks. This will eliminate your credibility.
- Limit yourself to 5 minutes.
- Respect all speakers. Booing, jeering, or applause is not appropriate.
- Simply say "thank you" when you are finished with your comments.

City of Carmel  
Dept. of Community Services  
One Civic Square  
Carmel, IN 46032  
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fx 317.571.2426  
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**Note:** This guide is for general information purposes only. For more specific information, please consult the Board of Zoning Appeals Rules of Procedure, the Plan Commission Rules of Procedure, and the Carmel/Clay Zoning Ordinances.

## CITIZENS SPEAK UP! PUBLIC MEETING CONDUCT



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# CONDUCT OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

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## Meetings

At a public hearing before the Plan Commission or Board of Zoning Appeals, the petitioner, property owners, or agent for the petitioner shall first present the facts and arguments in support of the petition. (Comments and questions from the Commission or Board members may be interjected during the presentation for clarification of the subject matter.) Following the petitioner's presentation, each person who wishes to comment on the petition must address the president and be recognized before speaking. Each person must state his or her name and the community in which he or she resides. To maintain orderly procedure, each side should proceed without interruptions by the other side. Each speaker is respected while giving his/her opinion, and is expected to do the same whether the petitioner, Department staff member, Commission member, or citizen is speaking.

Order of Meeting	
Petitioner's Presentation	15 minutes
General Public Comments - Favorable	5 minutes
Organized Public Remonstrance - Unfavorable	15 minutes
General Public Comments - Unfavorable	5 minutes
Petitioner's Rebuttal	5 minutes
Dept. of Community Services Comments	as requested for explanation or at the end of the public hearing
At the discretion of the majority of the Commission or Board members present, the above time may be extended. There should be no time for rebuttal of the rebuttal, however, should it occur, the petitioner shall always be given the opportunity to give the final rebuttal (per Robert's Rules of Procedure).	

## Close of Public Hearing

The president shall close the public hearing after the Commission or Board has adequately heard from all interested persons. The president shall distribute or read all written public comments on the petition received by the Commission or Board. All public comments will be entered into the public record by the Commission or Board Secretary. (Written testimony may be submitted to the Dept. of Community Services 5 days prior to the meeting.)

The petitioner may summarize arguments and the Commission or Board may question further. As deemed necessary, the Commission or Board members may also ask for clarification of points made by the public or may request legal opinion from City Counsel regarding any aspect of the petition. After the public hearing is formally closed and comments and questions from the Commission or Board or Staff have been heard, the matter shall then be assigned to an appropriate committee (in the case of the Plan Commission) or voted upon. Unless the rules are suspended, a vote is taken in accordance with Article XII Section 2 of the Plan Commission's Rules, or in the case of the BZA, a member may make an appropriate motion for disposition of a petition. All motions calling for a vote will be made in the affirmative.

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