



City of Westfield

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

MEETING GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Welcome! Please know that Zoning Board of Appeals appreciates your attendance, and that you have every right to be present and observe this public meeting (unless the Board enters Executive Session), but you may only speak or address the Board in the following instances:

1. At the **Public Participation** session at the start of the meeting, but only on matters not the subject of a pending public hearing.
 2. During, and relative to, a **Public Hearing**.
 3. At any other time, but only at the **discretion of the Chair**.
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The Public Hearing Process

The hearing will begin with the petitioner describing the proposal to Board, followed by members asking questions. The Chair then will open the floor and invite public input (to ask questions of fact, or to speak in favor or in opposition).

⚠ Please follow these basic rules when commenting:

1. Wait to be recognized; only one speaker at a time!
2. Stand up and give your name and address.
3. Direct questions or comments to the Chair, not to the petitioner.
4. Refrain from engaging in conversations or personal attacks. You may not cross-examine the petitioner, Board members, or other speakers. (The Chair may ask the petitioner to respond to your questions or comments at the end of the session.)



The Board may then **close the hearing**, after which no further testimony or information can be accepted; or it may **continue the hearing** to a specific future meeting. Other than the regular meeting announcement, notices are not mailed or posted for hearings that are continued, so make note of the continuance date. The Board may make a decision any time after the hearing is closed, whether that same night or at a future meeting.

Remember that a public hearing is not a referendum on the petition. Any decision ultimately rests solely with the Board, considering its discretion, regulations and any public comments.

- ⊘ Please do not attempt to discuss or influence any Board member on matters of a pending public hearing outside of an open meeting. Members are prohibited from considering any such *ex parte* communication. You may discuss the matter with City staff any time.**
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