

Date: May 3, 2004

To: Neighborhood Council Leaders

From: Greg Nelson, General Manager, Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment

Subject: LOBBYISTS CANNOT BE PROHIBITED FROM SERVING ON NC  
BOARDS. ONLINE DOCUMENTS MADE AVAILABLE BY CITY CLERK.

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEES. FUNDING PROGRAM REPORT RELEASED.  
\$100,000 STREET SERVICES PROGRAM – CONFLICT OF INTEREST  
GUIDELINES.

## LOBBYISTS CANNOT BE PROHIBITED FROM SERVING ON NC BOARDS

In response to a question that was raised somewhere along the line, the City Attorney provided written advice that lobbyists cannot be prohibited from serving on Neighborhood Council boards. In essence, the City Charter defines a stakeholder, at a minimum, as anyone who lives, works, or owns property in the area. It doesn't say anyone who lives, works, or owns property in the area, "except for lobbyists." To view the letter visit our website and go to [Reference Library>Legal Advice](#).

## ONLINE DOCUMENTS MADE AVAILABLE BY CITY CLERK

The City Clerk proudly announces a new feature that will allow you immediate online viewing of scanned copies of the original departmental and other reports that are contained in official City Council files. [Click here](#) to read his one-page letter, or visit our home page.

## GRIEVANCE COMMITTEES

The Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils requires Neighborhood Councils to establish a way through which they will address grievances and resolve disputes. Most Neighborhood Councils use a grievance committee. In some cases, new committees are created each time there are matters to be addressed.

The City Attorney advises that the person who filed the complaint, or who is the subject of the complaint, should not appoint the members of the committee. Aside from the possibility that it may raise conflict of interest issues, it's just decent and fair.

Similarly, you should not participate in a grievance committee if it is considering a complaint that you filed, or is one in which you are subject.

## FUNDING PROGRAM REPORT RELEASED

Our report that recommends several ways to streamline and improve the Neighborhood Council Funding Program has been on our website in draft form

so that you could view it and provide input. It has now been delivered to the City Council, and we await its scheduling in the City Council committee. To view the report and its attachments, please visit our home page.

#### **\$100,000 STREET SERVICES PROGRAM – CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES.**

The City Attorney has provided Neighborhood Council board members with some advice that will help them avoid conflicts of interest when determining their Neighborhood Council's priorities for the street projects, and other similar programs that may follow.

It's really common sense. If your property directly benefits from the project, you shouldn't be involved in the decision-making process.

To view the report, visit our home page. Later it will find its permanent home in Reference Library>Legal Advice.

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