

Date: December 14, 2005

To: Neighborhood Council Leaders  
From: Greg Nelson, General Manager  
Subject: DRAFT COMPLAINT PROCESS

## COMPLAINT PROCESS DRAFT FOR YOUR REVIEW

The process through which formal complaints against a Neighborhood Council are handled is spelled out a bit in the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils. The Plan says that if our department makes "exhaustive efforts" to get the Neighborhood Council to resolve the complaint, and those efforts fail, and the complaint involves a violation of the Plan, we must ask the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners to decertify the Neighborhood Council.

That's pretty drastic. The middle grounds, the exhaustive efforts, are not defined. Therefore, I am presenting to you for your comments a process through which formal complaints will be handled.

Its goal is to describe a system through which frivolous complaints can be dealt with quickly by a Neighborhood Council, and one through which stakeholders can be assured that their Neighborhood Council is following city rules and its own bylaws.

Unless the Plan is amended, the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the rules are followed is with our department.

Part of this grand Neighborhood Council experiment is to see if it is possible for people with the broadest range of diversity to work together in a productive way to increase public participation in government and in their neighborhood. The goal is not to see if government can do all of this for them and increase its size to be able to handle the workload.

Therefore, the proposed written process remains the same as the process that we have been using in that all complaints will first be sent to the Neighborhood Council so that it can have a first attempt at dealing with its own problems.

The draft process can be found on our home page. Beneath it is list of community and City resources that are available to assist Neighborhood Councils in resolving disputes, complaints, and grievances.

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