

Subcommittee Review for Design Commission projects March 2023



Purpose

The Seattle Design Commission convenes subcommittees to provide a project applicant with a focused review and direction on project issues or elements. Subcommittee review helps resolve issues or questions prior to subsequent full Commission reviews. Subcommittee meetings are also an opportunity for Commissioners to provide input on projects that do not warrant a full Commission meeting.

A subcommittee review does not constitute a formal Commission action. A subcommittee is comprised of Commissioners but does not constitute a quorum of the Commission. Notice of a subcommittee meeting is provided to people who attended the full commission meeting that identified the need for a subcommittee review.

Applicability

The following are eligible for subcommittee review:

- Projects subject to Commission review under Seattle Municipal Code Section 3.58 that are of a size or scope that do not warrant a full Commission review;
- Projects that have received final approval by the Commission with a condition to have additional review of a project issue or element;
- Projects under ongoing review by the Commission for which the Commission voted to require focused review of an issue or element as a condition of the project proceeding to subsequent full Commission reviews; or
- Special exceptions for signs in Seattle Municipal Code Section 23.55.040.

Process

1. A staff member and at least two commissioners shall be assigned to review designated project issues or elements. If any commission members voted to oppose or deny the project during a full Commission meeting, at least one of these commissioners shall be included in the subcommittee review, along with other commissioners appointed to this review by SDC staff.

2. Subcommittee meetings shall be scheduled as soon as possible following the Commission meeting that identified the need for the review. Prompt scheduling of a subcommittee meeting gives the applicant sufficient time to develop presentation materials in response to questions raised, or issues and elements identified.
3. At least eight days prior to the subcommittee meeting, presentation materials addressing the issue or element shall be forwarded to Commission staff.
4. At the subcommittee meeting, Commissioners shall be briefed by staff and the applicant using the presentation materials received from the project team.
5. Following review of presentation materials, Commissioners shall provide specific direction to the applicant regarding the project issue or element under review. Commissioner direction shall also indicate whether these items or issues have been sufficiently addressed and whether the project should proceed to the next stage of design development or permitting.
6. If additional subcommittee meetings are needed, subsequent meetings shall follow the same process outlined above. Specific information shall be provided to the applicant during or following the subcommittee meeting, detailing any additional information to be provided to staff prior to the next subcommittee meeting.
7. Following subcommittee approval of the project issue or element, staff shall prepare a written summary of direction provided to the project applicant. The applicant shall update any permit documents to reflect the Commission's approval.