

## Variances

### PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS



#### WHAT IS A VARIANCE AND WHEN IS ONE REQUIRED?

A variance may be applied for when a proposal does not comply with all of the specific dimensional regulations of the zoning code and the applicant believes that the proposal can meet all of the criteria for a variance. Variances will only be granted in cases where the particular property, because of special circumstances applicable to the property, is deprived of privileges commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same vicinity and zone and where the variance will remedy the disparity in privilege, or to accommodate a solar energy system.

#### HOW IS A VARIANCE APPLICATION REVIEWED?

Once the Planning Department receives a complete variance application, the staff will develop a staff report and a recommendation to the Hearing Examiner. The variance criteria are:

- A. The variance shall not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitation upon uses of other properties in the vicinity and zone in which the property on behalf of which the application was filed is located; and
- B. That such variance is necessary, because of special circumstances relating to the size, shape, topography, location or surroundings of the subject property, to provide it with use rights and privileges permitted to other properties in the vicinity and in the zone in which the subject property is located; and
- C. Granting of such a variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the vicinity and zone in which the subject property is situated; and
- D. There are special circumstances applicable to a particular lot or tract, such as size, shape, topography, surroundings, trees, groundcover or other physical conditions, installation of a solar energy system or the location or orientation of a building for purposes of gaining or providing solar access; and
- E. The granting of the variance will not alter the character of the land, nor impair the appropriate use or development of adjacent property; and
- F. Granting the variance will not conflict with the general purposes and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and other requirements of this title; and
- G. In determining whether to approve an application for a variance, the Hearing Examiner shall consider the applicant's record regarding meeting the terms, conditions and limitations of other permits previously issued including building permits, conditional uses or variances; and
- H. All variances shall meet any other term, condition or limitation of the Lake Forest Park Municipal Code, if any, applicable to the specific action including [Title 16, Environmental Protection](#); [Title 17, Subdivisions](#); and [Title 18, Zoning Requirements](#).



**WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR A VARIANCE?**

The variance process takes approximately 120 days. The process begins with submittal of a complete variance application and payment of the application fee. A pre-application meeting is required prior to official intake.

A complete variance application includes:

- A completed [Variance Application](#)
- A site plan showing all existing and proposed structures
- Elevation plans, if applicable
- A complete description of the proposal
- A complete description of the applicant's variance request
- The applicant's description of how the proposal complies with the established variance criteria

Additional information that supports the application may be required for staff and Hearing Examiner review

**PLEASE NOTE:** It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that all criteria are met in order for the Hearing Examiner to consider approval of the application

**Questions?**

For more information, please contact the Planning Department  
[aplanner@cityofflp.com](mailto:aplanner@cityofflp.com)  
206-957-2837

**Access to Information**

Electronic versions of all forms, permits, applications, and codes are available on the Lake Forest Park website:  
<http://www.cityofflp.com/>

Paper copies of all of the above are available at City Hall:  
17425 Ballinger Way Northeast, Lake Forest Park, WA 98155  
206-368-5440

**DISCLAIMER:** The information contained is meant to provide general information and guidance into basic application and hearing requirements and procedures in accordance with the Lake Forest Park Municipal Code and is not intended to be a substitute for actual codes and regulations. Additionally, the conditions and regulations described in this bulletin do not address any state or federal regulation.