



Metropolitan **Planning** Council

# **Zoning Assessment Steering Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday, February 14  
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm**

# Agenda

- 3:30** Welcome and Introductions
- 3:35** Timeline Historical Acknowledgement
- 3:45** Pre-reading Debrief and Activity
- 4:00** Definitions Activity
- 4:25** Definitions Presentation and Discussion
- 5:00** Adjourn

# Recap and Session Introduction

# Recap: Bike Rack and Notecards

## **Outcomes**

### **Session #3 – March**

- Limits to zoning and what it can change/impact

## **People and Processes**

### **Session #4 – April**

- Zoning process is expensive
- User stories of zoning and development process

## **Code and Other Requirements**

### **Session #5 – May**

- ARO
- Planned Developments
- General Planning
- Variances

# Recap: Bike Rack and Notecards

## **Future Project Phases (Phases II, III, and IV)**

- Zoning modalities like form-based code and others
- Relationship between comprehensive planning and zoning
- Understanding density and comparable density
- Zoning impact on property assessments and land uses change/impact
- Comparative studies for addressing zoning in other cities and states (best practices)

# Future Meetings & Topics

## Meeting 3: March 13

- Outcomes

## Meeting 4: April 17

- People and Process

## Meeting 5: May 15

- Codes and Other Requirements

## Meeting 6: June 12

- Review Methodology
- Debrief the Process

All meetings will be held in person at  
MPC from 3:30 – 5:00 pm

# Session 2

## Objectives:

- Acknowledge the forces and power dynamics that shaped zoning over time  
(*Bike Rack and Notecard*)
- Co-create definitions for key terms that will define the framework for reviewing zoning in Chicago

## Housekeeping:

- Please participate fully
- Ideas will be put in a "bike rack"
- Notecards are provided for all ideas and thoughts
- Write on your handouts as needed

# Group Agreements

- **Be present**
- **Listen deeply**
- **Recognize your privileges**
- **Embrace ambiguity and change; challenge perfectionism**
- **Challenge with care**
- **Preserve the integrity of stories**
- **Steward our space**
- **Respect silence**
- **When things get difficult, turn to wonder**



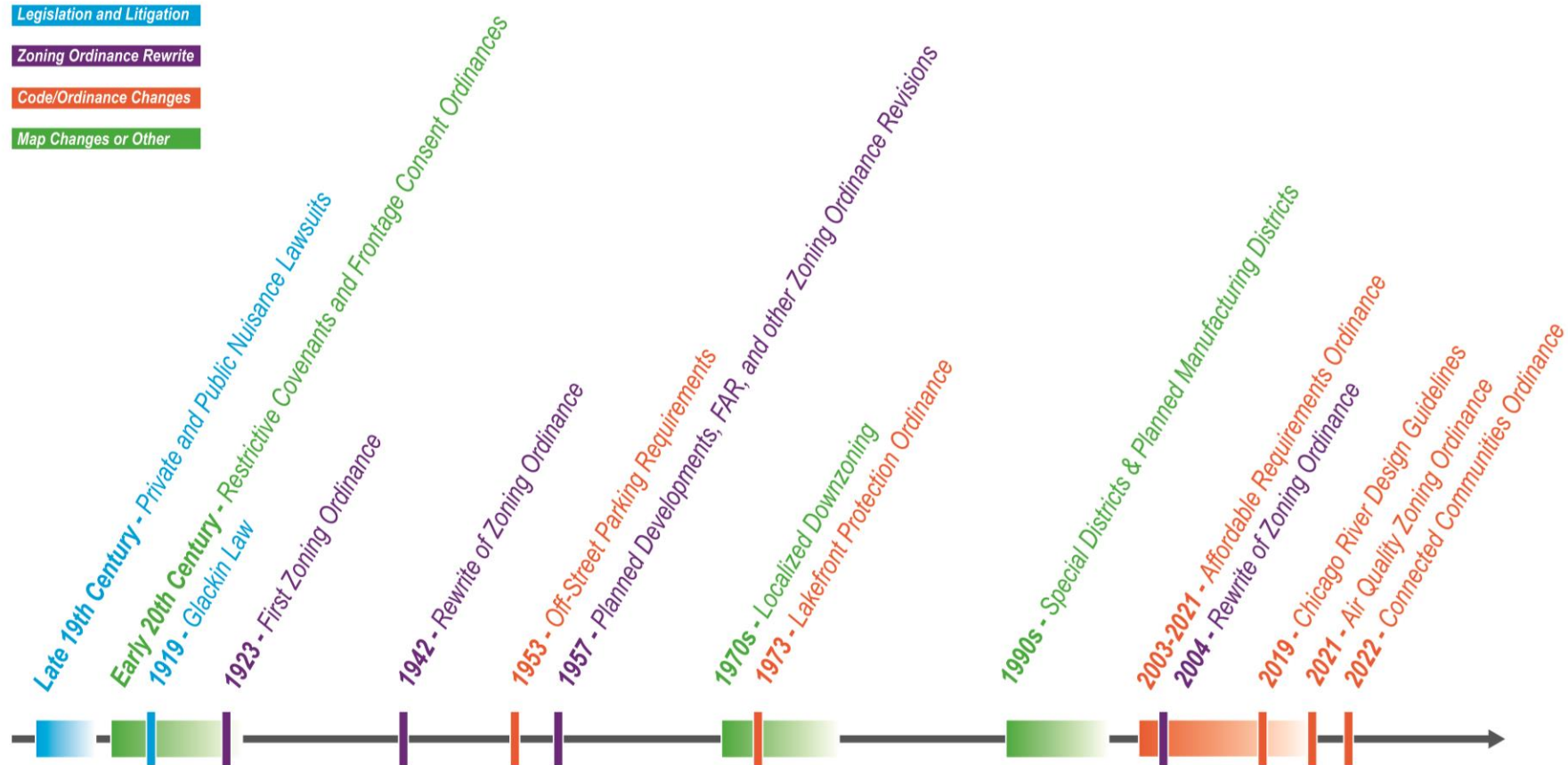
# Consensus Building – Decision Making

- **A fist** means, “I vote NO.” or in consensus it means , “I object and will block consensus (usually on moral grounds).”
- **1 finger** means, “I’ll just barely go along.” or, “I don’t like this but it’s not quite a no.” or, “I think there is lots more work to do on this proposal.” In consensus this indicates standing aside, or not being in agreement but not blocking the consensus.
- **2 fingers** means “I don’t much like this but I’ll go along.”
- **3 fingers** means, “I’m in the middle somewhere. Like some of it, but not all.”
- **4 fingers** means, “This is fine.”
- **5 fingers** means, “I like this a lot, I think it’s the best possible decision.”

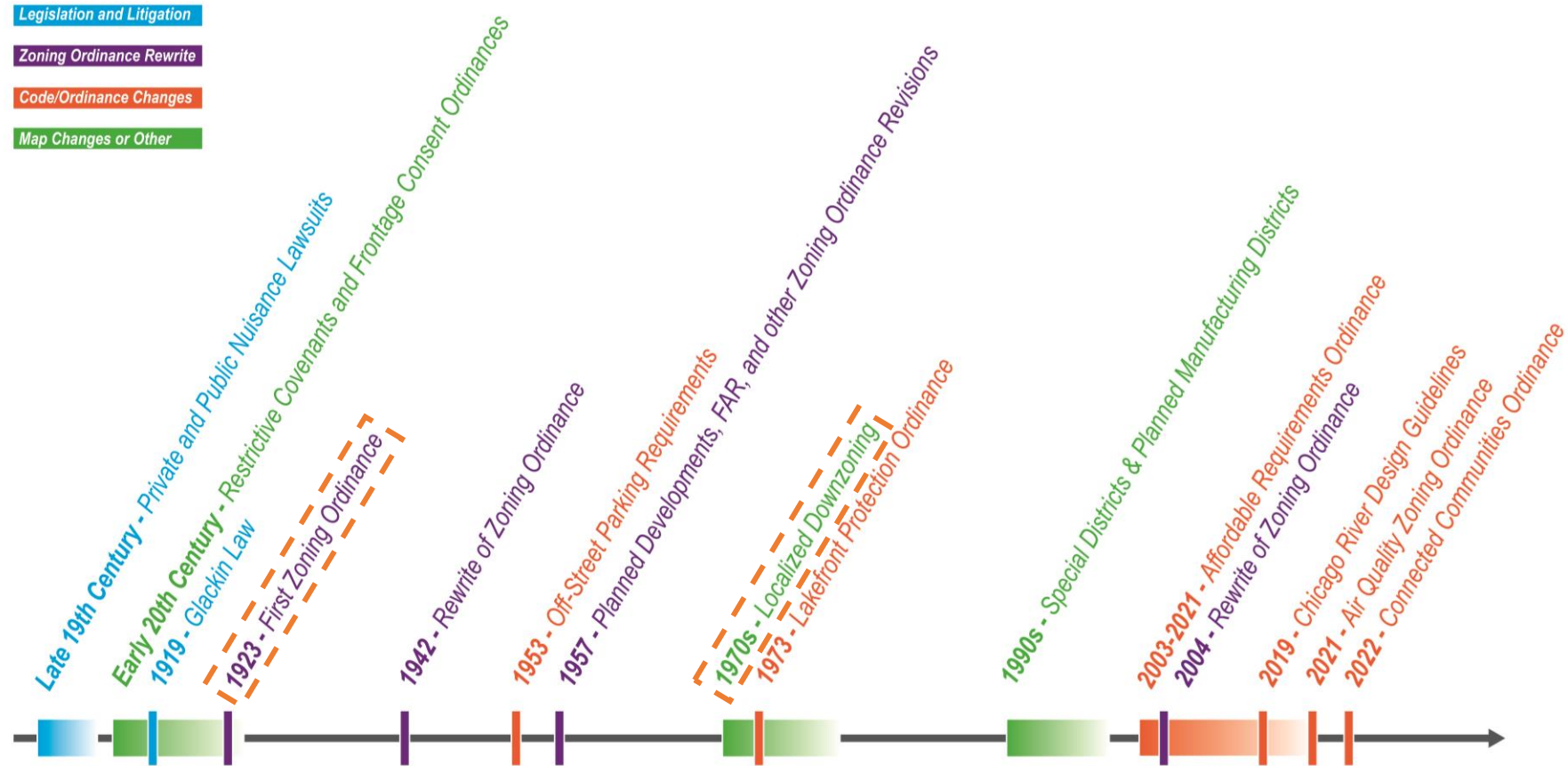


# Timeline Historical Acknowledgement

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# 1923 First Zoning Ordinance

## Description:

- Drafted by Zoning Commission, adopted in April 1923
- Established four districts; residential, apartment, manufacturing, and commercial and five volume districts expanding concentrically out from the Loop.

## Historical Context:

- Constitutionality of zoning upheld at federal level in Supreme Court *Euclid* decision
- Migration of southern Black residents to Chicago, inclusion of Charles Duke on Zoning Commission
- Shift from overt discrimination to more opaque deliberate or indirect discriminatory zoning policy

# 1923 First Zoning Ordinance

## Who held power?

- City officials and regulators
- Property owners (commercial & residential)
- Chicago Real Estate Board and other business interests
- White led groups

## Who was burdened?

- Black residents
  - 'Northern' (existing)
  - 'Southern' (new)
- Minority and immigrant populations
- Low-income renters, Black homeowners
- Black led groups

## Outcomes

- Loss of equity for Black homeowners
- Insular *higher density* Black neighborhoods
- Uneven commercial and Industrial zoning
- Longterm precedent for discriminatory policy

# 1970s Downzoning

## **Description:**

- Residents started to pressure their aldermen, the Plan Commission, and the Mayor to sponsor and pass amendments downzoning portions of the North Side neighborhoods and the Lakefront.

## **Historical Context:**

- Proliferation of high-density development replacing existing lower density (single family homes, 2 and 3 flats)
- Following the civil rights revolution of the 1960s, community groups in the higher income neighborhoods advocated for downzoning to prevent market forces from providing new affordable units in their neighborhoods

# 1970s Downzoning

## Who held power?

- Individual Homeowners
- Council Reps, Plan Commission, other city agency staff
- Neighborhood organizations

## Who was burdened?

- Low-income residents/renters
- Existing low-income residents and renters
- 'Missing' constituency
  - Displacement and restrictions
- Developers & landowners

## Outcomes

- Less density, affordability
- Affordable housing construction outside majority white wards
- 14 majority white wards, 55% of downzoning since 1970
- Empowered community groups, and grassroots support



# **Pre-reading Debrief and Discussion**

# Pre-reading Debrief and Discussion

## WTTW Article Discussion Questions

- What do the stories in this article tell you about segregation in Chicago that you didn't know before?
- Of the topics that you learned about for the first time, what do you wish everyone knew? What would change if everyone knew it?
- If you could require one person (or one group) to read this article and the WTTW FIRSTHAND: Segregation series, who would it be? What would you hope their main takeaway would be?
- How often do these topics or pre-reading definitions come up in your work? In what ways?

# Definitions Activity

# Definitions Activity Instructions

## Define key terms collaboratively

- Equity\*
  - Sustainability\*
  - Public Health\*
  - Equitable Development
  - Environmentally Sustainable Development
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- **Use the first five minutes for individual, quiet work**
  - **Then create a joint definition as a group**
  - **Then review other groups' definitions**
    - Something you like (blue post-it)
    - Something you have a question about (green post-it)
    - Something you think should not be included (red post-it)
    - Something you think is missing (yellow post-it)
  - **Finally, discuss and vote with the whole Steering Committee**

# Definition Prompts

- Based on the pre-definition, inspiration document, which words resonated with you? As you create a definition, which words should be included?
- Is there anything that is missing?
- Are there limitations to the terms (may be based on your knowledge or work or aspirations)?



Metropolitan**Planning**Council

**Thank you!**

**Meeting 3: March 13**  
**3:30 pm – 5:00 pm**