

# Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing Membership Manual

Draft 1.1

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## Section I: Introduction

### THE VISION OF OAK PARK INTERGENERATIONAL COHOUSING

**(To be reevaluated using finalized group decision-making process at an upcoming general meeting)**

*As presently stated on our website:*

*The Oak Park Cohousing Group is Chicagoland and Illinois' premier inter-generational cohousing community. The group envisions completing construction and opening the doors to a 20-family building in Oak Park, Illinois that features shared common spaces that fosters social interaction among residents, a development strategy that enables moderate, middle and upper income households to become members, and a building that promotes energy conservation practices and environmental sustainability. A solid foundation of kind, community-minded families has formed the core of the Oak Park Cohousing Group, and we are excited for families like yours to join in our vision!*

#### PRINCIPLES

- I. The physical design of shared common spaces (e.g., mail room, fireplace, dining area) will foster social interaction among residents.
  - Preparing and sharing meals on a regular basis in a common dining area (voluntary, periodic)
  - Coordinating social interaction, barter and labor exchange for services among residents
  - Common space will include space for gardening, child play and guest rooms
- II. Pursue a building design, development strategy and organizational structure that enables moderate, middle and upper income households to become members
  - Members may pay less for smaller dwelling units with fewer amenities and more for larger units
  - Institutional relations with Village agencies secures rent subsidy for select units & households
- III. The residential buildings will be developed on a location near public transportation and pedestrian accessible shops and services.
- IV. Promote and adopt energy conservation practices in the physical construction, maintenance and use of the building and facilities.

#### NEW MEMBERSHIP

Anyone interested in getting to know our group is welcome as an observer at our Public Meetings generally held on the first Tuesday of the month at Oak Park Public Library.

Please check our website, [www.oakparkcohousing.org](http://www.oakparkcohousing.org) for details. Additional details about membership criteria are covered in Section IV in this manual.

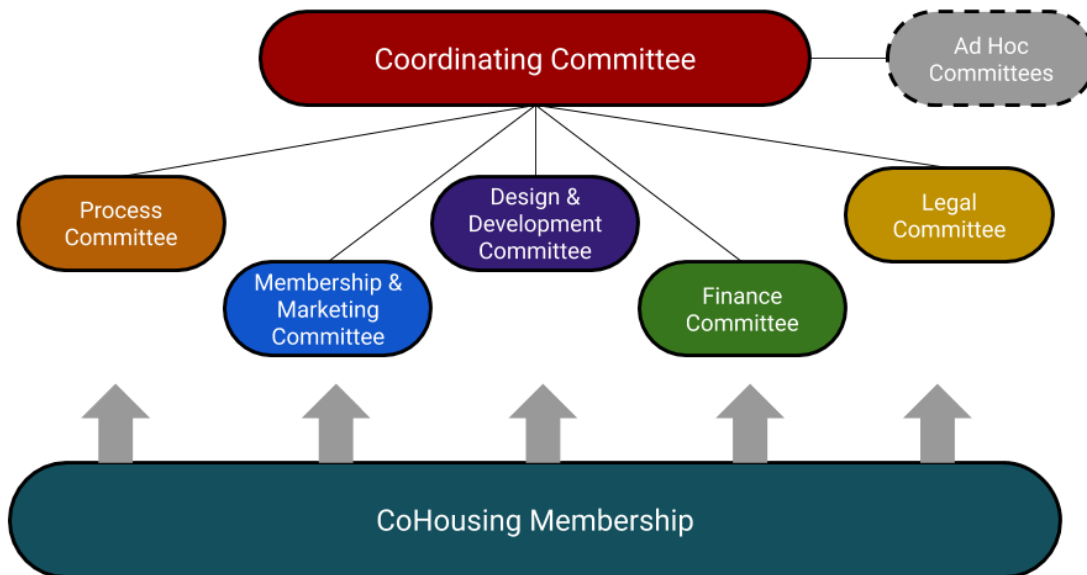
Initial membership to Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing is granted if a household meets the following requirements:

1. Attendance at a public meeting, a web-based public meeting, or any introductory meeting deemed eligible by the Membership Committee, by one member of the interested household.
2. A payment of one time \$200.00 (nonrefundable) by check made out to our fiscal sponsor-"Arbor West Neighbors , NFP".
3. Submits of Member Info Sheet to the Membership Committee.

For additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us at: **Phone:** (708) 772-8817, **Email:** [cohousingoakpark@gmail.com](mailto:cohousingoakpark@gmail.com).

## Section II: Organizational Structure

### COMMITTEE STRUCTURE



The general membership of Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing is subdivided into six standing committees and composed of member volunteers. Each standing committee is led by a chair who is selected by the general membership through Type II Decision-Making (see Section V: Decision-Making Processes and Procedures) and meets monthly at the discretion of the Committee Chair. The exception to this is the Coordinating Committee, which is composed of the five committee chairs, and Ad Hoc Committees, which are formed on an as-needed basis.. The responsibilities of each committee are more fully detailed below.

### STANDING COMMITTEES

#### Coordinating Committee

Sets the overall agenda for Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing, combines the input of the five committees, and assumes overall responsibility for the direction of Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing.

**Composition** - Composed of the chairs of the five subsequent committees.

**Organization** - Led by a chair who is selected among the Coordinating Committee members through a process determined by the Coordinating Committee (by consensus or on a rotating basis, for example).

**Responsibilities**

- Coordinate and oversee administrative tasks (e.g. meetings, minute taking, proposals, authorizing contracts, etc.).
- Oversee organizational structures and documents.
- Set agendas for and schedule general membership meetings.
- Plan ahead for future needs of the group.
- Decide which committee addresses specific proposals.
- Set up Ad Hoc Committees when necessary.
- Determine the decision types of proposals brought before the general membership (see Section V: Decision-Making Processes and Procedures).
- Allocate time for discussion of each proposal at the general membership meetings.

**Process Committee**

Develops, updates, and enforces the internal policies and procedures governing Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing and facilitates communication to minimize conflict and ensure the efficient functioning of the organization.

- Facilitate development of and ensure ongoing effectiveness of communication channels within the group.
- Develop mediation and conflict resolution skills.
- Be aware of conflicts that arise in the community, decide the best way to deal with them and resolve them.
- Be aware of individual needs in the community & coordinate a community response if appropriate.
- Suggest ways of enhancing community life (e.g. workshops, clearing circles, etc.).
- Review internal policies and procedures and suggest revisions and changes as needed.
- Keep the Membership Manual up-to-date.
- Help to facilitate the integration of new members into the group.
- Facilitate meetings or assist others in developing facilitation skills.

**Membership & Marketing Committee**

Responsible for the recruitment of new members, presentation of the group to outside entities, and fostering communication and camaraderie within the group.

- Oversee the preparation, organization and execution of information sessions.
- Prepare and distribute all promotional materials.
- Develop procedures for contact management and outreach.
- Develop procedures for orienting new members.

- Oversee member education.
- Review applications for membership.
- Publish regular newsletters and updates.
- Coordinate social events for the group.

### **Finance Committee**

Oversees the financial health of Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing.

- Plan, monitor, and oversee the group's finances.
- Survey and confidentially maintain information about members' ability to contribute to development cost and their ranges of affordability for buying into the project.
- Structure financing plan, in conjunction with the Development Committee, for the construction of the CoHousing building.
- Explore fundraising possibilities to defray the cost of development and construction.

### **Design and Development Committee**

Responsible for the physical design and construction of the cohousing facility, taking input from members to best meet members' needs while developing a facility based on core group values.

- Design a building following the building specifications enumerated and prioritized by the general membership.
- Survey members for their desired unit specifications (1 bedroom, 2 bedroom, etc.) and input about common spaces.
- Work with local authorities and officials to approve building plans and designs.
- In conjunction with the Finance Committee, structure a financing plan for the construction of the CoHousing building.

### **Legal Committee**

Ensures that Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing meets applicable legal requirements, protects members from legal and financial exposure, and oversees contracts entered into by the group.

- Develop and maintain documents and procedures (such as by-laws, incorporation renewals, etc.) to ensure legal compliance for operation of Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing.
- Establish mechanisms to protect individual members from potential legal and financial exposure.
- Draft documentation to ensure legal compliance/obligation of members regarding financial pledges.



- Either represents or leads the effort to find representation should any legal matters affecting the community arise.

## **AD HOC COMMITTEES**

Committees formed at the discretion of the Coordinating Committee to address specific needs and disbanded after that need is addressed.

## Section III: Meetings and Proposals

### MEETINGS

#### Types of Meetings

- **General Membership Meetings** - Held **monthly on a set day** to conduct the normal business of the community. These require full community participation.
- **Committee Meetings** - Held monthly at the discretion of the committee chair to conduct specifically-focused business under the purview of the individual committee.
- **Informational Meetings** - Typically held the first Tuesday of each month to introduce Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing to the public and to potential new members.
- **Workshops** - Held as needed to educate members about particular community building, legal and design aspects from professionals as the project progresses or to develop particular skills, such as facilitation or conflict resolution.

#### Quorum

Quorum at a business meeting is necessary for decisions to be made. The quorum standard for Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing is a simple majority or 50% + 1 Associate Members for all Type I, Type II and Type III decisions. The standard of quorum for all Type IV and Type V decisions is a simple majority of Equity Members or 50% + 1 Equity Member.

#### General Membership Meeting Structure

General Membership Meetings will be led by the Coordinating Committee and will be ordered as follows:

1. Recitation of Group Vision Statement
2. General Announcements
3. Brief Review of Last General Membership Meeting
4. Committee Updates
5. Old Business - Addressing decisions that were tabled or otherwise left unresolved at the previous General Membership Meeting
6. New Business
7. Closing Remarks by Coordinating Committee

### PROPOSALS

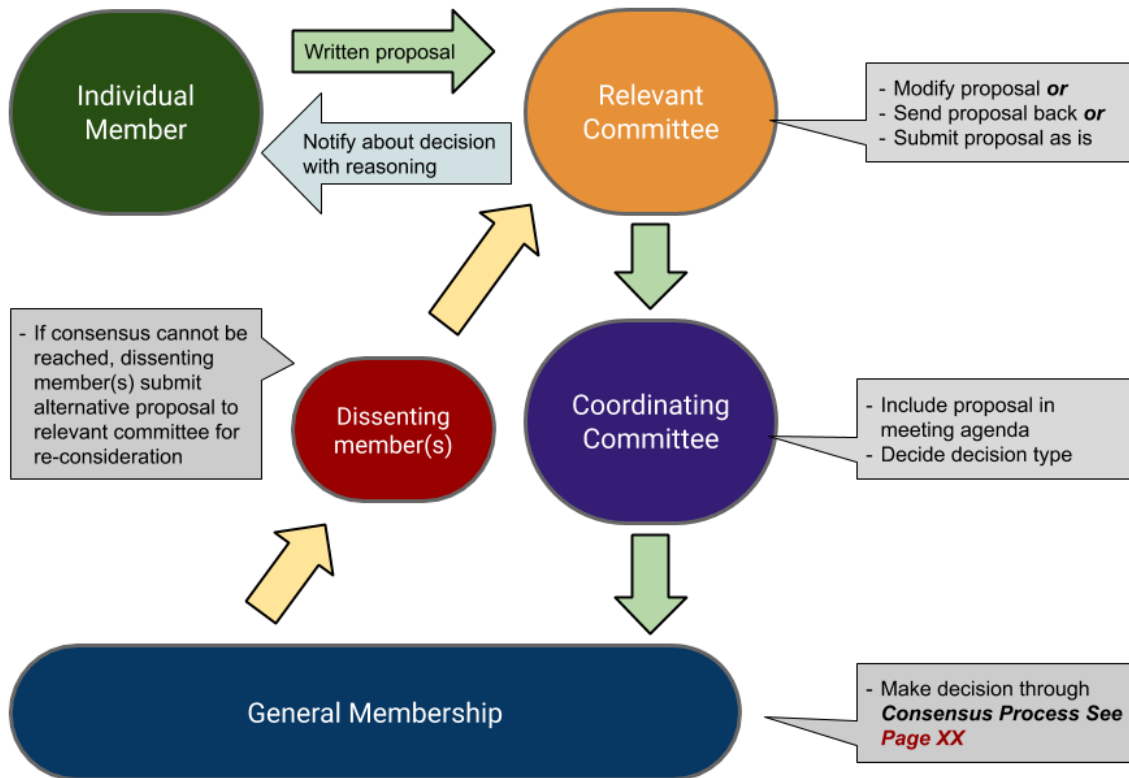
Proposals for any initiatives or changes to the group can either be submitted by individual members or generated from within the respective committees. While ideas and initiatives may be discussed informally between members, in order to ensure that earnest

proposals are considered and decided in an orderly manner, procedures for submitting and considering proposals are outlined below.

### **Types of Proposals**

- **Revisions to Group Goals or Processes** - are considered by the Process Committee and require consensus approval by the general membership in order to be adopted. Examples include changes to the organizational structure or revisions to group decision-making procedures.
- **Ideas or Initiatives Impacting the General Membership** - most proposals will fall into this category. Examples include selection of the site for the cohousing building or initiatives in which group money will be spent. While many of these proposals will be generated at the committee level, individual members may also submit proposals through the procedure below.
- **Idea for Committee Action** - members who do not sit on a particular committee may submit ideas for that committee to consider or enact. Examples include members submitting ideas for a parking arrangement to the Design & Development Committee or a marketing campaign to the Membership & Marketing Committee. To ensure that the proposal is earnest and practicable, the submitting member must present the proposal in a *concise document* that includes details regarding the research the member has already conducted regarding the proposal.

## Procedure for Proposal Submission and Consideration



### ● **Member-Initiated Proposals**

1. Member drafts a *concise document* outlining the proposal, including details regarding the research the member has already conducted regarding the proposal.
2. Member *submits a written proposal* to the chairperson of the relevant committee.
3. (Optional) Member attends the next meeting of the relevant committee.
4. Relevant Committee *reviews and discusses* the written proposal at its next committee meeting and takes one of the following *actions* (in each case, the committee will inform the member of its decision and reasoning behind the decision):
  - a. Accept the proposal as is to either execute as a committee or to present to the general membership (depending on the type of proposal).
  - b. Modify or conduct additional work regarding the proposal, in coordination with the submitting member.
  - c. Return the proposal to the submitting member for revision/additional information.

- d. Decline to act on the proposal, providing an explanation for declination to the submitting member.
  5. If accepted for consideration by the general membership, Committee sends the written proposal to at minimum, all members who qualify to provide input to the decision depending on the proposal's decision type, for review and input. Affected members will have two weeks from the date the proposal is sent to provide input to the committee.
  6. Committee drafts and submits a finalized proposal to the Coordinating Committee for inclusion in the agenda for consideration at the following general membership meeting.
- **Committee Initiated Proposals**
    1. Committee drafts a concise document outlining the proposal.
    2. Committee sends the written proposal to at minimum, all members who qualify to provide input to the decision depending on the proposal's decision type, for review and input. Affected members will have two weeks from the date the proposal is sent to provide input to the committee.
    3. Committee will compile member input and prepare either a final proposal or multiple proposal options to present at the following general membership meeting.
    4. Committee drafts and submits a finalized proposal to the Coordinating Committee for inclusion in the agenda for consideration at the following general membership meeting.

## Section IV: Membership

During the foundational stages of group formation and project development, membership in Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing is offered at three involvement levels. These levels will be reassessed when Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing moves into its next phase, marked by the purchase of a building site for the community.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR INITIAL MEMBERSHIP

Initial membership to Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing is granted if a household meets the following requirements:

1. Attendance at a public meeting, a web-based public meeting, or any introductory meeting deemed eligible by the Membership Committee, by one member of the interested household.
2. Submits of Member Info Sheet to the Membership Committee.
3. Pays \$200.00 by check made out to our fiscal sponsor-“Arbor West Neighbors , NFP.”

### LEVELS OF MEMBERSHIP

During the foundational stages of group formation and project development, a household member’s standing in Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing will be assigned to one of three categories.

#### **Member-Supporter**

Any household or individual who has an interest in supporting Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing and keeping up-to-date of group developments and activities but is not ready to invest additional time or funds to the effort.

1. **Requirements**
  - a. Attend a public meeting, a web-based public meeting, or any introductory meeting deemed eligible by the Membership Committee, by one member of the interested household.
  - b. Pay \$200.00 by check made out to “Arbor West Neighbors ,NFP”.
2. **Privileges**
  - a. Attend member meetings and committee meetings.
  - b. Attend member social gatherings.
  - c. Receive all-member correspondences and announcements.

## **Associate Member**

Households that are active participants in the life and growth of Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing but are not ready to make an equity pledge toward the development.

### **1. Requirements**

- a. Meet the requirements for standing as a Member-Supporter.
- b. In addition, at least one member of the household actively participates in a committee by attendance at one committee meeting per quarter or any contribution deemed sufficient by the committee chair.
- c. Regularly attends all-members meetings, defined as attending a minimum of one all-members meeting per quarter (sign-in sheet - coordinating committee responsible)

### **2. Privileges**

- a. All those of a Member-Supporter.
- b. Qualification to provide input toward Type I, Type II and Type III decisions (see Section V: Decision-Making Processes and Procedures).
- c. Facilitate member meetings and decision-making procedures.

## **Equity Member**

Households that have made a large commitment to drive the project forward, both through financial contributions and time invested in developing group processes.

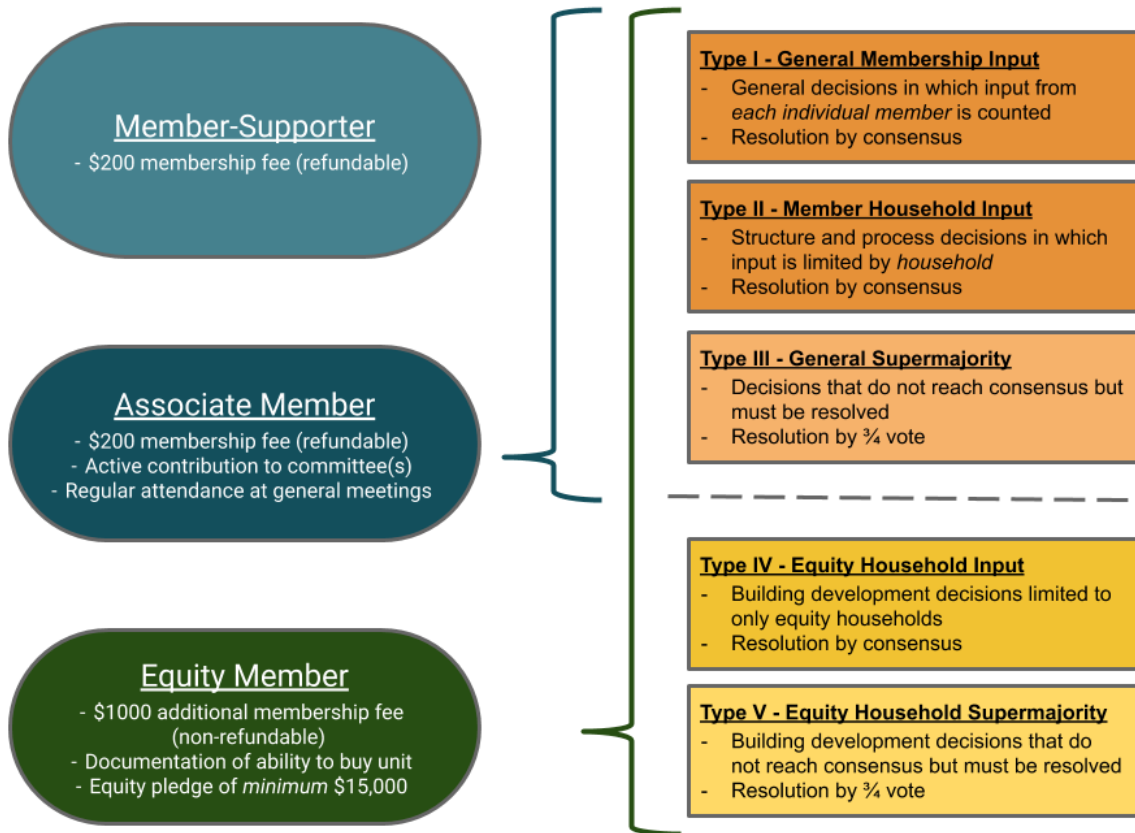
### **1. Requirements**

- a. Meet the requirements for standing as an Associate Member
- b. Provide documentation (either a bank or investment account statement or a mortgage pre-qualification letter from a recognized financial institution as proof that they qualify to afford purchasing a property of at least \$300,000.00)
- c. Pay an additional initial non-refundable equity membership payment of **\$1000.00\*** per household.
- d. Submit an Equity Pledge to the Coordinating Committee to contribute a **minimum** of **\$15,000.00\*** toward development costs, payable at a time determined by the Coordinating Committee.

**\* These amounts are initial suggestions that need to be discussed in the finance committee and decided through the group decision-making process.**

### **2. Privileges**

- a. All privileges afforded to Associate Members
- b. Qualification to provide input toward Type IV and Type V decisions (see Section V: Decision-Making Processes and Procedures).





## Section V: Decision-Making Processes and Procedures

### CONSENSUS DECISION-MAKING

Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing is committed to operate in a collaborative, consensus-driven manner in which all group members' viewpoints are thoughtfully considered and held with regard. Consequently, the group will employ a consensus decision-making model to govern group decision-making with a supermajority (75%) vote when consensus can not be achieved.

Consensus building involves everyone clearly understanding the situation or problem to be decided, analyzing relevant facts together, and then jointly developing solutions that represent the whole group's best thinking about the optimal decision. It's characterized by a lot of listening, healthy debate and testing of options. Consensus generates a decision about which everyone says, "I can live with it."

Due to the complexities of reaching decisions by consensus, versus a simple majority model, the group must establish additional procedures and definitions to ensure an efficient process of reaching consensus, detailed hereafter in this section.

### TYPES OF DECISIONS

CoHousing communities are collections of households and individuals. Accordingly, it is important to consider the effect of decisions on members at a household and individual level. In its current phase, Oak Park Intergenerational CoHousing features different levels of member investment and requires description of the correlation between investment level and access to decision making. Moreover, consensus decision-making can also gauge the overall level of group support for specific proposals (based on proportions of members who strongly agree, mildly agree, or are indifferent to each proposal). Consequently defining who qualifies to provide input into decision-making (each individual vs. each household vs. equity members only) can impact the outcome of the decision-making process.

In preparing for General Membership Meetings, the Coordinating Committee will set each meeting agenda, and will determine the decision type for each proposal and set the amount of time allotted for proposal presentation and discussion. During the general meeting, any member can object to the decision's type as decided by the Coordinating Committee, and propose a different decision type. If the objection and proposal is seconded by another member (from a different household), the proposal of the new decision type will be decided by Type III (supermajority) consensus. If the new proposal for decision type is not agreed to, the decision will revert to the original type, as specified by the Coordinating Committee.

All decisions will be made based upon a consensus or supermajority (depending on decision type) of the members present at the meeting (including members participating remotely by phone). In a consensus process, qualified members must be present in the discussion so they may express their thoughts and concerns, and to be able to be

accommodated, persuaded, or able to persuade others in order to qualify to provide input on any decision before the group. Proxy input from members who are not in attendance (either in-person or by phone/video conference) is not admissible.

### **Type I - General Membership Decisions (one “input” per person)**

1. **Definition** - Decisions in which each individual member’s opinion and expression is desired and in which members within a household may disagree. Examples include decisions affecting general community matters (i.e. community meals schedules, usage of common spaces, interior design choices, etc.)
2. **Participation** - Each *individual* member of the group above 18 years of age qualifies to have an input toward the consensus decision. Input may only be counted if the member attends the meeting at which the decision is being made.\*

### **Type II - Household Decisions (one “input” per household)**

1. **Definition** - Decisions regarding the group or community that should not be skewed by the size of the households. Examples include decisions regarding selection of committee chairs, group structure and rules, and pet policy.
2. **Participation** - Each *household* will have an input toward the consensus decision. Input may only be counted if at least one member of the household attends the meeting at which the decision is being made.\*

### **Type III - General Supermajority Decisions**

1. **Definition** - Situations in which consensus cannot be reached but a decision must be made will be resolved by 75% supermajority vote. All efforts should be made to resolve the decision by consensus. If possible, decisions that cannot be resolved by consensus should be tabled until the following general meeting so that time and space can be given to members to further digest and discuss the decision. At the following general meeting, the group will try to resolve the matter again by consensus and resort to supermajority if consensus fails the second time.
2. **Participation** - Each *household* will have an input toward the supermajority decision. The vote will be a straight yes or no vote (no signals of levels of agreement). If the vote reaches 75% agreement, the proposal is accepted. If not, the proposal will not be adopted.

### **Type IV - Equity Household Decisions**

1. **Definition** - Decisions regarding the expenditure of equity funds, generally encompassing any decision having to do with the actual construction of the building.
2. **Participation** - Each *household* having met the requirements for Equity Member standing will have an input toward the consensus decision. Input may only be counted if at least one member of the household attends the meeting at which the decision is being made.\*

## **Type V - Equity Household Supermajority Decisions**

### **1. Definition -**

- a. Standard - Situations in which a decision must be made and consensus cannot be reached will be decided by supermajority. Provisions for tabling as described in Type III decisions should be followed.
- b. Time Sensitive - Often, situations may arise when local governing bodies require that decisions be made quickly (immediately before or after a zoning board meeting for example). To resolve these matters in a timely fashion, these decisions will be addressed immediately by Equity Member Supermajority. As a safety valve to maintain some level of consensus process, each Equity Member household will have veto authority for such decisions (described in detail below).

### **2. Participation -** Each *household* will have an input toward the supermajority decision and the authority to veto decisions with which they strongly disagree. Veto authority should be used sparingly and with the household clearly understanding that their veto will significantly delay construction and development, as local governing authorities may need to reschedule development meetings for possibly months at a time.

\* Members may attend the meeting via phone or video conference. The assistant facilitator will monitor input from the members participating remotely. Proxy input from members who are not in attendance (either in-person or by phone/video conference) is not admissible.

## **ROLES IN CONSENSUS PROCESS**

### **Coordinating Committee**

**Role** - Prior to the General Membership Meeting, sets the meeting agenda, decides which proposals will be discussed, allots the time periods for presentation, initial and follow-up discussion of each proposal, and selects a facilitator for each proposal.

**Participation** - During the General Membership Meeting, Coordinating Committee members have no special roles and their inputs are weighted the same as any other member.

### **Facilitator**

**Role** - Leads the discussion and encourages participation, ensures that the agenda is being followed, that time constraints are respected and that all members have an

opportunity to voice their concerns in a manner that respects the group's rules and regulations.

**Participation** - If possible, the facilitator should be a member who does not have a stake in the decision under consideration, will only give feedback regarding the discussion itself (to foster understanding and communication) and avoid adding input about the matter under consideration, and will not have an input toward the decision.

### **Note Taker**

**Role** - Takes notes about important points made by members, tallies the hand signals given by members during Consensus Testing, and records the final agreed-upon language of the decision and final decision tally.

**Participation** - The Note Taker will have an input toward the decision and may provide input regarding the matter under consideration, but must make sure to avoid inputting personal bias into the notes.

### **Assistant Facilitator (Vibewatcher/Timekeeper)**

#### **Roles**

1. *Vibewatcher* - Monitors the emotional states of members that might be missed by the facilitator. Specifically, the vibewatcher is to watch for members' verbal tone, language used, body language, facial expressions or silence and inform the facilitator of these observations.
2. *Orderly* - Watches and keeps mental track of the order in which members raise their hands to ensure that a proper order of discussion unfolds.
3. *Timekeeper* - Monitors and gently reminds the facilitator and the group when they have surpassed or are about to surpass the estimated amount of time for a specific topic within a meeting.
4. Monitors members who may be calling into meetings via video or conference call.

**Participation** - The assistant facilitator will have an input toward the decision and may provide input regarding the matter under consideration, but should prioritize his/her roles as vibewatcher, orderly, and timekeeper above giving input about the matter under consideration.

## **CONSENSUS PROCEDURE**

Phase	Description	Conclusion
Proposal Presentation	Relevant Committee presents proposal to membership	When Committee completes presentation

<b>Initial Discussion</b>	Facilitator or Coordinating Committee ? sets time limit for group discussion of proposal	Time expires <i>or</i> $\frac{3}{4}$ of members signal “ready to test consensus”
<b>First Testing of Consensus</b>	Members show level of consensus via hand signals	Following count of member hand signals
<b>Resolution?</b>	If any member disagrees, a second round of discussion will commence	If no members disagree, the proposal is adopted
<b>Second Discussion</b>	Facilitator sets time limit for second discussion, beginning discussion with dissenting members	Time expires <i>or</i> $\frac{3}{4}$ of members signal “ready to test consensus”
<b>Second Testing of Consensus</b>	Members show level of consensus via hand signals	Following count of member hand signals
<b>Resolution?</b>	If any member strongly disagrees or if $\frac{1}{4}$ of members disagree, facilitator will decide to either open more discussion or to initiate re-drafting	If fewer than $\frac{1}{4}$ of members disagree <i>and</i> no member strongly disagrees, the proposal is adopted
<b>Re-drafting</b>	Proposal fails and dissenting members submit alternative proposal to Relevant Committee within two weeks	Relevant Committee submits new draft proposal for inclusion on agenda for next general membership meeting

1. **Proposal Presentation** - The relevant committee presents a proposal for consideration.
2. **Initial Discussion Period** - The facilitator manages the discussion to ensure that members are recognized and understood (procedures and hand signals detailed below)..
3. **Initial Test of Consensus** - If either  $\frac{3}{4}$  of qualified members all signal readiness to test consensus or the time period for discussion expires, the process moves into an initial Consensus Test (procedures and hand signals detailed below).
  - a. If *Unanimous Acceptance* (no disagreement) is reached, the proposal is accepted.
  - b. If some members express disagreement a follow-up discussion period and consensus test ensues.




4. **Follow-up Discussion** - Members expressing disagreement will be invited to speak first. Only after all members expressing disagreement have a chance to speak can discussion be closed by a signal of readiness by members.
5. **Follow-up Consensus Test** - Consensus will again be tested.
6. **Resolution** - Based on the outcome of the Follow-up Consensus Test, the decision will be resolved by the procedures detailed below.

### **Proposal Presentation**

Prior to the General Membership Meeting, the Coordinating Committee will allot a time period for the relevant committee to present a proposal for consideration.






### **Discussion Phase**

- **Procedure** - Prior to the General Membership meeting, the Coordinating Committee will have allotted a time period for members to provide their inputs regarding the proposal. During this period, the Facilitator endeavors to elicit as much member input as possible. If either  $\frac{3}{4}$  of qualified members signal readiness to test consensus or the set amount of time expires, the decision will move into the Consensus Testing phase.
- **Discussion Phase Hand Signals**
  1. **One Hand Raised** - I have input I would like to add to the discussion *or* I have a question about the proposal.
  2. **Two Hands Raised** - I have a Point of Order to raise. A Point of Order takes precedence over other concerns because a member has concerns that due process is not being followed.
  3. **One Thumb Up** - I am ready to test consensus on the matter (this does not signal agreement with the matter, only readiness to test consensus).

	<u>Description</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
	One hand raised	"I have input to add to the discussion" <i>or</i> "I have a question about the proposal"
	Two hands raised	"I have a point of order to raise"
	One thumb up	"I am ready to test consensus"

## Consensus Testing Phase

- **Procedure** - The facilitator will end the discussion and call for input from qualified members. Qualified members show their level of support with the hand gestures enumerated below.
- **Consensus Testing Hand Signals**
  1. **Two Thumbs Up** - I strongly agree with the proposal (fully satisfied = 3 points)
  2. **One Thumb Up** - I agree with the proposal (partially satisfied = 2 points)
  3. **Thumb Sideways** - I am neutral about the proposal (indifferent = 1 point)
  4. **Closed Fist** - I disagree with the proposal but accept it (dissatisfied = 0 points)
  5. **Thumbs Down** - I disagree with the proposal am willing to offer an alternative proposal (strongly disagree = blockage of the proposal)

	<u>Description</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Points*</u>
	Two thumbs up	"I strongly agree with the proposal"	3
	One thumb raised	"I agree with some reservations"	2
	Sideways thumb	"I am indifferent to the proposal"	1
	Closed fist	"I disagree but will not block"	0
	One thumb down	"I cannot agree to the proposal" <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Blocks proposal</li><li>- Must provide reasons</li><li>- Must submit alternative</li></ul>	X

\* (Point tallies apply only when multiple, related proposals are under consideration, enabling a rank order of group preferences)

## Resolution

- **Considering a Single Proposal** - Consensus will be considered met if there are no thumbs down to the proposal and fewer than ¼ of the members present show closed fists (disagree).
- **Weighing Multiple Options** - Hand signals will allow the group to quickly gauge the overall level of group consensus regarding the proposal. A tally of members' levels of

agreement, weighted by the points assigned above, will provide an overall “score” for each proposal and the proposal with the highest score will be adopted or the proposals will be rank-ordered accordingly.

- **Addressing Strong Disagreement** - A thumbs down signal effectively blocks a proposal. A member may only give a thumbs down signal if he/she is willing to submit an alternative proposal that viably addresses the needs of members who agree with the initial proposal. The dissenting member will have two weeks to submit an alternative proposal to the relevant committee for review. If the alternative proposal fails to reach consensus, the decision reverts to a supermajority ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) vote.
- **Addressing Failure to Reach Consensus** - Proposals toward which more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of qualified members disagree will also be considered to have failed to reach consensus and will return to the relevant committee for re-draft. One of the dissenting members may opt to draft an alternative proposal for submission to the relevant committee within two weeks. If the alternative proposal fails to reach consensus, the decision reverts to a supermajority ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) vote.