



**REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
MONDAY, APRIL 28, 2025 - MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER - The Regular Planning Commission Meeting was called to order by Chair Jeffery Harlan at 6:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG – Vice Chair Zich led the Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Jefferey Harlan, Vice Chair Jon Zich, Commissioner Angely Andrade, Commissioner Robert Dickson, Commissioner Karen Klepack, Commissioner David Martinez, Commissioner Johnny Rojas

Absent: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – MATTERS NOT LISTED ON THE AGENDA: None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

Commissioner Martinez shared that he attended the Costa Mesa Earth Day event at City Hall and appreciated the community's strong commitment to sustainability, especially at the climate action and adaptation plan booth. He encouraged attendance at the upcoming Community Preparedness Town Hall at Estancia High School on the coming Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. He also announced his excitement about attending Ciclo Irvine on May 3, an open streets event on Campus Drive, and expressed hope for a similar event in Costa Mesa in the future. Lastly, they noted that the City is seeking public input on the Consolidated Plan for HOME and CDBG funds, with the comment period open through mid-May.

Commissioner Dickson expressed interest in seeing more cohesive planning for Harbor Boulevard, referencing an item on the agenda, and suggesting a future study session or staff presentation on the Harbor Boulevard Specific Plan and related economic development efforts. He emphasized the corridor's importance, especially considering Measure K and ongoing development. He also shared that he recently saw Hamilton at the Performing Arts Center and praised the venue as one of the best he's seen nationwide. Lastly, he noted a personal milestone—his 16th anniversary of proposing to his wife.

Commissioner Andrade shared that she and her family participated in the Earth Day event at City Hall, praising it as a well-coordinated and well-attended event despite the rain. She appreciated the involvement of private companies focused on sustainability and commended the City's planning team for creatively engaging the community—particularly through an interactive activity where attendees wrote their visions of sustainability on leaves for a “tree” display. She thanked everyone for organizing a meaningful and engaging Earth Day celebration.

Commissioner Klepack mentioned attending the Earth Day event and picking up several bags of compost, expressing appreciation for the City's efforts in hosting such events. She noted that she has California native plants around her property and enjoys taking advantage of opportunities like this. She concluded by thanking the city for a great event.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

- 1. APRIL 14, 2025 UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES**
- 2. FEBRUARY 10, 2025 UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES**

MOVED/SECOND: DICKSON/ANDRADE

MOTION: Approve the Regular meeting Minutes.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Chair Harlan, Vice Chair Zich, Commissioner Andrade, Commissioner Dickson, Commissioner Klepack, Commissioner Martinez, Commissioner Rojas

Nays: None

Absent: None

Abstained: None

Motion carried: 7-0

-----END OF CONSENT CALENDAR-----
-

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- 1. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT PCUP-23-0003 FOR A 47-UNIT SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY MOTEL CONVERSION AT 2205 HARBOR BOULEVARD**

Three ex-parte communications reported but Commissioners Andrade, Martinez, and Rojas.

Commissioner Andrade recused herself due to proximity of the property.

Assistant Director Scott Drapkin presented the item.

Discussion ensued regarding various conditions of approval and details within the staff report and Property Management Plan (PMP). Commissioners asked for

clarification on bike rack and locker placement, annual reporting requirements, and the reasoning behind specific conditions—such as indemnification related to AB 2097 and designated smoking areas. Concerns were raised about occupancy definitions for single vs. double occupancy units, potential parking overflow, the lack of on-site social services, and consistency between the PMP and conditions of approval. Questions were also posed about closet/storage space compliance, the role of the City in ongoing project oversight, and whether any federal funding was tied to the project. Commissioners requested clearer language to reflect single-occupancy intent and better alignment between the PMP and official conditions, and suggested more transparency regarding AB 2097 implementation and parking practices for similar projects. Staff confirmed that some conditions could be modified or clarified if needed, and that the City's role includes ensuring compliance through conditions of approval and receiving annual reports. Further questions, especially regarding service providers and operational logistics, were deferred to the applicant.

The Chair Opened the Public Hearing.

The Commission engaged the applicant in a detailed discussion focused on the project's lease terms, tenant support services, accessibility, and site operations. The applicant confirmed that leases would be annual with early termination options, utilities would be covered by the owner, and single occupancy units would house only one individual. Although supportive services are not provided on-site, the applicant emphasized coordination with external nonprofits to assist tenants, especially those with case managers. Concerns were raised about the enforceability of occupancy limits, the clarity of language in the property management plan, and the adequacy of support for tenants without existing service providers. The applicant acknowledged these issues and expressed openness to making revisions. Accessibility questions were addressed, including confirmation that some ground-floor units are ADA compliant and that the manual vehicle gate may be upgraded to an electric gate to better accommodate disabled residents. The designated smoking area was identified and will be reviewed for compliance with location and distance requirements.

The Chair opened for Public comment.

Ashley Anderson, expressed concerns about the practicality and enforcement of single occupancy rules, noting that families often live in units intended for one person due to the lack of affordable housing. Drawing from her experience leading an eviction diversion initiative, she emphasized the urgent need for more flexible policies, especially for single mothers and low-income residents at risk of homelessness. She highlighted delays in accessing rental assistance through off-site case managers and recommended longer notice periods for rental increases and eviction proceedings. She encouraged the city to reconsider outdated policies to better reflect current housing realities and concluded by offering to share more insights via email.

Cynthia McDonald expressed appreciation for the commissioners' thorough questioning and stated that many of her concerns mirrored theirs. She described the Property Management Plan as disjointed and suggested it may reflect the applicant's inexperience in property management. While supportive of affordable housing, she questioned the legitimacy and track record of the listed property management company, noting its listed address is a post office. She also raised concerns about tenant sourcing, asking whether referrals might come from the applicant's substance abuse treatment practice, and cautioned against repeating issues seen with sober living homes in Costa Mesa. Lastly, she requested that the nearby uncovered bus bench be upgraded to a modern, covered version to better support future residents.

Richard Huffman expressed general support for the project, calling it a great idea to convert an aging motel into affordable single-room occupancy units. He questioned the role of government agencies mentioned in the project and sought clarification on whether tenants must be referred by nonprofits or if any qualifying individual can apply directly. He noted that while the project appears to be a private, for-profit venture, offering units at affordable rates is valuable and much needed. Overall, he supported the creation of these affordable housing units but raised concerns about transparency in tenant access and the project's operational model.

The Chair Closed Public comments.

In response to a commissioner's follow-up on a public comment, the applicant clarified that while the units will be open to the public and no one will be discriminated against, the primary goal is to house tenants referred by vetted nonprofits and the Orange County Housing Authority, as these organizations can handle due diligence and ensure appropriate placements. He also confirmed that none of his own patients would reside at the property, emphasizing that although it is structured as a business, the project is a philanthropic effort intended to give back to the community, with the expectation of only breaking even financially.

Commissioner Martinez made a motion. Seconded by Chair Harlan.

Commissioners expressed both support and concern during motion comments. Supporters emphasized the urgent need for affordable housing, praised the privately funded nature of the project, and appreciated its focus on seniors, veterans, and low-income residents. Some raised concerns about the Property Management Plan, describing it as unclear or incomplete, and suggested it should have gone through a study session first. Revisions were made to clarify language around occupancy limits, smoking areas, and the PMP. Despite some hesitation, most commissioners supported the motion, recognizing the project's potential to address housing needs in Costa Mesa.

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/ HARLAN

MOTION: to approve staff's recommendation with the following additions.

1. **Clarified Occupancy Limits:** A condition was added to ensure the project complies with the City Council's policy limiting double occupancy to 10%.
2. **PMP Language Clarification:** Condition of Approval #21 was revised to specifically reference the Property Management Plan (PMP) as the guiding operational document, ensuring precision.
3. **Smoking Policy:** Condition of Approval #28 was modified to explicitly prohibit smoking in units and require that any designated smoking area comply with the 25-foot separation requirement from entrances, windows, and doorways.
4. **Notice to Quit Review:** Staff was directed to investigate concerns raised about short notice periods for eviction (e.g., five-day notices) and to work with the applicant on potentially adjusting those terms.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Chair Harlan, Commissioner Dickson, Commissioner Klepack,
Commissioner Martinez, Commissioner Rojas

Nays: Commissioner Zich

Absent: None

Recused: Commissioner Andrade,

Motion carried: 5-1-1

The Chair explained the appeal process.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

REPORT - PUBLIC WORKS – Mr. Yang provided a brief update on the Adams Avenue and Pine Creek Avenue intersection project, noting that a new traffic signal has been installed along with green bike lanes. Final striping is expected to be completed by Wednesday, and the crosswalks are now operational. To illustrate the progress, an aerial video was shown in place of further explanation.

REPORT - DEVELOPMENT SERVICES - None.

REPORT - ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY - None.

ADJOURNMENT AT 7:57 PM

Submitted by:



CARRIE TAI, SECRETARY
COSTA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION