



REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MONDAY, APRIL 14, 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 – Commissioner Andrade 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

Absent: Commissioner Johnny Rojas

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

1. 2024 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Discussion ensued as staff provided updates on the Annual Progress Report (APR), noting it was submitted to HCD one week after being presented to City Council, with revisions made to address issues related to demolition permit reporting. Staff confirmed the ADU survey distributed during permit applications is voluntary and clarified that the city reviews and occasionally denies eviction-related permits when tenant protection requirements are not met; an appeal process is available through the Building Department. Updates were also shared on the One Metro West project, with staff indicating ongoing coordination with the developer and an anticipated completion within the sixth housing cycle. Commissioners asked about affordability requirements under the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO), and staff provided thresholds based on project density. In response to questions about sustainability, staff explained that while current building codes address key issues like EV infrastructure and fire risk, the upcoming Climate Action and Adaptation Plan will further guide sustainable development and resilience strategies. Staff also addressed the role of the rezoning consultant, clarifying their experience in California cities, especially San Diego, and their involvement in both technical and community engagement work. Lastly, staff confirmed that ownership and rental breakdowns of pipeline projects would be included in future reports and noted that several projects requiring Planning Commission review are already in the queue.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – MATTERS NOT LISTED ON THE AGENDA:

A member of the public expressed strong opposition to ongoing and planned high-density housing projects in Costa Mesa, arguing there is no housing crisis and that such developments are destroying the city's character. They criticized the Planning Commission and City Council as being out of touch with residents, urged greater community input, and dismissed sustainability concerns as misguided.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

Vice Chair Zich expressed support for Commissioner Martinez's suggestion to list future informational presentations as "New Business" to allow for public comment, emphasizing that such topics are significant and warrant public input. He also acknowledged concerns about community engagement, noting that while he welcomes and values public participation, attendance at meetings is often minimal, and residents need to take initiative to become informed and involved in local issues.

Commissioner Dixon supported moving informational items to "New Business" to allow for public comment and emphasized the value of study or informational sessions during meetings when project items are light. He expressed concern about the lack of substantive development projects in the current pipeline and encouraged staff to share more about the city's outreach and economic development efforts. He also suggested better public education on topics like ADUs, as many residents are confused about what they entail. Lastly, he echoed concerns about public disengagement, noting that many residents are unaware of city activities despite public noticing, and suggested exploring innovative strategies to improve community outreach and participation.

Commissioner Martinez shared several announcements, including upcoming Planning Commission items at the City Council meeting and the City's Earth Day event on April 26. He reported on the OCTA Board meeting where discussion took place regarding the proposed Geisler bridge, urging residents to stay informed and provide input. Martinez also reflected on recent commission and committee meetings, highlighting the Parks Commission's study session as a model for how the Planning Commission could facilitate deeper discussions on policy and capital projects. He expressed interest in exploring new formats for community engagement—such as joint meetings tied to development projects—and emphasized the need to increase public participation, noting the frequent absence of residents at meetings.

Chair Harlan clarified that his earlier comments were not intended to minimize the importance of small-scale developments like duplexes or ADUs, emphasizing that every housing project and investment in the city matters. He expressed a desire for the city to reach a point where it doesn't have to rely on smaller projects to meet RHNA targets, stressing the broader goal of creating meaningful housing opportunities for current and future generations.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. FEBRUARY 24, 2025 UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/HARLAN

MOTION: Approve the Regular meeting Minutes of February 24, 2025.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Rojas

Abstained: None

Motion carried: 6-0-1

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. MINOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (ZA-22-35) CONDITION OF APPROVAL NO. 28 - SIX-MONTH REVIEW ("ARENA OC")

Gabriel Villalobos, Assistant Planner presented the item.

Discussion ensued regarding the six-month review of a business operating under a minor conditional use permit. Commissioners inquired about the tracking of underage patrons at 18+ events; while a log of ticket sales is required, it does not differentiate by age, although there is a noted cover charge for patrons under 21 on certain nights. Staff also noted they reviewed the business's social media activity to verify event promotions, identifying around 20 18+ events between October and February. Commissioners suggested that age-specific ticket data could be helpful for future evaluations, though it is not currently required. Staff confirmed that the applicant has not requested any modifications to the permit since its approval.

Commissioner Martinez made a motion. Seconded by Commissioner Andrade.

Chair Harlan expressed support for the motion but emphasized the importance of the applicant being present at the next review. He noted that having the applicant available would allow commissioners to ask questions directly and demonstrate respect for the review process.

Vice Chair Zich stated that while he agreed with Chair Harlan about the importance of the applicant being present, he would not support the motion. He explained that he also opposed the item originally and remained unconvinced, citing the absence

of a recommendation from the Costa Mesa Police Department and his personal stance against allowing minors into an adult nightclub.

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/ANDRADE

MOTION: Receive and file

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: Vice Chair Zich

Absent: Commissioner Rojas

Abstained: None

Motion carried: 5-1-1

ACTION: Planning Commission Received and Filed the six-month review.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

REPORT - PUBLIC WORKS - None.

REPORT - DEVELOPMENT SERVICES - None.

REPORT - ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY - None.

ADJOURNMENT AT 7:16 PM

Submitted by:



SCOTT DRAPKIN, SECRETARY
COSTA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION