



**REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2026 - MINUTES**

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG - Commissioner Rojas led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Commissioner Robert Dickson

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - MATTERS NOT LISTED ON THE AGENDA:

Wendy Simone expressed ongoing concerns regarding noise impacts from the gym located at 140 17th Street. She stated that although recent City actions temporarily reduced noise levels, loud bass vibrations have resumed, beginning as early as 5:15 a.m. She described continued negative impacts on sleep and overall well-being. Ms. Simone noted that residents have been told by the business owner to move if they are dissatisfied with the noise. She requested that the City take further enforcement action to address ongoing noise disturbances affecting multiple nearby residents.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

Commissioner Martinez announced an upcoming Vernal Pool Walk at Fairview Park, hosted by the City in partnership with Endemic Environmental, scheduled for Saturday, January 31 at 9:00 a.m. He encouraged interested parties to RSVP and contact Parks and Recreation for additional information. Commissioner Martinez also requested a staff update on the City's pre-approved ADU program, noting that the website previously indicated availability in early 2025 and expressing interest in an updated timeline.

Commissioner Andrade thanked City staff for providing and sharing essential bilingual resources supporting local community aid efforts in response to recent ICE activity, including access to legal aid, food assistance, and general information, and emphasized the importance of supporting Costa Mesa's immigrant communities. She encouraged the public to participate through volunteering or donations and highlighted the County's Point-in-Time Count, a biannual effort to assess homelessness, noting opportunities for community members to volunteer in Costa Mesa to support unhoused residents.

Commissioner Klepeck expressed enthusiasm about returning for the first meeting of the year, noted the strong audience attendance, and shared anticipation for the work ahead in the coming year.

Vice Chair Zich expressed frustration regarding the ongoing noise complaints related to the gym discussed during public comment, stating that he believes the issue has a simple and unresolved solution. He noted that the business's existing Conditional Use Permit does not address noise impacts and that the City's current noise ordinance focuses on decibel levels without addressing sound frequencies such as bass or high-pitched noise. Vice Chair Zich suggested that closing the business's rear door could significantly mitigate the issue and questioned why the City has been unable to reach an agreement with the property owner or modify the permit accordingly. He offered to participate in discussions with the property owner to help resolve the matter and indicated that continued inaction would likely result in recurring public complaints.

Chair Harlan welcomed everyone back for the new year and expressed hope that attendees enjoyed the holiday season. In response to the public comment regarding ongoing noise issues, he agreed that the matter should be solvable, acknowledged that conditions had temporarily improved, and encouraged the speaker to continue providing updates to the Planning Commission. He also advised engaging the City Council and elected representatives to further involve them in efforts to work with staff toward a resolution.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. DECEMBER 08, 2025, UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/ ZICH

MOTION: to approve Consent Calendar.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Dickson

Recused: None

Motion carried: 6-0-1

ACTION:

Planning Commission approved consent calendar items.

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT PCUP-25-0014 TO CONVERT TWO EXISTING TWO-STORY OFFICE BUILDINGS INTO A CHURCH ("GRACE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH") FACILITY AT 3146 AND 3152 RED HILL AVENUE

One ex-parte communication reported.

Presentation by Assistant Planner, Jeffery Rimando.

Anthony Massaro stated he read and agreed to the conditions if approval.

Public comments:

None.

Motion Discussion:

During discussion, clarification was provided regarding proposed revisions to a condition of approval, with a request to replace references to an outdoor activity area with language permitting a non-conditioned interior activity area. It was suggested that unrelated language concerning parking and street circulation be removed, as it was not applicable. It was noted that any outdoor events could be addressed separately through special event permit regulations, and consensus was reached to incorporate the revised language as a friendly amendment.

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/DICKSON

MOTION: Move staff's recommendation with a revision to Condition of Approval No. 5 to remove references to an outdoor activity area and add language permitting a non-conditioned interior play area is permitted.

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Dickson

Recused: None

Motion carried: 6-0-1

ACTION:

1. Find that the project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301 (Class 1) Existing Facilities; and
2. Approve Conditional Use Permit PCUP-25-0014 based on findings of fact and subject to conditions of approval.

2. THREE-YEAR TIME EXTENSION FOR ZA-22-08, WHICH ALLOWED A MAJOR AMENDMENT TO THE AVENUE OF THE ARTS HOTEL MASTER PLAN (PA-16-50) AT 3350 AVENUE OF THE ARTS

One ex-parte communication reported.

Presentation by Senior Planner, Chris Yeager.

Paul Stanford stated he read and agreed to the conditions if approval.

Public comments:

None.

Motion Discussion:

Commissioners expressed support for the project. Comments noted appreciation for the project's progression, the applicant's thorough presentation and continued commitment to the City, and the project's importance to the South Coast Metro area and the City's economic health, particularly within the resort and hospitality sector.

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/ANDRADE

MOTION: To move staff recommendations.

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Dickson

Recused: None

Motion carried: 6-0-1

ACTION:

The Planning Commission adopted a resolution to:

1. Adopt a Resolution approving a three-year extension of time for ZA-22-08, which allowed a major amendment to the Avenue of the Arts Hotel Master Plan (PA-16-50), and
2. Determine that Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(c), no subsequent or supplemental EIR is required, and the previously certified EIR adequately addresses the environmental impacts of the proposed project

OLD BUSINESS:

1. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (PA-21-34) CONDITION OF APPROVAL NO. 31 - SIX-MONTH REVIEW ("420 FLOWER FACTORY")

Presentation by Assistant Planner, Jeffrey Rimando.

Public comments:

None.

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/ANDRADE

MOTION: To move staff recommendation.

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Dickson

Recused: None

Motion carried: 6-0-1

ACTION:

The Planning Commission received staff presentation.

NEW BUSINESS:

2. HOUSING ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION (NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE WE ALL BELONG) PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Presentation by Senior Planner, Michelle Halligan.

Commissioners engaged in extensive discussion with staff regarding proposed zoning code amendments related to housing element sites, including updating parking requirements to comply with State law, creating a new section of the City's Mixed-Use Overlay District that would apply to Housing Element sites and reflect recent case law, CEQA clearance for Housing Element site rezoning via a new exemption (Senate Bill 131), and the City's efforts to obtain Housing and Community Development (HCD) certification. Staff explained that the

amendments are intended to ensure compliance with state law, implement the City's Housing Element programs, reduce regulatory barriers, streamline housing development, and provide environmental clearance. Staff will continue to conduct public outreach, study options for allowing more development on non-Housing Element Measure K sites, and prepare an Environmental Impact Report for a potential Measure K rezoning to prepare the City for future RHNA cycles. Discussion included the use of overlays, confirmation that non-Housing Element site Measure K rezonings in the future would not mandate residential development, distinctions between streamlined and standard development review processes, density calculations and rounding of units, potential use of density bonus law, and parking minimum requirements in light of state preemption in some areas served by public transit (AB 2097). Commissioners also questioned proposed Mixed-Use Overlay District setbacks, open space requirements, and other design standards, with staff noting development standards for Housing Element sites were designed to encourage and facilitate housing development at the densities prescribed in the Housing Element, technical assistance from HCD, and public feedback emphasizing setbacks for open space and pedestrian-oriented design.

Public comments:

Cynthia McDonald expressed concern that the proposed rezoning amendments represent the beginning of significant upzoning and land use changes, raising issues related to traffic, air quality, infrastructure, public services, and long-term fiscal impacts, as well as potential weakening of voter-approved protections. The speaker also cited a lack of transparency, limited public outreach and notification, and the increased use of by-right approvals without public hearings, and urged the City to provide clearer information and meaningful public participation.

Speaker two expressed support for adding new housing in the City and inquired whether there are plans to improve accessibility through bike lanes or other public infrastructure. The speaker did not provide additional comments.

Commission Discussion:

Commissioners discussed walkability and active transportation, with staff explaining that the proposed residential and mixed-use development standards are intended to support more walkable neighborhoods, including opportunities for tree canopy along public streets, bike infrastructure, and integration with commercial uses, and noting the City's ongoing active transportation efforts. Commissioners then provided comments on the proposed amendments, expressing an interest in establishing consistency between heights and other development standards on Housing Element sites and (to be established later) non-Housing Element Measure K sites, flexibility in setbacks and open space,

concerns regarding parking requirements a potential barrier to affordability, and the importance of development quality alongside housing production. Additional comments expressed concern that the proposed amendments are primarily driven by state mandates rather than community input, emphasized the need for transparency, outreach, and neighborhood compatibility, and urged consistency between development standards proposed for Housing Element sites and what may be proposed on non-Housing Element Measure K sites in the near future.

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/ANDRADE

MOTION: To move staff recommendation.

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

Nays: Vice Chair Zich

Absent: Commissioner Dickson

Recused: None

Motion carried: 5-1-1

ACTION:

The Planning Commission received staff presentation.

REPORT - PUBLIC WORKS - Mr. Yang reported that the City hosted a community bike skills workshop at City Hall on January 24, with strong participation from families learning bicycle riding and safety skills. Staff also provided updates on ongoing construction, including roadway striping on Fairview Road south of Fair Drive following recent paving, with landscaping and new pedestrian crossings at Valley Forge planned in the coming months and completion anticipated in May. In addition, construction on the Adams Avenue Bike Facility Project is scheduled to begin in February, which will enhance pedestrian and bicycle travel and improve roadway lighting, with short-term traffic impacts expected during construction.

REPORT - DEVELOPMENT SERVICES - Director Tai reported on recent City Council actions and departmental updates. Staff noted that at the January 20 City Council meeting, amendments to the Small Lot Ordinance were introduced for first reading, which would allow two-lot subdivisions in the R2 and R3 zones to be processed ministerially, consistent with allowances in other residential zones, with a second reading scheduled for February 3. Staff also reported that City Council conducted an urban plan screening for a proposed 38-unit live/work and residential project at 1626 Placentia, which is expected to be submitted as a formal application and brought forward to the Planning Commission. Additional updates included an upcoming City Council presentation on the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan process, a potential rescheduling of the Ohio House appeal with continued updates to be provided, and an update on pre-approved accessory dwelling unit plans, noting that 13 prototype applications are currently under building review, with plans to post approved prototypes on the City's website once permits are finalized.

REPORT - ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY - None.

ADJOURNMENT AT 8:33 p.m.

Submitted by:



CARRIE TAI, SECRETARY
COSTA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION