



REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MONDAY, JUNE 22, 2026 - MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER - The Regular Planning Commission Meeting was called to order by Chair Harlan at 6:03 p.m.

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

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Jeffrey Harlan, Vice Chair Jon Zich, Commissioner Angely Andrade, Commissioner Robert Dickson, Commissioner Karen Klepack, and Commissioner Johnny Rojas

Absent: Commissioner David Martinez

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - MATTERS NOT LISTED ON THE AGENDA:

Speaker one addressed the Commission regarding development and permitting processes in Costa Mesa. He expressed concerns regarding permit processing timelines, demolition permit requirements, and the perceived complexity of development approvals. He encouraged Commissioners to seek greater transparency regarding permit processing and application timelines and suggested staff reports include information regarding application submittal dates and review durations. He also expressed concerns regarding transportation policies and the City's recent animal services contract decisions.

Cynthia McDonald commented on the Environmental Impact Report associated with the Measure K/Housing Element update. She noted the report identified numerous significant and unavoidable impacts and questioned the absence of traffic-related analysis. She also shared observations regarding the impacts of taller residential buildings, including shading and shadow effects, and encouraged the Commission to carefully review the environmental documentation.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

Commissioner Dickson commented on the cancellation of several recent Planning Commission meetings and suggested exploring additional opportunities for public engagement when regular meetings are not scheduled. He highlighted the success of the community event Songs in the Canyon and discussed the importance of supporting local businesses and considering the economic impacts of planning and transportation decisions. He also expressed interest in consistent approaches to state mandates and planning issues affecting the Fairview Developmental Center and other major projects.

Commissioner Andrade thanked staff for facilitating the June 3 public workshop regarding the Neighborhoods Where We All Belong (NWWAB) initiative and encouraged community participation in reviewing the Environmental Impact Report available for public review through August 3, 2026. She also recognized staff participation in the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) conference, recent park improvement projects, and the Small Business Diversity Network's entrepreneurship and food industry training program. She encouraged residents to participate in upcoming community events including Movies in the Park and Concerts in the Park.

Commissioner Klepack expressed appreciation for returning to the regular meeting schedule and offered no additional comments.

Vice Chair Zich responded to issues raised during public comments and discussed the limited role of the Planning Commission in broader policy matters. He noted the Commission's responsibility is generally limited to reviewing development applications and ensuring compliance with adopted standards. He acknowledged concerns regarding permit processing, business development, and environmental review issues, while emphasizing the importance of receiving specific information from residents and businesses regarding such concerns.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. APRIL 13, 2026 UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

2. APRIL 27, 2026 UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

MOVED/SECOND: DICKSON/ZICH

MOTION: Move the minutes.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Martinez

Recused: None

Motion carried: 6-0

ACTION:

Planning Commission approved Consent Calendar items.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (PCUP-26-0005) TO ALLOW THE SALE OF ALCOHOL FOR ON-SITE CONSUMPTION UNTIL 12:00 A.M. WITHIN 200 FEET OF A RESIDENTIAL ZONE FOR A RESTAURANT (THREE EYED TIGER) AT 2930 BRISTOL STREET, UNIT B60

Presentation by Assistant Planner, Gabriel Villalobos.

Zachary Scherer, business owner, stated he has read the staff report and agreed to the conditions of approval. He also clarified that he did submit a revised applicant letter.

Public comments:

Speaker one commented generally on the application process and praised the speed at which the application was processed.

Motion Discussion:

Commissioners discussed the proposal, compatibility with surrounding uses, and the similarities of Conditions of Approval No. 1 and No. 9. Chair Harlan and Commissioner Andrade revised the motion to include striking Condition of Approval No. 9.

MOVED/SECOND: HARLAN/ANDRADE

MOTION: Move staff's recommendation and strike Condition of Approval No. 9.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Martinez

Recused: None

Motion carried: 6-0

ACTION:

The Planning Commission adopted a resolution to:

1. Find that the project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities); and
2. Approve Conditional Use Permit (PCUP-26-0005) based on the findings of fact and subject to conditions of approval, with the removal of Condition of Approval No. 9: Any change in the operational characteristics of the use shall be subject to Planning Division review and may require an amendment to the conditional use permit, subject to either Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission approval, depending on the nature of the proposed change.

2. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (PCUP-26-0003) TO ALLOW THE SALE OF ALCOHOL FOR ON-SITE CONSUMPTION UNTIL 1:30 A.M. WITHIN 200 FEET OF A RESIDENTIAL ZONE FOR AN EXISTING RESTAURANT (NAISHO OMAKASE AND HIGHBALL BAR) AT 3033 BRISTOL STREET, UNIT 117

Presentation by Assistant Planner, Gabriel Villalobos.

Michael Cho, applicant's representative, stated his client has read the staff report and agreed to the conditions of approval.

Public comments:

Speaker one spoke in support of the business and on the application processing timeline.

Motion Discussion:

Commissioners expressed support for the project, noting that based on personal observations of the shopping center and surrounding area, late-night operations have generally been quiet with minimal disturbances. Commissioners also commented that the restaurant would add a unique dining option to Costa Mesa and believed the conditions of approval would adequately address potential neighborhood concerns.

MOVED/SECOND: DICKSON/KLEPACK

MOTION: Move's staff recommendation and strike Condition of Approval No. 9.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Martinez

Recused: None

Motion carried: 6-0

ACTION:

The Planning Commission adopted a resolution to:

1. Find that the project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities); and
2. Approve Conditional Use Permit (PCUP-26-0003) based on findings of fact and subject to conditions of approval, with the removal of Condition of Approval No. 9: Any change in the operational characteristics of the use shall be subject to Planning Division review and may require an amendment to the conditional use permit, subject to either Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission approval, depending on the nature of the proposed change.

3. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 13 (PLANNING, ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT) OF THE COSTA MESA MUNICIPAL CODE TO UPDATE LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS FOR VARIOUS NON-RESIDENTIAL USES INCLUDE BUT NOT LIMITED TO, PERSONAL SERVICES, ARTISAN STUDIO AND RETAIL USES, ACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT USES, EVENT CENTERS AND ASSEMBLY USES, SPECIALIZED FITNESS STUDIOS, AND OTHER NON-RESIDENTIAL USES AND STANDARDS- PCTY-26-0001

Presentation by Planning Manager, Martina Caron.

Commissioners requested clarification regarding:

- Proposed exclusions from floor area ratio calculations, including storage areas and equipment rooms.
- The definition of pet services and how they differ from veterinary services and kenneling.
- How unique businesses, such as cat cafés, would be classified under the revised code.
- Classification of golf simulator businesses.
- Parking standards for small fitness studios compared to larger fitness facilities.

Staff explained the intent of the proposed classifications, clarified differences between various business types, and indicated that processing requirements had changes, but the parking standards for small fitness studios remained unchanged from current regulations despite differences in operational intensity.

Public comments:

Daniel Pietenpol, a downtown Costa Mesa commercial property owner, expressed strong support for the proposed code amendments, stating they would simplify approvals for modern businesses and encourage economic development. He commended staff's efforts but urged the Commission to further reduce parking requirements for small fitness studios, noting Costa Mesa's standards are significantly higher than neighboring cities and may discourage prospective tenants.

Speaker two expressed concerns that the Commission had not reviewed zoning code updates frequently enough and stated that outdated regulations have negatively affected business development. He commented on the City's handling of electric vehicle charging regulations, parking requirements, and zoning interpretations, encouraging the Commission to conduct more regular reviews of the zoning ordinance and provide stronger policy direction.

Motion Discussion:

Commissioners expressed appreciation for staff's efforts to modernize the zoning code and generally supported the proposed direction.

Discussion focused primarily on two issues:

- Small Fitness Studios: Commissioners agreed that additional refinement of the parking requirements and size thresholds should be explored to better distinguish small studios from larger fitness facilities and ensure parking standards reflect actual operational characteristics.
- Floor Area Ratio (FAR): Commissioners expressed concerns regarding the proposed exclusion of certain storage areas from FAR calculations and requested staff review industry definitions and further clarify what spaces should be excluded.

Several Commissioners stated that the proposal represented a strong foundation but believed these issues should be addressed before forwarding a recommendation to the City Council.

Director Tai noted that the amendments were the result of approximately 18 months of work with the business community and suggested the Commission consider forwarding portions of the package that had broad support while staff continued refining the remaining items. Commissioners ultimately preferred to review the complete package after the identified revisions were made. Commission and staff discussed including in the motion to reopen the public

hearing and continued to July 13 meeting. Vice Chair Zich and Commissioner Dickson agreed to include that in their motion.

MOVED/SECOND: ZICH/DICKSON

MOTION: Reopen the public hearing and continue the item to July 13, 2026 to allow staff to revise the proposed parking standards for small fitness studios and the floor area ratio (FAR) definition before returning the item to the Planning Commission.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: Commissioner Andrade

Absent: Commissioner Martinez

Recused: None

Motion carried: 5-1

ACTION: Planning Commission reopened the public hearing and continued the item to the July 13, 2026 meeting to allow staff to come back with revisions to the proposed parking standards for small fitness studios and the floor area ratio (FAR) definition.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

1. PUBLIC WORKS REPORT - City Engineer Yang reminded the public that the 2026 Orange County Fair will be held July 17 through August 16, operating Wednesday through Sunday. Residents were encouraged to observe traffic controls, watch for pedestrians and bicyclists, and exercise caution while traveling near the fairgrounds. Mr. Yang noted that Monday Planning Commission meetings would not be impacted because the fair is closed on Mondays.

2. DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT - Director Tai reported:

- Recent meeting cancellations were due to normal fluctuations in application workloads and staff resources devoted to major long-range planning efforts.
- The Ohio House project public hearing before City Council was continued to September 1.
- Upcoming Planning Commission agendas will include the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, Neighborhoods Where We All Belong, and Fairview Developmental Center planning documents.

- Environmental review periods remain open for the Neighborhoods Where We All Belong Environmental Impact Report and the Fairview Developmental Center Environmental Impact Report.
- Demolition of the former Trinity Broadcasting Network property has been completed for the future Meritage Homes development.
- The One Metro West project has submitted modifications reducing residential units while increasing unit sizes and reconfiguring site amenities.
- The City's Neighborhoods Where We All Belong outreach program has been named a finalist for the Orange County Golden Hub Awards.
- City staff attended the Internal Council of Shopping Centers conference in Las Vegas to promote Costa Mesa and attract new businesses.
- Twenty-four entrepreneurs graduated from the City's EATS small business program.
- Effective July 1, the Economic and Development Services Department will be renamed the Community Development Department to better reflect the department's broader responsibilities.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT:

1. CITY ATTORNEY REPORT - None.

ADJOURNMENT AT 8:14 p.m.

Submitted by:

CARRIE TAI, SECRETARY
COSTA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION