



REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2025 - 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 Dickson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Jeffrey 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:

Wendy Simo expressed ongoing noise and code-compliance concerns regarding the gym at 140 17th Street. She stated that doors open early each morning, loud music and events without permits continue, and valet parking requirements are not being followed. Simo said the noise has negatively affected neighbors' quality of life and health and urged the City to take enforcement action.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

Commissioner Klepack announced that Barktober Fest will be held on Saturday, October 18, at TeWinkle Park from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The family-friendly event promotes pet adoption and raises awareness for the City's Animal Services. Activities will include food trucks, a DJ, a pet costume contest, and a vaccine and microchip clinic.

Commissioner Andrade highlighted the many upcoming fall community events hosted by the City, noting they provide great opportunities to connect with staff and residents. She commended staff participation at the Hispanic Heritage Month

celebration and encouraged everyone to follow the City's website and recreation page to stay informed and engaged with the community.

Commissioner Dickson requested a follow-up from staff regarding the conditions of approval for the gym at 140 17th Street to better understand the regulations in place. He noted his familiarity with similar noise issues from living near a gym in the past and acknowledged that some impacts are part of urban living. He also encouraged everyone to watch recent City Council meetings for important discussions related to the Planning Division activities

Commissioner Martinez shared his experience attending CicLAvia, an open streets event in Los Angeles, and expressed hope that Costa Mesa could host a similar event in the future. He announced several upcoming City events, including the Homeless Solutions Town Hall on October 15, Fire Station Open Houses on October 25, and a Community Bike Skills Workshop that same day at the Senior Center. He also provided an overview of recently signed state housing and planning legislation, highlighting key bills related to building permit fee schedules, adaptive reuse projects, ADUs, and traffic impact fees, encouraging staff to review and update municipal codes as needed.

Vice Chair Zich commented on the significant news of progress toward a lasting peace in the Middle East, noting that while it is not a local issue, it captured his attention and he expressed gratitude for the development.

Chair Harlan thanked Vice Chair Zich for his comments and expressed appreciation for his capable leadership while filling in during his recent absence.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. SEPTEMBER 22, 2025 UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/ DICKSON

MOTION: to approve Consent Calendar.

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

Recused: None

Motion carried: 7-0

ACTION:

Planning Commission approved consent calendar items.

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (PCUP-25-0012) TO MODIFY THE EXISTING OFF-SALE STATE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) LICENSE FROM TYPE 20 (BEER AND WINE) TO TYPE 21 (GENERAL) FOR AN EXISTING CONVENIENCE STORE (7-ELEVEN) AT 2244 FAIRVIEW ROAD

No ex-parte communications reported.

Presentation by Assistant Planner, Christopher Aldana.

Sherry Olson, from the applicant team, stated she read and agreed to the conditions if approval.

Public comments:

No Public Comments.

Motion Discussion:

The Commission discussed revisions to Condition of Approval Number 5, related to the sale and display of alcoholic beverages at a convenience store. Members clarified that the intent was to prevent the use of portable or ad hoc refrigerated units while allowing wine to be displayed unrefrigerated on an end cap. Following discussion and staff input, the Commission agreed to strike the existing Condition Number 5 and replace it with language stating that distilled spirits shall only be sold and displayed behind the counter.

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/DICKSON

MOTION: To move staff recommendations with the following modifications:

1. Condition of Approval Number 5 to read: "Distilled spirits shall only be sold and displayed behind the counter".

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Recused: None

Motion carried: 7-0

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 25-0012 based on findings of fact and subject to conditions of approval.

2. AMENDMENT TO THE LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE CITY'S GENERAL PLAN TO PROVIDE CONSISTENCY WITH THE SIXTH CYCLE (2021-2029) HOUSING ELEMENT - PCTY-25-0004

One ex-parte communication reported by Vice Chair Zich.

Presentation by Principal Planner, Melinda Dacey.

The Commission asked staff to address a public comment received regarding notification procedures. The City Attorney responded that the commenter's interpretation was incorrect, explaining that the municipal code requires mailed notice to all property owners and occupants within 500 feet of a project site, except for applications involving buildings over 150 feet in height, which require a greater notice radius. Since the item under discussion was not a building application, the standard noticing requirements were met.

The Commission and staff discussed the proposed Land Use Element amendment to ensure consistency with the City's Housing Element, clarifying that the update is primarily a technical correction to reconcile past procedural gaps rather than a substantive policy overhaul. Staff explained that the changes are needed because the original Housing Element adoption did not include a required General Plan consistency finding, and the current action aligns the two documents under state law. Commissioners asked detailed questions regarding site capacity, height limits, trip generation, rezoning timelines, Measure K implications, and compliance with state housing mandates. Staff emphasized that while the amendments provide flexibility to achieve housing element densities, future projects would still undergo environmental review and be subject to objective development standards through the upcoming "Neighborhoods Where We All Belong" program.

Public comments:

Ralph Taboada thanked the Commission for their thoughtful questions, noting that the discussion was informative and that he learned a lot from the exchange.

Cynthia McDonald expressed concern about noticing procedures related to a rezoning item, stating that current property owners within 500 feet were not properly notified and that prior notices from previous years were insufficient. The

speaker also raised issues regarding potential Measure Y implications, noting that increased densities and building heights could trigger a public vote, and emphasized the need for coordination with the circulation element due to possible traffic impacts. She urged the Commission to defer consideration of the item until updated noticing and Measure Y evaluations are completed.

Motion Discussion:

The Commission discussed a motion to advance updates with minor updates to Figure LU-4 and Figure LU-6 to replace “reductions” with “modifications” from the proposed language to the Land Use Element for consistency as part of implementing the City’s Housing Element. Supporters described the update as a necessary procedural step to align City policy with state housing requirements and ensure consistency across zoning codes and specific plans. Others expressed concern about removing height limits, traffic standards, and other safeguards, warning that such changes could alter neighborhood character, reduce local control, and expand high-density residential zoning beyond public expectations. The discussion also highlighted differing views on the city’s housing crisis—some emphasizing the urgency of addressing affordability and homelessness, while others questioned the long-term impacts on open space, infrastructure, and economic balance.

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/ANDRADE

MOTION: To move staff recommendation.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: Vice Chair Zich, Commissioner Dickson

Absent: None

Recused: None

Motion carried: 5-2

ACTION:

The Planning Commission adopted a resolution to:

To recommend to the City Council to adopt the draft amendments to the Land Use Element of the City’s General Plan to provide consistency with the Sixth Cycle Housing Element and associated California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) environmental determination.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

REPORT - PUBLIC WORKS - Mr. Yang highlighted recent and upcoming community events and projects. Walk to School Day events were held on October 8 and continued on October 15 at various elementary schools to promote safe biking and walking routes. He also announced the Community Bike Skills Workshop will take place on October 25 at the Costa Mesa Senior Center, offering free bike tune-ups and safety lessons. Additionally, construction has begun on Fairview Road between Fair Drive and Newport Boulevard to repave the roadway, enhance bike lanes, add green conflict zones, and install a new pedestrian crossing signal near College Park Elementary School.

REPORT - DEVELOPMENT SERVICES - Director Tai provided an update on recent and upcoming City Council actions. On October 7, 2025, the Council upheld the Planning Commission's approval of a small lot subdivision at 2308 Santa Ana Avenue and adopted the second reading of the technical code cleanup updates, which take effect November 6, 2025. Upcoming Council items include an appeal for a cannabis business permit at 2301 Newport Boulevard, discussion of the Fairview Developmental Center environmental study scope, and consideration of the Planning Commission's recommendation on the land use element and general plan amendment. The Director also noted that the triennial building and fire code updates will include minor safety changes, with limited impact due to Assembly Bill 130, and shared that staff recently held a Fair Housing workshop and provided a Fairview Developmental Center update to the Parks and Community Services Commission.

REPORT - ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY - None.

ADJOURNMENT AT 8:07 p.m.

Submitted by:

CARRIE TAI, SECRETARY
COSTA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION