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**MEETING MINUTES OF THE CITY OF
COSTA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION**

May 28, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ereth called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Chair Ereth led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Adam Ereth, Vice Chair Russell Toler, Commissioner Angely Andrade, Commissioner Karen Klepack, Commissioner David Martinez
Commissioner Jonny Rojas, Commissioner Jon Zich

Absent: None

Officials Present: Assistant Director of Development Services Scott Drapkin, Planning and Sustainable Development Manager Bill Rodrigues, Assistant City Attorney Tarquin Preziosi, Associate Planner Chris Yeager, City Engineer Seung Yang and Recording Secretary Anna Partida

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – MATTERS NOT LISTED ON THE AGENDA:

Speaker one voiced his concerns about a general lack of parking in development projects concern for and about how the 19th Street bike enhancements have made that street more challenging for vehicles.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

Commissioner Martinez informed the public that May is Bike Month and stated he has been an active participant. He encouraged the public to go on a bike ride.

Commissioner Rojas thanked those in attendance and encouraged the public to voice their opinions on all matters.

Commissioner Zich thanked those in attendance.

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Commissioner Andrade thanked those in attendance. She continued her comments by thanking the Public Works Department for their recent work on city park updates and the Parks and Recreation Department for their work on the community events.

Vice Chair Toler presented a slideshow titled “Principles to Guide the Future of Costa Mesa” which expressed his concerns for car dependence and asked the City to prioritize people and the public realm. Vice Chair Toler also noted that May is Bike Month and encouraged the public to go for a ride.

Chair Ereth thanked Vice Chair Toler for his presentation. He continued his comments by updating the public on his recent public engagements. He stated he spoke to Leadership Tomorrow; he announced his participation on a thesis panel for the City of Costa Mesa’s Assistant Planner Caitlyn Curley; and, that he moderated a session at the U. S. Green Building Council’s conference about bringing together the entertainment industry to find the best environmental practices for the entertainment industry.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

No member of the public or Commissioner requested to pull a Consent Calendar item.

1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: MAY 13, 2024

MOVED/SECOND: Toler/Ereth

MOTION: Approve recommended action for Consent Calendar Item No. 1.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Ereth, Toler, Andrade, Klepack, Martinez, Rojas, Zich

Nays: None

Absent: None

Abstained: None

Motion carried: 7-0

ACTION: Planning Commission approved the minutes of the regular meeting of the May 13, 2024.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:**1. PLANNING APPLICATION PA-22-39 FOR A VARIANCE TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM PERMITTED HEIGHT AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PDVR-23-0004 TO CONSTRUCT NEW CHURCH AND NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL BUILDINGS AT 234 FISCHER AVENUE**

Project Description: Development Review PDVR-23-0004 is a request to establish the development program associated with the phased removal of existing site improvements and construction of a new three-story, 35,154-square-foot church; a new three-story 10,514-square-foot Sunday school building; and a new

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6,285-square-foot children's play deck, which is elevated one-story above the proposed surface parking lot, and the addition of new landscaping, parking and other site features. Planning Application 22-39 is a variance request to allow architectural elements, including a steeple and two domes with crosses, up to 77 feet in height where the allowable height is 45 feet.

Environmental Determination: The project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 (Class 32), In-Fill Development.

One ex-parte communication reported.

Commissioner Zich met with the applicant and the applicant's team on-site.

Chris Yeager, Associate Planner, presented the staff report.

The Commission asked questions of staff including discussion about the Arts Commission's role will be in the approval of the proposed mural/mosaic; the criteria the Arts Commission follows to approve murals/mosaics; confirmation that the project adds 20 parking stalls to the site; whether the Arts Commission would review the stained glass windows; how staff determines if the mural/mosaic is visible from the right-of-way, bike rack location; sidewalk standards; pedestrian access to the site; whether the Planning Commission would review future changes to café operations; if more trees could be added to the site; proposed water feature; and whether the City Arborist reviewed the landscape plans.

The Chair opened the Public Hearing.

Tony Torres, representing the applicant, stated that he has read and agrees to the conditions of approval.

Commission questions of the applicant included church operating hours; gate hours; café operations ; number of parking spaces and if site design would change if less parking was needed; community outreach and engagement efforts; whether the multipurpose rooms were open to the public; and if the youth Sunday school building is open to the public for other education opportunities.

The Chair opened public comments.

Speaker one spoke in support of the item.

Speaker two spoke in support of the item.

Speaker three spoke in support of the item.

Father Paul Mikhail spoke in support of the item.

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Speaker five spoke in support of the item.

Cindy Fergus spoke in support of the item.

Speaker seven spoke in support of the item.

The Chair closed public comments.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing.

Chair Ereth made a motion. Seconded by Commissioner Rojas.

The Commission discussed the motion including the project's conformity to the findings; was complementary to the project's overall design including the requested height deviation that is ornamental only as there is no usable square footage therein; commented on the congregation's positive community involvement; and expressed preference to improve review process and timeline.

MOVED/SECOND: Ereth/Rojas

MOTION: Approve staff's recommendation.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Ereth, Toler, Andrade, Klepack, Rojas Martinez, Zich

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 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15332 (Class 32) In-Fill Development, and
2. Approve Planning Application PA-22-39 to grant a variance for allowing an exception to the required maximum building height, and Development Review PDVR-23-0004 to allow a new church building, Sunday school building, and site improvements based on findings of fact and subject to conditions of approval.

RESOLUTION PC-2024-14 - A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA, CALIFORNIA APPROVING PLANNING APPLICATION PA-22-39 FOR A VARIANCE TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM PERMITTED HEIGHT AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PDVR-23-0004 TO CONSTRUCT NEW CHURCH AND NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL BUILDINGS FOR THE PROPERTY AT 234 FISCHER AVENUE

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Chair Ereth explained the appeal process.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

1. Public Works Report – Mr. Yang reported the Public Works Department is continuing with the Adams Avenue Street construction project between Royal Palm Drive and the Santa Ana River Trail. He thanked the public for their patience and asked the community to follow safe driving practices.
2. Development Services Report – None.

CITY ATTORNEY’S OFFICE REPORT:

1. City Attorney – None.

ADJOURNMENT AT 7:21 PM

Submitted by:

SCOTT DRAPKIN, SECRETARY
COSTA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION