



REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MONDAY, MARCH 9, 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 - Vice Chair Zich 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: None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

Commissioner Andrade thanked City staff for organizing the Neighborhoods Where We All Belong session at the Norma Herzog Community Center and noted the strong community turnout. She appreciated the interactive activities and summaries presented, particularly the block-building exercise that helped visually demonstrate potential development concepts. She expressed interest in attending the upcoming sessions and hearing additional community input.

Commissioner Dickson welcomed attendees and provided a brief follow-up from the previous meeting regarding the discussion on security guards and the related Council policy concerning 24-hour security requirements. He noted that he had emailed the Chair and staff and indicated that the matter may be addressed directly by the City Council. He explained that streamlining the process would save time and costs for staff and applicants by avoiding the need for individual applications each time the issue arises.

Commissioner Martinez announced several upcoming community events, including the Spring Bark Bash at TeWinkle Park on March 21, volunteer opportunities at Fairview Park, and upcoming open houses related to the Fairview Developmental Center. He also noted attending the Neighborhoods Where We All Belong community meeting and observing Public Works staff evaluating potential crosswalk improvements at Placentia Avenue and Center Street. Additionally, he informed the public about a Newport-Mesa Unified School District board meeting regarding proposed policies that could restrict student bicycle use and encouraged community members to attend and provide feedback.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. FEBRUARY 23, 2026, UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

MOVED/SECOND: DICKSON/ MARTINEZ

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. TWO-YEAR EXTENSION OF TIME FOR MASTER PLAN (PA-22-30) FOR AN EIGHT-UNIT LIVE/WORK DEVELOPMENT AT 1711-1719 POMONA AVENUE

One ex-parte communication reported.

Presentation by Senior Planner, Chris Yeager.

Derick Thelen stated he read and agreed to the conditions if approval.

Public comments: None.

Motion Discussion:

The Planning Commission discussed the appropriate length of a time extension for the applicant to obtain building permits. While Vice Chair Zich supported a one-year extension, noting there was no evidence in the record that delays from Southern California Edison required additional time, staff recommended a full two-year extension to provide flexibility and avoid the possibility of the applicant needing to return and pay another application fee. Some Commissioners expressed concern about limiting the applicant due to potential third-party delays, while others felt the request lacked sufficient justification. After discussion, a substitute motion was made to grant an 18-month extension, which Commissioners noted would result in approximately a two-year total extension when combined with the previously approved 180-day extension. The motion received support as a compromise that would provide adequate time while still encouraging progress on the project.

MOVED/SECOND: ZICH/DICKSON

MOTION: Move to approve a one-year time extension.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION VOTE:

MOVED/SECOND: HARLAN/MARTINEZ

MOTION: Move approve an eighteen-month time extension.

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. Adopt a Resolution approving a eighteen-month extension of time for PA-22-30, a Master Plan allowing for an eight unit live/work development, and
2. Find that 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.

2. DESIGN REVIEW PDES-25-0003, TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP PTPM-25-0003, AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PDVR-25-0005 FOR A COMMON INTEREST DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF TWO, TWO-STORY TOWNHOME CONDOMINIUMS LOCATED AT 121 CECIL PLACE

Two ex-parte communication reported.

Presentation by Assistant Planner, Gabriel Villalobos.

Josh Martinez stated he read and agreed to the conditions if approval.

Public comments: None.

Motion Discussion:

Commissioners generally expressed support for the project, noting that it is well designed with thoughtful site planning, including privacy between adjacent properties and adequate on-site parking. While some Commissioners shared concerns about the front-facing massing along the street, they acknowledged the design challenges related to the site's frontage and ultimately supported the proposal. Discussion focused on opportunities to improve the pedestrian experience along Cecil Place by increasing tree canopy and shade along the sidewalk. Commissioners discussed relocating some of the proposed olive trees closer to the sidewalk, if feasible, and the motion was amended to require that two replacement olive trees be placed as close to the sidewalk as possible, subject to staff review and site constraints such as utilities and sidewalk integrity. Commissioners also noted that the project would provide ownership housing and add a sidewalk where one does not currently exist, which were viewed as positive improvements.

MOVED/SECOND: DICKSON/ZICH

MOTION: Move staff's recommendation with an amendment to condition of COA 17 that adds the word words "or removed after damaged" in the second sentence as well as noting that the trees "will be placed as close to the sidewalk as feasible".

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 the project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15315 (Class 15), Minor Land Divisions, and Class 15303 (Class 3) New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures; and

2. Approve Design Review (PDES-25-0003), Tentative Parcel Map (PTPM-25-0003), and Development Review (PDVR-25-0005), based on the finding of fact and subject to conditions of approval.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

REPORT - PUBLIC WORKS - Mr. Yang reported that Caltrans District 12 is conducting the Reconnecting Our Communities (ROC) Study to evaluate opportunities to reconnect neighborhoods impacted by state highways in Anaheim, Buena Park, Costa Mesa, Garden Grove, and Huntington Beach. The study aims to improve safety, access, and multimodal transportation for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders, as well as enhance conditions near roadways, freeway crossings, and underpasses. Staff announced a virtual community meeting scheduled for March 16, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. and directed interested members of the public to visit reconnectingoc.org for additional information and the meeting link.

REPORT - DEVELOPMENT SERVICES - Director Tai reported on recent and upcoming planning activities. Staff thanked the community and City staff for participating in three "Neighborhoods Where We All Belong" workshops, where attendees reviewed outreach results and provided feedback on proposed development and design standards. Staff noted that Housing Element-related items previously recommended by the Planning Commission, including sites inventory amendments and rezoning changes, will be considered by the City Council on March 17, along with the City's General Plan and Housing Element Annual Progress Report. Additional items going to Council include the award of HOME funds for affordable housing and a funding request for the Jamboree Senior Housing project. Staff also reported that the Ohio House sober living home and Step House recovery facility will be heard by the City Council in April. Lastly, staff announced upcoming outreach meetings for the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan scheduled for March 24, March 26, and March 30.

REPORT - ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY - None.

ADJOURNMENT AT 7:15 p.m.

Submitted by:

CARRIE TAI, SECRETARY
COSTA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION