REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 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 Robert Dickson, Commissioner Karen Klepack, Commissioner David Martinez, Commissioner Johnny Rojas

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – MATTERS NOT LISTED ON THE AGENDA: None.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

Commissioner Klepack announced that Barktoberfest will be held on October 17 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at TeWinkle Park. She shared that she volunteered at the event last year and recommended it, highlighting the dog costume parade, Costa Mesa Police Department K-9 demonstration, pet adoptions, and mobile vaccination clinic.

Commissioner Andrade highlighted upcoming City activities and encouraged the community to attend the Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration on September 19. She noted that the event begins at 10:00 a.m. with Pilates and will include food, performances, and opportunities to celebrate Costa Mesa's diverse cultures.

Commissioner Martinez highlighted several upcoming City and community events, including the City Council meeting, the Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration at Lions Park, and Art Venture at the Norma Hertzog Community Center. He also announced the Costa Mesa Historical Society's fourth annual arts-focused bike ride on September 20 and the Knowledge and Health Fair Expo at the Costa Mesa Senior Center on September 24, which will provide information on community resources and services available to seniors.

DRAFT

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. AUGUST 10, 2026 UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/DICKSON
MOTION: Move the item.
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: The Planning Commission approved the minutes.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. VARIANCE (PVAR-26-0001) TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM 30-FOOT BUILDING HEIGHT FOR A RETAIL USE (DICK'S HOUSE OF SPORT) AT 2200 HARBOR BOULEVARD, UNIT K

No ex-parte communications to report.

Presentation by Assistant Planner Gabriel Villalobos.

Commission questions and discussion:

Commissioners asked questions regarding conditions of approval, landscaping and code compliance, pedestrian safety and walkability, and the justification for the proposed building height and variance. They also encouraged additional landscaping along College Avenue and consideration of pedestrian improvements near the project.

Commission and applicant discussion:

Don Alexander, project's architect, stated that he has read the staff report and conditions of approval and agrees to them.

Commissioners discussed the applicant's community involvement, parking and transit expectations, landscaping and beautification along College Avenue, and the proposed treatment of windows in the climbing wall area to address visibility and potential lighting impacts.

DRAFT

Public comments:

Jay Humphrey, Costa Mesa resident, expressed support for the project and its potential retail and employment benefits but raised concerns about granting variances and the precedent they could set for future development and the City's established development standards.

Additional Commission questions:

Commissioner Andrade asked about the project's anticipated employment opportunities and local hiring strategy, particularly whether Costa Mesa residents, including college and high school students, would have opportunities to apply for positions. Mr. Alexander stated that employment opportunities would be advertised as construction progresses, with the intent of providing local residents an opportunity to apply.

Commission comments after the motion:

The Commission expressed strong support for the project, citing new retail and employment opportunities and the reuse of a vacant space. Commissioners encouraged landscaping and beautification along College Avenue, approved clarifications to conditions regarding window tinting and equipment screening, and raised concerns about ensuring a clear and consistent approach to development exceptions.

MOVED/SECOND: DICKSON/ANDRADE
MOTION: Move staff's recommendation with an amendment to Condition of Approval No. 5 and 16.
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: 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) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities); and
2. Approve Variance (PVAR-26-0001) based on the findings of fact and subject to conditions of approval with the following modifications below:

DRAFT

Condition of Approval No. 5 to read: Unless the lighting plan and photometric study required pursuant to Condition of Approval NO. 13 determines this condition is unnecessary, the proposed windows of the climbing wall roof structure shall be tinted or obscured to minimize light pollution emitted.

Condition of Approval No. 16 to read: The plans shall show the method of screening for all ground-mounted equipment (backflow prevention devices, Fire Department connections, electrical transformers, etc.). With the exception of back-flow prevention devices, ground-mounted equipment shall not be located in any landscaped setback visible from the street and shall be screened from view, under the direction of Planning Staff.

2. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (PCUP-25-0021) TO ALLOW A PROPOSED COMMERCIAL PADEL FACILITY (PADEL UP) AT 2045 HARBOR BOULEVARD

One ex-parte communication reported by Commissioner Martinez who visited the site.

Presentation by Assistant Planner Froylan Garcia.

Commission questions and discussion:

The Commission discussed permitted uses and noise standards in the C2 zone, proposed operating-hour restrictions for courts near residences, zoning and entitlement requirements for nearby residential uses, and accessibility improvements, including the proposed path of travel and compliance with accessibility standards.

Commission and applicant discussion:

Albert Blanck, authorized agenda for the property owner, stated that he has read the staff report and conditions of approval and agrees to most of them but asked for clarifications and revisions to a few mentioned in the report.

The Commission and applicant discussed the site layout and potential noise impacts, court enclosure design, possible future site reconfiguration, and the project's noise study. Commissioners also discussed community and youth engagement, encouraging partnerships and opportunities for local Costa Mesa youth.

No public comments.

Commissioner questions and discussion continued:

DRAFT

The Commission discussed tournament and special event requirements, operating hours and noise impacts, parking and site access during larger events, and the project's use of two separate parcels. Commissioners also sought clarification on the land use restriction and how the CUP would remain applicable to both parcels.

Commissioner comments after the motion:

The Commission expressed strong support for the project, highlighting its recreational, physical activity, and youth benefits. Commissioners encouraged affordable access and partnerships with local schools and nonprofits, discussed noise and operating conditions, and recognized the project as a unique recreational use that could benefit the community as the area continues to evolve.

MOVED/SECOND: DICKSON/MARTINEZ
MOTION: Move staff's recommendation with modifications to Conditions of Approval Nos. 6 and 12.
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: 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 15332 (Infill Development Project); and
2. Approve Conditional Use Permit 25-0021 based on findings of fact and subject to conditions of approval with the following modifications below:

Condition of Approval No. 6 to read: The operation shall comply with the conditions and requirements of the applicable Special Event Permits for the City of Costa Mesa when they expect more than 50 participants.

Condition of Approval No. 12 to read: The single padel court located closest to the adjacent residential use, as identified on the approved site plan (the westernmost court), shall be limited to operation between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., daily. No court play, instruction, practice, tournaments, or other recreational activities shall occur on that court outside of these hours. The remaining padel courts may operate during the hours otherwise authorized by this Conditional Use Permit. Staff shall use best efforts to assign reservations to the courts nearest Harbor Boulevard, where available.

DRAFT

3. **CITY OF COSTA MESA NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE WE ALL BELONG PROPOSED ZONING CODE AMENDMENT, ZONING MAP UPDATE, AND ESTABLISHMENT OF CITYWIDE MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-USE OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS, AND REPEALING OF URBAN PLANS (PCTY-26-0004); AMENDMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS OF THE COSTA MESA GENERAL PLAN: CIRCULATION, COMMUNITY DESIGN, LAND USE, NOISE, AND OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION (PGPA-26-0002); AND AMENDMENTS TO THE NEWPORT BOULEVARD SPECIFIC PLAN (PSPA-26-0003), NORTH COSTA MESA SPECIFIC PLAN (PSPA-26-0004), AND ONE METRO WEST SPECIFIC PLAN (PSPA-26-0005); CERTIFY FINAL PEIR, ADOPT FINDINGS OF FACT, STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS AND MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM PURSUANT TO CEQA**

Presentation by Senior Planner Michelle Halligan along with representatives from Dudek, City consultants.

Commission questions and discussion:

The Commission discussed the Mixed-Use Overlay District and Objective Design Standards, their relationship to existing zoning and former urban plans, Density Bonus and Housing Element requirements, airport restrictions, sustainability measures, and EIR mitigation. Commissioners emphasized the need for clear, predictable standards while maintaining flexibility for unique projects, and staff agreed to review and clarify several provisions before City Council consideration.

Public Comments:

George Sakioka, Sakioka Company, supported moving the project forward, thanked staff for incorporating stakeholder feedback, and requested consideration of minor revisions intended to clarify the documents and reduce barriers to housing development.

Chris Meany with Wilson Meany, who works with the Sakioka Company, supported forwarding the documents to City Council and requested greater flexibility regarding overlapping development standards, open-space requirements, and EV infrastructure.

Amy Forbes, Windsor Strategies, representing the Sakioka Company, requested clarification of "lower-income housing element site" and emphasized maintaining flexibility among applicable plans and standards to support housing development.

DRAFT

Cynthia McDonald raised concerns about enforceability, environmental and infrastructure impacts, and the complexity of the proposal, recommending proceeding with required Housing Element rezoning while deferring Measure K rezoning and associated revisions.

A Zoom caller opposed the proposed housing density, citing concerns about public participation, impacts on existing neighborhoods and businesses, loss of commercial/industrial space, and insufficient information about building heights and other development impacts.

A Zoom caller representing the Costa Mesa Affordable Housing Coalition advocated for more affordable housing for lower-income families and thanked staff for their outreach and compliance efforts.

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/HARLAN
MOTION: Move staff's recommendation with the following amendments:

1. **Rowhouse Definition – Page 310:** Change "rowhouse" to "townhouse" because the terms are considered the same.
2. **Density Bonus Groups – Pages 352, 355 & 356:** Expand references to include very low-income households, senior citizens, and other groups eligible under Density Bonus Law.
3. **Application Fee – Page 354:** Move the fee requirement in subsection 7 to subsection 3 so it applies to general application requirements rather than only requested waivers.
4. **Housing Language – Page 356:** Revise Section 4A, at staff's discretion, to add language regarding a form approved by the City Attorney or make it consistent with Section 4B.
5. **MOOD Permitted Uses – Page 371:** Allow the less restrictive permit requirement of the underlying base zoning district to apply when appropriate. Also allow uses permitted by the base zoning but not listed in the MOOD table, except uses limited to specified industrial zones.
6. **MOOD Development Standards – Page 376:** Add "unless otherwise noted in such zoning provision" and direct staff and the City Attorney to clarify language related to specific plans.
7. **Off-Street Parking – Page 378:** Split the "additional provisions, if applicable" column into two cells, with one specifically referencing Article 3 for parking design requirements.
8. **Open Space/Lot Size – Page 378:** Add a footnote stating that for lots greater than four acres, lot area is measured excluding streets and rights-of-way when interior streets and rights-of-way are required by the Objective Design Standards.

DRAFT

9. **Objective Design Standards – Pages 462, 470 & 481:** Replace references to the "more restrictive regulation" with "objective design standards," allowing greater flexibility for development.
10. **Trip Budget – Page 519:** Add "if applicable" before the trip budget limitations.
11. **Technical Corrections – Pages 528, 538 & 541:** Direct staff to verify and correct references to Sakioka lot/area numbers and Figure LU-6, as necessary.
12. **Development Standards Language – Page 734:** Add and clarify references to "development standards," "standards," and "provisions."
13. **Specific Plan Standards – Page 1,005:** Replace "the more restrictive regulation shall prevail" with language stating that these standards prevail, while allowing projects to use more permissive standards contained in an applicable specific plan.
14. **Facade Design – Page 1,017:** Substantially rewrite the facade design requirements. Street-facing facades would be visually divided so individual sections do not exceed 75 feet, with separation achieved through features such as facade projections/recesses, height variations, changes in materials or colors, vertical architectural elements, or variations in window/fenestration patterns.
15. **Facade Hierarchy – Page 1,018:** Add variations in fenestration size or pattern as an acceptable facade hierarchy feature.
16. **Standards – Page 1,023:** Replace "the more restrictive regulation" with "these standards."
17. **General Corrections:** Authorize staff to make necessary spelling, grammar, numbering, and wording corrections, to clarify the Commission's intent.

Commissioner comments after the motion:

Commissioner Martinez and Chair Harlan praised staff's work and supported amendments intended to provide greater flexibility for housing development while maintaining quality design standards. They noted that the Planning Commission's recommendation is advisory and that City Council will make the final decision.

Commissioner Dickson provided a substitute motion with Vice Chair Zich seconding it.

Commissioner comments after the substitute motion:

Vice Chair Zich and Commissioner Dickson supported additional time for review and public input, while Commissioner Andrade supported moving the item forward to City Council. Chair Harlan supported the original motion but was open to a brief continuance for further Commission review.

MOVED/SECOND: DICKSON/ZICH

DRAFT

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Continue the item to the next meeting, allowing the Commission additional time to review, analyze, and discuss Commissioner Martinez's proposed substantive amendments before making a recommendation.
The motion carried by the following roll call vote:
Ayes: Chair Harlan, Vice Chair Zich, Commissioner Dickson, Commissioner Rojas
Nays: Commissioner Andrade, Commissioner Klepack, Commissioner Martinez,
Absent: None
Recused: None
Motion carried: 4-3

ACTION: The Planning Commission continued the item to the next meeting to allow the Commission additional time to review, analyze, and discuss Commissioner Martinez's proposed substantive amendments before making a recommendation.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

1. **PUBLIC WORKS REPORT –** City Engineer Yang announced that the Transportation Division received an American Planning Association Orange County Branch award for the Fairview Transportation Improvements Project between Newport Boulevard and Fair Drive.

2. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT –** Director Tai announced the City's recent planning and public works awards and noted that the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan public hearing would be held before the City Council the following evening.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT:

1. CITY ATTORNEY REPORT – None.

ADJOURNMENT AT 10:30 p.m.

Submitted by:

_____
CARRIE TAI, SECRETARY
COSTA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION

DRAFT