REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 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 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, 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 Andrade commended City staff for the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration and recognized October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. She highlighted the Shine the Light event and the partnership between Human Options and the Costa Mesa Police Department to provide resources for domestic violence survivors and train officers to recognize and respond to domestic violence situations.

Commissioner Dickson emphasized the importance of domestic violence awareness and highlighted available community resources, including Human Options, local shelters, legal clinics, and the Costa Mesa Police Department. He encouraged residents seeking assistance to call 211 or contact the Police Department for resources.

Commissioner Martinez highlighted recent community events and openings, including Oktoberfest, improvements at Ketchum-Libolt Park, and Café Mesa at Lions Park. He also announced Mayor Stevens' upcoming State of the City address and a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) meeting focused on pet emergencies and evacuations.

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CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. **SEPTEMBER 14, 2026 UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES**
2. **SEPTEMBER 28, 2026 UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES**

MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/DICKSON
MOTION: Move the consent calendar.
The motion carried by the following roll call vote:
Ayes: Chair Jeffrey Harlan, Vice Chair Jon Zich, Commissioner Angely Andrade, Commissioner Robert Dickson, Commissioner Karen Klepack, Commissioner David Martinez, Commissioner Johnny Rojas
Nays: None
Absent: None
Recused: None
Motion carried: 7-0

ACTION: The Planning Commission approved the minutes.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. **ONE-YEAR TIME EXTENSION FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT PA-22-08, WHICH ALLOWED FOR A NEW CANNABIS STOREFRONT AT 2490 NEWPORT AVENUE**

No ex-parte communications.

Presentation by Gabriel Villalobos Assistant Planner.

Commission questions and discussion:

Commissioner Dickson confirmed staff's recommendation for approval and asked whether the applicant had caused any unnecessary delays. Staff clarified that the project was progressing through its third round of plan check and that the requested one-year extension was a precaution to allow sufficient time to obtain permits.

Commission and applicant discussion:

Gina Austin, the applicant's land use attorney, that she has read the conditions of approval and agrees to them. She explained that the project has faced delays and significant cost increases due to unexpected right-of-way improvements, which doubled the original budget. She confirmed that the required plans and documents have been submitted to the City and that the applicant remains

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committed to completing the project. She emphasized that the improvements will enhance the area's appearance, improve pedestrian and vehicle safety, address illegal dumping, and align with Costa Mesa's development plans. She requested an extension to allow the project to move forward.

The applicant, through their attorney, attributed project delays to engineering issues but confirmed that additional support is in place, plans are nearing completion, and the contractor is ready to begin construction. The applicant agreed to a six-month extension and progress check-in to avoid expiration of the project approval.

Public comments none.

MOVED/SECOND: ZICH/DIXON
MOTION: Move staff's recommendation, with a modification to grant a six-month extension.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:
Ayes: Chair Jeffrey Harlan, Vice Chair Jon Zich, Commissioner Angely Andrade, Commissioner Robert Dickson, Commissioner Karen Klepack, Commissioner David Martinez, Commissioner Johnny 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. Adopt a Resolution approving a six-month time extension for Conditional Use Permit (CUP) PA-22-08, which allowed for a new cannabis storefront at 2490 Newport Boulevard, extending the approval through May 3, 2027.

2. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (PCUP-26-0002) TO ALLOW FOR A MUSEUM WITH AN OUTDOOR COURTYARD AT 1901 NEWPORT BOULEVARD, SUITE 100

No ex-parte communications.

Presentation by Senior Planner Chris Yeager.

Commission questions and discussion:

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Commissioners discussed the museum's special event restrictions listed in Condition No. 6, permit requirements, and courtyard capacity. Staff clarified that additional events require a $425 permit, typically processed within two weeks to one month. Courtyard use must comply with noise ordinances and building occupancy limits. Staff also confirmed that no neighboring businesses had submitted concerns.

Commission and applicant discussion:

Marwa Saeed, applicant, stated that he has read the conditions of approval and agrees to them as currently amended.

Commissioner Martinez asked the applicant whether the proposed limit of two events per month would accommodate the museum's anticipated programming. The applicant explained that the museum primarily intends to host educational activities, including one monthly dinner for supporters, rather than operate as an event venue. They emphasized that the courtyard would serve as an outdoor classroom for children and that larger events would be held at hotels or other venues. The applicant expressed strong commitment to the museum's educational mission and confirmed general agreement with the proposed conditions of approval.

Public comments:

Todd Martin, Costa Mesa resident, expressed appreciation for the property's restoration but requested clarification about the proposed museum. He explained that a public notice led him to research the project, where he found information about a proposed 25-story residential development called "Museum House" and questioned whether it was associated with the museum. He sought confirmation that the two projects were unrelated.

Zoom caller Mark Vukcevich spoke in strong support of the proposed museum, highlighting Kahlil Gibran's cultural and literary significance to the Lebanese American community. He shared his family's excitement about having a cultural institution dedicated to Gibran in Costa Mesa. He also encouraged the City to consider allowing greater flexibility for special events and amplified sound in the courtyard to better accommodate the museum's activities.

Commissioner comments after the motion:

Commissioners expressed unanimous support for the proposed museum, highlighting its cultural and educational value to Costa Mesa and recommending that museums be added to the City's land use matrix.

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MOVED/SECOND: MARTINEZ/ANDRADE
MOTION: Move staff's recommendation.
The motion carried by the following roll call vote:
Ayes: Chair Jeffrey Harlan, Vice Chair Jon Zich, Commissioner Angely Andrade, Commissioner Robert Dickson, Commissioner Karen Klepack, Commissioner David Martinez, Commissioner Johnny 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 15301 (Existing Facilities); and
2. Approve Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 26-0002 based on findings of fact and subject to conditions of approval.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

1. **PUBLIC WORKS REPORT –** City Engineer Yang had nothing to report.

2. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT –** Director Tai provided updates on recent City Council approvals, the Jamboree senior living project's progress toward construction, and introduced Alejandra Daum as the new Administrative Assistant supporting the Planning Division and Planning Commission.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT:

1. **CITY ATTORNEY REPORT –** Assistant City Attorney Preziosi explained that a conditional use permit is considered exercised once construction begins, a certificate of occupancy is issued, or the approved business use is established. A time extension can also preserve the permit's validity.

ADJOURNMENT AT 7:14 p.m.

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Submitted by:

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CARRIE TAI, SECRETARY
COSTA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION

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