

**NEWPORT BEACH PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 100 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE  
THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026  
REGULAR MEETING – 6:00 P.M.**

I. **CALL TO ORDER** - 6:00 p.m.

II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Commissioner Ellmore

III. **ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Chair Tristan Harris, Vice Chair David Salene, Secretary Jonathan Langford, Commissioner Curtis Ellmore, Commissioner Michael Gazzano, Commissioner Greg Reed

ABSENT: Commissioner Mark Rosene

Staff Present: Deputy City Manager Ben Zdeba, Deputy Community Development Director Liz Westmoreland, Principal Civil Engineer Joshua McDonald, Deputy City Attorney Jose Montoya, Associate Planner Oscar Orozco, Administrative Assistant Clarivel Rodriguez, Department Assistant Beatriz Avila

IV. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None

V. **REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCES** – None

VI. **CONSENT ITEMS**

**ITEM NO. 1 MINUTES OF JUNE 4, 2026**

**Recommended Action:** Approve and file

Chair Harris opened public comment, and there was none.

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Salene and seconded by Commissioner Reed to approve the item as presented.

AYES: Gazzano, Harris, Langford, Reed, and Salene  
NOES: None  
ABSTAIN: Ellmore  
ABSENT: Rosene

VII. **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

**ITEM NO. 2 WESTCLIFF AT DOVER RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (PA2025-0254)  
Site Location: 1501 16<sup>th</sup> Street**

**Summary:**

A request to authorize the development of a 30-unit, for-sale residential townhome community on an existing office site at 1501 16<sup>th</sup> Street (Project site). The proposed development includes the demolition of the former Newport Bay Hospital and construction of three-bedroom townhomes ranging from 2,088 to 2,401 square feet. The development will include a two-car garage for each unit and nine uncovered guest parking spaces for a total of 69 on-site parking spaces. The 30 units will be distributed within five buildings, with units

arranged in five, six, and seven-unit buildings. The buildings have a maximum structure height of approximately 44 feet above established grade. The development will include resident-serving amenities including outdoor seating, barbeque, firepit, walking paths, and a passive turf area. Vehicular access to the Property is provided via a driveway on 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The following approvals are required to implement the project:

- *Major Site Development Review (SDR)*: An SDR in accordance with Section 20.52.080 (Site Development Reviews) of the Newport Beach Municipal Code (NBMC) for five or more units with a tentative tract map. An SDR also allows for deviations from five objective design standards pursuant to Section 20.48.185 (Multi-Unit Objective Design Standards) of the NBMC; and
- *Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM)*: A VTTM to allow for an airspace subdivision of the individual residential units on a 1.53-acre parcel, pursuant to Chapter 19.12 (Tentative Map Review) of the NBMC.

**Recommended Actions:**

1. Conduct a public hearing;
2. Find this project statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.66 (enacted through Assembly Bill 130) because it has no potential to have a significant effect on the environment; and
3. Adopt Resolution No. PC2026-019 approving the Major Site Development Review and Vesting Tentative Tract Map, filed as PA2025-0254.

Associate Planner Oscar Orozco used a PowerPoint presentation to introduce the project location, zoning, surrounding land uses, project description, existing conditions, and requested approvals required by the City and an exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Assembly Bill 130.

Associate Planner Orozco reported that the community has expressed concerns regarding the project for over a year due to compatibility, the interface with the Environmental Nature Center (ENC), and potential neighborhood impacts. He stated that the ENC has submitted a letter raising concerns over massing, privacy, lighting, noise, and ecological effects. He noted receiving approximately 110 letters citing concerns over the project. He also requested revising Condition of Approval (COA) No. 53 to replace “cross lot draining shall not be permitted” with “private street improvements shall comply with Public Works Department Standards,” the removal of COA Nos. 77-79 as they are duplicates.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano’s inquiry, Deputy Community Development Director Liz Westmoreland confirmed that the City does not have an overall minimum unit width, although there are codes related to components of a unit, such as the size of a bedroom. She clarified that, in this development, the width of the units is driven by the size of the garages, which have a minimum width of 17 feet, 6 inches.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano’s inquiry, Deputy City Manager Ben Zdeba clarified that the development standards for housing overlay zones are a blanket set. He noted that there are five different subareas of the housing opportunity sites intended to cover density changes in a manner so that the City could demonstrate that the figures could lead to a feasible development. He noted that the height of this project is 20 feet below the maximum allowance while still yielding the minimum density of 20 units per acre.

In response to Chair Harris’ inquiry, all commissioners reported having ex parte communications with the applicant, and all commissioners except for Vice Chair Salene reported having ex parte communications with representatives of the ENC.

Chair Harris opened the public hearing.

D.R. Horton, Inc. Vice President of Entitlements Daniel Boyd commended City staff who helped with the project, adding that the applicant approves of the Resolution and COAs, including amendments. He noted that several COAs speak directly to the ENC's concerns.

Mr. Boyd stated that the site plan has been thoroughly reviewed, and this site is uniquely qualified for this housing opportunity as it is near churches, parks, shopping, NHHS, and other residential amenities. He noted that the site plan provides side yard setbacks ranging from 10.5 feet to 12 feet where they are not required.

Mr. Boyd reported that the applicant initiated 10 months' worth of discussions with the ENC's Board of Directors focused on visual and noise intervention, leading to landscaping enhancements. He added that the trees have the potential to grow over 30 feet on the side adjacent to the ENC. He added that the previous use of the site was for an involuntary psychiatric rehabilitation center.

WHA Architects Senior Designer Dan Dugan reported on the project's design, including the 10 different three-bedroom floor plans ranging from 2,088 to about 2,400 square feet. He stated that the Cape Cod exterior architectural style was inspired by discussions with City staff, adding that it is synonymous with coastal areas and compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. He presented multiple renderings of the architecture, noting how elements comply with the ODS. He clarified Associate Planner Orozco's presentation to state that Building 500 is only 159 feet wide and not 164 because there is a curve to the building. He noted that the windows facing the preschool are designed to bring in light while making it almost impossible to look down.

BMLA Landscape Architecture Senior Project Manager Jeff Trojanowski reported that he has been on site to assess sensitive areas multiple times. He presented renderings and elevation views of the landscaping at both the time of installation and 10 years into the future when the projected tree growth will obscure all but the rooflines from the ENC's sensitive areas. He presented line-of-sight views, noting that there is little to no view of the ENC and/or ENC preschool at installation, with the views becoming completely obstructed as the trees grow.

Mr. Boyd reported that the applicant has made nine to 10 concessions for the ENC, including the relocation of rooftop decks, the removal of five recessed balconies facing the ENC's gathering area, restricting viewing angles from third-story windows facing the preschool, and other modifications. He spoke to the noise concerns by noting the site's proximity to 16<sup>th</sup> Street and John Wayne Airport, adding that the ENC and its preschool are closed in the evening. He added that it is a highly urbanized area and expressed doubts that the ambient noise generation of the future residents is a substantial factor. He lauded how the landscaping plan will obstruct sight lines of the ENC's sensitive areas both initially and as the trees grow over time. He added that there will be a 10-foot boundary wall on top of a four-foot retaining wall on the west side of the project with a City staff-supported eight-foot wall on the preschool side of the project.

In response to Chair Harris' inquiry, Mr. Boyd confirmed that the applicant agrees to the COAs.

In response to Secretary Langford's inquiry, Mr. Boyd clarified that the location of the common open space was derived from plans to have an interior sidewalk looping around the development. He added that the resident amenity area landed where it did by assessing how the site could best balance the parcel's area while meeting the minimum density requirement. He added that there will be a block wall by the amenity area to provide privacy from adjacent commercial use.

In response to Commissioner Ellmore's inquiries, Mr. Boyd reported that the applicant plans to take all its electrical power off 16<sup>th</sup> Street through an underground system. He added that one of

the existing power poles will be removed, with the other pole to remain, as the power from it also serves the ENC and residences to the south of the site. He added that Southern California Edison (SCE) is involved in this process. He agreed that it is common for a single power pole to serve multiple users and that his past practice has been to leave the pole in place.

In response to Chair Harris' inquiries, Mr. Boyd clarified that the ENC's power is fed by above-ground lines from the pole that go to a sub pole on the ENC's property. He confirmed that the residential lines on the pole are a dead-end system. He confirmed that he would agree to a COA requiring the removal of the pole if SCE determined it to be feasible.

In response to Commissioner Reed's inquiry, Mr. Boyd clarified that the rooftop decks help fulfill the private open space requirements because the parcel and site plan do not provide space for pocket yards. He added that the decks range from about 315 to 340 square feet. He added that the "doghouse" shaped areas on the roof are necessary to provide safe roof deck access in slippery conditions. He noted that the locations of the decks and their framing were altered to help alleviate concerns by the ENC but acknowledged that the ENC will be partially visible from the rooftop decks even after the projected landscape growth.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano's inquiries, WHA Vice President of Architecture Gary Cunningham stated that the HO-3 zone requires a 20-foot by 20-foot garage. He clarified that the additional width is due to the accumulated construction's lumber, drywall, and clearances, including an additional two inches between units for sound attenuation. He clarified that the modular dimensions of the project's housing units start with the garages.

In response to Chair Harris' inquiry, Mr. Boyd reported that the primary concerns from the ENC were visual intrusion and noise impacts. He added that the landscaping program was analyzed to determine where it needed to be enhanced to increase shielding. He noted that the preschool has a substantial amount of new landscaping that will further reduce any issues as it grows. He noted that there is a 40-foot building separation on that side of the development and a landscape-surrounded 8-foot wall. He added that the ENC's main campus' gathering area has proven to be a bigger challenge, so the applicant intends to plant the largest tree species it can within the area – a series of 48-inch box trees that will already be 20 feet tall when they leave the nursery. He added that these modifications to their plans will almost satisfy the ENC's concerns. He reported on some of the discussions between the applicant and the ENC, including an ENC request to have a 30-foot setback for the entire project, which would not provide enough buildable area for a viable project.

After assessing the large number of interested public speakers and referencing past discussions with ENC President and Chief Executive Officer Bo Glover, Chair Harris allotted Mr. Glover eight minutes instead of the standard three, with two minutes each for the remaining speakers. He noted that the Commission and City staff have received many messages about the development and understand the arguments. He encouraged the crowd to refrain from cheering and to use proper respectful decorum, acknowledging the emotions involved. He noted that the Commission is hearing code-related issues and encouraged speakers to focus on the project.

Commissioner Ellmore noted that the Commission is an appointed Code-focused technical body and not the elected City Council. He added that they have children and can appreciate the importance of things like schools, but the Commission's job is to focus on the technical codes.

Mr. Glover reported that the ENC has served the community for 54 years, connecting residents with nature, serving over 30,000 children, and is a premier nature center model nationally. He expressed concerns about the safety and security of the ENC's entrusted children due to the project, protecting the environmental integrity of their site as the project will impinge on their blue skies, and the community compatibility of the project due to its height. He stated that the applicant

has not alleviated their concerns about compatibility, adding that the ENC coexisted well with the site's previous use. He offered alternative solutions to be more compatible with the surrounding uses. For example, he noted that the applicant could eliminate the rooftop decks or provide an open stairway to the decks instead of "doghouses", or provide increase setbacks, limit perimeter buildings to two stories, or consider subterranean garages or basements. Mr. Glover also shared a site plan with a relocated driveway that was submitted to the Commission.

ENC Board of Directors Chair Shana Buxser stated that the ENC has been integral to Newport Beach for generations but lacks the City's protection as a non-public entity. She stated that the ENC's objective is not preventing development, adding that there have been many good-faith discussions with the applicant to discuss improving compatibility that have not led to the desired concessions. She stated that all project changes were only made to the City's minimums. She stated that a compatible development is possible and approval of this plan would be premature. She encouraged a maximum of two stories, increased setbacks, and the removal of rooftop decks. She requested that the Commission withhold approval until neighborhood-compatible plans are drafted.

Katie Smith expressed concerns about whether the project's compatibility findings comply with the City's General Plan, Municipal Code, and the HO-3 zoning. She reported speaking with an attorney and finding that staff is using the HO-3 as evidence of the project's General Plan consistency for a site with a CO-G zoning, adding that the City has a burden of showing that, even with the HO-3 zoning, the project complies with applicable General Plan policies governing compatibility. She stated that General Plan Policy No. LU-5.6.1 and No. LU 5-6.2 requires an evaluation of compatibility with adjacent uses and the avoidance of abrupt changes in scale. She stated that there is no analysis of compatibility with the ENC by placing four-story buildings 10 feet from its outdoor classrooms without a line-of-sight analysis performed by the City.

Sergio Tellez stated that he is a qualified arborist and that the development has limited options for landscaping due to the lack of available space, adding that the trees could become a falling hazard if they are unable to grow as projected in the development's tight spaces. He expressed concerns about residents of the new development being poor influences on children at the ENC.

ENC Vice President Lori Whalen stated that environmental educators need the immersion provided by open spaces and open sky for maximum impact. She stated that the compatibility between the project and the ENC can be improved.

Tom Dallape stated that the site is an excellent location for needed housing suitable for young families. He expressed his support.

Don Abrams inquired if the development is too dense for Newport Beach. He stated that the ENC is important to his family and the City and encouraged the Commission not to allow townhomes to abut the ENC. He stated that the City should buy the lot and gift it to the ENC.

Sage encouraged the Commission to consider the need for open green spaces, adding that the project would harm the ENC's quiet sanctuary. She called on the developer to build elsewhere.

Dan Heinfeld reported that he was the ENC's architect and stated that the project would be detrimental to the nature center. He added that every infill site has neighbors it needs to relate to, and this development is choosing not to relate to its community's context. He stated that the setback will not allow enough space for the deciduous trees to grow as anticipated while the applicant is relying on the ENC's landscaping to screen their wall.

Kristen Caspers Petros reported that she was the environmental planner for a nearby city and knows that planning commissions can consider the compatibility of projects with a neighborhood.

She stated that this project can be modified for better compatibility, citing Mr. Glover's recommendations. She requested that the Commission consider Mr. Glover's options to improve the project.

Thomas Rubio stated that the applicant has invested significantly in this process, but the concerns seem not to be fully resolved. He noted that questions of compatibility amounting to a legitimate planning consideration persist. He encouraged the Commission to consider opportunities through project design and COAs to further a long-term co-existence between the project and the ENC.

Carleton Waters stated that the City should do a better traffic and access analysis due to the site's proximity to Newport Harbor High School. He added that traffic conditions at the intersection of 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Irvine Avenue should have been evaluated with heavy pedestrian volumes as a focus. He stated that the parking requirements should be higher for a development entirely comprised of three-bedroom units, adding that there is limited overflow parking in the area.

ENC Intern Annabelle Jin lauded all that she has learned from the ENC about the importance of environmental conservation and expressed hopes that any development for the site would be compatible with the ENC's mission.

Terry Koken lauded the ENC's beauty and encouraged the Commission not to eviscerate it.

Debby Koken commended the ENC and encouraged the Commission to make the project more compatible before moving it forward.

Max Levine stated that the project is in a highly developed area and sits on a former hospital site where there are likely to be contaminants. He requested a continuation of the item if potential contaminants have not yet been assessed. He added that there are potential issues to explore relative to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) due to certain species documented at the ENC.

Peggy Levine stated that a developer's best efforts cannot override municipal law, and this project fails the City's ODS while also relying on uncompleted studies for lighting and line-of-sight. She stated that the Commission has full discretionary authority to reject this non-compliant project and encouraged it to do so.

Ari Levine spoke about his great experiences at the ENC, expressed fears that it will be negatively impacted by the development, and requested the denial of the project.

Paul Waggoner, speaking on behalf of the Coastal Corridor Alliance, stated that the skyline impacts on the ENC are sufficient to determine incompatibility because the development will block needed early-morning sun from the ENC's plants. He expressed concerns that the developer's landscaping will include invasive non-native plants that will attract non-native pollinators and harm the ENC's native plant habitats. He expressed concerns about light pollution impacting nocturnal animals and pollinators at the ENC's habitats.

J.D. Vickers stated that developments like this one will help a young professional like himself looking to start a family in a community like Newport Beach. He encouraged approval of this development and others like it so people like himself are not priced out of Newport Beach.

An unidentified speaker stated that the proposed for-sale housing is a better use for the site than a dilapidated hospital.

Jim Jacobs stated that housing developments like this, following the State's housing regulations, will allow his NHHS graduate children an opportunity to live in Newport Beach.

Gary Meredith reported that the ENC houses endangered bird species. He encouraged the

commissioners to walk the property to assess the project's compatibility and listen to the children who spoke during the public hearing in support of the ENC. He stated that he is an environmental activist who will encourage The Nature Conservancy to buy the property.

Deb Iluvalier noted that, while the developer stated that the rooftop decks help fulfill the open space requirements, additional open space could be added at ground level by shrinking the buildings. She noted that her ENC-attending young family would not be able to afford to live at the proposed development. She stated that reducing the square footage and building height could both help make the units more affordable and more compatible with the ENC. She stated that it would be a travesty to have the project looming vertically over the ENC.

Lindsay Fox commended the ENC from the perspective of a neighborhood resident and stated that this is not the right project for the lot because it could be done in a far less intrusive manner.

Jim Mosher stated that this item seems like a failure of process because this hearing would not have happened had these public comments about how the site relates to the ENC been either sought out or heard when the City Council was discussing the lot as a Housing Opportunity site in 2022 and/or for its Housing Overlay zoning approval in 2024. He added that this minimum density development is likely going to yield pricier market-rate housing, and the project will not help the City meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) requirements.

Kayla Whistler agreed that housing is needed but noted that this discussion has yet to touch directly on the privacy of the children at the preschool. She expressed concerns about the potential for evil things stemming from future residents and requested that the Commission respect the children's right to privacy.

Brent Jacobsen stated that he used to run youth programs for the Newport Beach Fire Department before retiring. He lamented that the site is private property included in the Housing Element, so the City is limited in its options. He cautioned that residents could get a less desirable project if this one is not approved. He noted that there is ample vacant space in West Newport where projects like this should be built.

ENC attorney Doug Hedenkamp stated that this project does not meet the grounds for a categorical CEQA exemption under AB 130. He added that AB 130 requires a Phase 1 Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that is not mentioned in the COAs. He added that the required components of the tribal consultation process are also not included in the COAs.

Mr. Boyd stated that the applicant has made modifications to the landscape, site, and architecture plans, lamenting that public speakers feel that they are insufficient. He stated that City staff is responsible for determining if the project qualifies for a categorical CEQA exemption under AB 130, adding that the project qualifies. He added that the project is compatible with one of Newport Beach's most dense areas, with the site's varied surrounding uses making it ideal for new homes, noting that the existing property has been a community eyesore for decades. He added that traffic concerns have been addressed with the City Traffic Engineer stating that it will not create an impact to the extent that a formal Traffic Study is required.

Mr. Boyd noted that the point of this public hearing is to determine if the project is worthy of moving forward because it furthers the City's policies and objectives. He stated that this is an excellent project and any potential redesign must comply with the underlying rules and regulations.

Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland stated that the project is consistent with the General Plan for meeting the minimum density prescribed for the zoning. She agreed that the project does not comply with all ODS, adding that the Commission is able to suggest changes to the design to make it compliant. She cautioned that, should the changes make the project

infeasible or reduce units, that this action could constitute an unofficial denial. She stated that, other than the ODS, the project is consistent with all Objective Standards in the General Plan and HO-3 zoning. She noted that the project is protected by the State's Housing Accountability Act, so the City can only apply objective standards and not subjective standards.

Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland stated that the project would be required to comply with the City's Noise Ordinance. She reported that the Traffic Engineer and Public Works Department have reviewed the site plan for the driveway, including the line-of-sight, to ensure it complies with City standards. She stated that the parking requirements are based on bedroom count, leading to the requirement of a two-car garage for every unit, along with guest parking spaces. She noted that the Commission can suggest changes to the surrounding fences and walls, with any changes to materials of the block wall requiring an additional ODS waiver.

Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland clarified that a very specific CEQA exemption is involved with this project. She stated that California Government Code Section was amended last year by AB 130 to provide a very narrow pathway for projects like this one on relatively small sites with a very specific list of criteria pertaining to the site. She added that the City has documented its compliance with specific tribal consultation requirements related to this exemption, noting that the COAs include tribal monitoring provisions. She agreed that the MBTA is applicable, and the applicant is required to comply with it.

Chair Harris closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Gazzano stated that he supports the use of the site for housing, adding that the developer has a strong national reputation and the aesthetics fit in the community. He stated that he has issues with the findings after visiting the site because the presence of preschool children becomes a Code issue under its definition of being a sensitive use. He noted that, in addition to the height of the buildings, the preschool's playground is 10-15 feet below the grade of the proposed site and expressed concerns as a father of having preschool-aged children playing in the shadow of such elevated residences. He lamented that specific details were not given to every site within the broad housing overlay zones, which do not specifically address sensitive uses like this site possesses.

Commissioner Gazzano added that he is struggling with the ODS waiver request for Building 500 because the windows do not impact structural integrity. He stated that the ODS waiver request for horizontal modulation on Building 400 is also concerning when each unit can be reduced by just 10 inches to eliminate the issue. He added that the development should not need an ODS waiver for the open space requirement. He disagreed with the compatibility finding for the bulk and scale of the development. He disagreed with the findings about the project's lack of a specific and adverse impact on the safety of children at the preschool.

In response to Commissioner Reed's inquiries, Associate Planner Orozco reported that removing the rooftop decks would mean that the project would not meet the minimum requirement for private recreational space. He stated that a possible solution for this non-compliance could be for the applicant to increase the size of the balconies. Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland clarified that removing the "doghouses" would not impact the private open space requirement.

In response to Commissioner Reed's inquiries, Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland stated that there is no requirement to have the internal sidewalk and potentially removing it for more vegetation space would be a design consideration for the applicant. She confirmed that the sidewalk's removal would not create any new exceptions or variances but deferred to the applicant to ensure that there would be no accessibility concerns.

In response to Commissioner Reed's inquiry, Associate Planner Orozco clarified that the setback requirements on the rear of the property limit fencing and walls to 8 feet, so any additional height would require a variance.

Secretary Langford lamented that this public hearing is only happening because the State government decided to supersede local control over decisions like this one, stating that the commissioners and City Council did not support the legislation. He noted that it has already led to the City having to approve some projects that displeased residents. He expressed concerns about this project, citing as his biggest challenge the common open space's placement, which is forcing the structures to be closer to the ENC.

Commissioner Ellmore thanked the public for their overwhelming participation in the process. He agreed with Secretary Langford's critique of the State's housing mandates and their application of blanket codes that put cities around the State in a precarious situation, noting that municipalities like the City of Huntington Beach, which have pushed back against the mandates, have faced legal action by the State. He stated that the Commission is a technical body, adding that the property owner has rights and the application fits into the envelope of the code regardless of whether people like it. He noted that he has four children under the age of six, so he understands the sentiments of the public speakers, but he must agree with the project's findings when viewed in black-and-white. He noted that the applicant was not required to make the concessions made thus far. He stated that the "doghouses" are unattractive, the power pole should be removed, and alternative landscaping and fencing ideas are possible, but there are not enough findings to make him vote against the project based on the State mandates.

Vice Chair Salene agreed with his peers about the Commission's hands being tied by State laws. He agreed that the project will have a visual impact on the ENC but added that the ENC will survive. He cautioned that this project could have been designed in ways to have an even larger impact on the ENC, commending the applicant on their restraint. He agreed that the "doghouses" are undesirable. He noted that only three units are directly adjacent to the preschool and stated that he is unaware of a way to minimize the impact without relocating the entire development, acknowledging that there will inevitably be a residential development on the site impacting the preschool. He stated that none of the impacts warrant a dramatic modification or denial of the project.

Commissioner Reed thanked the public for its civic involvement and for providing the back-and-forth dialogue. He stated that he supports the project, but it needs a few modifications.

Chair Harris stated that he dreads this type of meeting because of the emotions. He agreed that the ramifications of non-compliance with the State's housing mandates are brutal and have led them to approve projects that they do not love. He stated that he does not hate this project and the applicant has done a reasonable job, considered many options, and tried hard.

Chair Harris stated that he would like to see the wall along the ENC's main campus align with the ENC's staggered pressure-treated wood wall adjacent to NHHS for forest-feeling continuity. He added that there should be a COA about removing the power pole if deemed possible. He noted that the use of 48-inch box trees for landscape shading is above the City's code and pondered whether there are ideas to make the landscaping sufficiently blend in under 10 years. He agreed with his peers in opposition to the unattractive "doghouses," particularly the obtrusive ones facing the ENC. He pondered whether the applicant would be open to enlarging other rooftop decks to compensate for creating smaller ones near the ENC while meeting open space requirements. He spoke to Commissioner Gazzano's concerns by noting that the windows facing the preschool are high and inaccessible. He added that he would not be opposed to raising the fence on the preschool side of the project. He stated that he would also support modifications to the roof deck facing the school so that it is not all glass sided.

Commissioner Ellmore stated that he is supportive of COAs based on Chair Harris' comments because they would reasonably accomplish as much as the Commission can in its power.

Commissioner Reed agreed that privacy is one of the biggest issues with this project. He stated that he would like to add a COA for the landscaping on the ENC side to start at 30 feet and 35 feet on the preschool side. He agreed with his peers' interest in removing the "doghouses."

Chair Harris noted that the applicant plans to install 20-foot trees that will grow to 30 feet over 10 years. He reported speaking to staff about limitations on what size tree is healthy to plant.

Commissioner Reed stated that the issue is on the side that only has 10 feet of setback, where they could find 30-foot hedging if the sidewalk is removed.

Chair Harris stated that the sidewalk is needed because the front doors of those units are on that side.

Chair Harris reopened the public hearing.

In response to Mr. Boyd's inquiry, Chair Harris agreed to recess the meeting so that the applicant's team has some time to discuss the Commission's comments.

Chair Harris recessed the meeting at 8:29 p.m. The meeting resumed at 8:40 p.m.

Chair Harris reported that he spoke with City staff during the recess, and they cannot insist on all that was discussed, but there are alternatives.

Mr. Boyd stated that the applicant would agree to increase the height of the wall facing the preschool to 10 feet.

In response to Chair Harris' inquiry, Mr. Boyd stated that the applicant will research a suitable product for the wall's material that resembles a wood grain, if not actual wood. He expressed his understanding of the ENC's call for a type of fence that blends in with its theme. He clarified that the applicant would be willing to submit to a COA that explores various alternatives that include the use of wood fences.

Chair Harris stated that the Commission would like to add phrasing related to the appearance of wood in shape and color.

Mr. Boyd stated that the applicant would agree to include "further evaluation" in this proposed COA if staff would authorize it.

In response to Chair Harris' inquiry, Mr. Boyd agreed to the phrasing "at the Director's discretion."

Mr. Boyd stated that the applicant can remove the request for the window glazing ODS waiver and will modify the design to meet the 20% minimum.

Mr. Boyd stated that the applicant will agree to a COA to reevaluate the "doghouse" design and return with a more compatible design at City staff's discretion, but that the applicant is reluctant to give up the "doghouse" design until they can determine an alternative that respects the square footage of the stairwells. He committed to working with staff to find an alternative to the "doghouses" that is more compatible with the Commission's concerns.

In response to Chair Harris' inquiry, Mr. Boyd stated that he heard concerns about the landscaping, adding that at staff's discretion, the applicant can agree to use 25-foot trees in 60-inch boxes in appropriate locations.

In response to Chair Harris' inquiry, Mr. Boyd stated that he would agree to a COA about removing the power pole if SCE finds that the line terminates there but would request a provision that the pole remains if SCE determines that the pole is supplying power to other properties. He added that protection and flexibility are necessary because SCE must verify if there are any other users from the pole. He proposed that the COA state that "the applicant shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of staff, per SCE, that the subject lines may be removed providing as determined that no additional services are being provided off that line."

Chair Harris recommended adding "at that point" to the end of the phrasing, to which Mr. Boyd agreed.

Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland clarified that the interior clear dimensions of the garages must be 17 feet, 6 inches wide, and this length does not include the exterior walls. She added that the garages also accommodate the trash, recycling, and organic materials bins, along with mechanical equipment, which require additional space.

Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland clarified that the side of the property facing the preschool has an 8-foot limit on the wall due to the setback. She stated that staff cannot incorporate this change today but could do so at a future public hearing because this meeting was not noticed with a variance request for the wall. She added that there could be other effective methods, such as landscaping. She reported that staff is prepared to make Draft COAs related to the wall's material and the pole.

Commissioner Gazzano commended the applicant's ability to work on the fly with the Commission and neighbors by making modifications during this meeting.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano's inquiry, Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland confirmed that the Commission must address all findings, as opposed to selected findings, if it wishes to approve the project. She clarified that the specific health and safety findings are only necessary should the Commission choose to deny the project or make it infeasible.

Chair Harris closed the public hearing.

Chair Harris stated that the applicant addressed some of the major concerns with the additional COAs, expressing appreciation for the collaboration. He moved to approve the project but requested confirmation on the additional COAs that have been discussed.

In response to numerous inquiries, Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland clarified that the additional COAs include; that the applicant will work with staff to determine an alternative to the "doghouse" design, including removal, that is more compatible to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director; that the materials of the wall should be either wood or a suitable material resembling a wood grain similar to other ENC fence lines, with review by the Community Development Director; that the wall should be 10 feet facing the ENC; that, prior to building permit issuance, the landscape plan for the area abutting the ENC should be revised to include plant materials that are sized and spaced to achieve immediate effect of adequate landscape buffering to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director, including 60-inch box trees where appropriate; that if the power pole located at the rear of the property is deemed to be unnecessary to serve other properties, the applicant shall remove the power pole or implement an equivalent measure unless the applicant provides documentation from Southern California Edison to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director demonstrating that removal or an equivalent measure is not feasible without construction on adjacent properties or would not be permitted by Southern California Edison; and that the applicant agrees to revise the current design to ensure compliance with the glazing requirements of the Objective Design Standards.

Chair Harris reopened the public hearing.

Mr. Boyd agreed to the Draft COA relative to the “doghouses,” including the possibility of removal. He agreed to the Draft COA about the wall materials with the ability to explore wood alternatives, adding that there is a goal to meet ENC’s request for a wood fence.

In response to Commissioner Ellmore’s inquiry, Mr. Boyd concisely confirmed that the applicant agrees to the revised COAs as read by Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland.

Chair Harris closed the public hearing.

**Motion** made by Chair Harris and seconded by Commissioner Ellmore to approve the project with revised Conditions of Approval stating that the applicant will work with staff to determine an alternative to the “doghouse” design, including removal, that is more compatible to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director; that the materials of the wall should be either wood or a suitable material resembling a wood grain similar to other ENC fence lines, with review by the Community Development Director; that the wall should be 10 feet facing the ENC; that, prior to building permit issuance, the landscape plan for the area abutting the ENC should be revised to include plant materials that are sized and spaced to achieve immediate effect of adequate landscape buffering to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director, including 60-inch box trees where appropriate; that if the power pole located at the rear of the property is deemed to be unnecessary to serve other properties, the applicant shall remove the power pole or implement an equivalent measure unless the applicant provides documentation from Southern California Edison to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director demonstrating that removal or an equivalent measure is not feasible without construction on adjacent properties or would not be permitted by Southern California Edison; that the applicant agrees to revise the current design to ensure compliance with the glazing requirements of the Objective Design Standards; that Condition of Approval No. 53 be modified to replace “cross lot draining shall not be permitted” with “private street improvements shall comply with Public Works Department Standards”; and the removal of Conditions of Approval Nos. 77-79.

AYES: Ellmore, Harris, Reed, and Salene  
 NOES: Langford and Gazzano  
 ABSTAIN: None  
 RECUSED: Rosene

**VIII. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER ITEMS**

**ITEM NO. 3 MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION - None**

**ITEM NO. 4 REPORT BY THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR OR REQUEST FOR MATTERS WHICH A PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER WOULD LIKE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA**

Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland reported that the July 9<sup>th</sup> meeting will include a housing project in the John Wayne Airport area and a request for a Variance in Corona del Mar. She added that the 2350 Bristol Street driveway access that was denied by the Commission will be heard on appeal by the City Council on July 14<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Mosher noted that the Housing Element Implementation Program Amendments are listed as pending before the California Coastal Commission (CCC) but that the Director’s Report at the last meeting stated that they were approved with modifications and the City Council has approved what was allowed by the CCC. He inquired whether the item listed on the Tentative Agenda Report involves other amendments or if it should be removed.

**ITEM NO. 5 REQUESTS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Commissioner Gazzano reported that he will not be able to attend the July 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano's inquiry, Deputy Community Development Director Westmoreland reported that staff is still awaiting confirmation of whether the July 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting will be cancelled.

Commissioner Reed stated that he would not be able to attend the July 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT** – With no further business, Chair Harris adjourned the meeting at 9:03 p.m.

**The agenda for the June 18, 2026, Planning Commission meeting was posted on Friday, June 12, 2026, at 5:15 p.m. in the Chambers binder, on the digital display board located inside the vestibule of the Council Chambers at 100 Civic Center Drive, and on the City's website on Friday, June 12, 2026, at 4:51 p.m.**

---

Tristan Harris, Chair

---

Jonathan Langford, Secretary

DRAFT