

**NEWPORT BEACH PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 100 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE
THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2026
REGULAR MEETING – 6:00 P.M.**

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

Due to Chair Harris' absence, Vice Chair Salene ran the meeting.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Commissioner Rosene

III. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Vice Chair David Salene, Secretary Jonathan Langford, Commissioner Michael Gazzano, Commissioner Greg Reed, Commissioner Mark Rosene

ABSENT: Chair Tristan Harris, Commissioner Curtis Ellmore

Staff Present: Deputy City Manager Ben Zdeba, City Traffic Engineer Kevin Riley, Assistant City Attorney Yolanda Summerhill, Administrative Assistant Clarivel Rodriguez, Department Assistant Beatriz Avila, Principal Planner Liz Westmoreland, Assistant Planner Jerry Arregui

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

V. REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCES

Deputy City Manager Ben Zdeba requested to continue Item No. 1 because there were not enough voting members who attended the April 23rd meeting present to approve the minutes. He recommended that the item be continued to the Commission's next meeting on June 4th.

VI. CONSENT ITEMS

ITEM NO. 1 MINUTES OF APRIL 23, 2026

Recommended Action: Approve and file

The item was continued to the June 4th meeting.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

ITEM NO. 2 SOL COCINA PATIO EXPANSION (PA2025-0199)

Site Location: 251 East Coast Highway (restaurant) and offsite parking at 151 and 201 East Coast Highway and APNs 050-451-03 and 050-451-57

Summary:

A request for a conditional use permit and coastal development permit to permanently retain a 641-square-foot outdoor dining patio (Detached Patio) at SOL Mexican Cocina (Restaurant), to expand the existing Type 47 (On-Sale General – Eating Place) Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) License to include the Detached Patio, and to reauthorize off-site parking on the waterfront of Balboa Marina, identified as 151 and 201 East Coast Highway and Assessor Parcel Numbers 050-451-03 and 050-451-57. As proposed, hours of operation for the Restaurant and existing attached patio will remain as currently operating, from 10 a.m. to 12 a.m., daily (i.e., late hours), with live entertainment authorized until 11 p.m. in the interior of the

Restaurant. The hours of operation for the proposed Detached Patio will be from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., daily. No dancing is proposed. If approved, the operator will be required to obtain an operator license from the Newport Beach Police Department as the project includes alcohol service with live entertainment and late hours. Approval of the project will supersede Use Permit Nos. UP621 and UP651 and Accessory Outdoor Dining Permit Nos. OD49 and OD49A.

Recommended Actions:

1. Conduct a public hearing;
2. Find this project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15301 under Class 1 (Existing Facilities) and 15303 under Class 3 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) of the CEQA Guidelines, because it has no potential to have a significant effect on the environment; and
3. Adopt Resolution No. PC2026-016 approving the Conditional Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit filed as PA2025-0199 (Attachment No. PC 1).

Principal Planner Liz Westmoreland reported that the item is for a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) and Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the existing SOL Mexican Cocina restaurant at 251 East Coast Highway, with offsite parking located at the Balboa Marina. She noted that private residences are in proximity to the project on Linda Isle. She added that a temporary detached patio was permitted on a temporary basis from 2020-2023 during the pandemic, with the Planning Commission approving a permanent detached patio on September 18, 2025, including Conditions of Approval relative to restricted operating hours and noise. She reported that the application was withdrawn by the property owner prior to the effective date over concerns about reducing historic entitlements.

Principal Planner Westmoreland reported that this application includes retaining all the existing rights and entitlements for the restaurant and adding the detached patio on a permanent basis. She clarified that the detached patio would operate until 10 p.m. and the restaurant's interior operating hours would retain a closing time of midnight, with live entertainment being permissible as currently allowed, but no dancing.

Principal Planner Westmoreland reported that offsite parking is requested to continue using the Balboa Marina's parking lot. She added that the only change to existing operations is the permanent retention of the detached patio, which has generated no complaints over the past couple of years to either the Newport Beach Police Department (NBPD) or Code Enforcement. She added that the NBPD has no concerns about the alcohol service or late hours, and Conditions of Approval are designed to reduce noise concerns for Linda Isle residents. She noted that additional enforcement tools for the City are provided through the requirement of an Operator License in Condition of Approval No. 14 and a one-year review by the Community Development Director in Condition of Approval No. 15.

Principal Planner Westmoreland reported that CDP findings include that the development is consistent with development standards, not visible from coastal viewpoints, will have a transparent guardrail, and there is adequate parking.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano's inquiries, Principal Planner Westmoreland clarified that the current hours for live entertainment are not explicitly stated in the Use Permit but should generally go until about 11 p.m. She confirmed that there is not presently a live entertainment limit.

In response to Vice Chair Salene's inquiry, all commissioners stated that they had no ex parte communications on this item.

Vice Chair Salene opened the public hearing.

Keisker & Wiggle Architects, Inc. owner Gary Wiggle confirmed that the applicant agrees with the staff report and, in response to Vice Chair Salene's inquiry, confirmed that the applicant agrees to all recommended Conditions of Approval.

In response to Secretary Langford's inquiries, Mr. Wiggle stated that the only change intended for the grass area is for the grass to be revived. He added that reviving the grass will likely be part of the scope of their work installing the transparent wall. He could not confirm which side of the property line the tree in the grassy area stands on.

Secretary Langford stated that he likes having the tree in the area of the patio, as it restricts ambient noise.

Mr. Wiggle stated that the applicant has no intention of removing the tree.

Leann Benvenuti of 106 Linda Isle expressed confusion surrounding the Planning Commission's action on September 18, 2025. She added that the hearing notice for this meeting came late, and noted that many neighbors are out of town ahead of the Memorial Day holiday weekend. She called for the item to be continued until more Linda Isle residents can attend in person.

Vice Chair Salene clarified that the application heard in 2025 was withdrawn, and this is a new application.

Ms. Benvenuti stated that the Linda Isle residents supported the restaurant during the pandemic, but the concept of a full-time patio does not work for residents. She stated that the noise levels get high, especially on "Taco Tuesday," and the restaurant does not close the cantilevers at 9 p.m. as required, allowing the music to cross the bay. She stated that the decibel restrictions on the neighboring Tavern House Kitchen + Bar are not being similarly applied to this application.

Jim Mosher stated that Condition of Approval No. 8 should be amended to make the closure of doors and windows at 10 p.m. instead of 11 p.m. to match the City's standard beginning of quiet time. He added that the second sentence of Condition of Approval No. 9 erroneously refers to the partition as a petition. He reported that in 2015, the Commission approved a much larger restaurant for the west end of the parking lot and expressed concerns about parking if the approval is still active.

Mr. Wiggle stated that the applicant agrees to amend Condition of Approval No. 8 so that the doors and windows must be closed at 10 p.m. He clarified that the parking allocation for the restaurant approved in 2015 included the parking allocation for this restaurant.

Pat Simonian, a Linda Isle resident, stated that she opposes the time modifications in the Condition of Approval and expressed concerns that the hearing was happening so close to a holiday weekend, preventing residents from attending. She requested a continuance.

Principal Planner Westmoreland clarified that the detached patio becoming permanent is the only thing changing through this application, with the existing live entertainment and operational hours being retained. She noted that the prior application was withdrawn, so it has no force or effect at this time. She added that the Operator License requirement would provide an additional enforcement tool for the NBPD and that the City's Noise Ordinance will also apply to the project.

Vice Chair Salene closed the public hearing.

In response to Commissioner Rosene's inquiry, Principal Planner Westmoreland confirmed that

the Commission can amend the Conditions of Approval relative to closing times.

Commissioner Gazzano thanked Mr. Mosher for his comments about Condition of Approval No. 8, adding that he would have said the same thing.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano’s inquiry, Principal Planner Westmoreland confirmed that the Condition of Approval prohibiting amplified sound on the patios after 8 p.m. was carried over from a suggestion made by the Commission at the September 18, 2025, public hearing. She added that the 9 p.m. time for the awning to be retracted carries over from the existing Use Permit. She noted that it can be modified.

Commissioner Gazzano, in deference to residential concerns, recommended syncing the awning retraction and end of amplified music at 8 p.m. He added that 10 p.m. should be the time for the windows and doors to be closed, along with the detached patio. He added that he is agreeable to capping live entertainment at 11 p.m. because that is the current time and because the windows and doors would be closed after 10 p.m.

Commissioner Reed agreed with Commissioner Gazzano.

In response to Commissioner Reed’s inquiry, Principal Planner Westmoreland clarified that amplified sound simplistically refers to music from a speaker, including background music.

Secretary Langford noted that the detached patio has been in use for almost six years with no recent problems and making it permanent would only create a better situation through the addition of a required sound wall. He stated that he will support the application. He added that the restaurant seems to have good operations.

Vice Chair Salene reopened the public hearing.

In response to Vice Chair Salene’s inquiry, Mr. Wiggins reported that the awning generally closes by 8:30 p.m. because the customers get cool at night. He agreed to amend the Conditions of Approval to have it closed by 8 p.m.

Vice Chair Salene closed the public hearing.

Motion made by Commissioner Rosene and seconded by Commissioner Gazzano to approve the item with modifications to the Conditions of Approval requiring the awning to be retracted by 8 p.m., the doors and windows to be closed by 10 p.m., and “petition” to be changed to “partition.”

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

ITEM NO. 3 NEWPORT BIRCH MEDICAL PLAZA (PA2025-0220)
Site Location: 20071 Birch Street

Summary:

A request to construct a new 19,156-square-foot medical building on a vacant lot. The building will feature a small lobby and parking on the ground level, with two levels of medical office space above. The interior of the building is proposed as a shell design to accommodate future medical office tenants. The project also includes uncovered surface parking spaces, circulation improvements, and landscaping along the street frontage and throughout the parking lot. The project will provide a total of 89 parking spaces. The following approvals are required to

implement the project as proposed:

- Minor Site Development Review: To allow the construction of a nonresidential building between 10,000 and 19,999 square feet of floor area, pursuant to Section 20.52.080 (Site Development Reviews) of the Newport Beach Municipal Code (NBMC).
- Minor Use Permit: To authorize the medical office use, pursuant to Section 20.90.120 (Business Park District: SP-7) [BP] of the NBMC;
- Staff Approval: To waive 7 of the 96 required parking spaces, or 7.3 % of the parking requirement, pursuant to Section 20.40.110(D) (Adjustments to Off-Street Parking Requirements – Reduction of Required Off-Street Parking by Director) of the NBMC; and
- Traffic Study: To consider the projected 643 net increase in average daily trips (ADTs), pursuant to Chapter 15.40 (Traffic Phasing Ordinance) of the NBMC.

If approved, this project will supersede the Use Permit Filed as PA2023-0172.

Recommended Actions:

1. Conduct a public hearing;
2. Find this project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15332 under Class 32 (In-Fill Development Projects) of the CEQA Guidelines, because it has no potential to have a significant effect on the environment; and
3. Adopt Resolution No. PC2026-017 the Site Development Review, Minor Use Permit, Staff Approval, and Traffic Study collectively filed as PA2025-0220 (Attachment No. PC 1).

Assistant Planner Jerry Arregui reported that the subject property is a vacant lot in the Santa Ana Heights area. He added that the Commission approved a Conditional Use Permit in 2024 to relocate a Fletcher Jones Airport shuttle service to the property, but the property has since been sold. He added that the area is developed with office and medical buildings and is within the Santa Ana Heights Specific Plan in the Business Park District.

Assistant Planner Arregui reported that the project would be a new 19,156-square-foot medical office building with a shell design, so future tenants would be required to apply for commercial tenant improvements. He stated that the building has a podium structure design with parking on the ground level and two stories of medical office space above. He added that 29 of the 89 parking spaces are beneath the podium, with 60 more surrounding the building.

Assistant Planner Arregui reported that project requires a Minor Site Development Review (MSDR), a Minor Use Permit, a staff approval seven-space parking waiver, and a Traffic Study as the project will exceed 300 Average Daily Trips (ADT).

Assistant Planner Arregui stated that the key findings of the MSDR are that it is consistent with the General Plan, Zoning Code, and Specific Plan, the structures are arranged efficiently, it is compatible with adjacent development, and it has adequate landscaping and open space. He added that the project by far exceeds setback requirements and conforms to height limits. He noted that the project also complies with the Specific Plan's design guidelines and is consistent with the scale of other medical and office buildings on Birch Street within the Santa Ana Heights.

Assistant Planner Arregui reported that the Minor Use Permit findings are that the project is compatible with adjacent development and the site is suitable for medical office use. He stated that Conditions of Approval include restrictions on the operating hours and prohibitions on patient discharges or occupancy outside of the hours of operation, along with use as a hospital or urgent care facility, which ensures the use is compatible within the business park

Assistant Planner Arregui reported that the site requires 96 parking spaces, but 89 parking spaces proposed, requiring a 7-space parking waiver. He added that the Newport Beach Municipal Code (NBMC) allows for administrative parking relief, and the project is proposing a dedicated pick-up/drop-off space and bicycle parking spaces, which is sufficient to waive seven parking spaces. He added that a Condition of Approval is included to allow staff the ability to require additional parking mitigation measures if parking spill over occurs.

Assistant Planner Arregui reported that the project is expected to generate a net increase of 643 ADTs, requiring a Traffic Study that analyzed 12 intersections in the area, finding that it will not cause or worsen unsatisfactory levels of service, so no improvements or mitigations are necessary. He added that the project is subject to Traffic Impact Fair Share Fees.

In response to Secretary Langford's inquiry, Assistant Planner Arregui clarified that staff could administratively approve the parking waiver if this was an existing building being converted to medical office use. He stated that staff believes the waiver is appropriate.

In response to Vice Chair Salene's inquiries, Assistant Planner Arregui clarified that the 643 ADT increase includes a very small credit for the since-demolished single-family residence that previously existing on the site. Deputy City Manager Zdeba clarified that this area was intended to be a business park corridor but was developed with a nonconforming single-unit residence. He stated that the area's infrastructure supports this type of development, even though it seems like a drastic ADT increase. City Traffic Engineer Kevin Riley agreed and added that the figure is based on the City's usual estimation standards.

In response to Vice Chair Salene's inquiry, all commissioners stated that they had no ex parte communications on this item.

Vice Chair Salene opened the public hearing.

ACS Development Group, Inc. owner Fred Alaghband stated that the applicant agrees with the staff report and Conditions of Approval.

Diane Hornby, neighboring property manager at 20101 Southwest Birch Street, stated that medical office use is required to have a 5-space per 1,000 square feet parking ratio and added that her property currently has overflow parking problems from the apartments across the street. She added that the medical facility next to the project has requested additional parking from her property's available space She expressed her opposition to the parking waiver out of concerns that the applicant will not have enough spaces, and it will become an issue. She requested a plan for overflow parking.

Mr. Alaghband reported that his company manages other medical office buildings in Orange County, and the ideal figure for parking is a 4.5-space per 1,000 square feet ratio based on their experience. He noted that this project would exceed that ratio. He agreed to cooperate with the City should any problems arise, adding that he does not foresee any parking issues.

Vice Chair Salene closed the public hearing.

Secretary Langford noted that there is no public parking near the project. He added that he would prefer not to start with a parking deficient. He stated that if the NBMC is unsatisfactory in the parking ratios, they could consider changing it and pondered if having a second drop-off/pick-up space could be an option.

Vice Chair Salene stated that the NBMC allows for administrative parking requirement reductions

and that the proposed drop-off/pick-up space and bicycle parking which could allow for a 15% reduction, and the applicant is only asking for a 7% reduction, and are providing more than is required by the NBMC for their request.

Deputy City Manager Ben Zdeba agreed with Vice Chair Salene. He added that the City recently performed a comprehensive review and update of its commercial parking standards, with a point of discussion being whether medical facility parking requirements could be lowered. He added that the City did not change its standards because medical offices are resilient and continue to have a demand for their services even with other businesses dipping during times like the pandemic. He noted that flexibility was provided to developers with more objective waivers and stated that there is also a Condition of Approval where the City can revisit the facility's parking situation if it becomes an issue.

Commissioner Reed stated that the project is consistent with the area.

Motion made by Commissioner Reed and seconded by Commissioner Rosene to approve the item as presented.

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

VIII. STUDY SESSION

ITEM NO. 4 RESULTS OF THE REAP 2.0 MIXED-USE STUDY (PA2025-0257)
Site Location: Citywide

Summary:

On January 13, 2026, the City Council authorized participation in the Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) 2.0 Program in partnership with the Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG). The REAP 2.0 Program provided the City with grant-funded consultant assistance to complete Housing Element Policy Action 4H (Review Mixed-Use Zones), primarily intended to identify and reduce regulatory barriers to housing development in the City's existing mixed-use zoning districts (Study). Staff has been working with OCCOG's selected consultant, Houseal Lavigne, to prepare the Study including recommendations for potential changes to the Newport Beach Municipal Code, Local Coastal Program, and General Plan that would reduce barriers and incentivize mixed-use development. The City is not obligated to make any amendments based on the findings of the Study. Staff will share a presentation on the findings of the Study for Planning Commission review and discussion.

Recommended Actions:

1. Receive the presentation and provide direction regarding the recommendations of the Study.

Secretary Langford recused himself from the item due to a property ownership interest by his employer and a personal income source.

Principal Planner Westmoreland reported that the Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) 2.0 Program is a State initiative designed to accelerate infill housing, Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (AFFH), and reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). She added that the Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG) received a grant to administer the program, opting to establish

a technical consulting bench to assist its member agencies with their Housing Element Implementation Programs. She stated that the City was selected for assistance with completing Housing Element Policy Action 4H, a review of mixed-use zones, with a goal of identifying regulatory constraints against mixed-use development and recommendations for subsequent policy and code changes to encourage infill housing.

Principal Planner Westmoreland reported that the City created the mixed-use zoning districts in 2010, but the City has not experienced the amount of mixed-use development that was expected. She added that the current zoning has led to a mixed-use project at 2510 West Coast Highway, along with some scattered mixed-use developments in Balboa Village, noting that Balboa Village is attractive due to its parking overlays. She added that five of the City's six mixed-use districts are in the Coastal Zone, with Dover Westcliff being the exception.

Principal Planner Westmoreland reported on the scope of the consultant's analysis and noted that, after tonight's Study Session on the results, the City Council is also scheduled to have a Study Session at its June 23rd meeting that would include the Commission's comments. She noted that the City is not obligated to move forward with the Study's recommendations.

Assistant Planner Arregui reported that any mixed-use development in the City requires the approval of a Site Development Review (SDR), with the Zoning Administrator able to approve projects with 1-4 dwelling units and less than 10,000 square feet of non-residential floor area, and anything larger having to be approved by the Commission. He added that, because most of the mixed-use developments are also within the Coastal Zone, there is an additional requirement for a Coastal Development Permit (CDP). He noted that from a developer's perspective, public hearing for these entitlements can increase a project's complexity, extend timelines, and reduce predictability.

Assistant Planner Arregui stated that the Study tested conceptual plans for projects at sites on Dover Drive, Cannery Village, and McFadden Square to determine if they could be built under the City's zoning standards and whether they would be financially viable given considerations like construction costs, soft costs, and entitlement risk.

Assistant Planner Arregui reported that two conceptual plans were analyzed for the Dover Drive site, with a determination that the first plan, while complying with City standards, is not financially viable, and the second plan, which includes an affordable housing component, would require obtaining a parking waiver in addition to not being financially viable. He added that increasing the height of a parking deck to solve the second conceptual project's issue would also require additional discretionary approvals.

Assistant Planner Arregui reported that two conceptual plans were analyzed for Cannery Village site, with a determination that neither the first plan (a two-story project) nor the second plan (a three-story project) would meet its commercial parking requirements due to the small lot sizes and requires a parking waiver. He added that because both concept plans include two lots, the concept plans would also require a Lot Merger, and neither plan was deemed to be financially viable due to constraint on qualifying rentable space.

Assistant Planner Arregui reported that the McFadden Square analysis was for a conceptual project on a consolidated lot at 2212 and 2214 West Ocean Front. He reported that, like the conceptual plans for the previously mentioned sites, only the residential parking can be accommodated. He added that, in addition to the need for both parking waiver and lot merger applications, the conceptual project was deemed to be not financially viable.

Assistant Planner Arregui reported that recommendations from the consultant that staff feel would

be appropriate for Newport Beach include allowing administrative approval for small mixed-use developments and allowing for a minimum of two residential units. He added that another recommendation was having mixed-use development residential parking requirements based on the number of bedrooms, which incentivizes smaller units. He added that there is a recommendation to waive non-residential parking requirements for certain uses to incentivize resident and visitor uses, noting that there is a similar and successful program in Balboa Village. He reported that a recommendation not supported by staff is to have an administrative waiver for all commercial and residential uses, adding that part of the concern is due to most of the mixed-use areas are located in the Coastal Zone, where these recommendations could create coastal access issues.

Assistant Planner Arregui reported that recommendations supported by staff also include allowing upper floors residential units to be allowed within the 100-foot setback from Coast Highway in the Mariner's Mile Mixed-Use Zone and only requiring common open space for projects with four or more units to make smaller projects more efficient on small lots. He noted that many mixed-use developments are in high-resource areas where outdoor activity space already exists. He added that staff does not agree with the recommendation to increase the residential Floor Area Ratio (FAR), as it is likely to lead to larger units, instead of additional units. He stated that a staff-supported recommendation is to increase the height limit in Dover Westcliff to 55 feet for flat roofs and 60 feet for sloped roofs because it is not in the Coastal Zone, but staff does not support the recommendation to remove discretionary review for increases in height limits in all mixed-use zones due to potential Coastal Zone issues.

Principal Planner Westmoreland reported that the final recommendation supported by staff is to redefine non-residential uses on the first floor for affordable housing projects to include resident-serving amenities such as a gym or community room. She stated that the Study has shown that the City does have zoning barriers to housing development, with changes that can be made to incentivize development. She added that affordable housing is challenging, if not infeasible, in smaller mixed-use developments because the economics are difficult enough even without the affordable housing component. She recommended community and industry outreach if the City wishes to enact the Study's recommendations and cautioned that factors exist beyond the City's control, including market conditions, funding sources, and the many small lots in Newport Beach's mixed-use areas.

In response to Commissioner Rosene's inquiry, Principal Planner Westmoreland clarified that the current Mixed-Use Zoning Code was implemented in 2010, but some areas had existing specific plans that allowed mixed-use development under old zoning regulations.

Commissioner Rosene stated that the concept here seems to be to incentivize residential development and pondered whether some areas could benefit from an Overlay Zone that would waive the mixed-use component and not require a commercial use. He added that this would allow developers to get creative on housing projects while adhering to appropriate densities.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano's inquiry, Principal Planner Westmoreland confirmed that the City's goal through this Study is to incentivize mixed-use developments viewed through the lens of creating more housing opportunities.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano's inquiry, Principal Planner Westmoreland stated that the land cost is likely lumped in with the economic analysis used to determine if the conceptual projects would be financially viable because the Return on investment calculation would include the cost of purchasing the property. Consultant Robert Kain, of Houseal Lavigne confirmed that the cost of the land is factored into the costs of the conceptual developments but does not have its own specific listing in the report.

Commissioner Gazzano requested a specific notation of the cost of the land for the conceptual plans because the costs can vary widely around the City. He added that potential purchasers have looked at 881 Dover Drive but could not offer the current landowner enough money to sell it.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano's inquiry, Principal Planner Westmoreland agreed that land costs would be included in the economic viability analysis prior to the City Council study session.

Commissioner Gazzano clarified that his request is to include the land costs as a separate item in the economic analysis.

Commissioner Gazzano recommended adding a requirement for the residential use to be over 50% of the floor area to ensure that the City is getting the benefit of the housing units. He also recommended consideration of expanding the City's mixed-use zones.

Commissioner Reed agreed with Commissioner Gazzano's call to separately list the hard costs, soft costs, and land costs of the conceptual projects.

Vice Chair Salene opened public comment.

Mr. Mosher stated that 881 Dover Dr. currently has a Housing Overlay, allowing the current property owner to develop 100% residential with a minimum density requirement. He expressed confusion over the goals of the study relative to residential use, commercial use, and mixed-use.

Principal Planner Westmoreland confirmed Mr. Mosher's notation of the existence of a Housing Overlay over several of the areas being discussed. She clarified that the Study is looking at mixed-use zoning districts Citywide, adding that the potential project sites in Dover Westcliff are by far the largest the City can offer for mixed-use. She noted that mixed-use zoning without a Housing Overlay does not allow for 100% residential development, and the Study is aimed at discovering barriers to development in these areas under the City's current codes.

Vice Chair Salene closed public comment.

Vice Chair Salene expressed concerns about the consistent discussion of parking waivers as developments come to the Commission, noting how hard it can be to find available parking in parts of Newport Beach. He expressed concerns about granting more parking waivers for the sole purpose of encouraging more residential development. He agreed with the Study's recommendation of removing common open space requirements from smaller projects as the mixed-use zones are located in areas with recreational amenities. He stated that waiving any required parking spaces in some areas of the City is difficult.

In response to Vice Chair Salene's inquiry, Assistant City Attorney Yolanda Summerhill stated that staff has received reasonable feedback from the Commission to bring to the City Council.

Vice Chair Salene closed the Study Session.

IX. DISCUSSION ITEM

ITEM NO. 5 CITY TRAFFIC ENGINEER UPDATES (PA2026-0085)

Site Location: Citywide

In response to previous Planning Commission inquiries, City Traffic Engineer Kevin Riley will present updates on the warrant study for a stop sign at Cliff Drive and Kings Place and

the potential for on-street parking on the south side of Ridge Park Road near the Ziani Community.

Secretary Langford returned to the meeting.

Assistant City Attorney Summerhill reported that Commissioner Reed's residence is near the first site the item will discuss, but he does not have a conflict regarding the second half of the forthcoming discussion. She recommended discussing the two sites separately, allowing Commissioner Reed to recuse himself from the first half but participate in the second half.

Commissioner Reed left the meeting.

Traffic Engineer Riley reported that at a previous Commission meeting, there were public comments about traffic safety at the intersection of Cliff Dr. and Kings Place with a request to consider an all-way stop sign. He added that the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CAMUTCD) lists causes that warrant the addition of an all-way stop, but the intersection does not meet the minimum traffic volume requirements, there have been no broadside collisions at the intersection correctable by an all-way stop over the past ten years according to the NBPD's database, and the visibility is not a concern. He stated that the only other option available is a finding of a lack of reasonable gaps in traffic.

Traffic Engineer Riley reported that 85% of the 5,408 daily vehicles use Cliff Dr., which is too disproportionate to constantly stop it. He stated that the only two collisions at the intersection over the past 10 years were single-car accidents in which the vehicles hit a tree and a curb. He added that there is a vertical curve on Cliff Dr. at an 8% grade to the east of the intersection and 2% to the west, allowing motorists on Kings Place to see 400 feet to the west and 300 feet to the east, which is more than satisfactory visibility. He stated that there are reasonable gaps in the Cliff Dr. traffic for vehicles to enter off Kings Place, even during peak school windows.

Traffic Engineer Riley did not recommend an all-way stop but added that, once the recently approved development at 601 Dover Dr. is fully occupied, the gaps in traffic can be reassessed.

Commissioner Rosene stated that speed has been the biggest issue when he has gone through this intersection. He questioned why the nearby intersection of Cliff Dr. and Signal Road qualified for an all-way stop when this intersection does not. He pondered if traffic-calming measures, including a crosswalk, would help slow traffic through the intersection. He noted that many residents said that an all-way stop was needed when the Commission held its public hearing for the development at 601 Dover Dr.

Traffic Engineer Riley stated that the intersection does not experience many pedestrians, and the corners lack Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant ramps that would lead to a crosswalk. He stated that he could not speak to the past determination that led to the all-way stop at Signal Road, as it has likely been in place for many years.

Commissioner Gazzano echoed Commissioner Rosene's thoughts about the intersection's speed and the discrepancy with the all-way stop at Signal Road.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano's inquiries, Traffic Engineer Riley reported that speeding is not a consideration to justify an all-way stop sign per the CAMUTCD. He theorized that an all-way stop sign would be ignored by the more voluminous Cliff Dr. drivers when seeing no awaiting vehicles on Kings Place. He stated that staff has considered installing a driver feedback speed radar sign on Cliff Dr. adjacent to Ensign Intermediate School. He stated that, in addition to the driver feedback signs, bicycle lanes can function as a soft mitigator for speed by narrowing the

vehicular lane. He added that stenciling the 30-mile-per-hour speed limit onto the roadway is another option. He stated that the traffic volume needed for an all-way stop is not even close to the CAMUTCD threshold, there are essentially no injury-based collisions reported to the NBPD, and the visibility level is acceptable because there is no street parking.

Commissioner Gazzano recommended revisiting the matter after the development at 601 Dover Dr. is built out.

Vice Chair Salene opened public comment, and there was none.

Commissioner Reed returned to the meeting.

Traffic Engineer Riley reported that Commissioner Rosene requested an evaluation of possible street parking on Ridge Park Road adjacent to the Ziani community. He stated that the stretch of Ridge Park Road has both horizontal and vertical curvature, which is likely why the no parking zone was instituted. He stated that he contemplated street parking to the east of the last no parking sign on the south side of the road and found that removing the last sign would create 130 feet of parking for a total of five spaces. He added that staff can assess the parking need over a weekend when there is more demand and determine if the five spaces are needed.

Commissioner Rosene clarified that he is not advocating for parking at the entrance to Pacific Ridge due to sightline obstruction but encouraged Traffic Engineer Riley to tour the area over the weekend when there is a significant number of hikers, mountain bikers, and people playing soccer at Coastal Peak Park. He noted that he is one of the people often challenged to find parking to access the parks, adding that people already park in the area they are discussing.

Traffic Engineer Riley reported that he did visit the area and observed vehicles parked in the area being discussed. He stated that he would take another look over the weekend and discuss the matter further with the Planning Department.

Commissioner Rosene stated that the community would benefit from formally opening the additional spaces.

Commissioner Gazzano reported that many people park in the area to go hiking while avoiding a parking fee closer to Pacific Coast Highway at the base of the trail. He agreed from past experiences that parking is tough to come by at the top of the trail in the area being discussed.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano's inquiry, Traffic Engineer Riley clarified that there is a descending vertical curve heading eastbound on Ridge Park Road impacting visibility for the remainder of the no parking zone on the south side of the road.

Vice Chair Salene opened public comment, and there was none.

Vice Chair Salene closed the discussion.

X. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER ITEMS

ITEM NO. 6 MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION - None

ITEM NO. 7 REPORT BY THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR OR REQUEST FOR MATTERS WHICH A PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER WOULD LIKE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA

Deputy City Manager Zdeba reported that the May 26th City Council Agenda includes an Ordinance with Housing Element Implementation Program amendments to make the Housing Opportunity Overlays effective in the Coastal Zone, adding that it has received approval from the California Coastal Commission with some requested modifications. He added that the NBMC amendments relative to tobacco retailers will also be before the City Council on May 26th, noting that they were reviewed by the Commission. He reported that the June 4th Commission meeting will feature the 1400 Dove townhome project, and the June 18th meeting will feature the Westcliff at Dover residential development.

In response to Commissioner Gazzano's inquiry, Deputy City Manager Zdeba confirmed that the Commission's decision about driveway access at 2350 Bristol St. was appealed and will be heard by the City Council on June 23rd.

ITEM NO. 8 REQUESTS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES - None

- XI. **ADJOURNMENT** – With no further business, Vice Chair Salene adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

The agenda for the May 21, 2026, Planning Commission meeting was posted on Friday, May 15, 2026, at 2:15 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, May 15, 2026, at 1:57 p.m.

David Salene, Vice Chair

Jonathan Langford, Secretary