

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**November 22, 2021  
6:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair de Arakal called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Commissioner Toler led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Chair Byron de Arakal, Vice Chair Jon Zich, Commissioner Adam Ereth (via Zoom), Commissioner Johnny Rojas, Commissioner Dianne Russell, Commissioner Russell Toler, Commissioner Jimmy Vivar

Officials Present: Director of Economic and Development Services Jennifer Le, Assistant Director of Development Services Scott Drapkin, Assistant City Attorney Tarquin Preziosi, City Engineer Seung Yang and Recording Secretary Julie Colgan

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:** None.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS – MATTERS NOT LISTED ON THE AGENDA:**

No public comments.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:**

Commissioner Toler encouraged the public to watch the recording of the Merrimac Way Ribbon Cutting on YouTube, specifically the Mayors speech. He also mentioned attending the Strong Town Event on Friday, November 19 and encouraged the public to view Strong Town's website at [strongtown.org](http://strongtown.org).

Vice Chair Zich inquired about the City's Sales Tax Quarterly Report and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Chair de Arakal wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

**CONSENT CALENDAR:** None.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

## 1. CITY OF COSTA MESA 2021-2029 (SIXTH CYCLE) HOUSING ELEMENT (GP-21-01)

**Project Description:** 2021-2029 Housing Element Sixth Cycle Update. The Planning Commission will be holding a public hearing regarding the 2021-2029 City of Costa Mesa Sixth Cycle Housing Element Update on November 22, 2021. A subsequent noticed public hearing will be held on December 13, 2021 for the Planning Commission to consider and make a recommendation to the City Council.

**Environmental Determination:** In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study has been prepared to evaluate the potential environmental effects associated with the City of Costa Mesa 2021-2029 Housing Element Update. Based on the conclusions of the environmental analysis, the City's Housing Element Update would have less than significant impact on the following environmental issue areas: Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Energy, Geology, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire. Additionally, the Housing Element Update would have less than significant impacts with the implementation of mitigation on: Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Noise, and Tribal Cultural Resources. The Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) was circulated for public comments on October 29, 2021. The public comment period ends on November 29, 2021. At a future public hearing, the Planning Commission will be requested to consider the Housing Element and IS/MND and make a recommendation to the City Council.

No written public comments were received.

Director Jennifer Le presented a slideshow on the item.

The Chair re-opened the public comments from the continued public hearing.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Tony Velazquez asked that local hire be implemented along with a skilled and trained work force.

Kathy Esfahani asked for analysis on SB82 for Fairview and its limitation of 20 acres for affordable housing. She also asked for a master planned housing village to be built at Fairview Developmental Center.

John Hanna asked the City to focus on having a Diversified Housing Policy. He also asked that the carbon footprint be reduced by ensuring that the City prioritize hiring those that live in Costa Mesa and adjacent cities.

Caller Four asked for additional analysis on the site inventory to address concerns regarding site development constraints. She also asked that the City strengthen Housing Element Program 3F to ensure that longtime residents are protected.

**Commission and staff discussion included:**

Commissioner Ereth inquired about the impacts from a local hire provision.

Commissioner Vivar asked about the potential displacement of small businesses and what help might be provided to those businesses. He asked for confirmation that the site where El Metate is located is not included as one of the housing opportunity sites.

Commissioner Toler spoke against onsite parking requirements and dwelling unit per acre (DUA) caps.

Commissioner Russell stated that her main focus will be on how the City will implement housing changes moving forward.

Commissioner Zich asked to focus Housing Element programs on increasing homeownership opportunities and incentivize production of for sale housing. He encouraged the public to speak up, show up and get involved in this process. He also acknowledged Ms. Esfahani's comments on Fairview Developmental Center and stated she highlighted a unique opportunity for the City.

Chair de Arakal spoke on the Housing Programs in Chapter 4, in favor of an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, and asked that the Community Profile Indicators in Chapter 4, Section 4-3 of the Housing Element include references to Housing Element Programs 2A, 2E and 2I to help bring in the outside market to the City. He commented on the local hire policy and Project HomeKey. He also asked if the Housing Element is subject to a Measure Y vote.

Commissioner Toler agreed with Commissioner Zich on increasing homeownership opportunities. He also asked staff what their strategy was for the next three years for amending zoning.

Commissioner Vivar stated he agreed with Vice Chair Zich on ownership opportunities. He also stated he likes the idea of mixed-use buildings.

**MOVED/SECOND:** de Arakal/Vivar

**MOTION:** Move staff's recommendation.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: de Arakal, Ereth, Russell, Toler, Rojas, Vivar, Zich

Nays: None

Absent: None

Recused: None

Motion carried: 7-0

**ACTION:** Chair de Arakal moved to continue the Housing Element Update to the regularly scheduled meeting on December 13, 2021.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. STAFF REPORT REGARDING SENATE BILL 9 RELATING TO TWO-UNIT DEVELOPMENTS AND URBAN LOT SPLITS IN SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL ZONES**

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommends that the Planning Commission receive and file this report.

No written public comments were received on this item.

Director Jennifer Le and Chris Yeager presented the staff report.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

No public comments.

Commissioner Toler asked about the High Quality Transit Corridor, parking requirements, whether there were repercussions for asking owners to live in the residence for three years and about public concern regarding properties that are torn down and rebuilt.

Commissioner Vivar asked staff about building footprints and height restrictions.

Commissioner Ereth asked staff whether there is an estimate of how many property owners will opt to subdivide their property.

Vice Chair Zich asked about building height restrictions. He also asked how staff would manage provisions of the SB9 Bill and the intent of this bill.

Chair de Arakal spoke on concerns he has with the bill.

**ACTION:** The Planning Commission received and filed the staff report.

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORT(S):**

1. Public Services Report – City Engineer Yang spoke on the Merrimac Way ribbon cutting and the Highway Safety Improvement Project.

2. Development Services Report – none.

**CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE REPORT(S)**

1. City Attorney – none.

**ADJOURNMENT AT 11:28 P.M.**

Submitted by:

  
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JENNIFER LE, SECRETARY  
COSTA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION