



City of Fontana

Planning Commission

Minutes

Idilio Sanchez, Chair
Ricardo Quintana, Vice Chair
Joe Armendarez, Secretary
Torrie Lozano, Commissioner
Dylan Keetle, Commissioner

Tuesday, July 1, 2025	6:00 P.M.	Grover W. Taylor Council Chambers
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CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:

A. Call to Order/Roll Call:

A regular meeting of the City of Fontana Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, July 1, 2025. Chair Sanchez called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Present: Chair Sanchez, Vice Chair Quintana, Secretary Armendarez, Commissioners Keetle and Lozano.

Absent: None

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

A. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance:

Following the Invocation by Chaplain Diane Fore, the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Keetle.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Public Communications:

None.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

A. Approval of Minutes:

Approve the Regular Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of June 24th, 2025.

ACTION: A Motion was made by Secretary Armendarez and seconded by Commissioner Keetle and passed by a vote of 5-0 to approve the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Chair Sanchez, Vice Chair Quintana, Secretary Armendarez, Commissioners Keetle and Lozano

Absent: None

Abstain: None

PH-A Master Case No. 24-0065: Specific Plan Amendment No. 24-0001, Tentative Tract Map No. 20729 (TTM No. 24-0010) and Design Review No. 24-0035 - A request to amend the Rancho Fontana Specific Plan and to subdivide approximately 3.3 acres for condominium purposes and for the site and architectural approval of a new residential development consisting of 54 attached condominium dwellings and associated improvements, pursuant to an Addendum to the Rancho Fontana Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report.

Chair Sanchez opened the public hearing.

The City Clerk's Department received one (1) written correspondences addressed to the City Council in opposition of this item and noted that the correspondence had been provided to the Planning Commission.

Associate Planner, Cecily Session-Goins, presented the staff report.

Vice Chair Quintana inquired about the results of the traffic study and potential concerns related to traffic flow and left turns into the development. Associate Planner Session-Goins provided detailed traffic study results and clarified that the project will not be gated, which will support smoother traffic movement. Associate Planner Session-Goins also noted that two driveways will provide ingress and egress and that the queuing analysis indicated that even during peak times, projected queues will remain well within the available spacing from the signalized intersection on Orlando Drive. Additionally, inbound peak hour traffic is expected to result in roughly one left turn every 12 minutes, leading staff to conclude that no significant traffic or queuing issues are anticipated.

Another discussion ensued between the commission and staff regarding the location and extent of anticipated queuing, specifically whether queues would form along Orlando Drive or within the site's internal drive aisles. Staff explained that the queuing analysis primarily focused on Orlando Drive and nearby intersections, and no significant backup is anticipated either from Baseline Road or Lime Street.

Additional questions were raised regarding the relatively low number of peak hour trips projected for a 54-home development. Staff noted that trip estimates reflect the assumption that not all residents travel during peak periods and that the projections align with standard modeling methods.

Commissioner Keetle inquired about the fencing along Baseline Road, and staff clarified that while the development is not gated, there is an existing concrete block wall on the southern property line. The applicant plans to install a tubular steel fence and small retaining wall approximately three feet from the block wall to create a drainage channel for managing runoff and that the existing wall will be cleaned and maintained as part of the project. Regarding park and barbecue facilities, commissioners raised concerns about their location near parking areas and the lack of monitoring, questioning whether these amenities would be open to the public and how access would be managed.

Vice Chair Sanchez questioned why the project was not designed as a gated community, noting the property's potential for controlled access and the possible benefits of reducing street traffic during peak hours. Staff deferred the question to the applicant.

The applicant, Bryan Avilla, on behalf of NewBridge Homes, stated that he read and agreed to the Conditions of Approval and clarified that the property will be a single-parcel condo project with an HOA (Homeowners Association) managing common areas, including the park and parking, with covenants, conditions and restrictions to prevent unauthorized public use.

Commissioner Keetle raised concerns about the accessibility and enforcement of private amenities within the proposed development, specifically the park and barbecue areas. The applicant confirmed that these areas are private and will be managed by the HOA. Enforcement would fall to the HOA and property management, with potential support from law enforcement if necessary. Commissioners expressed concerns about the practicality of keeping the public out given the proximity to surrounding single-family homes and the likelihood of non-residents accessing the space.

The conversation also revisited the idea of gating the community to address potential unauthorized use, though concerns were raised about the burden that might place on the Fontana Police Department and the risk of overly restricting residents. The applicant acknowledged these issues and emphasized that similar models exist elsewhere in the city.

Regarding parking, the applicant explained that it will not be assigned but will be regulated by time limits, with towing and property management oversight to ensure proper use. Assigned parking may be considered in the future.

Chair Sanchez asked whether the applicant was open to gating the community. The applicant responded that from a traffic standpoint, gating the entire community would introduce challenges, including the need for turnarounds and increased loading on nearby streets—issues the current project design does not accommodate. While the applicant expressed a preference not to gate the development, they acknowledged that gating the park area could be a reasonable compromise and is an option they are open to considering.

Chair Sanchez suggested key cards for park access and parking passes for residents to manage parking and prevent issues. The applicant was open to both ideas.

Vice Chair Quintana inquired about vehicle queuing locations. The applicant clarified queuing occurs on Orlando and Baseline streets, not inside the project. Vice Chair Quintana praised the modern Spanish design and landscaping, confirming the plants shown in the renderings will be used on-site.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Chair Sanchez made a motion to approve the project with a request for staff and the applicant to explore possible gated access or key cards for the park as a non-binding suggestion.

Attorney Stephen Deitsch explained that if a motion is made and not seconded, another commissioner can offer a substitute motion which takes precedence. The motion to have the applicant work with staff on park gating and key cards was clarified as a suggestion, not a condition of approval, ensuring it would not delay or scale the project if infeasible.

RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the information contained in this staff report and subject to the attached Findings and Conditions of Approval; staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. PC 2025-022; and recommend that the City;

- 1. Adopt the Addendum and Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program (MMRP) to the Rancho Fontana Specific Plan EIR (SCH No. 1981100211) and direct staff to file a Notice of Determination; and,**
- 2. Adopt an ordinance approving Specific Plan Amendment No. 24-0001; and,**
- 3. Adopt a resolution approving Tentative Tract Map No. 20729 (TTM No. 24-0010); and,**

4. Adopt a resolution approving Design Review No. 24-0035

ACTION: Motion was made by Chair Sanchez and seconded by Commissioner Keetle and passed by a vote of 5-0 to approve Public Hearing Item “A”; adopt Resolution No. PC 2025-022; approve Tentative Tract Map No. 20729 and approve Design Review No. 24-0035.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Chair Sanchez, Vice Chair Quintana, Secretary Armendarez, Commissioner s Keetle and Lozano **NOES:** None; **ABSTAIN:** None; **ABSENT:** None
Chair Sanchez returned to the dais.

PH-B Master Case No. 25-0019 and Municipal Code Amendment (MCA) No. 25-0007: Fontana Municipal Code amendments to Chapter 30 (Zoning and Development Code) for amendments to multiple sections of the Fontana Municipal Code, Chapter 30 - Zoning and Development Code, to revise signage regulations within the Downtown Core, streamline the approval process for various sign types, and to prohibit feather and yard signs pursuant to the certified General Plan Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse [SCH] No. 2016021099) and Public Resources Code Section 21083.3.

Chair Sanchez opened the Public Hearing.

No written correspondence was received.

Alejandro Rico, Associate Planner, presented the staff report.

The Commission and staff discussed signage regulations for downtown businesses, including whether secondary businesses (e.g., cigar vendors inside bars) can display their signage. Associate Planner Rico explained it must align with the primary use of the business.

The discussion shifted to changes in the sign approval process. Staff explained that signage review would be guided by a downtown core design guidebook, emphasizing attractive, high-quality, and cohesive signage. The process would be managed by a designated planner, with ultimate sign-off from the Planning Director. However, if applicants disagree with a staff decision, they would have the right to appeal to the Planning Commission.

Commissioners raised concerns about the subjectivity of what is considered “attractive” or “creative” signage. They asked for clarification on who makes final decisions and requested more transparency. Staff emphasized use of visuals in the guidebook to help applicants understand expectations.

There were also questions about restrictions on yard signs downtown, especially for political campaigns. Staff responded that political signs are generally exempt under a separate section of the code.

Commissioner Keetle asked who has the final authority on approving downtown signage—whether it's the Planning Director (Director Nevins) or an individual planner. Director Nevins responded that although final approval is hers, most of the review will be handled by staff, specifically Planner Rico, who is assigned as the downtown planner.

Chair Sanchez acknowledged the answer and emphasized the importance of commissioners being involved in the process. He appreciated that there's an appeal process available if applicants disagree with staff decisions and reiterated the need to maintain a consistent, attractive aesthetic in downtown—citing examples of well-designed signs in nearby cities like Rancho Cucamonga.

Commissioner Keetle initiated a discussion by proposing a motion to approve the item under consideration—related to signage approvals in the downtown area—with the condition that all creative sign designs and sign programs continue to be reviewed by the Planning Commission. He emphasized that since the Commission is a five-member voting body, it should retain decision-making authority to ensure public oversight and alignment with the community's vision for revitalizing downtown.

Secretary Armendarez offered a substitute motion supporting the staff-recommended approval process as outlined, with the added stipulation that all applicants be explicitly informed about their right to appeal staff decisions to the Planning Commission. Secretary Armendarez explained that his intent was to streamline the development process while maintaining transparency and accountability. He expressed concern that requiring Commission review for every sign could slow progress and clarified that his substitute motion was meant to ensure applicants were not left unaware of their options if dissatisfied with an outcome.

After a brief procedural clarification, Vice Chair Quintana seconded Secretary's Armendarez motion, leading to a broader discussion among the commissioners. Commissioner Keetle reiterated that signs are subjective and argued that Commission review allows for a more democratic and community-driven evaluation, especially given the infrequent nature of such applications. He stressed the importance of elected and appointed officials—not just staff—steering the visual identity of the downtown area.

Secretary Armendarez countered that maintaining a consistent design vision is difficult if the composition of the Commission changes over time. He commented that allowing a rotating body to interpret aesthetics could cause inconsistency in applying the city's long-term goals. Other commissioners voiced support for both sides, with some acknowledging that they had concerns about specific signs already installed downtown, which didn't reflect the level of creativity envisioned during the general planning process.

Secretary Armendarez's motion—to approve the process as proposed and ensure applicant notification of the appeal process—was the one actively under consideration, having received a second and moved into the discussion phase.

No individuals spoke in support or opposition of this item.

The Public Hearing was closed.

RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the information contained in this staff report staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. PC 2025-023; and forward the recommendation to the City Council to:

1. Determine that the proposed amendments are consistent with the Fontana General Plan and certified General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (State Clearinghouse No. 2016021099) and so qualifies for an exemption from CEQA, specifically Public Resources Code 21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 and Section 7 of the Local 2019 Guidelines for implementing CEQA, as the proposed amendments will have no new or more severe significant environmental effects “peculiar to” the Ordinance than discussed in the certified EIR and will have no significant off-site and cumulative impacts not discussed in that EIR as long as all applicable mitigation measures in the certified EIR will be undertaken; and,
2. Approve a Resolution recommending that the City Council adopt an Ordinance for Municipal Code Amendment (MCA) No. 25-0007 and amend Chapter 30 of the Municipal Code.

ACTION: Motion was made by Secretary Armendarez and seconded by Vice Chair Quintana and passed by a vote of 4-1 to approve Public Hearing Item “B” and adopt Resolution No. PC 2025-023.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Chair Sanchez, Vice Chair Quintana, Secretary Armendarez and Commissioner Lozano **NOES:** Commissioner Keetle; **ABSTAIN:** None; **ABSENT:** None

DIRECTOR COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Director Communications:

None.

COMMENTS:

A. Public Communication Commission Comments:

Commissioner Keetle closed his remarks by expressing gratitude to the planning staff and fellow commissioners, acknowledging the value of open discussion and differing perspectives. He emphasized that this kind of dialogue is exactly what the commission is meant for and reflected on the importance of living in a country that allows for such democratic processes. Tying his comments to the upcoming Fourth of July, he spoke with appreciation for the freedoms and system of government established by the nation's founders. He ended by wishing everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday, celebrating the values that make open governance possible.

Commissioner Lozano echoed Commissioner Kettle's remarks, extending thanks to the planning staff, council, and presenters. She shared that she genuinely enjoyed the meeting, describing it as interesting, fun, and at times even a little intense. Lozano appreciated the open, candid nature of the discussion and noted the value in not always agreeing, emphasizing the importance of honest dialogue. Commissioner Lozano closed by wishing everyone a safe and happy Fourth of July and reminded families to stay hydrated during the holiday.

Secretary Armendarez concluded by expressing sincere gratitude to city staff for their consistent dedication and the detailed information they provide, which he said helps the Commission make informed decisions. He voiced strong trust in the staff's judgment and the direction they've charted for the city's future. Secretary Armendarez encouraged those who are faith-based to pray for the country, especially during challenging times, urging unity over division. He ended with well wishes for a blessed and safe Fourth of July and looked forward to reconvening at the next meeting.

Vice Chair Quintana wrapped up the meeting by thanking staff for consistently providing thorough and reliable reports, acknowledging that while questions often arise, the foundation they offer is always solid. He praised the passion displayed by the commissioners during the meeting, saying it reaffirmed the City Council's strong choices in appointing each member. He appreciated the range of perspectives shared, emphasizing the strength of democratic debate and the importance of accepting the outcome of each vote.

He also reflected on the city's recent Fourth of July event, sharing his personal enjoyment of the festivities and the performance by the band Ozomatli. He recalled first seeing them open for Santana years ago and expressed excitement at seeing them again at the community celebration. He praised the City's fireworks show, calling it amazing and saying it never disappoints. Vice Chair Quintana closed by thanking everyone who attended and expressing his enthusiasm for making next year's event even better.

Chair Sanchez concluded the meeting by thanking staff for their continued support, noting that their work consistently makes the Commission's responsibilities more manageable. He also encouraged ongoing involvement from the Planning Commission, expressing appreciation for the thoughtful and passionate discussions that took place. He

emphasized the importance of mutual respect during conversations, ensuring that every voice is heard equally.

Chair Sanchez echoed praise for the city's Fourth of July fireworks show, mentioning that it was once again a standout event and giving a nod to Ozomatli's performance. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and expressed personal gratitude to God for the opportunity to serve the city. He closed by wishing everyone a safe and happy Fourth of July.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Sanchez adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m. to the next Regular Planning Commission Meeting on Tuesday, July 15th, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Grover W. Taylor Council Chambers located at 8353 Sierra Avenue, Fontana, California.

Susana Gallardo
Deputy City Clerk

**THE FOREGOING MINUTES WERE APPROVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION
ON THE 15th DAY OF JULY 2025.**

Idilio Sanchez
Chair