

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA HABRA
May 11, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Ramsland called the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of La Habra to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: LED BY COMMISSIONER MAHECHA

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: RAMSLAND
MANLEY
MAHECHA
LOGAN-CANNON

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: CARDENAS

OTHERS PRESENT: DIRECTOR: KIM
PLANNING MANAGER: LUI
CITY ATTORNEY: ROBERTO
SECRETARY: LOPEZ
ASSOCIATE PLANNER: WIELENGA

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Ramsland asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to address the Commission on the consent calendar or any item not listed on the agenda. There were none.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Secretary Lopez explained the Consent Calendar procedures. Chair Ramsland asked if any of the Commissioners or staff members wished to remove an item. There were none.

Motion made by Commissioner Manley and seconded by Commissioner Mahecha, to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion passed, unanimously.

1. Approval of the Planning Commission Minutes of April 13, 2026.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. A DULY NOTICED PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT (LARGE) (SEP2L26-0001) TO CONDUCT A LARGE SPECIAL EVENT THAT INCLUDES A CIRCUS (A.K.A. CIRCUS CABALLERO) AND

ANCILLARY ACTIVITIES AT 115 NORTH HARBOR BOULEVARD (ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER 303-114-23) AND 1002, 1010, AND 1026 STEARNS AVENUE (ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBERS 303-113-01, -02, -03)

Chair Ramsland asked if any correspondence had been received with regard to the item.

Secretary Lopez said no.

Associate Planner, Jacob Wielenga, presented the staff report.

Chair Ramsland asked if any of the Commissioners had questions for staff.

Commissioner Logan-Cannon asked what kind of security will be provided during the event. Associate Planner Wielenga said the circus has their own private security, which includes a total of six security guards.

Chair Ramsland asked if they would be temporarily striping the parking lot off of Stearns that they are using as the event parking lot since currently it is not striped. Associate Planner Wielenga responded in the affirmative. When the Chair asked about the location of the accessible parking spaces, Associate Planner Wielenga displayed the site plan to indicate that a row of accessible parking spaces would be provided along the south side of the big tent. Chair Ramsland asked if there would be signage over on Stearns indicating that the accessible parking is located off of La Habra Boulevard. Associate Planner Wielenga said that was not a written condition of approval.

Chair Ramsland opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to address the Commission followed by anyone else in the public wishing to speak in favor of the proposed project.

Mark Landon, representing the applicant (Circus Caballero), addressed the Commission. Mr. Landon said they have six security guards and they don't usually have any issues since the performers stay onsite and their performances mainly attract families. Mr. Landon said that he liked the idea of placing signage off of Stearns to inform patrons accessible parking spaces will be provided on-site along La Habra Boulevard and he said they will be implementing that suggestion. Mr. Landon said he was available to answer any other questions.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to the project, Chair Ramsland closed the public hearing and asked for a discussion or a motion.

Moved by Commissioner Mahecha and seconded by Commissioner Logan-Cannon, approving Resolution No. 26-07 Entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LA HABRA, CALIFORNIA, MAKING THE REQUIRED FINDINGS AND APPROVING SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT (LARGE) 26-0001 (SEP2L26-0001) TO CONDUCT A LARGE SPECIAL EVENT THAT INCLUDES A CIRCUS (A.K.A. CIRCUS CABALLERO) AND ANCILLARY ACTIVITIES AT 115 NORTH HARBOR

BOULEVARD (ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER 303-114-23) AND 1002, 1010, AND 1026 STEARNS AVENUE (ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBERS 303-113-01, -02, -03), AS PER THE APPROVED PLANS AND SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS, AND MAKING THE DETERMINATION THAT THE PROJECT IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 15304, CLASS 4 (MINOR ALTERATIONS TO LAND) AND 15061(b)(3)(COMMON SENSE EXEMPTION) OF THE CEQA GUIDELINES.

The roll call vote was as follows:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: MAHECHA, LOGAN-CANNON, RAMSLAND, MANLEY
NOES: COMMISSIONERS: NONE
ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS: NONE
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: CARDENAS

Secretary Lopez said the motion carried and this item will become final in 10 working days unless it's appealed to City Council.

2. CONSIDER AND PROVIDE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL REGARDING AN ORDINANCE APPROVING ZONE CHANGE 26-0002 TO AMEND VARIOUS SECTIONS OF TITLE 18 (ZONING) IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT MINOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REGULATIONS, IMPROVE INTERNAL CONSISTENCY WITHIN TITLE 18 (ZONING) AND CLARIFY AND CONSOLIDATE USE REQUIREMENTS THAT AIM TO FURTHER ACCOMMODATE NON-RESIDENTIAL USES IN THE CITY'S NON-RESIDENTIAL ZONES AND MIXED-USE OVERLAY ZONE.

Chair Ramsland asked if any correspondence had been received with regard to the item.

Secretary Lopez said no.

Planning Manager, Sonya Lui, presented the staff report.

Chair Ramsland asked if any of the Commissioners had questions for staff. He began by asking about what changes were being made to the requirements for remediation systems because neighbors next to proposed remediation systems complained about the noise impacts. Planning Manager Lui referred to Section 9 of the draft ordinance reading the proposed development and design standards that address things that they have seen while processing past Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) for remediation systems.

There was further discussion regarding remediation systems between staff and the Commission. Chair Ramsland was satisfied with the information provided by staff.

Chair Ramsland opened the public hearing and invited those who wanted to speak on the item. There being no one present, Chair Ramsland closed the public hearing and called for a discussion or a motion.

Chair Ramsland said that dance studios in the past have not been good neighbors because they tend to put on performances, which caused on-site circulation and parking issues that impact the surrounding neighborhood. He stated that both small and large dance studios should be subject to a discretionary approval so that the Commission can look at their operational characteristics and their parking. Director Kim said that if two or more Commissioners make that recommendation, staff can ask City Council to consider it. Commissioner Mahecha said she would be in favor of that recommendation. As a second option, Chair Ramsland suggested that the City continue to require all dance and fitness studios regardless of size to obtain a CUP. Commissioner Mahecha said she is in favor of keeping dance and fitness studios as permitted subject to a regular CUP. Commissioner Manley asked if a special event permit is required for extra events at places like dance studios. Director Kim responded that they would be required if the events are held outside the building.

Chair Ramsland said he understood that Council is trying to make it easier for restaurants to open in La Habra. He wondered though, why the City requires a CUP for restaurants with alcohol sales, if those are highly regulated by the Department of Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC). He recommended that they remove restaurants who sell alcohol from requiring a CUP. Commissioner Manley asked if the Chair meant permitting those type of restaurants outright. Chair Ramsland said yes. Commissioner Mahecha said that made sense to her too saying revenue lost from a CUP application would be captured by the alcohol sales tax. Chair Ramsland believes that other cities don't require a CUP for restaurants with alcohol sales and asked Director Kim if she was aware of which cities don't require CUPs for alcohol sales. Director Kim said she did not have that information, but if the Commission wanted to, they could make that recommendation. Chair Ramsland clarified for Commissioner Manley, that the new recommendation was to allow all restaurants outright, only requiring a CUP if they have a drive-through or if they sell alcohol.

Director Kim tried to summarize the Commission's concerns. The Commission generally agreed that all fitness studios and dance studios should continue requiring a CUP due to "secondary effects" they could have on a surrounding neighborhood. Commissioner Mahecha stated that there have been small fitness center operations in the past that became troublesome because their operations lacked sufficient parking. Regarding restaurants, Director Kim asked if the Commission supports that all restaurants, with the exception of drive-through restaurants and restaurants with outdoor entertainment, to be permitted by right. Chair Ramsland said yes; Commissioner Manley questioned if the ABC regulations were sufficient. Commissioner Manley said he was uncomfortable with singling out fitness centers, gyms and dance studios as being noisy but not restaurants with alcohol sales who stay open to one or two o'clock in the morning. The Commission and staff discussed parking requirements for restaurants under the proposed zone changes and if all restaurants who sell alcohol should require a CUP or an MCUP.

Commissioner Manley raised concerns regarding the proliferation of massage establishments and discount stores and asked whether the City Council could look into limiting these types of businesses. Director Kim reminded the Commission that City Council had directed staff to consider an ordinance that aims to streamline regulations for businesses. She explained that limiting types of businesses do not follow Council's directive and that it would be up to the City Council on whether they would like to direct staff to initiate a separate amendment.

Commissioner Manley said he appreciates the intent that Council has to help businesses, but he believes that the Commission continues to hear from the public when certain business are coming to La Habra and therefore, he believes that the Commission needs to be cautious about reducing restrictions. Commissioner Manley, Commissioner Mahecha and Chair Ramsland agreed that all commercial recreation uses including dance studios and gyms should be grouped together and that all such commercial recreation uses should require a regular CUP.

Staff and the Commission discussed how to convey their recommendation into their motion regarding the commercial recreation fitness and instruction uses.

Staff and the Commission also discussed how the Land Use Matrix in the code would identify restaurant types including restaurants and the differences between CUPs and MCUPs and what recommendation they wanted to make to Council.

Commissioner Manley said he would like the City Council to have a more detailed discussion and reconsider applying fewer restrictions on restaurants. Commissioner Manley explained that he believes the community should be able to cite their concerns about both restaurant operations and alcohol requirements. Commissioner Manley further stated that he prefers CUPs be required for all restaurants or at a minimum, restaurants with alcohol sales. Therefore, he is voting no if the motion includes staff's recommendation to permit restaurants by right and subject certain restaurant types to a MCUP.

Moved by Commissioner Mahecha and seconded by Commissioner Logan-Cannon, approving Resolution No. NO. 26-08 Entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LA HABRA, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT AN ORDINANCE APPROVING ZONE CHANGE 26-0002 (ZC26-0002) TO AMEND SECTIONS 18.04.030 (TERMS DEFINED), 18.06.040 (LAND USES), 18.12.140 (OUTDOOR SEATING AREA), 18.12.170 (SMOKING LOUNGES), 18.14.060 (NUMBER OF SPACES REQUIRED), 18.23.030 (SIGN MATRIX), 18.44.020 (USES), AND 18.62.020 (DEFINITIONS), AND ADD SECTION 18.12.190 (REMEDICATION SYSTEMS) TO TITLE 18 (ZONING) OF THE LA HABRA MUNICIPAL CODE IN ORDER TO ENABLE THE CITY TO IMPLEMENT MINOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REGULATIONS, IMPROVE INTERNAL CONSISTENCY WITHIN TITLE 18, AND MODIFY VARIOUS REGULATIONS BY CLARIFYING AND CONSOLIDATING USE REQUIREMENTS AND MAKE A DETERMINATION THAT THE ORDINANCE IS

EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 15378(b)(5) AND 15061(b)(3) OF THE CEQA GUIDELINES with the exception that all commercial recreation, fitness, and instruction uses shall continue to require a CUP.

The roll call vote was as follows:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: MAHECHA, LOGAN-CANNON, RAMSLAND
NOES: COMMISSIONERS: MANLEY
ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS: NONE
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: CARDENAS

Secretary Lopez said the motion passed 3-1 and this item will be forwarded to City Council for their consideration.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF

Planning Manager Sonya Lui said that there are no items ready for the second meeting in May and said the next meeting is expected to be on June 8, 2026.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

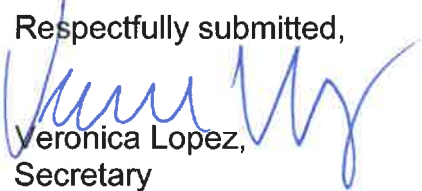
Commissioner Manley asked staff and City Council to see what can be done to limit the number of discount stores and massage businesses coming to La Habra.

Commissioner Mahecha said a big underdeveloped and dilapidated, problem area in our City is the former Burch Ford location and she was surprised that the applicant for the special event was able to get two different property owners to agree to hold the circus event at those locations. Commissioner Mahecha said there has to be a way for the City to get those owners to develop their properties.

Commissioner Logan-Cannon commented that she had concerns with the security for families walking to the circus event as they walk through the neighborhood and not necessarily with the security at the event itself.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:07 p.m. to the Planning Commission meeting on June 8, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,


Veronica Lopez,
Secretary