

**PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, December 16, 2025 – 7:00 PM

Video Recording is Archived on the City Website

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CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rahmim called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

COMMISSIONER: CALLAWAY, DAVIS, EMMERT, RAHMIM,
ROSENBLUTH, WONG (arrived at 7:01 PM)

ABSENT

COMMISSIONER: WILLIAMSON

ALSO PRESENT

Brad Johnson, Community Development Director; Daniel Kim,
Assistant Planner; Nhi Atienza, Senior Administrative Assistant

CEREMONIAL MATTERS, PRESENTATIONS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no ceremonial matters, presentations, or announcements.

PUBLIC COMMENT

This item starts at 0:01:10 in the archived video.

Chair Rahmim invited public comment.

There were no requests to speak.

Chair Rahmim closed public comment.

CONSENT CALENDAR

This item starts at 0:03:26 in the archived video.

Chair Rahmim invited public comment.

There were no requests to speak.

Chair Rahmim closed public comment.

Commissioner Callaway moved to approve the Consent Calendar, seconded by Commissioner Rosenbluth; and carried on by roll call vote as follows:

AYES: *Commissioner - Callaway, Davis, Emmert, Rahmim, Rosenbluth*
NOES: *Commissioner - None*
ABSENT: *Commissioner - Williamson*
ABSTENTION: *Commissioner - Wong*

1. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of December 2, 2025
Approved and filed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

This item starts at 0:05:21 in the archived video.

2. Request for a Conditional Use Permit (File #07-C09AMD) for Music Entertainment in Conjunction with an Existing Bona-Fide Eating Establishment, Located in the Village Expansion at 101 North Indian Hill Boulevard, Unit C-2 103. Applicant – Casa Maguey Restaurant.

Assistant Planner Kim presented a PowerPoint presentation and addressed Commissioners' inquiries regarding conditions of the original CUP, where and how decibel levels are read, 9:30 PM as the end time for entertainment, Casa 425's lounge hours, applicant's request, noise complaints, violation enforcement process, and the reasoning for prohibiting DJs and requiring closed doors with the decibel reading.

Antonio Santana, Owner of Casa Maguey, stated that usually only one person is playing the guitar and one speaker. He does not recall any complaints. As requested, he cancelled the DJ event for Cinco De Mayo and submitted for the CUP. He is asking for two to three DJ events per year and would respect the time and neighbors. He would like to do the right thing. In response to the Commissioners' inquiries, he confirmed that there would be two to three DJ events per year, events would start early evenings and would end at the latest 9:30 PM, he does not recall any complaints, and the restaurant would not play loud, inappropriate music that would affect the neighbors.

Chair Rahmim invited public comment.

Commission Secretary Atienza announced that one written public comment was received.

There were no additional requests to speak.

Public comment was closed.

Director Johnson clarified that there have not been many complaints, except for a few calls from annoyed residents. DJs do add a level of louder noise, and this is to curtail potential issues.

Commissioner Emmert stated that the conditions of the CUP need to be better defined, but he is unsure what that entails and would like to gain a better understanding of how to proceed.

Commissioner Callaway, in reading Casa 425's letter, stated that it's important to make these determinations clearer, more concrete. This is a good process to get everyone in agreement with the specifics of the code.

Commissioner Rosenbluth stated that all the findings can be made. By changing the time to 11:00 PM to match Casa 425 and providing a more specific description of decibel measurement, he would support the request.

Commissioner Davis agreed with Commissioner Rosenbluth that the time should be changed to 11:00 PM. He does not understand the prohibition on DJs, especially when noise levels will be determined by decibel readings.

Vice Chair Wong agreed that prohibition is not necessary if we are using decibel readings as a tool, the need for a more specific description of decibel measurement, as well as changing the time to 11:00 PM.

Chair Rahmim suggested the prohibition on DJs, changing the entertainment time from 9:30 PM to 10:00 PM, and determining the decibel reading at the property boundary.

Commissioner Callaway agreed with the 10:00 PM time change.

Commissioner Emmert requested for DJs to be permitted two times a year, with notice.

Commissioners Callaway and Davis agreed with the suggestions.

Commissioner Wong stated that the decibel readings should be the deciding factor. He also suggested increasing the DJ events to four times per year.

Commissioner Rosenbluth suggested that the decibel readings should be taken at 10 feet from the exterior of the restaurant/patio.

Commissioner Davis moved to adopt Resolution No. 2025-14, A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AMENDMENT #07-C09AMD, A REQUEST FOR MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT IN CONJUNCTION WITH AN EXISTING BONA-FIDE EATING ESTABLISHMENT, LOCATED IN THE VILLAGE EXPANSION AT 101 NORTH INDIAN HILL BOULEVARD, UNIT C-2 103. APPLICANT – CASA MAGUEY RESTAURANT as amended to limit the use of disc jockeys/special events to four events per calendar year, live entertainment will be limited to 10:00 PM, and the sound decibel reading will be read at a distance of ten feet from the exterior restaurant/patio; and find this item is exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Seconded by Commissioner Wong; and carried on a roll call vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioner - Callaway, Davis, Emmert, Rahmim, Rosenbluth, Wong

NOES: Commissioner - None

ABSENT: Commissioner - Williamson

Chair Rahmim announced this decision can be appealed within ten calendar days.

This item starts at 1:06:32 in the archived video.

3. Request For A Conditional Use Permit (File #22-C04amd) For Music Entertainment In Conjunction With An Existing Bona-Fide Eating Establishment, Located In The Claremont Village At 235 North Yale Avenue. Applicant – La Popular Restaurant.

Assistant Planner Kim presented a PowerPoint presentation and addressed Commissioners' inquiries regarding noise complaints, preferential treatment, applicant's DJ and time requests, and indoor/outdoor amplified music.

Daniel Sandoval, Regional Director of La Popular, requested flexibility with the number of DJ events (the restaurant currently holds four to five events per year), leeway regarding the decibel reading level, the ability to shift the times/days for live entertainment, and flexibility with signage.

Mr. Sandoval clarified that the entertainment days will remain at two and is requesting for flexibility to shift times/days, DJ events are about four times a year, there are two special events, and the decibel level suggested is low. He understands that the City is starting the compliance process, and he is working to ensure compliance. There have not been any police department complaints or fines.

Chair Rahmim invited public comment.

Commission Secretary Atienza announced that one written public comment was received.

Luara Cayley, owner of 225 Yale Avenue and multiple businesses in Claremont, stated that La Popular is a troublesome establishment. They do not currently have a CUP and are hosting live music and DJ events and do not comply with the rules. She is not able to play her music without being overwhelmed by La Popular's music. She suggested the City investigate further before granting any more privileges.

Whitney lives locally and is a patron of the village. She complains about the loud music from La Popular.

Union on Yale Manager stated that it is very difficult to communicate with their patrons on the patio or indoors due to La Popular's loud music. The music is loud enough that staff can understand the lyrics from the back of Union on Yale. It is very loud. She suggested that La Popular close its doors and lower its music so that it's not so loud.

There were no additional requests to speak.

Public comment was closed.

Assistant Planner Kim clarified that La Popular has been operating outside of the code.

Mr. Sandoval apologized for the disruption and stated that once he is notified of complaints, he immediately remedies the situation. He clarified that there have been five to six DJ events, and the rest consist of a guitarist and a singer. Last Friday was the first time that a complaint was made to the restaurant. He agreed that it is best to close the doors during DJ events, but there is an audio factor that draws customers in.

Commissioner Davis stated that closing the doors would resolve a lot of the issues. La Popular should also be granted the same changes as granted to Casa Maguey.

Commissioner Rosenbluth stated that all the findings can be made. He would support the CUP with the following changes: allowing four special events per year and the decibel reading is limited to 65 and should be taken at 10 feet from the exterior of the restaurant/patio and zero feet at the south wall.

Commissioner Callaway stated that it's difficult to maintain a decibel level. Keeping the doors closed will be more effective.

Commissioner Emmert stated that the music is affecting the surrounding businesses and agreed that closing the doors to meet the decibel level would suffice.

Commissioner Wong stated that it would be difficult to enforce decibel levels since the buildings are wall-to-wall.

Commissioner Rahmim stated that closing the doors and abiding by the decibel readings will alleviate the issue. He reviewed the suggested changes.

Commissioner Callway moved to adopt Resolution No. 2025-15, A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AMENDMENT #22-C04AMD, A REQUEST FOR MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT IN CONJUNCTION WITH AN EXISTING BONA-FIDE EATING ESTABLISHMENT, LOCATED IN THE CLAREMONT VILLAGE AT 235 NORTH YALE AVENUE. APPLICANT – LA POPULAR RESTAURANT as amended to limit the use of disc jockeys/special events to four events per calendar year, live entertainment days may be modified upon City staff approval, the sound decibel reading will be read at a distance of ten feet from the exterior restaurant/patio or zero feet at the common wall, and “associated with entertainment use” shall be deleted from Section 3F; and find this item is exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Seconded by Commissioner Wong; and carried on a roll call vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioner - Callaway, Davis, Emmert, Rahmim, Rosenbluth, Wong

NOES: Commissioner - None

ABSENT: Commissioner - Williamson

Chair Rahmim announced this decision can be appealed within ten calendar days.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEM – None

REPORTS

This item starts at 1:55:20 in the archived video.

Staff

Director Johnson reported on items of interest from the previous City Council meeting, announced that cancellation of the January 6, 2025 meeting due to the holiday break, and described future items coming before the Commission.

Commission/Committee

None

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Rahmim adjourned the meeting at 8:58 PM.

Chair

ATTEST:

Administrative Assistant