



MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS REPORT

MAY 27, 2025

1.0 MINUTES

--Planning Commission
April 1, 2025

2.0 PROCLAMATIONS

--Castillo's Shotokan Karate-Do
May 17, 2025

--Older Americans Month
May 15, 2025

--Ken Morena
May 24, 2025

--Tom House
May 24, 2025



MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE

April 1, 2025

6:07 PM

In accordance with City policy, all Planning Commission meetings are recorded on audio and video in their entirety and are available for review in the Community Development Department (CDD). These minutes are a summary of the action taken.

1. ROLL CALL

Chair Peter Radin, Vice-Chair Brando Sencion, Commissioners Daniel Dodge, and Lowell Hurst were present. Commissioners Ed Acosta, Lucy Rojas, and Jenni Veitch-Olson were absent.

A. MOTION TO EXCUSE ABSENT PLANNING COMMISSIONERS (IF ANY)

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Dodge, seconded by Vice Chair Sencion, and carried by the following vote to excuse absent Commissioners Ed Acosta, Lucy Rojas, and Jenni Veitch-Olson:

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS: Dodge, Hurst, Radin, Sencion
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS: None
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Rojas, Veitch-Olson

Staff members present were Interim Community Development Director Justin Meek, Interim Assistant Community Development Director Matt Orbach, Assistant City Attorney Denise Bazzano, Associate Planner Ivan Carmona, Executive Assistant Celia Castro, Permit Technician Rob Manansala, and City Interpreter Carlos Landaverry.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair Sencion led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PRESENTATIONS & ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

A. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

B. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COMMISSION

None

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. MOTION APPROVING MINUTES OF JANUARY 7, 2025, FEBRUARY 10, 2025 AND MARCH 4, 2025

PUBLIC INPUT

None

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Dodge, seconded by Vice-Chair Sencion, and carried by the following vote to approve the Consent Agenda:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Dodge, Hurst, Radin, Sencion

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Rojas, Veitch-Olson

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. APPROVAL OF A SPECIAL USE PERMIT AND DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (PP2023-6377) FOR A NEW 7,670-SQUARE-FOOT DRIVE-THROUGH CAR WASH FACILITY ON A 1.18-ACRE SITE LOCATED AT 632 EAST LAKE AVENUE (APN: 017-321-02), FILED BY VANCE SHANNON, APPLICANT, ON BEHALF OF BILL HANSEN, PROPERTY OWNER

1) Staff Report

Interim Assistant Community Development Director Orbach requested a continuance of this item to a date certain of May 6, 2025.

2) Appropriate Motion(s)

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Dodge, seconded by Commissioner Hurst, to move the item to the Planning Commission meeting on May 6, 2025:

3) Public Hearing

Chair Radin opened the public hearing.

Hearing no comments, Chair Radin closed the public hearing.

4) Chair Calls for a Vote on Motion(s)

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: Dodge, Hurst, Radin, Sencion

NOES: COMMISSIONERS: None

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Acosta, Rojas, Veitch-Olson

B. APPROVAL OF A SPECIAL USE PERMIT, DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT, AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (#PP2025-8417) TO ALLOW CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW 9,884± SQUARE-FOOT AUTOMOTIVE RESTORATION SHOP ON A

0.29± ACRE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 140 GROVE STREET (APNs 017-252-25 & -26)

1) Staff Report

Associate Planner Ivan Carmona gave the presentation.

2) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

Commissioner Dodge asked about the need for a lot consolidation. In answering, Associate Planner Carmona explained that since there is an existing building over the property line, the two parcels will be combined as one to allow the project to move forward.

Commissioner Hurst inquired about whether the project includes weekend work hours. In answering, Associate Planner Carmona confirmed the applicant proposed weekend hours for Saturday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Commissioner Hurst further asked about the parking arrangements for auto-related services. In answering, Associate Planner Carmona explained the Watsonville Municipal Code parking requirements for the proposed project and commented on the type of specialized automotive repair services provided by the applicant.

Commissioner Hurst inquired about the flood zone designation of the property. In answering, Associate Planner Carmona explained that the property is located in Flood Zone AH and described the floodplain elevation requirements included in the conditions of approval.

Commissioner Hurst asked whether a permit from the air board is required for the project. In answering, Associate Planner Carmona explained the conditions of approval concerning a spill prevention control plan and air pollution control permit for the proposed paint booth.

Vice Chair Sencion asked for a clarification concerning zoning. In response, Associate Planner Carmona explained the difference between general plan land use designations and zoning district designations.

Commissioner Dodge inquired whether the alley at the rear of the property will be utilized to allow traffic to access the property. In answering, Associate Planner Carmona confirmed that the alley provides access to the property. In response to follow-up question, he confirmed the width of the alley is 20 feet.

Chair Radin inquired about the current use of the building on site. In answering, Associate Planner Carmona noted that project involves improving the site by removing the dilapidated building and abandoned vehicles.

3) Applicant Presentation

Applicant Hank Wempe gave the presentation.

4) Planning Commission Clarifying & Technical Questions

Commissioner Hurst asked how many employment opportunities this project will help generate. In answering, applicant Hank Wempe stated this project will generate approximately five additional jobs.

Commissioner Dodge inquired about the vision for the property. In answering, applicant Hank Wempe shared the project would expand his existing specialized auto shop and allow the business to be more efficient, enabling service of up to 8 vehicles at a time.

Vice Chair Sencion asked whether the existing building will be demolished. In answering, applicant Hank Wempe clarified that the existing building will not be demolished and explained that an additional building will be constructed on the consolidated lot.

Chair Radin shared a supporting comment regarding the low volume of vehicles onsite and the low impact on the neighborhood.

5) Public Hearing

Chair Radin opened the public hearing.

Resident Remy Ducay shared a comment in support of the project.

Hearing no further comments, Chair Radin closed the public hearing.

6) Appropriate Motion(s)

MAIN MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Dodge, seconded by Commissioner Hurst, to approve the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 04-25 (PC)

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT, DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT, AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (PP2025-8417) AND FINDING THE PROJECT CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES §§ 15303 and 15332, TO ALLOW CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW 9,884± SQUARE-FOOT AUTOMOTIVE RESTORATION SHOP ON A 0.29± ACRE SITE LOCATED AT 140 GROVE STREET (APN: 017-252-25 & - 26)

7) Deliberation

ADOPTED MINUTES 4.A.

Commissioner Hurst shared a supporting comment regarding the project.

Chair Radin shared a comment in support of the applicant and project.

Commissioner Dodge shared enthusiasm regarding automobile services and the project.

Vice Chair Sencion shared a supportive comment and thanked the applicant for his vision.

8) Chair Calls for a Vote on Motion(s)

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS:	Dodge, Hurst, Radin, Sencion
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS:	None
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS:	Acosta, Rojas, Veitch-Olson

Chair Radin read the appeal language.

5. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

Interim Community Development Director Meek shared an update on two items, one regarding long term transportation planning and the other regarding implementing strategies in the City's Housing Element. In working on Zero Emission Passenger Rail & Trail ("ZEPRT") project, Regional Transportation Commission ("RTC") is evaluating what is involved with re-activating the rail line to provide passenger rail service and providing a high-quality trail between Watsonville and Santa Cruz and encouraged Commissioners to keep a lookout for future community outreach events and meetings. He also shared that at the next Planning Commission meeting will be an update regarding implementation strategies called for in the City's Housing Element.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Radin adjourned the meeting at 6:56 PM. The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for May 6, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

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Justin Meek, Secretary
Planning Commission

DocuSigned by:

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Peter Radin, Chair
Planning Commission



P r o c l a m a t i o n


Castillo's Shotokan Karate-Do May 17, 2025

- WHEREAS,** Shihan Fred L. Castillo began his training in karate in January of 1967 under Instructor Calvin Avila; and
- WHEREAS,** Shihan Castillo received his 1st Degree (Shodan) Black Belt in 1970 after three years of consistent training in Watsonville and Saturday trips to the Chinese YMCA in San Francisco to train directly under Shihan Richard Kim, after which he received his 2nd and 3rd Degree Black Belt grades; and
- WHEREAS,** as his children grew, Shihan Castillo had to balance his training with spending as much time as possible with them and his position as Watsonville Community Hospital's Chief of Radiologic Services Department; and
- WHEREAS,** Shihan Castillo kept training on his own before joining his nephew to train under Sensei Kenneth Funakoshi, who presented him with his 4th and 5th Degree Back Belt grades; and
- WHEREAS,** after this achievement, Shihan Castillo was ready to start his own Dojo and began his career as a sensei in 1990 in Watsonville's Filipino Community Center, where he taught for six years before moving on to teach at various locations around the city over the following decades; and
- WHEREAS,** Castillo's Shotokan Karate-Do has never been intended for commercial purposes; instead, Shihan Castillo and the Assistant Black Belts continue to teach because traditional karate allows them to instill values of self-defense and building high character; and
- WHEREAS,** Shihan Castillo is grateful for Sensei Dan Aruiza, Sensei Ignacio Garcia, and Sensei Jorge Vasquez, the black belt instructors that have been with him for decades; and
- WHEREAS,** Shihan Castillo values nothing more than former students returning to tell him how much they valued their training and how it continues to help them face life's struggles.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Maria Orozco, Mayor of the City of Watsonville, in the State of California, on behalf of the City Council hereby recognize Castillo's Shotokan Karate-Do and Shihan Fred L. Castillo for his decades-long dedication to the community and wish him continued success in the future.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Watsonville to be affixed this 17th day of May, Two thousand and twenty-five.



Maria Orozco, Mayor



P r o c l a m a t i o n

Older Americans Month

May 2025

- WHEREAS,** May is Older Americans Month, a time for us to recognize and honor older adults and their immense influence on every facet of American society; and
- WHEREAS,** this year's theme, "Flip the Script on Aging," focuses on transforming how society perceives, talks about, and approaches aging — encouraging individuals and communities to challenge stereotypes, dispel misconceptions, and reimagine aging as a time filled with purpose, exploration, and connection; and
- WHEREAS,** the senior population in Santa Cruz County is projected to increase by 109% by the year 2060; and
- WHEREAS,** through their wealth of life experience and wisdom, older adults guide younger generations and help preserve our cultural heritage and historical knowledge; and
- WHEREAS,** older Americans continue to improve our communities through intergenerational relationships, civic engagement, mentorship, volunteerism, and advocacy; and
- WHEREAS,** our community benefits when people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds are valued, included, and empowered to live with dignity and purpose; and
- WHEREAS,** Seniors Council of Santa Cruz & San Benito Counties is one of many local organizations focused on providing necessary support to our seniors; and
- WHEREAS,** Seniors Council of Santa Cruz & San Benito Counties' staff and board are committed to do all they can to enable older persons to live with independence while thriving in their daily activities.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Maria Orozco, Mayor of the City of Watsonville, in the State of California, on behalf of the City Council hereby recognize May 2025 as Older American Month and acknowledge the importance of appreciating and respecting all older adults who help our community succeed.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Watsonville to be affixed this 15th day of May, Two thousand and twenty-five.

Maria Orozco, Mayor



WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA



P r o c l a m a t i o n

Ken Morena

Soccer Fields Complex


May 24, 2025

- WHEREAS,** Kenneth “Ken” Morena was born and raised in San Francisco, attended the Star of the Sea Grammar School and in 1954 graduated from Sacred Heart High School; and
- WHEREAS,** Ken then began his career in the produce industry as a Produce Clerk at Safeway in San Francisco for two years before serving in the Army; and
- WHEREAS,** after his time in the military, Ken returned to Safeway and quickly rose within the company which led him to move to Watsonville in 1969 as Produce Buyer and Branch Manager; and
- WHEREAS,** Ken fell in love with Watsonville, and he and his wife Velma raised their daughters, Jean and Lori, here; and
- WHEREAS,** in 1977, Ken joined Driscoll’s as Administrative Assistant to the President & Chairman before being promoted to General Manager in 1979 and President two years later; and
- WHEREAS,** Ken believed in the value of promoting from within and was committed to mentoring and advising others, which is still reflected today through Driscoll’s annual Ken Morena Award for Developing People, bestowed on employees who follow Ken’s example; and
- WHEREAS,** Ken helped start Driscoll’s first adopt-a-school program with Pajaro Middle School, providing paid time off for employees to tutor students, perform small maintenance projects, and give class presentations; and
- WHEREAS,** after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake and the 1995 flooding of Pajaro, Ken led Driscoll’s efforts to aid affected community members in a variety of ways; and
- WHEREAS,** for many years, Ken contributed his time and money to improve the health and well-being of his community and continues to serve as an Emeritus Board Member of the Dominican Hospital Foundation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Maria Orozco, Mayor of the City of Watsonville, in the State of California, on behalf of the City Council hereby recognize Ken Morena for his decades of dedication to our community and congratulate him on the well-deserved honor of having the Freedom Elementary *Ken Morena Soccer Fields Complex* named after him.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Watsonville to be affixed this 24th day of May, Two thousand and twenty-five.



Maria Orozco, Mayor

WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA



P r o c l a m a t i o n

Tom House

May 24, 2025

- WHEREAS,** in late 2017, during a presentation at the Watsonville Rotary Club, community leaders Roland Hedgpeth and Gina Castaneda clearly articulated the critical need for additional soccer fields to serve local youth in the Pajaro Valley; and
- WHEREAS,** in response to this call to action, a dedicated coalition of leaders—including members of the Watsonville Rotary—joined together in 2018 to establish the Pajaro Valley Sports Foundation (PVSF) with the mission of expanding access to safe, structured recreational spaces for youth; and
- WHEREAS,** among those leaders, Tom House emerged as a tireless champion and driving force behind the project from its inception, organizing and facilitating meetings, engaging stakeholders, and—critically—donating countless hours of hands-on labor including restoring fences, digging trenches, removing weeds, and maintaining the field grounds; and
- WHEREAS,** despite personal challenges, including supporting his wife through serious health struggles, Tom House continued to serve selflessly and with unwavering commitment to the youth of the community; and
- WHEREAS,** under the leadership of Tom House and with the steadfast support of the Watsonville Rotary, the project gained strong partnerships with Driscoll's and the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County, ultimately leading to the selection of Freedom Elementary School—a site with deep community roots and urgent need—as the location for the Foundation's first major initiative; and
- WHEREAS,** the signing of a 20-year joint use agreement with the Pajaro Valley Unified School District in April 2020 allowed the project to move forward, leading to transformational improvements including new infrastructure, turf restoration, irrigation systems, fencing, soccer amenities, and the creation of a vibrant mural and community gathering space; and
- WHEREAS,** in April 2022, the field officially opened, becoming an active site of play and mentorship for local schoolchildren and soccer programs including Pajaro Valley United and the Aztecas Soccer Program, and is now a beacon of opportunity and positive engagement in a neighborhood previously underserved by recreational facilities; and
- WHEREAS,** this vision culminates in a formal ribbon-cutting and heartfelt dedication to youth sports advocate Ken Morena on this day to celebrate the community's shared investment and the nearly \$470,000 raised to make this dream a reality.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Maria Orozco, Mayor of the City of Watsonville, in the State of California, on behalf of the City Council hereby extend our deepest gratitude and appreciation to Tom House for his outstanding leadership, labor, and lifelong commitment to the wellness and development of our youth.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Watsonville to be affixed this 24th day of May, Two thousand and twenty-five.

Maria Orozco, Mayor