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City of Margate, Florida

**MEETING OF
THE PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87192907370>
MINUTES**

**Tuesday, April 7th, 2026
7:00 p.m.
City of Margate
City Commission Chambers at City Hall**

PRESENT:

Elsa Sanchez, Vice-Chair
Joseph Eppy, Chair
Richard Zucchini, Board Member
Ojar Varun, Board Member
Michael Marquez, Secretary

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:

Andrew Pinney, Development Services Senior Planner
Christopher Gratz, Development Services Senior Planner
Elizabeth Taschereau, Development Services Director
Paul Ojeda, Development Services Office Manager
Amanda Ingram, Development Services Permit Specialist
David Tolces, City Attorney

The regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Board (PZ) of the City of Margate, having been properly noticed, was called to order at 7:17 p.m. on Tuesday, April 7th, 2026, in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall, 5790 Margate Boulevard, Margate, FL 33063.

1) OATHS

Ms. Sanchez and Mr. Eppy took their oaths, swearing that they are residents of Margate; that they will support, protect, and defend the Constitution and Government of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Florida; and that they will well and faithfully perform the duties of their office as members of the Planning and Zoning Board upon which they are about to enter.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2) NEW BUSINESS

*A) ID 2026-094
ELECTION OF CHAIR*

Mr. Eppy made the following motion, seconded by Mr. Zucchini:

MOTION: RICHARD ZUCCHINI BE THE CHAIR OF THE ZONING BOARD.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Marquez – No; Mr. Varun – No; Mr. Zucchini – Yes; Mr. Eppy – Yes. Ms. Sanchez – No. The motion failed with a 2-3 vote.

Mr. Varun made the following motion, seconded by Mr. Marquez:

MOTION: MICHAEL MARQUEZ FOR CHAIR.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Marquez – Yes; Mr. Varun – Yes; Mr. Zucchini – No; Mr. Eppy – No. Ms. Sanchez – No. The motion failed with a 2-3 vote.

Mr. Zucchini made the following motion, seconded by Mr. Eppy:

MOTION: JOSEPH EPPY AS CHAIR.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Marquez – No; Mr. Varun – No; Mr. Zucchini – Yes; Mr. Eppy – Yes. Ms. Sanchez – Yes. The motion passed with a 3-2 vote.

*B) ID 2026-097
ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR*

Mr. Varun made the following motion, seconded by Chair Eppy:

MOTION: FOR ELSA.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Marquez – Yes; Mr. Varun – Yes, Mr. Zucchini – Yes; Mr. Eppy – Yes. Ms. Sanchez – Yes. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

*C) ID 2026-099
ELECTION OF SECRETARY*

Mr. Varun made the following motion, seconded by Mr. Marquez

MOTION: FOR MICHAEL.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Marquez – Yes; Mr. Varun – Yes; Mr. Zucchini – No; Mr. Eppy – Yes. Ms. Sanchez – Yes. The motion passed with a 4-1 vote.

*D) ID 2026-100
APPROVAL OF 2026 TERM CALENDAR*

Mr. Marquez made the following motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Sanchez

MOTION: TO APPROVE THE CALENDAR.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Marquez – Yes; Mr. Varun – Yes; Mr. Zucchini – Yes; Mr. Eppy – Yes. Ms. Sanchez – Yes. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

E) ID 2026-059

CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE APPLICATION 25-400070 TO REPURPOSE A 497-SQUARE FOOT FORMER DRIVE-THROUGH BANK TO A DUNKIN WITH DRIVE-THROUGH.

David Tolces, City Attorney, explained that this item is quasi-judicial and asked each board member to disclose any ex parte communications or site visits. All members reported none, except Mr. Zucchini, who stated he visited the site and took measurements but did not communicate with the applicant or any representatives beyond that.

Any audience member interested in providing testimony was sworn in.

Andrew Pinney, Senior Planner, presented the staff report. The site, 5300 Coconut Creek Parkway, is designated in the Activity Center, zoned Gateway, and located within the Central Business District and Community Redevelopment Agency boundary.

Mr. Pinney provided a history of the site, noting it was previously developed as a donut shop and drive-through bank, later rebranded under BB&T and then Truist, and has been vacant since at least 2019. A prior approval for a drive-through coffee shop in 2021 expired after the use was not established. Landscaping and traffic patterns were highlighted as nonissues.

The Applicant proposes to reuse the existing building with minor modifications, site improvements, and multiple escape lanes. Mr. Pinney covered the expected process, the 10 criteria required for approval, DRC's comments, and the DRC's recommendations for minor adjustments.

Chair Eppy questioned why the structure over the two escape lanes would not be removed. Mr. Pinney explained that the City's traffic consultant and the applicant's traffic consultant agreed to leave them open to serve as escape lanes.

Mr. Zucchini stated he would support the application but expressed some concerns. He noted an excess of escape lanes and suggested considering measures, such as a concrete planter, to help direct traffic. He also raised concerns about potential queuing and traffic backup during peak hours, acknowledging the site's longer drive-through area as an advantage but recommending further consideration of peak-hour operations. Mr. Pinney stated that the issue had been reviewed extensively and found that it would not be an issue. Mr. Zucchini strongly recommended that an attendant take orders before the menu board during peak hours.

Matthew Scott, a representative of the applicant, introduced himself to the board. His presentation included a history of why the past coffee shop failed and the importance of utilizing vacant buildings for community improvement. Matthew Scott highlighted the site's existing condition, the applicant's compliance with the city's queuing requirements, and the applicant's agreement to have an attendant outside during peak hours to take orders.

Matthew Scott explained that the application met all special review criteria, that staff approved the site plan, and that staff recommended approval of the special review required for the drive-through.

Mr. Zucchini confirmed with Matthew Scott that they'd be closing the existing walk-up window. Mr. Zucchini further explained that past requirements had chased off a previous business, but still felt that the applicant should confirm they'd be willing to employ an attendant to take orders on a digital board to relieve extra queuing. The applicant committed to having the attendant as recommended.

Public comment was opened, and members of the public who had not been previously sworn in were sworn in.

Diana Permanan requested to know why the previous two drive-through lanes won't be used in the Dunkin operations. She was advised that the comment section was for comments, but the applicant could come up after to answer her question.

No other public comment was given. Matthew Scott explained that the two additional lanes would serve as bypass lanes and that the store wasn't expecting enough business to cover the costs of additional drive-throughs, such as staffing and menu boards. It would require employees to walk out to deliver food to a secondary lane.

Mr. Zucchini made the following motion, seconded by Mr. Varun

MOTION: TO APPROVE WITH ALL STAFF FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COMMISSION.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Marquez – Yes; Mr. Varun – Yes; Mr. Zucchini – Yes; Mr. Eppy – Yes. Ms. Sanchez – Yes. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) *ID 2026-088*

APPROVAL OF PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEETING MINUTES FOR THE MARCH 3RD, 2026 MEETING.

Vice-Chair Sanchez made the following motion, seconded by Mr. Marquez:

MOTION: TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 3RD, 2026, PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEETING AS PRESENTED.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Marquez – Yes; Mr. Varun – Yes; Mr. Zucchini – Yes; Mr. Eppy – Yes; Ms. Sanchez – Yes. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

4) GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mr. Varun expressed his excitement to be on the Zoning Board and to help the city.

Mr. Zucchini expressed concern that a commissioner's decisions may be influenced by personal or emotional considerations. He also commented on public participation, stating that he would have preferred the opportunity to address concerns raised by members of the audience directly and indicating that he may choose to do so in future meetings.

Vice-Chair Sanchez said that she was happy to be on the board.

Chair Eppy referenced the oath of office and raised concern about an issue within the City of Margate. Mr. Tolces advised that the topic was not on the agenda, was personal in nature, and requested that the discussion be deferred. Chair Eppy indicated he viewed his remarks as general comments and respectfully disagreed.

Elizabeth Taschereau, Development Services Director, requested the cessation of discussion of non-agenda or personal items to the city attorney. Mr. Zucchini encouraged board members to raise city-related concerns during the comment portion of the meeting, even if not on the agenda, and suggested allowing additional time for such discussion.

Chair Eppy continued by providing background on a prior City ordinance and related development practices. Mr. Tolces reiterated that the matter was not appropriate for discussion during the current agenda item and offered to address the concerns outside of the meeting. Chair Eppy stated he had previously submitted a written memorandum on the issue.

Mr. Zucchini raised points of order regarding the relevance of the discussion and cited concerns about City processes and potential impacts regarding tax collection. Mr. Tolces advised that such matters would be more appropriately directed to other departments and did not fall within the purview of the Planning and Zoning Board. Chair Eppy disagreed, stating that he believed the issue was zoning-related.

Mr. Tolces cautioned that continued discussion could raise procedural concerns and again recommended addressing the matter outside the meeting. Mr. Zucchini made an additional point of order, suggesting the discussion be deferred and brought back at future meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Eppy, Chair