



North Fair Oaks Community Council

*A Municipal Advisory Council to the
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors*

2600 Middlefield Rd,
Redwood City, CA
650-363-1800
www.nfoforward.org

February 26, 2026

7:00pm

The North Fair Oaks Community Council provides recommendations on the issues of community health, safety, welfare, public works, and planning for the North Fair Oaks geographic area. It holds regular monthly meetings to address the needs of the community, act as a forum, and serve as an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors.

The North Fair Oaks Community Council was held in person at the Fair Oaks Community Center (2600 Middlefield Rd, Redwood City) and by teleconference using Zoom:
<https://smcgov.zoom.us/j/94143760855> It began at 7:00 PM and Spanish interpretation was available.

This meeting can be viewed in its entirety and shows each agenda item here: [YouTube Video](#)

1. ROLL CALL

Present:

Council members: Chair Prado, Parisi, Whitney, Daly, Esser, and Aponte

Absent:

Council members Saman and Orozco

2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

In-Person Comments:

OCA Interim Chief, Blanca Tapia
Augustin Espirio
Gabriela Valencia
Ever Rodriguez

Comments via Zoom:

0

3. MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda.

Motion: Council member Esser / Second: Chair Prado

Yes: 6 – Chair Prado, Esser, Whitney, Daly, Parisi, and Aponte

No: 0

Absent: 2 – Council members Saman and Orozco

Agenda is approved.

4. Motion: Chair/Vice-chair Election and Discussion

Speaker:

Chair Prado

Council member questions/comments:

- Nominations for council member Parisi at first, and then council member Aponte nominated himself.
- Kelly made the motion to elect council member Aponte as vice chair, then they all voted.
- A motion was made to keep Chair Prado as chair.
- They all voted unanimously to keep Chair Prado as chair.

In-person Public Comments:

None

Public Comments via zoom:

None

Recommendation: To elect Council member Christian Aponte as the new Vice-Chair of NFOCC.

Motion: First: Council member Parisi / Second: Council member Aponte

Yes: 6 – Chair Prado, Esser, Whitney, Daly, Parisi, and Aponte

No: 0

Absent: 2 – Council members Saman and Orozco

Recommendation: To elect Chair Juan Carlos Prado to remain the Chair for NFOCC.

Motion: First: Council member Whitney / Second: Council member

Yes: 6 – Chair Prado, Esser, Whitney, Daly, Parisi, and Aponte

No: 0

Absent: 2 – Council member's Saman and Orozco

5. Motion: Consideration of a Use Amendment to Permit a new private primary school located at 3151 Edison Way, in the unincorporated community of North Fair Oaks.

Speaker:

Kanoa Kelly, Planning and Building Department

- **Project type:**
 - Use permit renewal for SportsHouse and amendment to allow a new K–8 private primary school (Synapse Campus #2) within the same building at 3151/3551 Edison Way.
 - **School details:** Up to 140 students, 15 staff, 6 classrooms, plus new outdoor play space and an outdoor classroom in the eastern portion of the existing warehouse.
- **Parking plan:**
 - On-site spaces reduced from 125 → ~107 after COVID-era volleyball courts; volleyball courts to be removed and area converted for school use.
 - Formal shared-parking agreement with Synapse Campus #1 across the street, for a combined ~167 spaces; hours staggered so school uses lots in the morning and SportsHouse after 4 p.m.
- **Traffic & safety measures:**
 - ~290 feet of new sidewalk and improved crossings on Fifth Avenue, coordinated with a DPW intersection upgrade project (bulb-outs, striping, visibility).
 - Traffic study completed; project will implement a trip cap, expanded shuttle, and ongoing traffic monitoring.
- **Conditions to address neighborhood impacts:**
 - Required parking agreement, on-site parking attendants, signage directing to overflow lots, and no employee street parking.
 - Parking demand study and administrative reviews every 2 years; Planning Commission can tighten conditions or reduce enrollment if ongoing problems are documented.
- **Administrative review every 2 years for SportsHouse:**
 - After traffic/parking data is collected, staff will review performance and condition compliance.
 - At renewal or review, Planning Commission can:
 - **Impose additional conditions, or**
 - **Reduce enrollment/operations** as a last resort if repeated non-compliance occurs.
 - SportsHouse permit renewal is **for 5 years**; Synapse Campus #1 renewal is also upcoming, with monitoring reports feeding into that review.
 - **CEQA/environmental review:** Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration found **no significant environmental impacts**; State now evaluates VMT, not intersection delay (LOS), as the environmental traffic metric.

Council member questions/comments:

- Is Synapse School for-profit or non-profit organization?
- What is the relationship between SportsHouse and Synapse (ownership, lease holder, sublease)?
- Have any benefits or promises been made to nearby businesses or residents? Have they been kept?
- What outreach has Synapse done to:
 - Businesses along the Edison corridor?
 - Residents from Fifth Avenue to Marsh Road who may be affected by traffic changes?
- How many students from North Fair Oaks currently attend Synapse?
- What is the regular tuition, and what portion of students receive financial aid/scholarships?
- How many parking spaces were originally approved vs. how many exist now, after the volleyball courts?
- Why were the volleyball courts (approved as temporary during COVID) not converted back to parking after the emergency ended?
- How many additional AM and PM vehicle trips are expected (drop off and pick up) with the 140 new students?
- How often do SportsHouse events go all the way to midnight, and on which days?
- Will there be overlap between:
- Why is the shuttle stop located far from the eastern (school) portion of the building?
- Does the school reimburse staff for using carpool, transit, or rideshare beyond a general transportation stipend?
- Can there be upgraded crosswalks (e.g., flashing beacons) and crossing guards, especially on Fifth Avenue?
- Are planned crosswalk and intersection improvements (bulb outs, striping) already on DPW's work plan and budget?
- How could these DPW projects be scheduled and funded before the permit is approved?
- Who monitors the trip cap and traffic conditions (name of consultant, method, frequency)?
- Why wasn't the required administrative review in 2020 conducted once COVID restrictions eased?
- Shouldn't the administrative review be done before bringing this renewal/amendment to the council?
- If the school exceeds trip caps or ignores conditions, is reducing enrollment or expelling students a realistic and enforceable remedy?
- How exactly would Planning/DPW respond if the data and complaints show continued non compliance?
- After the Zoning Hearing Officer (ZHO) hearing on March 19, is there another step or is that the final decision?
- Will the ZHO have the traffic/parking study results, or will they be deciding without that data?
- Can decisions of the ZHO be appealed to the Board of Supervisors, and how?

In-Person Public Comments:

Hugo Peralez
Maria Peralez
Stephanie
Olver
Harsha

Dale/Theo
Laura Kaplan
Angelica Baez-Aranda
Carlos Arando
Jennifer
Shannon Schaefer
Gabriela Valencia
Zach Z.
Josie
Elizabeth Bailey
Natalie
Jackie Nunez
Augustine Espino
Eric
Ever Rodriguez

Public Comment via zoom:

Stephen
Randy Shafton

Recommendation: Moved to recommend approval of the project per Planning staff's recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Officer.

Motion: First: Council member Whitney / Second: Council member Esser

Yes: 2 -Esser, Whitney,

No: 4- Daly, Parisi, Aponte, Chair Prado

Abstain: 0

Absent: 2 –Saman and Orozco

Motion did not pass.

Recommendation: To recommend denying the recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Officer on the proposal on the proposed use permit renewal.

Motion: First: Vice-Chair Aponte / Second: Council member Parisi

Yes: 4 - Daly, Parisi, Aponte, and Chair Prado

No: 2 - Esser, and Whitney

Abstain: 0

Absent: 2 –Saman and Orozco

Motion passed.

6. Presentation: Multicultural Institute

***Due to the sake of time, Chair Prado made the decision to move Multicultural presentation to the next NFOCC meeting.**

7. Motion: Use Permit Application for the installation of a new wireless telecommunications facility and associated equipment atop an existing utility pole located in the public right-of-way near 401 7th Avenue, in North Fair Oaks.

Speaker:

Randall Cohen, Planning and Building Department; Jason Camarena and Jerry Freeman with Crown Castle (for Verizon), and Tony Dematte from Waterford Consultants

- **What the project is:**
 - New Verizon small wireless facility on a replacement utility pole in the public right of way near 401 7th Avenue (North Fair Oaks).
 - Mounted on a wood utility pole, with 3× 5G radios/antennas and 1× 4G radio + 1× 4G antenna; ground equipment footprint < 5.5 sq. ft.
 - Pole height / design change (in response to council concerns)
 - Existing pole: ~29 ft 2 in.
 - Original proposal: ~34 ft (council previously worried about RF “blow out” into homes).
 - Revised proposal: ~46 ft 9 in, with antennas well above nearby building roofs, to push signal above, not directly into adjacent residences.
- **Why this specific pole:**
 - Location chosen by Verizon RF engineers to fill a coverage/capacity gap between existing macro/small cell sites around Middlefield & 7th.
 - Sits in Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU), just outside mapped residential zoning.
 - Follows existing fiber route: hub to the northwest, fiber runs aerially on poles, then splits to Menlo Park and Atherton.
- **Why other poles/sites were rejected:**
 - Many nearby wood poles have PG&E equipment that blocks use:
 - Transformers, primary risers, or disconnect switches (PG&E/GO 95 prohibit attachments there).

- Others fail require clearances (too many lines/luminaires to safely add antennas).
 - Some poles are surrounded by trees, which would block signal or require heavy pruning/removal.
 - Metal streetlights on Middlefield are county owned:
 - Crown Castle lacks a master license agreement to attach.
 - Would likely require underground construction for power/fiber, with longer, more disruptive work in the street.
- **RF/Health and safety findings**
 - Independent RF study (Waterford Consultants) **modeled worst case emissions** (max power, all radios on).
 - Predicted exposure:
 - **Lower roof:** ~1.67% of FCC general public limit.
 - **Higher roof:** ~2.1% of FCC general public limit.
 - **At ground:** ~4.1% of FCC general public limit.
 - Conclusion: **Well below** 100% public limit; only area near the antenna itself (~45 ft up) approaches occupational zone, not accessible to the public.
 - **Staff ask to council:**
 - Planning staff asked NFO Council to recommend to the Planning & Building Director whether to approve the use permit for this wireless facility at 401 7th Ave.
 - Emphasized that:
 - Pole height was raised in direct response to council concerns.
 - An alternate site analysis and RF safety analysis were provided to address earlier questions.

Council member questions/comments:

- Why is node being placed directly by housing?
- Why not use nearby commercial properties instead?
- Is this essentially a technicality?
- What other commercial/utility sites were evaluated and rejected, and why?
- Why not get a County agreement for Middlefield Streetlights first?
- Why hasn't Crown Castle/Verizon pursued that agreement before asking NFO to accept a residential adjacent pole?
- Why is the community being asked to accept the more intrusive siting because the County process is unresolved?
- Who is this really serving?
- Is it easier to build in unincorporated NFO than in cities?
- Implicit question: Are we seeing this pole here because it's harder to get approval in nearby incorporated cities?

In-Person Public Comments:

0

Public Comment via zoom:

0

Recommendation: To recommend that the North Fair Oaks Council provide a recommendation to the Director of Planning and Building regarding the proposed wireless telecommunication facility atop a utility pole in North Fair Oaks neighborhood.

Motion: First: Council member Whitney / Second: Chair Prado

Yes: 3 – Esser, Whitney, and Aponte

No: 3 – Daly, Parisi, and Chair Prado

Abstain: 0

Absent: 2 –Saman and Orozco

Motion does not pass.

8. Report Out:

District 4: No report out

County Executive's Office: No report out

County Attorney: Brian Petit – No report out

Council Members: Aponte and Chair Prado

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.