

**UNOFFICIAL MINUTES
OF THE
SALINAS PLANNING COMMISSION
September 3, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m. in the City Council Chamber Rotunda.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

WELCOME AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

PRESENT: Chairperson McKelvey Daye and Commissioners Gutierrez, Meeks (arrived at 4:11 p.m.), Purnell, Rocamora and Wruck

ABSENT: Commissioner Almanza-Larios

STAFF: City Attorney, Christopher Callihan; Community Development Director, Lisa Brinton; Planning Manager, Courtney Grossman; Senior Planner, Thomas Wiles; Police Sergeant, Gerardo Magana; and Administrative Aide, Maira Robles

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Chairperson McKelvey Daye opened for public comment at 4:02 p.m.

No public comments were received, either in-person or via Zoom.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye closed for public comment at 4:03 p.m.

CONSENT

[ID#25-375](#) Approval of the Minutes: August 6, 2025

Upon motion by Commissioner Wruck, and a second by Commissioner Purnell, the minutes of August 6, 2025 were approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Chairperson McKelvey Daye and Commissioners Gutierrez, Purnell, Rocamora and Wruck

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Almanza-Larios and Meeks (arrived at 4:11 p.m.)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ID#25-354 Conditional Use Permit 2024-024; Appeal of the City Planner’s approval to establish and operate a 23,412 square-foot Commercial Recreation and Entertainment use (Dave & Buster’s) with on-sale alcohol sales (Type 47 ABC license) located at 1104 Northridge Mall in the Commercial Retail (CR) Zoning District

Received presentation from Senior Planner, Thomas Wiles, regarding an appeal of the City Planner’s approval request from Dave & Buster’s of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to establish and operate a 23,412 square foot Commercial Recreation and Entertainment use with on-sale alcohol sales of beer, wine, and distilled spirits and a separate bar area (Type 47 ABC license – On-Sale General – Eating Place) located on the second floor of a former Sears store at the Northridge Mall. On July 3, 2025, a Notice of Intent to Approve (NOI) the CUP was mailed to properties located within 300 feet of the site and interested parties. No protest was received by 5:00 p.m. on July 14, 2025. Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 37-60.500(c), the City Planner approved the CUP on July 15, 2025. Subsequently, on July 25, 2025, a timely 10-day appeal of the City Planner’s approval was received. Per Zoning Code Section 37-60.1300(a), the CUP has been scheduled for the next available Planning Commission hearing date within 60 days of the appeal.

Jason Jaffe, Steerpoint Capital Director and representative of Northridge Mall Management and Ownership, provided public comment in opposition to the proposed project. Concerns raised by Mr. Jaffe included the following:

1. Public safety risks based on past issues at the Sears site (e.g., fights, graffiti, emergency responses);
2. CUP approval bypassed proper CEQA environmental review/ legitimacy of CEQA exemption;
3. The proposed use of the site will change from retail to a large-scale bar use;
4. The project will negatively affect mall vibrancy and deter other tenants;
5. Lack of detailed security plans by the applicant; and
6. Alcohol is a core business driver despite applicant’s claims.

Stephen Jamieson, Attorney for Dave & Buster’s, introduced himself and the representatives for the applicant whom included Les Leonard, Chief Development Officer; Jason Foshee, Director of Security; and Mike Grannon, VP & Regional Manager. Mr. Jamieson spoke in support of the project and provided the following comments in opposition to the appeal:

1. Dave & Buster’s is primarily an entertainment venue, not a bar; alcohol revenue will only account for a 5-6% of revenue;

2. The proposed project will revitalize a long-vacant property and deter crime by activating the space;
3. The CUP includes conditions for additional security, especially on weekends;
4. The City's police department did not raise any objections, and the applicant has agreed to all requested conditions as presented in the police memorandums;
5. The Applicant team attempted outreach efforts to the appellant and was ignored and added that the appellant's arguments are misleading or inaccurate;
6. The proposed use will bring economic benefits to the community including jobs and a projected \$11M–14M in revenue, provide an event space, as well as a family-friendly environment; and
7. Dave & Buster's has extensive operational experience and robust internal safety protocols.

Rebuttal comments by Mr. Jaffe included the following key points:

1. Indicated that the applicant team has provided incomplete and evasive responses to security concerns;
2. Commented that retail use, not alcohol-focused uses, should drive mall recovery;
3. Maintained that the applicant was dismissive of real community concerns and tried to discredit opposition; and
4. Emphasized the need for clear, transparent security and operations plans before approval of the proposed project.

Rebuttal comments by Mr. Jamieson included the following key points:

1. Dismissed the appellant's presentation as fearmongering without factual basis;
2. Reiterated Dave & Buster's compliance with police recommendations and commitment to proactive safety protocols; and
3. Urged the Planning Commission to consider the review of the project as completed by City staff, as well as the benefits that the proposed project will bring to the community.

The Planning Commission discussed the following with regard to the project:

1. Security presence requirements;
2. Potential impact to police involvement;
3. Curfew and age requirements;
4. Gambling and betting behavior; and
5. Round One precedent and overall safety measures impacting the mall.

Planning Commissioners expressed general support for the proposed project commending it as an effort toward community revitalization. They also expressed appreciation for both the applicant and the appellant's participation.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye opened for public comment at 5:14 p.m.

No public comments were received, either in-person or via Zoom.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye closed for public comment 5:15 p.m.

Commissioner Meeks motioned to approve a resolution finding the project exempt pursuant to Section 15301(a) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and affirming the findings to deny the appeal of the City Planner’s approval of Conditional Use Permit 2024-024. Commissioner Wruck seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Chairperson McKelvey Daye and Commissioners Gutierrez, Meeks, Purnell, Rocamora and Wruck

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Almanza-Larios

OTHER BUSINESS

General Plan Steering Committee Update

Community Development Director, Lisa Brinton, indicated that there are no updates to report from the steering committee. Staff anticipates that a final public review draft document will be available in late September 2025.

FOLLOW-UP REPORTS

No follow-up items were discussed.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Planning Manager, Courtney Grossman, informed that there are no projects scheduled for presentation to the Planning Commission at this time, however, it is forecasted that staff will provide a study session at the next regular Planning Commission meeting on September 17, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson McKelvey Daye commended Commissioner Meeks for his attendance record and reviewed for quorum for the Planning Commission meeting scheduled for September 17, 2025. Chairperson McKelvey Daye adjourned the meeting at 5:27 p.m.

LORISA MCKELVEY DAYE
Chairperson

COURTNEY GROSSMAN
Executive Secretary