

From: [jack koepfgen](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Agenda Item #4. 310 Cal Avenue Conditional Use Permit
Date: Sunday, April 7, 2024 8:41:12 PM

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> PA Planning Commission,
> I am writing to express my concern about the application for the Subject Address to be entirely converted to a gym business which has or will displace three existing businesses that were in the building, one of which has been a Palo Alto fixture for 40 years. In addition to the expulsion of these businesses, in particular Printers Cafe, the loss of this space will result in several long time employees losing their jobs. This will greatly affect those in the community of who have patronized the Cafe for many years and will take away from Cal Avenue needed small business diversity. I question the benefit to the overall Cal Avenue business district for a greatly expanded gym at the expense of eliminating Printers Cafe. At the very least, Printers should be allowed to continue in its present form. A possible compromise might consider expansion into the vacated space in the back of the building that the Art Gallery used to occupy. Printers Cafe is a Heritage Palo Alto institution and as a long time resident, I would hate to see it be forced out of business by over expansion of a questionable need.
> Thank you for your consideration.
> Jack and Susan Koepfgen
> [REDACTED] Palo Alto——94301
Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Lait, Jonathan](#)
Subject: rezoning proposals on 4/10/2024 agenda
Date: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 11:05:16 AM

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Dear Commissioners,

Please approve both requests so we can move forward with this needed and appropriate housing asap.

The teacher housing project is a 100% privately funded addition to our housing stock for low and moderate income residents, most of whom will be staff or teachers in the PAUSD and with the support of the PAUSD unions.

Moreover, many of the residents are currently living far away from Palo Alto and the project will reduce congestion, pollution and GHG emissions as well as save some new residents the large costs of commuting.

The project is located on ECR, which is one of the housing priority areas for our city.

The second project is on San Antonio, another housing priority area and will bring 15 BMR units as part of the project proposal.

Approval of both projects tomorrow will also be a signal that Palo Alto is ready to move forward on housing in its priority areas.

Stephen Levy

From: [Jeff Levinsky](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: 3265 El Camino Real: Is It Truly Affordable Housing?
Date: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 1:26:29 PM
Attachments: [3265 El Camino Real Concerns.pdf](#)

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April 9, 2024

Dear Planning Commissioners:

When the Council screened this project last September, many significant questions were raised about the actual rents tenants would be charged, whether these rents would in fact be low enough to help Palo Alto teachers, and whether the rents would even be below market rates.

Sadly, none of these questions are answered in the staff report for your April 10 hearing.

Given the absence of such information in the report, here are a few estimates. The bottom of packet page 20 says that most of the units in the building will be priced for 110% of AMI. Per HUD's 2024 AMI figures for Santa Clara County, I calculate that the rent for a one-bedroom unit (considered a two-person household) at 110% of AMI will be roughly \$4,018 per month. That rent is considered affordable only to those earning \$160,738 a year or more (details on the sources and calculations are at the end of this letter).

How many Palo Alto teachers can afford rent of \$4,018 a month? The attached 2023-2024 Palo Alto teacher salary chart shows that virtually no Palo Alto teacher earns enough. The highest salary in the regular table, paid to certified teachers with 30 years of experience and 90 post-baccalaureate semester units, is \$154,336. Even with a masters degree and a doctoral degree (adding \$2,932 for each), a teacher still won't be able to afford the 110% of AMI one-bedroom rent at this proposed building. And this is a teacher with 30 years of experience – who is likely starting to think about retirement.

But it gets worse. Even if a Palo Alto teacher could afford the \$4,108 rent, the proposed building is not offering them a bargain. The one-bedroom units are about 500 sq. ft., roughly half will have no parking space, and there's no community facilities and no swimming pool. Just a few blocks away at the Merrilee Terrace Apartments on Ventura Avenue, you can rent today a 770 sq. ft. one-bedroom unit for \$2,695 – and it comes with parking (see <https://www.apartments.com/merrilee-terrace-apartments-palo-alto-ca/6dw91es/>). And a pool! In other words, the \$4,108 rent is higher than market rates – and once teachers realize that, they'll rent elsewhere.

What about the 80% AMI units in this building? I calculate that a small studio at 80% AMI will rent for \$2,558 a month, which is affordable only to someone earning \$102,300 a year or more. A teacher with 30 post-baccalaureate semester units would have to teach for seven years in Palo Alto before being able to afford this high a rent. So even the smallest studios in the building in the lower AMI tier won't benefit starting teachers – the folks who most need help to afford to live in Palo Alto. And they too can do better by renting elsewhere, such as at the Stanford Villa on Alma that currently offers a 590 sq. ft. studio for \$2,399 to \$2,499 a month (see <https://www.apartments.com/stanford-villa-palo-alto-ca/5ezwzbq/>). Plus three swimming pools and a fitness center. So again, they can already get more space and more amenities for less money elsewhere in town.

In short, will any Palo Alto teachers, once they actually see the high rents, tiny units, zero amenities, and lack of parking at this proposed new PC ever want to rent there?

This project is asking for the moon. Per packet page 18, it seeks six (!!!) times the normal FAR for the site. It requests exemptions from many other standards, including parking and open space. But if teachers will find larger

units for less elsewhere in town, the proposal is not generating any true public benefits

We've unfortunately seen this before. For many years, Palo Alto councilmembers, planning commissioners, and the public have sought to compare the value of the public benefits of proposed PCs to the value of the extra benefits the PCs want from the City. For this building, one expects to it to offer rents well below the market, thus providing true financial savings to teachers. The numbers above suggest it is promising only to charge rents above market rates, so we'll be creating a PC with no major benefit to teachers and others at their income level in exchange for millions of dollars of giveaways to the developer.

This is a good example of what many housing advocates in California say, namely that what gets touted as "affordable housing" actually isn't.

We can do a lot better! Please ask for an analysis of this, given that the staff report offers none. Request that staff provide you with a thorough analysis of the proposed rents, rents for comparable units in the area, and how much true savings, if any, the project will then generate for Palo Alto teachers. The savings teachers receive is key to evaluating the public benefits of this project – and in determining whether it merits a six-fold increase in FAR and the other exemptions – or if we should reserve those instead for projects with real benefits.

Thank you,

Jeff Levinsky

Calculations and Sources

My numbers are estimates but that's because staff provided none. For rents, I used HUD's 2024 Santa Clara data for 80% AMI available at https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il2024/select_Geography.odn and shown here:

FY 2024 Income Limits Summary										
FY 2024 Income Limit Area	Median Family Income Click for More Detail	FY 2024 Income Limit Category	Persons in Family							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA HUD Metro FMR Area	\$184,300	Very Low (50%) Income Limits (\$) Click for More Detail	64,550	73,750	82,950	92,150	99,550	106,900	114,300	121,650
		Extremely Low Income Limits (\$)* Click for More Detail	38,750	44,250	49,800	55,300	59,750	64,150	68,600	73,000
		Low (80%) Income Limits (\$) Click for More Detail	102,300	116,900	131,500	146,100	157,800	169,500	181,200	192,900

For the studios at 80% of AMI, I used the \$102,300 number under a one-person family, while for one-bedroom units at 110% of AMI, I adjusted the two-person household figure of \$116,900 in the 80% AMI row by 110%/80% to get \$160,738. The annual rent that can be charged at those levels is 30%, yielding the monthly rents of \$2,558 for the studio at 80% of AMI and \$4,018 or the one-bedroom at 110% of AMI.

PAUSD teacher salaries are at

https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1683064350/pausdorg/atoehvsazsuxumlgy5b1/salary_schedule_teachers.pdf and <https://Apartments.org> is a good source of market-priced rentals.

April 9, 2024

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Thank you,

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Palo Alto Unified School District TEACHERS' 2023-24 SALARY SCHEDULE

Step	0	15	30	45	60	75	90
1	76,488	76,488	76,488	78,218	81,845	85,312	88,518
2	76,488	76,488	79,798	83,810	87,713	91,330	94,599
3	76,488	79,930	84,639	88,943	93,106	96,851	100,249
4	78,486	84,016	89,024	93,651	98,083	101,964	105,509
5	81,845	87,779	93,167	98,001	102,709	106,742	110,435
6	84,907	91,266	96,984	102,093	107,078	111,233	114,995
7	87,842	94,539	101,753	106,467	111,188	115,905	120,619
8	90,633	97,594	105,279	109,991	114,702	119,425	124,146
9	93,311	100,590	108,803	113,516	118,238	122,953	127,664
10	93,311	100,590	112,323	117,043	121,760	126,472	131,194
11	93,311	100,590	112,323	117,043	125,400	130,214	134,712
12	93,311	100,590	112,323	117,043	125,400	130,214	134,712
13	93,311	100,590	115,822	120,542	128,899	133,713	138,211
14	93,311	100,590	115,822	120,542	128,899	133,713	138,211
15	93,311	100,590	115,822	120,542	128,899	133,713	138,211
16	93,311	100,590	119,321	124,041	132,398	137,211	141,710
17	93,311	100,590	119,321	124,041	132,398	137,211	141,710
18	93,311	100,590	119,321	124,041	132,398	137,211	141,710
19	93,311	100,590	119,321	124,041	132,398	137,211	141,710
20	93,311	100,590	122,820	127,540	135,896	140,710	145,209
21	93,311	100,590	122,820	127,540	135,896	140,710	145,209
22	93,311	100,590	122,820	127,540	135,896	140,710	145,209
23	93,311	100,590	122,820	127,540	135,896	140,710	145,209
24	93,311	100,590	122,820	127,540	135,896	140,710	145,209
25	93,311	100,590	122,820	127,540	140,460	145,274	149,772
26	93,311	100,590	122,820	127,540	140,460	145,274	149,772
27	93,311	100,590	122,820	127,540	140,460	145,274	149,772
28	93,311	100,590	122,820	127,540	140,460	145,274	149,772
29	93,311	100,590	122,820	127,540	140,460	145,274	149,772
30	93,311	100,590	122,820	127,540	140,460	145,274	154,336

PLACEMENT ON SCHEDULE:

- Column placement is determined by number of semester units completed after receipt of bachelor's degree. Maximum of 90 units will be granted at time of hire. Only one column advancement may be made each year unless all of the units are earned while on authorized leave.
- Step placement is determined by credited years of experience. A maximum credit of 11 years of experience within the last 15 years will be granted at time of hire.
- Exceptions to this schedule are made by the Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.
- Teachers' contract is a total of 187 work days. Counselors have a total of 191 work days and Teachers on Special Assignments have a total of 200 work days. Any work days above the 187 day contract are compensated by a per diem rate which is in addition to their base salary.

Masters Degree = Add \$2,932
2nd Masters Degree = Add \$2,932
Doctoral Degree = Add \$2,932
NBPTS/CCC Certification = Add \$3,805
Athletic Director = Add \$9,663

From: [Wolfgang Dueregger](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Fwd: CUP for former Printers Cafe on California Ave 310 and 320
Date: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 3:36:35 PM

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thank you for your consideration as well.

Wolfgang

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Wolfgang Dueregger** [REDACTED] >
Date: Tue, Apr 9, 2024 at 3:29 PM
Subject: CUP for former Printers Cafe on California Ave 310 and 320
To: Council, City <city.council@cityofpaloalto.org>,
<Nishita.Kandikuppa@cityofpaloalto.org>, <city.manager@cityofpaloalto.com>

Dear City Council, Planning Department and City Manager,

In last week's meeting of the Evergreen Park Neighborhood Association (EPNA), we discussed the recent events on California Avenue that add greatly to the existing challenges making California Avenue a vibrant and community oriented space - such as the loss of Printer's Cafe, Mood's bar and the gallery, all at once!

I want to emphasize that it is imperative to preserve and enhance California Avenue as a pedestrian street, with businesses which are oriented toward walk-in business such as Printer's Cafe, the Moods bar and the gallery house. I request the PTC to include requirements on conditional use permits (CUPs) that businesses make a contribution to the community and atmosphere of the walking street. The submitted application for the CUP for 310/320 Cal Ave mentions Printer's Cafe and Moods bar by name, but now these businesses no longer exist.

Many of my friends and myself are very disappointed that the proposed project displaces 3 existing retail businesses from the 320 California Avenue tenant space.

This conflicts with Policy L-4.1 to “encourage the upgrading and revitalization of selected Centers in a manner that is compatible with the character of surrounding neighborhoods, without loss of retail and existing small, local businesses” and Policy B-2.4 to “recognize that employers, businesses, and neighborhoods share many values and concerns, including traffic and parking and preserving Palo Alto’s livability and need to work together with a priority on neighborhood quality of life.”

It should be emphasized that wonderful people at Printer's Cafe, the Mood's bar and the gallery house have been employed for many years (some of them since the late 90's!) - and all of them are now without jobs.

Printer's Cafe, the Mood's bar and the gallery house were cherished in the Palo Alto

community (and way beyond!) and patrons of these businesses have used these spaces for social and professional gatherings, community meetings, and leisure for over 40 years. In addition to the loss of family-owned businesses, I am very concerned about the pedestrian appeal and walkability of California Avenue. I prefer to have a vibrant cafe/bar/gallery space that brings people together to chat and socialize on a downtown strip that is inviting to all as opposed to a gym (with some take out coffee and snacks) that is targeted towards a select few who are members.

Unfortunately, the three businesses have already left and we can't bring them back. A gym is currently permitted in the corner building (310 Cal Ave) and the owner bought the property (310 and 320 Cal Ave) specifically for a fitness business. I request to specify conditions for operating the new gym space so that it is more consistent with the desired Cal Ave use as a pedestrian street, such as:

1. The new café must be open to the public.
2. The new café should be a full-service restaurant, not just a juice/coffee bar with snacks. To this end, the new facilities should not expand so far into the café space that it would limit its functionality and seating capacity.
3. The café should be open during reasonable hours incl. weekends, including evening hours when the gym may be closed.
4. The café should continue to preserve an outdoor dining space.
5. If the new cafe hires employees for the 320 Cal Ave space, the displaced former employees from Printer's Cafe, Mood's bar and the gallery should be given consideration of employment if those former employees would be interested in (in order to reduce their current hardship).

It is all about community, isn't it?

There is so much talk about community, social gathering spaces, etc. - where Printer's Cafe, the Mood's bar and the gallery house just perfectly fit in to fill that void.

Another big gym where we have already 3 on Cal Ave, that does not seem to be logical.

Thank you for your consideration.

Wolfgang Dueregger
Evergreen Park

From: [Christina Bellardo](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Kandikuppa, Nishita](#)
Subject: Planning & Transportation Commission Agenda Item No. 4: 310 California Ave
Date: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 7:10:18 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Chair and Commissioners,

I am writing to express support for Agenda Item 4 regarding the CUP for the Expansion of an Existing Commercial Recreation Use and Renovation of Eating and Drinking Space located at 310 California Ave.

PA Fit is an integral part of the community, providing essential fitness services that go beyond only physical exercise. Their approach to health and well-being, inclusive of all ages, sizes, and abilities, truly fosters a sense of community and support. PA Fit stands out not just for its fitness coaching and nutrition support but for the genuine care they show their clients. Their commitment to meeting individuals where they are, with a smile on their face, is commendable and invaluable. This level of personalized care and no judgement inclusivity is what sets PA Fit apart and makes it a vital part of Palo Alto's community fabric.

It is crucial to recognize that PA Fit is not "another" gym on California Avenue. PA Fit is relocating to California Ave from their existing facility on Portage Avenue. A fitness community is no less deserving of support than any other business. Just because it differs from what was previously in the space, does not mean it is "less-than."

I urge the Planning and Transportation Commission to approve the CUP.

Thank you for your time,

Christina Bellardo

From: [Sauls, Garrett](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [French, Amy](#)
Subject: FW: 3265 El Camino Real - PTC Presentation
Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 8:24:44 AM
Attachments: [Letter of Support - PAEA - Teri Baldwin.pdf](#)
[PA Forward Support Letter CC 3265 ECR \(09.10.23\).pdf](#)
[Letter of Support - Jesse Ladomirak and Jennifer DiBrienza.pdf](#)
[The Academy Letter of Support - CSEA Meh Steiner.pdf](#)
[League of Women Voters Palo Alto.pdf](#)
[image009.png](#)
[image010.png](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Please see the attached letters for the project at 3265 El Camino Real.



Garrett Sauls
Senior Planner
Planning and Development Services Department
(650) 329-2471 | Garrett.Sauls@CityofPaloAlto.org



Provide feedback on Planning Development and Administration services

[NEW Parcel Report](#) | [Palo Alto Municipal Code](#) | [Online Permitting System](#) | [Planning Application Forms & Handouts](#) | [Planning Applications Mapped](#)

From: Andy Pittman <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 8:19 AM
To: Sauls, Garrett <Garrett.Sauls@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Cc: Isaiah Stackhouse <[REDACTED]>; Jason Matlof <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: 3265 El Camino Real - PTC Presentation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Hello Garrett,

We also wanted to share letters of support for the project from the community, please see attached.

Thanks,
Andy

Andy Pittman | Project Architect
TRACHTENBERG ARCHITECTS
2421 Fourth Street Berkeley, CA 94710
[TrachtenbergArch.com](#)

On Mon, Apr 8, 2024 at 12:16 PM Andy Pittman <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hello Garrett,

Please see the link below for our powerpoint presentation for the PTC hearing. Our presentation is the first group of slides, and then we have a backup of all the drawing sheets just in case they are useful in responding to any questions.

Thank you,
Andy [2226 - 2024.04.10 - PTC Presentation.pptx](#)

Andy Pittman | Project Architect
TRACHTENBERG ARCHITECTS
2421 Fourth Street Berkeley, CA 94710
[TrachtenbergArch.com](#)

Subject: Affordable Housing Project for PAEA Members at 3265 El Camino Real

Dear Mayor Kou and Council Members,

The Palo Alto Educators Association (PAEA) would like to express our strong support for the affordable housing project located at 3265 El Camino Real, which will prioritize vacancies for members of the PAUSD employee unions (PAEA and CSEA). Educator housing has been something I have been passionate about since I moved to California to work at for the school district 23 years ago and I could not afford to live close. The PAEA has partnered with Mr. Matlof and Half Dome Capital on this project, and we are so excited about the potential housing that it will bring to our members.

Our Executive Board has heard from many of our 850 teachers about the need for affordable housing in this area. The vast majority of our teachers **cannot** live in the community we serve. As median income earners, we earn too much to qualify for low-income housing, but not enough to afford market-rate rents, let alone payments on a purchase. Even with newly constructed apartment complexes adding to the housing supply in the area, typical rent can exceed half of the monthly take-home salary of an experienced teacher.

Palo Alto is known for its excellent schools and education, but the fear is that we are going to lose great teachers and struggle to recruit new ones because teachers can't afford to live in this area. We have teachers who commute from Gilroy, Morgan Hill, Aptos, and Dublin (to name just a few places). This long commute takes a toll on our teachers' quality of life and decreases the value of their salaries. It also adds to traffic and pollution problems in the county.

When teachers live in or near their school communities, students also benefit. We want to be part of the community we teach in. We want to organize or attend after-school events and support and encourage our students. When a teacher has a commute that can exceed an hour each way, such participation in the life of a school community is much more difficult.

The Palo Alto Educators Association strongly supports this teacher housing project, and we urge your approval.

Sincerely,

Teri Baldwin

Teri Baldwin, President
Palo Alto Educators Association



September 10, 2023

SUBJECT: Agenda Item #2 - 3265 El Camino Real, Palo Alto

Dear Mayor Kou and Honorable Council Members,

We write in strong support of the proposed 44-unit affordable housing development on a vacant lot at 3265 El Camino Real, including the reasonable exceptions to the Zoning Ordinance and design standards being requested through the Planned Home Zoning (PHZ) process.

In addition to helping meet our Regional Housing Needs Allocation numbers, **construction of 44 affordable units for local teachers with ZERO public funding or subsidies is a win for our city**. Students benefit when their teachers live in the community and can dedicate their intellectual and emotional energy to teaching, without having to endure long and expensive commutes each day. Districts can attract and retain the best employees when affordable housing like this is available.

The project site is the perfect location for housing with its proximity to California Avenue retail and services, area transit and bikeways, and local schools. This type of housing directly helps our environment (with lowered vehicle miles traveled), economy (more residents to shop locally consistent with recommendation #10 from the City's Economic Development Strategy), and equity (housing at all income levels makes for a stronger community where people thrive).

We also fully support the reasonable zoning and design deviations being requested by the project as part of this PHZ process. Consistent with the City's Economic Development Strategy, the City is over-retailed already and more retail at this location does not make sense at the site. The parking that will be provided is adequate to meet the project needs given its location near major transit stops, Caltrain, local schools, services, and retail.

Please allow for this project to move forward and allow our city to demonstrate our commitment to creating housing (and especially affordable housing for our teachers) a priority. As recommended in the Santa Clara County Grand Jury Report on Housing from December 16, 2021, we urge you to expedite the review process for housing projects that include Below Market Rate units (Recommendations 9a, 9b, 10a, 14) - such as the proposed project.

Sincerely,

Palo Alto Forward

SUBJECT: PAUSD Housing Proposal at 3265 El Camino Real

Dear Honorable Mayor Kou and Council Members:

We write in support of the project at 3265 El Camino Real that is prioritized for union member employees of the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD). We, Jennifer DiBrienza and Jesse Lodomirak, serve as the President and Vice President of the PAUSD Board of Education, respectively.

We speak as Palo Alto residents who strongly support this new housing development. Mr. Matlof worked directly with PAUSD's bargaining units throughout the process. I trust our union leadership when they tell us these units are desired by their membership and can be filled at the designated rents.

Our entire school district benefits when we reduce stress on our staff. Living closer to our schools will help educators support PAUSD students in a variety of ways. More significantly, it will improve their quality of life by reducing their commutes and giving them more time with their families.

This generous project is an outstanding opportunity to make a small dent in the thousands of housing units Palo Alto must add. It is housing for some of the hardest workers in Palo Alto, near transit, jobs, and services - which will reduce cars on the road and greenhouse gas emissions. It's a win for all of us. Please fast track this and make it happen!

With Regards,

Jennifer DiBrienza
Jesse Lodomirak

The Academy
Affordable Housing Project for CSEA Members
3265 El Camino Real

December 11th, 2023

Mayor Kou and Distinguished Members of the City Council,

My name is Meb Steiner and I am the President of the California School Employees Association, Palo Alto Chapter #301, a 20-year employee of the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD), and a 50+ year resident of Palo Alto. I am writing to you in support of the proposed affordable housing project prioritized for PAUSD employee union members that is located at 3265 El Camino Real.

I support this proposal because the ***need for affordable housing close to work is real***. We all understand this. I was proud to be part of the phenomenal public/non-profit/private partnership that created the successful multi-district employee housing project at 231 Grant Avenue. I want to congratulate Mr. Matlof and Half Dome Capital for recognizing the need and bringing forward this standalone, for-profit affordable housing project proposal for members of our school district employees.

CSEA represents all staff at our school districts ***other than*** our teachers and administrators. Classified employees and their roles are critical to the District's mission and vital to supporting our students. Often times, our members work multiple jobs and many commute from long distances. The opportunity to find affordable housing proximate to their PAUSD jobs would be a huge benefit.

I would ask you to please support this affordable housing project proposal. Please contact me with any questions or for further information.

Respectfully,

Meb

Meb Steiner
President

California School Employees Association, Palo Alto Chapter #301

[REDACTED]

September 8th, 2023

Dear Honorable Mayor Kou and councilmembers,

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto strongly recommends that the City encourage the applicant's proposal to develop 100% rent-restricted housing for teachers at 3265 El Camino Real.

Our comments are based on our League's local housing position which supports actions by the City of Palo Alto that improve the diversity of housing opportunities for all economic levels, ages, and ethnicities and which ensure that all housing is open to everyone without discrimination, and on state and national League policies:

- [Housing and Homelessness](#)
- [Meeting Basic Human Needs](#)

Our city suffers from an extreme shortage of housing available for low and moderate income households, as high land prices, construction costs, the absence of adequate and/or available public or private financing, and land use policies that force developers to focus on luxury homes.

This private developer proposes to help alleviate the shortage of housing affordable to teachers by constructing studio and one-bedroom units in an area well-served by public transportation and near bicycle routes. Significantly, without precedent for 100% below market units, no outright public subsidies are being requested (other than a relaxation of land use regulations). We urge the City to act so that this project remains economically feasible.

The benefits of encouraging this project are many. Teachers' unions support this proposal. Local housing for teachers will eliminate hours-long commutes, help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and help restore the city's economic diversity. It will also improve the quality of life in our community by having our essential teachers live where they work.

Thank you for your consideration of the League's point of view.

Respectfully,

Nancy Shephard and Judy Kleinberg
Co-Presidents, League of Women Voters of Palo Alto

--

League of Women Voters of Palo Alto

3921 E. Bayshore Road
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Phone: (650) 903-0600

Web: www.lwvpaloalto.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/PaloAltoLeague/

Twitter: www.twitter.com/lwvpaloalto

From: [barry kramer](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Printers Cafe
Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 8:50:12 AM

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

I am writing to express my unhappiness that the Printers Cafe lease was not renewed. Printers Cafe was a neighborhood institution and a place for the community to gather. While a landlord can not of course be required to lease its property to a specific tenant, the city should not endorse its decision by granting the landlord any more rights than the minimum they are allowed by law. In other words I would like the city to reject providing the benefits of a conditional use permit if the landlord is not going to take into account the interests of the community. Related, Cal Ave does not have a need for a high end gym in a prime retail location. Of course there is already one next door, but expansion is not in the best interests of the community. We need more gathering places for the community. In that corner alone we have lost Antonios and Calave.

Thank you,
Barry Kramer
[REDACTED]

From: [Jill Bicknell](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#); [Kandikuppa, Nishita](#)
Subject: April 10, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting, Agenda Item #4: Conditional Use Permit for 310 California Avenue
Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 9:25:32 AM

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Commission Members,

My name is Jill Bicknell and I live at 301 Stanford Avenue, in the Evergreen Park neighborhood, about 5 blocks from the property in question. I am active in the Evergreen Park Neighborhood Association and participate in its California Avenue Committee. I am not representing the Association or the Committee with these comments, as we did not have time to gain consensus on the issues for this property, but I am speaking on behalf of myself and the many neighbors who share my views. I will also present these comments at the Commission meeting tonight.

California Avenue is dying, one small business at a time. We are very concerned about keeping this area vibrant and supportive of local businesses as well as providing services and entertainment to the community.

We particularly want to preserve and enhance California Avenue as a pedestrian street, with businesses which are oriented toward walk-in services.

We believe that the Commission should include requirements in conditional use permits that businesses make a contribution to the community and the atmosphere of the walking street. The 310 California Avenue project is a perfect example.

We agree with the finding of the staff report that the 310 California Avenue project conflicts with two Comprehensive Plan policies:

- Policy L-4.1, which is to “encourage the upgrading and revitalization of selected Centers in a manner that is compatible with the character of surrounding neighborhoods, without loss of retail and existing small, local businesses”; and
- Policy B-2.4 which is to “recognize that employers, businesses, and neighborhoods share many values and concerns, including ... preserving Palo Alto’s livability and need to work together with a priority on neighborhood quality of life.”

We also support the many comments included in the staff report that express concern over the loss of family-owned businesses and the pedestrian appeal of California Avenue, and the desire for “vibrant café space on a downtown strip that is inviting to all as opposed to a gym that is targeted towards a select few who are members.”

Unfortunately, the three beloved businesses previously at this address, Printers Café, Moods, and Gallery House, have already left and we can’t bring them back. What we can do now is to request certain conditions for operating the café space so that it is more consistent with the desired use of California Avenue as a

pedestrian street.


Our specific requests include the following:

1. The café must be open to the public;
2. The café should be a full service restaurant, not just a juice/coffee bar with snacks; to this end, the new facilities should not expand so far into the café space that it would limit its functionality and seating capacity;
3. The café should be open during reasonable hours, including evening hours when the gym may be closed; and
4. The café should continue to preserve an outdoor dining space.

We also strongly encourage the Commission to be more proactive about implementing and enforcing the two policies mentioned earlier before more existing businesses are forced out.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We appreciate your consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,
Jill Bicknell

 Palo Alto

From: [Melanie Grondel](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: California Avenue losing 4 thriving businesses in favor of a new gym
Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 10:39:29 AM

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Dear Commissioners,

I am greatly concerned about losing four thriving businesses on California Avenue, Printer's Cafe, Moody's Wine Bar, the Art Gallery and the current Gym.

For years we have fought to make Cal Ave a walking street for a few blocks, a promenade of sorts in it's aspiration. The City Council says it is committed to make this a destination area for restaurants, shopping and a community experience. To keep a characteristic and beloved area and make it into a thriving business destination, that takes commitment to make it worth the effort to walk, bike or visit from a neighboring community. That takes a commitment to zoning and land use so businesses can make an investment in maintaining their beloved establishments and their outside seating.

We have not gotten an effective way to preserve retail and protect the characteristic appeal that sets Cal Ave apart from a strip mall. These factors benefit all the businesses in the area and eventually the landlords who hold properties in a thriving business area, and most of all these factors benefit the customers from near and afar. Customers are the lifeblood that drives this entire retail of our community, after all.

To loose four businesses is entirely contradictory to the stated intentions to preserve and enhance the experience on Cal Ave. It represents a great loss. A new and bigger gym with a limited membership adds next to nothing to the appeal of the walking street on Cal Ave. Most gyms have a place for coffee and snacks for members. It is not clear that the proposed gym will have a coffee place open to the public, so the loss of the beloved Printer's Cafe and Moody's Wine bar is a net total loss for the visitors and businesses activity on Cal Ave, further aggravated by the loss of the Art Gallery.

We need to use our zoning laws and conditional use permit to protect and preserve the retail and a well thought out mix of businesses on Cal Ave that makes Cal Ave the street that we love. It attracts business from neighboring communities in order for all to thrive. We have made a good start with the 3rd Thursday event and need to continue in that direction to promote further improvement.

There is an additional danger that the empty store fronts during the long process of development create further de- vitalization. The dead store front across the street of what was the Nut House is a good case in point. This end of Cal Ave will be a construction zone for years, not a walking street.

We need to use pop up stores to prevent a death spiral.

Olsens, the owners of cherry orchards, including the one they sold to a developer to realize an attractive shopping mall in Sunnyvale, kept their beloved fruit stall open during construction

by setting up a charming fruit stand as could be found on the way to Gilroy in earlier times. This is a good example of how to prevent such a death spiral. Certainly with the design talent available in our area, positive solutions could be found to deal with a pop up shop instead of a dead storefront exemplified by the sorry sight of the former Nut House. We can do better than add another sorry sight across the street.

We can learn from the surrounding communities who have beaten us and are eating our "retail lunch" because they got their act together 3 years ago and more. Our Mayor has praised San Luis Obispo and put it up as a model.

There are 16 walking cities in the US. Plenty ways to learn from for our city how to preserve our precious Cal Ave and other charming retail areas.

We need to hang on to our current zoning and improve it to preserve our vital and beloved walking streets.

Thank you for your consideration - Melanie Grondel - College Terrace, Palo Alto

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Planning Commission](#); [Kandikuppa, Nishita](#)
Cc: [Brian & Jill Bicknell](#)
Subject: RE: April 10, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting, Agenda Item #4: Conditional Use Permit for 310 California Avenue
Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 11:37:53 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

To whom it may concern:

I want to strongly support my neighbor Jill's perspective on this. While I cannot make the meeting tonight to speak for myself, please consider her as representing me. My name is David Matheson and I live at 280 Oxford in the Evergreen Park neighborhood.

I want to add one additional point:

Closing Cal Ave was the best thing that happened to the street in ten years. I live and work nearby, and the increase in vitality and use is night and day. Before the closure, it was a tired and slowly dying downtown. After the closure, things brightened up noticeably. We must amplify this bright spot—it is actually working—and leverage it to further increase vitality of this critical community asset. Please take a proactive role: don't leave it up to chance or let nostalgic forces that fantasize that cars are essential to vitality unwind the progress that has been made.

Please take whatever additional actions you see fit to increase vitality of the Cal Ave walking street in the specific case of this permit, I cannot envision everything you might be able to do.

I know that many other neighbors also share these views. The Evergreen Park Neighborhood Association charter requires a formal vote before the neighborhood association can take political position, and we didn't have time to conduct one. So our officers and their delegates cannot represent these views as official. That said, my personal view based on interactions with my neighbors is that a statement along the lines in this email thread would have passed with broad support.

Best Regards,

David

From: Jill Bicknell [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 9:25 AM
To: planning.commission@cityofpaloalto.org; nishita.kandikuppa@cityofpaloalto.org
Subject: April 10, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting, Agenda Item #4: Conditional Use Permit for 310 California Avenue

Commission Members,
My name is Jill Bicknell and I live at 301 Stanford Avenue, in the Evergreen Park

neighborhood, about 5 blocks from the property in question. I am active in the Evergreen Park Neighborhood Association and participate in its California Avenue Committee. I am not representing the Association or the Committee with these comments, as we did not have time to gain consensus on the issues for this property, but I am speaking on behalf of myself and the many neighbors who share my views. I will also present these comments at the Commission meeting tonight.

California Avenue is dying, one small business at a time. We are very concerned about keeping this area vibrant and supportive of local businesses as well as providing services and entertainment to the community.

We particularly want to preserve and enhance California Avenue as a pedestrian street, with businesses which are oriented toward walk-in services.

We believe that the Commission should include requirements in conditional use permits that businesses make a contribution to the community and the atmosphere of the walking street. The 310 California Avenue project is a perfect example.

We agree with the finding of the staff report that the 310 California Avenue project conflicts with two Comprehensive Plan policies:

- Policy L-4.1, which is to “encourage the upgrading and revitalization of selected Centers in a manner that is compatible with the character of surrounding neighborhoods, without loss of retail and existing small, local businesses”; and
- Policy B-2.4 which is to “recognize that employers, businesses, and neighborhoods share many values and concerns, including ... preserving Palo Alto’s livability and need to work together with a priority on neighborhood quality of life.”

We also support the many comments included in the staff report that express concern over the loss of family-owned businesses and the pedestrian appeal of California Avenue, and the desire for “vibrant café space on a downtown strip that is inviting to all as opposed to a gym that is targeted towards a select few who are members.”

Unfortunately, the three beloved businesses previously at this address, Printers Café, Moods, and Gallery House, have already left and we can’t bring them back. What we can do now is to request certain conditions for operating the café space so that it is more consistent with the desired use of California Avenue as a pedestrian street.

Our specific requests include the following:

1. The café must be open to the public;
2. The café should be a full service restaurant, not just a juice/coffee bar with snacks; to this end, the new facilities should not expand so far into the café space that it would limit its functionality and seating capacity;

3. The café should be open during reasonable hours, including evening hours when the gym may be closed; and
4. The café should continue to preserve an outdoor dining space.

We also strongly encourage the Commission to be more proactive about implementing and enforcing the two policies mentioned earlier before more existing businesses are forced out.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We appreciate your consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,
Jill Bicknell

, Palo Alto

From: [Kingston Duffie](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#); [Kandikuppa, Nishita](#)
Cc: jcbicknell@eoainc.com; [liz](#)
Subject: 4/10/24 Planning Commission Meeting, Agenda Item #4
Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 12:11:40 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

My name is Kingston Duffie. I live at 343 Oxford Ave. I am the treasurer of the Evergreen Park Neighborhood Association -- although I am speaking here only on my personal behalf as the neighborhood association has not yet had an opportunity to organize a coordinated response.

I just saw a copy of the message that Jill Bicknell sent you regarding the conditional use permit for 310 California Ave. I want you to know that I share the same concerns and recommendations that Jill expressed -- and I believe are shared by many others in the neighborhood.

More generally, I feel strongly that your careful attention to the future of California Ave will have a direct and significant impact on our quality of life in this neighborhood.

Thanks,

Kingston Duffie

From: [Kandikuppa, Nishita](#)
To: [Dao, Veronica](#)
Subject: FW: Agenda Item #4. 310 Cal Avenue Conditional Use Permit
Date: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 4:14:03 PM
Attachments: [image0.png](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)



Nishita Kandikuppa

Associate Planner

Planning and Development Services Department

(650) 838-2806 | nishita.kandikuppa@cityofpaloalto.org

www.cityofpaloalto.org

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From: jack koepfgen [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 3:53 PM
To: Kandikuppa, Nishita <Nishita.Kandikuppa@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Subject: Re: Agenda Item #4. 310 Cal Avenue Conditional Use Permit

Hi Nishita—thanks for forwarding my last letter. Also in my original letter I wrote (which is included first) in the packet, you responded with the below in green. From what I understand, this is not exactly the case. Al Ghafouri did sign a shorten lease for a slightly reduced rate but it was by no means voluntary.....he was more or less strong armed into signing the lease as he was given a 3 day eviction notice or pay pre-pandemic rent which he or the other 2 businesses could afford at that time. He was told he would have a chance to again apply for an extended lease in April and would pay full market rate. Seems pretty sketchy to me. This and other letters and documents are all included in the packet going to the ptc. Just wanted to make sure that the full story is addressed.

Thanks —Jack Koepfgen

I hope this finds you well – I am following up on your email regarding Printer's Café.

I reached out to the applicant last week to confirm whether Printer's Café would continue to rent the 320 California Avenue space beyond this year. Please see the applicant's response in green below:

Printers Cafe voluntarily shortened its lease earlier this year. The lease was originally scheduled to terminate on October 31, 2025. The parties mutually agreed to reduced rent during the Covid pandemic and for a period of time afterward, but when the original rent was to be reinstated, Printers Cafe indicated a preference to shorten the lease term in exchange for a reduced rent for that shortened term. The new lease termination date, as requested by Printers Cafe, is April 6, 2024.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns – I'd be happy to pass them on to the applicant!

Best,
Nishita

<image001.png> **Nishita Kandikuppa**
Associate Planner
Planning and Development Services Department
(650) 838-2806 | nishita.kandikuppa@cityofpaloalto.org
www.cityofpaloalto.org

<image002.png>

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Sent from my iPad

On Apr 8, 2024, at 1:38 PM, Kandikuppa, Nishita <Nishita.Kandikuppa@cityofpaloalto.org> wrote:

Hi Jack,

Thank you for your email – as the staff report has already been published, I will not be able to include this email in the formal report. However, it has been brought to PTC's attention.

Please let me know if you have additional questions or comments!

Best,
Nishita

<image001.png> **Nishita Kandikuppa**
Associate Planner
Planning and Development Services Department
(650) 838-2806 | nishita.kandikuppa@cityofpaloalto.org
www.cityofpaloalto.org

[<image002.png>](#)

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From: jack koepfgen [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, April 8, 2024 1:33 PM
To: Kandikuppa, Nishita <Nishita.Kandikuppa@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Subject: Fwd: Agenda Item #4. 310 Cal Avenue Conditional Use Permit

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Hi Nishita,

I wrote you of my concerns back in November regarding my concerns for the above Subject and I received your timely response with information. I did see my original letter was in the information packet for this Wednesday's planning commission meeting and I thank you.

As per directions in the Agenda, I wrote an additional letter which I submitted yesterday to be included for the commission to consider. My letter to them is included below. I just want to make sure, it gets included for review as I did not see it in the information section under the other documents. This subject is scheduled to be addressed at 9:10pm Wednesday April 10 and unfortunately, I will not be able to attend that late due to having both my young granddaughters under our care this week so I want to make sure my comments are considered. I may try and get over there around 6 to see if I can talk to anyone but have to leave no later than 7pm. Thanks for your help. Really unhappy with this proposed expansion which displaces a heritage Palo Alto Business (40 years)

Jack and Susan Koepfgen

Tasso street, PA

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: jack koepfgen [REDACTED]
Date: April 7, 2024 at 8:40:51 PM PDT
To: Planning.Commission@cityofpaloalto.org
Subject: Agenda Item #4. 310 Cal Avenue Conditional Use Permit

PA Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my concern about the application for the Subject Address to be entirely converted to a gym business which has or will displace three existing businesses that were in the building, one of which has been a Palo Alto fixture for 40 years. In addition to the expulsion of these businesses, in particular Printers Cafe, the loss of this space will result in several long time employees losing their jobs. This will greatly

affect those in the community of who have patronized the Cafe for many years and will take away from Cal Avenue needed small business diversity. I question the benefit to the overall Cal Avenue business district for a greatly expanded gym at the expense of eliminating Printers Cafe. At the very least, Printers should be allowed to continue in its present form. A possible compromise might consider expansion into the vacated space in the back of the building that the Art Gallery used to occupy.

Printers Cafe is a Heritage Palo Alto institution and as a long time resident, I would hate to see it be forced out of business by over expansion of a questionable need.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jack and Susan Koepfgen

 Palo Alto—94301

Sent from my iPad

From: [Kandikuppa, Nishita](#)
To: [Dao, Veronica](#)
Subject: FW: Al Ghafouri/ printers cafe
Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 8:49:04 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

Hi Veronica,

Please add this email to the public comments for PTC.

Best,
Nishita



Nishita Kandikuppa
Associate Planner
Planning and Development Services Department
(650) 838-2806 | nishita.kandikuppa@cityofpaloalto.org
www.cityofpaloalto.org

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From: Mirco Horst <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 10:15 PM
To: Kandikuppa, Nishita <Nishita.Kandikuppa@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Cc: Laura Roberts <[REDACTED]>; Peter Ko <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Al Ghafouri/ printers cafe

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Hi Nishita,

Please add this to the records.

Thanks, Mirco

Begin forwarded message:

From: Al Ghafouri <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Al Ghafouri/ printers cafe

Date: March 26, 2024 at 11:37:04 AM PDT

To: Mirco Horst <[REDACTED]>, Nina Main <[REDACTED]>

Hi Mirco , Hi Nina ,

I talked with my family last night and let me say for what ever reason for all what happened up to date I want to put this behind me and go on with my life I don't want to leave this place that I love so much over the years with anger and frustration and I do whatever I can to make sure you get your permit to open your gym and cafe . I won't be coming to April 10 th meeting and I will tell as many as my customers that I know they received first notice that I gave my blessing to you to open your gym that maybe one day I be back to help you with your California cafe to expand your catering this way they all know maybe I be back and for them not to attend the meeting . If you ever need any help for your cafe I be glad to help. Wish you lots of luck and success I will send this email to city officials as well so they know too . Al