

SUPPLEMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS PART 2
(RECEIVED BY 12PM 4/27/23)

Zoning Adjustments Board
City of Berkeley

Subject: 2555 College Ave Apartment Building

This proposed building exceeds the size and scope of space consumed even in this congested South Campus neighborhood. Due to concessions approved by staff it overcrowds sidewalks for passage, makes no provision for parking, reduces sunlight on adjoining properties, fails to add appropriate solar power to the development, allows this small foot print building to be the tallest in the area, removes the set back that has been appropriate for zoning in this neighborhood, and reduces common areas to insignificant size for the families to utilize while living there.

Housing with affordable rents is important to Berkeley and is welcome next door. I look in other areas of the city like that housing at Martin Luther King, Jr Way and Cedar St to understand set back and open space must be a part of any project, especially affordable rent homes with children. Having raised four children in my home, and four grandchildren currently being raised there, I know the value of room to play.

The encroachment of this new construction upon my property is unfair to my family and me. Not only will it be too close, but it will also be ugly and unappealing. The "tenement" nature of the stairs and walkways up four stories on the east side of the project is not desirable. I have asked the builder to cover, turn the building, or make other accommodation to reduce this situation, and I have been ignored. You might say that it is better than what was there, however, a fence tall enough to cover the former auto shop did so, that cannot be said for a four-story building full of windows, walkways, and stairs. Also, with no elevator or other provisions, how does a handicapped individual, as I am, use these facilities?

In the first zoom meeting regarding the construction, I raised many of these issues, but did not think it appropriate to dominate the presentation with my questions. I did, however, raise the issue of solar power for the all-electric building, which is not mentioned in the zoning notice. I was told that the minimum required panels were only to be installed on the building (as I remember, three). I have 18 panels on my home, which is sufficient for me, but only three panels will not support the real goal here, reducing greenhouse gas in Berkeley and elsewhere. How do the affordable rent occupants of the project have equal access to solar as those who are wealthier may have?

There are no parking spaces nor parking permits allowed. Currently, my daughter cannot use curb parking on Parker Street or College Avenue, though she purchases an area "D" Permit. The only space that she finds is that created by capping the driveway to our home. If anyone believes that thirty to sixty persons next door will not have a car with them, please prove it to me. Parking is already maximized when students are in town, these provisions will make it worse. There must be some spaces for parking spaces in the project.

For these reasons presented above, I request that the Zoning Adjustments Board amend the project or reject it all together.

Sincerely,

Steven KoneffKlatt
2707 Parker St, Berkeley, CA 94704

Jacob, Melinda

Subject: FW: Oppositionh to granting exceptions for 705 Euclid project

-----Original Message-----

From: Theodore D. Raphael <tdraphael@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 27, 2023 9:28 AM
To: Roe, Russell <RRoe@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Oppositionh to granting exceptions for 705 Euclid project

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April 26, 2023

Russell Roe
Associate Planner/ Code Enforcement
City of Berkeley
Berkeley, California

Dear Mr. Roe:

We wish to express our strongest opposition to the granting of exceptions to the rules requested by the developer of 705 Euclid.

The basis of our opposition is two-fold: it is an unmerited exception and its realization will have direct deleterious effects on the enjoyment of our property at 694 Hilldale, separated from 705 Euclid by only one lot, 696 Hilldale. (Note: 694 and 696 Hilldale actually front on the east side of Euclid, adjacent to 705 Euclid, although they are accessed from Hilldale and have Hilldale addresses.)

As you know better than us, exceptions to the rules are appropriate for unusual circumstances pertaining to the idiosyncrasies of a particular lot, such as a minor variance from the setback regulations, to allow a lot to be feasibly accommodate a residence. Such exceptions to the rules are of great benefit to the developer, with little or no impact on the lot's neighbors.

Such is not the case with 705 Euclid. The lot is a standard, sloped Berkeley Hills lot, similar to its neighbors on the east side of Euclid. In this case, the developer simply wishes to build an oversized house not permitted by the rules. There is nothing preventing the developer from building a house that conforms with current rules. There is no compelling reason to grant an exception to the rules in this case. The planned house is out of character for the neighborhood, due to its height and volume, in violation of the very reason the rules were established to safeguard the character of the neighborhood. The request for an exception to the rules should be denied on this basis alone.

However, building of the planned house will have a severe effect on the light, privacy, and views at 696 Hilldale, and, to a lesser extent, at our home at 694.

We spent five whole years searching for a retirement home in Berkeley, from 2009 to 2014 (this can be confirmed by our agents Nancy Mueller and Terri White of Berkeley Hills Realty). We wanted view privacy from adjacent homes, which is not achieved easily. We were not concerned about what might be built on the unimproved lot at 705 Euclid, as we knew that the rules would not permit the building of a house that would compromise our privacy and views.

An exception granted to the 705 Euclid project would greatly compromise our privacy, as the uppermost deck at 705 would allow views directly onto the entire length of the west-facing deck of our house, completely destroying our privacy. The purchase of our property was premised entirely on the reasonable expectation that the rules would continue to be enforced in the neighborhood. We are in our late 70s and expected the purchase of our last home to afford us the privacy we sought to enjoy during the remaining years of our lives.

The loss of privacy will undoubtedly reduce the value of our property, as well. Today we have valuable, complete privacy from our neighbors, due to the siting of the properties. If an exception to the rules is granted, we will lose our coveted privacy and substantially lower the value of our property.

There is no reason that a house at 705 cannot conform to the rules to which the builders of surrounding lots observed. We will suffer if the exception is granted. We will not suffer, nor will the developer of 705 Euclid, if the exception is denied.

For the benefit of sound public policy and the unnecessary loss of privacy we will suffer, we urge you to deny the requested exception to the rules for the 705 Euclid project.

Sincerely,

Theodore D. Raphael
Mary E, Raphael
694 Hilldale Ave.
510-684-1912

Jacob, Melinda

From: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB)
Subject: FW: Willard Clubhouse

From: Jesse Greenspan <jgreens14@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 8:18 PM
To: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) <Planningzab@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Willard Clubhouse

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Zoning Adjustments Board,

I'm the parent of two Berkeley elementary students (who attend John Muir), and I'm writing in support of the proposed remodel of Willard Playhouse. The re-model would help children and families, and there doesn't seem to be any compelling reason to oppose it.

Thanks for the time, and I'm looking forward to viewing the new Willard Playhouse once it's complete.

Best,
Jesse Greenspan

Jacob, Melinda

From: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB)
Subject: FW: Please support rec space for kids at Willard Park

From: Maya Amago <amago.maya@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 7:26 PM
To: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) <Planningzab@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Please support rec space for kids at Willard Park

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Zoning Adjustments Board,

Due to parental obligations, I will be unable to attend the meeting this week as will the dozens, if not hundreds of parents who desperately need or rely on childcare in our city.

The proposed remodel of Willard Playhouse will not only be an aesthetic improvement and protect green space, it will dramatically help children across Berkeley, particularly low-income children and families.

We urge you to support this important project and remember that Berkeley needs these types of recreational improvements, community spaces, and childcare options in our city. Thank you for your dedication to Berkeley.

***Regards,
Maya Amago***

Jacob, Melinda

From: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB)
Subject: FW: Willard Park Clubhouse

From: rj godin <votingcitizen@outlook.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 5:28 PM
To: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) <Planningzab@cityofberkeley.info>
Cc: Humbert, Mark <MHumbert@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Willard Park Clubhouse

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I am a neighborhood home owner resident who uses Willard Park on a regular basis. I have attended multiple project reviews for the past several years, in person and via Zoom. I provided feedback to the former project manager and the her replacement.

It is very unfortunate that a small minority has been able to delay this project for so long. Community input was accommodated and the project scope was materially changed. Unfortunately, the small minority will only be satisfied with no project at all.

The Willard Park Clubhouse needs to be expanded so it can provide programs for more children and become a community center. The current clubhouse is too small, run down and insufficient to support the number of children that deserve it.

Please approve the zoning variance as requested so construction can begin as soon as possible.

Thank you,

RJ Godin
2614 Stuart Street

Jacob, Melinda

From: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB)
Subject: FW: Willard Clubhouse Project - yay!

From: beth alyse snyder <bethalyse@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 5:16 PM
To: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) <Planningzab@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Willard Clubhouse Project - yay!

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Dear Zoning Adjustments Board,

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We urge you to support this important project and remember that Berkeley needs these types of recreational improvements, community spaces, and childcare options in our city. Thank you for your dedication to Berkeley.

Regards,

Elizabeth Snyder

--

Beth Alyse Snyder

Guerrilla Makeovers

www.GuerrillaMakeovers.com

1-866-293-STYLE

Jacob, Melinda

From: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB)
To: Darryl Knudsen; Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB)
Subject: RE: Please support rec space for kids at Willard Park

From: Darryl Knudsen <darrylknudsen@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 4:12 PM
To: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) <Planningzab@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Please support rec space for kids at Willard Park

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Zoning Adjustments Board,

I want to see the proposed improvements to the Willard Park clubhouse implemented. I will be unable to attend the public meeting this week (as will many parents who need or rely on childcare), so I am submitting my comments in writing to the Board.

I have a personal and close connection to Willard Park. I am a nearby resident and homeowner, and I frequently walk to Willard Park with my dog. My younger child will also be attending Willard Middle School next year, and my older child previously attended Willard Middle School.

The proposed remodel of Willard Playhouse is, in my view, an excellent proposal. I believe the improvements will be an aesthetic improvement to the park that will increase use and enjoyment. I have read through details about the proposal, and I am convinced that the proposal will protect green space and that it will increase use and activity in and around the immediate area of the clubhouse. Further, I understand that it will dramatically help children across Berkeley, particularly low-income children and families.

The current clubhouse is an eyesore that reduces the value of the park. Especially when I was new to the area but also now, I have found that the current dilapidated and unused clubhouse projects a sense of decay, decline, and neglect that reduces my sense of safety or interest in using the nearby areas of the park with my children or for myself. It is also an aesthetic detraction to my enjoyment of the park. I'm sure I'm not alone.

Our iconically liberal city should prioritize the needs of our most vulnerable e.g., the low-income children and families who stand to benefit, and it should also prioritize investments that make Berkeley fresh, dynamic, well-maintained, and attractive. I understand that there are a small but committed group of people, who wish to preserve things as they are. In my view, this position of "no change" fails to recognize that our city must be dynamic to remain vibrant, enjoyable, and attractive. I believe this effort to ward off change represents a misguided quest to preserve their view of the city's halcyon days in a way that is narrow-minded and stultifying to our city's progressive values. If they succeed in blocking this project, I fear their obstructive efforts will only further contribute to the mummification of our city in perverse rags of stagnation and injustice.

For all these reasons, I urge you to support this important project and remember that Berkeley needs these types of recreational improvements, community spaces, and childcare options in our city. Thank you for your dedication to Berkeley.

Sincerely,
Darryl Knudsen

Jacob, Melinda

From: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB)
Subject: FW: Please support rec space for kids at Willard Park

From: sue dykstra <suedykstra@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 3:58 PM
To: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) <Planningzab@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Please support rec space for kids at Willard Park

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Dear Zoning Adjustments Board,

Due to parental obligations, I will be unable to attend the meeting this week as will the dozens, if not hundreds of parents who desperately need or rely on childcare in our city.

The proposed remodel of Willard Playhouse will not only be an aesthetic improvement and protect green space, it will dramatically help children across Berkeley, particularly low-income children and families.

We urge you to support this important project and remember that Berkeley needs these types of recreational improvements, community spaces, and childcare options in our city. Thank you for your dedication to Berkeley.

Regards,

Sue Dykstra

Jacob, Melinda

From: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB)
Subject: FW: Please support rec space for kids at Willard Park

From: Josie de Janvry <josiedejanvry@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 3:27 PM
To: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) <Planningzab@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Please support rec space for kids at Willard Park

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We urge you to support this important project and remember that Berkeley needs these types of recreational improvements, community spaces, and childcare options in our city. Thank you for your dedication to Berkeley.

Regards,
Josie de Janvry
Berkeley resident, 2727 Woolsey Street

Jacob, Melinda

From: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB)
Subject: FW: Please support rec space for kids at Willard Park

From: Oliver McCrum <oliver@omwines.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 3:11 PM
To: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) <Planningzab@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Please support rec space for kids at Willard Park

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Dear Zoning Adjustments Board,

Due to parental obligations, I will be unable to attend the meeting this week as will the dozens, if not hundreds of parents who desperately need or rely on childcare in our city.

The proposed remodel of Willard Playhouse will not only be an aesthetic improvement and protect green space, it will dramatically help children across Berkeley, particularly low-income children and families.

We urge you to support this important project and remember that Berkeley needs these types of recreational improvements, community spaces, and childcare options in our city. Thank you for your dedication to Berkeley.

Regards,

Oliver McCrum
2373 Woolsey St
Berkeley

Cell: +1 510/703.8222

www.omwines.com

Jacob, Melinda

From: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB)
Subject: FW: Please support Willard Park Playhouse

From: Denise Hall Montgomery <dhm@dhmarchitecture.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 10:20 AM
To: Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) <Planningzab@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Please support Willard Park Playhouse

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Zoning Adjustments Board,

As a longtime Berkeley Elmwood resident, business owner, Architect, Landmark Preservation Commissioner, and working parent, I am in strong support of the proposed remodel of the Willard Playhouse. I've closely followed the extremely thorough and lengthy design process of the Playhouse over the years and am heartened not only with the proposed design, but also with the sensitivity in the process to listen to all the parties impacted by the proposed project.

The proposed remodel of Willard Playhouse will not only be a functional and aesthetic improvement to the neighborhood, it will dramatically help families across Berkeley increase access to high quality child care, aftercare, and summer programs - particularly for low-income children and families. In my professional opinion, the design is sensitive to the surroundings and will have little impact on the overall use of the park (ie. the tot lot, the grassy fields, the tennis courts, etc.) itself but will increase the utility of the portion of the park already allocated for child focused education and community based programs. It will also provide a public facility in near proximity to several Berkeley schools (ie. Sylvia Mendez, Emerson, and Willard Middle School) in a part of Berkeley that lacks similar facilities.

I implore you to support this important project and remember that Berkeley needs these types of public recreational improvements, community spaces, and childcare options in our city.

Thank you for your public service on behalf of Berkeley.

Respectfully,
Denise Hall Montgomery

architecture

denise hall montgomery

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ig: @dhm_architecture