



# City/School Liaison Committee Special Meeting Final Minutes



Special Meeting  
February 20, 2020

Council Member Kou called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M. in the Community Meeting Room, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California.

Present: City of Palo Alto Representatives  
Greg Tanaka, Council Member  
Lydia Kou, Council Member  
Chantal Gaines, Assistant to the City Manager, Staff Liaison

Palo Alto Unified School District Representatives  
Jennifer DiBrienza, Board President  
Todd Collins, Board Vice President  
Don Austin, Superintendent, Palo Alto Unified School District

## Minutes Approval

2. Approval of the December 19, 2019 Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION:** Board Member Collins moved, seconded by Board Member DiBrienza to approve the minutes as presented.

**MOTION PASSED:** 4-0

3. Selection of Committee Chair.

**NOMINATION:** Board Member Collins moved, seconded by Board Member DiBrienza to nominate Council Member Kou as Chair for the City School Liaison Committee for 2020.

**NOMINATION:** Council Member Kou moved, seconded by Council Member Tanaka to nominate Board Member Collins as Chair for the City School Liaison Committee for 2020.

Board Member DiBrienza appreciated the City hosting the meetings and felt a Council Member should serve as Chair.

**NOMINATION:** Board Member Collins moved, seconded by Board Member DiBrienza to nominate Council Member Tanaka as Chair for the City School Liaison Committee for 2020.

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## COUNCIL MEMBER KOU DECLINED NOMINATION

Council Member Tanaka preferred Board Member Collins serve as Chair because Council Member Tanaka had not served on the City School Liaison Committee (Committee) previously.

Council Member Kou believed each member of the Committee should have an opportunity to serve as Chair.

## NOMINATION OF BOARD MEMBER COLLINS PASSED: 4-0

### 4. Superintendent's Comments and City Manager's Comments.

Don Austin, Superintendent of Schools, Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) appreciated the meetings between City and PAUSD Staff. Staff had recently discussed in depth grade separations and Cubberley Community Center. Both high schools were searching for principals, and first-round interviews were scheduled for later in the day. The depth of the candidate pool had improved significantly over previous recruitments. PAUSD's safety work was progressing, and PAUSD Staff was going to present recommendations to the Board of Education (Board) soon. Development of the budget was to begin the following week.

Chair Collins inquired regarding actions taken in relation to the coronavirus.

Mr. Austin advised that he had spoken with City Manager Shikada and the Santa Clara County Office of Education about best practices. The Santa Clara County Health Department was going to notify PAUSD of anyone subject to a mandatory quarantine but not a voluntary quarantine. There were no issues and no noticeable increases in illnesses.

Council Member Tanaka asked about the motivation for the resignation of the Palo Alto High School principal.

Mr. Austin indicated the principal wanted a change. The current Gunn High School principal was going to serve as a mentor to the new principal until her retirement.

Chantal Cotton Gaines, Assistant to the City Manager advised that meetings between PAUSD and City Staff were going well. The City was participating in Job Shadow Day, and 31 high school students were going to learn about careers in local government on February 26, 2020. City and PAUSD Staff were collaborating on the Council's directions regarding vaping.

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Council Member Tanaka asked if PAUSD fined students for falsely pulling fire alarms.

Mr. Austin replied no. A couple of students were punished but were not fined.

5. Review of Recent City Council and PAUSD Board Meetings
  - a. CITY: Recent Council Agendas Recap.
  - b. PAUSD: Recent Board Agendas Recap.

Council Member Kou reported the Palo Alto Youth Council (PAYC) scheduled a vaping forum for April 2, 2020 at Mitchell Park. Youth and experts from the Santa Clara County Department of Health and the Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) were going to discuss vaping. The Council reviewed the Housing Work Plan. On February 24, 2020 the Council was going to hold a Study Session about community policing and discuss data about traffic, safety and bicycle boulevards.

Council Member Tanaka expressed interest in protected bike lanes and requested Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) Staff provide feedback. Some cities installed bike lanes between the curb and on-street parking.

Council Member Kou advised that the City Manager submitted a letter of support for Senate Bill (SB) 795. She inquired about the Board of Education's (Board) position.

Chair Collins indicated the Board needed additional information.

Council Member Kou added that a letter of support was sent to the Board of Supervisors regarding an update of the Stanford University Community Plan. The Council continued to work on a Business Tax measure for the November, 2020 ballot.

Chair Collins asked if the City was considering additional measures for the November, 2020 ballot.

Council Member Kou responded no. She summarized a few State measures that could be placed on the November, 2020 ballot.

Board Member DiBrienza reported the Board approved a Resolution in support of the Foothill-De Anza measures.

Chair Collins related that the Board placed a measure to renew and increase the existing Parcel Tax on the May 5, 2020 ballot.

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## 6. NVCAP Update.

Rachel Tanner, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Services outlined the North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan (NVCAP) area, which contained the Fry's building site, and the Council's goals for developing the NVCAP. There was interest in naturalizing Matadero Creek within the NVCAP area, and some opportunities were feasible. A Historic Resource Evaluation of 340 Portage, the Fry's building, was conducted. The NVCAP was working on preferred alternatives for the area. A community meeting was scheduled for February 27, 2020 and a Study Session before the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) was planned for April, 2020. She compared data for vibrant areas suggested by Working Group members with data for the NVCAP area.

Chair Collins requested the methodology for calculating the vibrancy target.

Ms. Tanner explained that the City's consultant calculated the numbers.

Chair Collins indicated the vibrancy target appeared to be arbitrary and needed to be clearly explained.

Board Member DiBrienza remarked that the area was extremely under-housed in light of the services and jobs located in the area.

Ms. Tanner summarized three preferred alternatives that could be found on the website.

Council Member Kou requested the current zoning for the area.

Ms. Tanner advised that 340 Portage was zoned for Residential Multifamily uses (RM-30).

Council Member Kou requested information regarding the retail zoning for 340 Portage.

Ms. Tanner related that Research and Development (R&D) office and retail uses were permitted for the Fry's building.

Council Member Kou understood the retail use for the Fry's building did not have an expiration date. At the last meeting of the NVCAP Working Group, the property owner's representative mentioned that Target had expressed interest in the Fry's building. Alternative 3 was providing 2,646 housing units, which would significantly increase the population in the area. Naturalizing Matadero Creek was going to utilize a portion of the Fry's parking lot.

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COUNCIL MEMBER TANAKA LEFT THE MEETING AT 9:15 A.M.

Chair Collins emphasized the need to consider a neighborhood school with housing in the planning process. The NVCAP area was not currently well served with schools.

Ms. Tanner noted parcels within the NVCAP area were privately owned by multiple individuals, which made zoning for a school difficult. In addition, there was no guarantee that parcels zoned for housing would be redeveloped with housing. A short-term goal was to increase connections across Caltrain tracks.

Chair Collins felt a school should be one of the most important considerations in planning the area. The Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) Board of Education (Board) were not provided a place on the NVCAP Working Group; he felt Ms. Tanner should build a relationship with PAUSD Staff soon. A tunnel or bridge to El Carmelo Elementary School was not a popular option. He urged Ms. Tanner to increase communications about community meetings. Planning the area correctly was extremely important for constituents of the City and PAUSD.

Council Member Kou asked about the original amount of housing proposed for the site.

Ms. Tanner explained that 354 housing units could be built in the area based on the existing zoning.

7. Updates on Ongoing Matters
  - a. Cubberley Update
  - b. Grade Separation (Rail Crossings) Update.

Kristen O'Kane, Director of Community Services reported the environmental analysis was close to completion. City and Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) Staff were finalizing a five year lease between the City and PAUSD.

Don Austin, Superintendent of Schools, Palo Alto Unified School District advised that City and PAUSD Staff agreed to the terms of an agreement, however attorneys had raised questions. He needed to discuss the childcare component with City Staff. The general counsel for PAUSD notified him the prior day that the lease was almost complete. The City was not going to assign members to the Ad Hoc Committee until the lease agreement was complete.

Council Member Kou inquired regarding the Ad Hoc Committee.

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Mr. Austin indicated the City requested the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee for development of Cubberley. PAUSD assigned members to the Ad Hoc Committee.

Ms. O'Kane added that City Staff could present the lease and recommend Ad Hoc Committee Members to the Council at the same time. Staff was working on a process for that.

Council Member Kou asked if Council Members or members from City Boards and Commissions would be assigned to the Ad Hoc Committee.

Ms. O'Kane indicated the Ad Hoc Committee would be composed of two Council Members and two Board Members.

Council Member Kou suggested the Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) needed to be involved in some manner.

Chair Collins noted the City and the Board of Education (Board) held different visions for collaboration between the City and the Board. The concept behind the Ad Hoc Committee was to create a single vision for collaboration between the two.

Mr. Austin concurred.

Chair Collins related that Board Member Dauber and he were appointed to the Ad Hoc Committee.

Chantal Cotton Gaines, Assistant to the City Manager reported the Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP) was on track to recommend preferred alternatives to the City Council by the end of April, 2020, and the Council was going to select a preferred alternative thereafter. Three Town Halls Meetings were scheduled to provide information and to obtain feedback from community members.

Chair Collins suggested a notice be posted on the electronic message board outside Palo Alto High School.

Council Member Kou inquired about putting a notice in the Parent Teacher Association's (PTA) e-newsletter.

Chair Collins suggested having Staff write to the Parent Teacher Association Council (PTAC).

Ms. Gaines indicated the XCAP was meeting almost weekly, and their next meeting was February 26, 2020. The XCAP was going to begin narrowing the alternatives at the end of February, 2020 and were going to continue

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through March, 2020. At the end of 2019, the XCAP solicited the public for new ideas; they received six ideas and eliminated three of the ideas as a result. In January 2020, the City Council selected two of the three ideas for further analysis. The XCAP was going to update the Council again by the end of March, 2020.

Mr. Austin related that he was preparing a letter to City Manager Shikada regarding the impact of closing the Churchill Avenue crossing on bus and student travel.

Ms. Gaines noted the XCAP expressed interest in City Staff's communications with PAUSD, and Superintendent Austin's letter was helpful information for the XCAP members.

Chair Collins clarified the reason the PAUSD representative resigned from the XCAP. He asked if communications and coordination between the City and PAUSD were appropriate.

Mr. Austin believed communications and coordination were good in that City Staff requested PAUSD's input. The number of buses crossing the tracks at Churchill warranted consideration of some alternative.

Council Member Kou suggested a PAUSD representative provide public comment during XCAP meetings. The XCAP was seeking input from the business community and other stakeholders. She summarized the two ideas submitted by the community.

Mr. Austin stated anything that limited the traffic flow for school buses at the Churchill, Charleston and Meadow crossings were a concern.

## Future Meetings and Agendas

Board Member DiBrienza questioned whether updates to Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) Board of Education (Board) policies and Safe Routes to School guidelines should be discussed in a City School Liaison Committee (Committee) meeting or at a Board meeting.

Chantal Cotton Gaines, Assistant to the City Manager advised that the Safe Routes to School Staff expressed interest in updating the guidelines. The Safe Routes to School update to the Committee was scheduled for May, 2020, and a discussion of updating the policies and guidelines could be added to the May, 2020 Agenda.

Chair Collins noted a trend in the United Kingdom to declare car-free zones around schools.

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Council Member Kou requested an Agenda Item for review of Proposed Legislation that could impact schools.

Don Austin, Superintendent of Schools, Palo Alto Unified School District added that a legislative update was scheduled for the March 17, 2020 Board meeting.

Chair Collins reported the Board approved the City School Liaison Committee's proposed mission statement during their second December, 2020 meeting.

Council Member Kou requested an Agenda Item regarding Airplane Noise.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 A.M.