

**From:** [Cindy Chen](#)  
**To:** [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Supporting a 69-car garage for Castilleja  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 12:21:30 PM

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Thank you Commissioners for this opportunity to speak. I live on Emerson Street very close to the Castilleja campus, and I want to express my appreciation for the garage options presented to you this evening. I recall last year when the City Council directed the school to reduce the garage capacity to 52 cars. At the time, it struck me as an arbitrary number -- it was significantly smaller in order to address concerns of a few neighbors, but why 52? Did they actually know the number of spots that could fulfill the school's required spaces per city code? Did they know the number of spots that would still allow more trees to be preserved? Did they somehow conjecture that the 52 car capacity would mitigate traffic in a way that no other number could?

The answer to these questions is an emphatic NO. The 52 car limit was an arbitrary, finger in the wind number. Unfortunately, its effect is to significantly impair the school's ability to educate more young women. And yet, to oblige, the school has submitted plans to you that meet Council's limit. Instead of recommending that plan, however, please approve their garage with a 69-car capacity. The slightly larger capacity will get more cars off the streets, it will prevent parking on Spieker Field, it preserves trees, and it STILL adds no additional traffic on any surrounding street, including Emerson - my street.

I thank you for your continued attention. I know some of you are terming out soon on the PTC, and I appreciate your service.

Cindy Chen

**From:** [Roy Maydan](#)  
**To:** [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Castilleja Proposal  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 12:32:12 PM

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I spoke at the PTC meeting last night regarding the Castilleja proposal. Below is the original text of my comments.

Good evening members of the commission. I am Roy Maydan and I have lived in Downtown North for over 25 years. I am grateful for the attention you have given this project. As a citizen who wishes to see City leaders make decisions that will positively impact our property values, our quality of life, and our community, I especially appreciate that you have already supported the merits of this proposal.

Therefore, I am really disappointed to be speaking to you again at yet another hearing on this project, as this does seem to deny the hard work you have already put into this process. The good news is that you have acted in clarity and conviction in the past, and I am sure these improvements will only increase your desire to see this project become a reality.

Your previous review of this project solidified what the data in the EIR proved -- that the garage will not bring more cars to the neighborhood. Now you just need to determine how many parking spots should go below ground and how many should remain on the surface. While I support a proposal keeping as many cars off the street as possible while preserving the trees, I trust your leadership as you make that decision. However, please keep in mind that the staff report estimated that Option E will result in a shortage of parking spaces.

Most of all, it is important for leaders to be able to decide -- then act on those decisions. You have decided once, and this review further defines the plans you have already supported. Now I hope you will make a choice and urge the city council to act.

Roy Maydan  


**From:** [Barbara Gross](#)  
**To:** [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Castilleja Modernization Project  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 1:10:07 PM  
**Attachments:** [Castilleja.pdf](#)

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My comments expressed last night at the PTC meeting are below.

I support this project on its merits.

The time and cost - both lost and spent - on this process seem to go unnoticed and/or unappreciated.

As people in charge of local government, you have experienced this with the construction of the fire station on Newell and Embarcadero, the California Ave Garage, the Public Safety Building.

Please approve this project and move on.

Thank you// Barbara Gross

Good evening, this is Barbara Gross. I live, work and vote in Palo Alto. Thank you for sending this proposal forward with your approval last year. At the city council's direction, the school has improved upon the previous design, which should make this quite easy for you to review and return to the council with your support.

Among the improvements:

- More trees are preserved.
- There are many options for underground parking.
- There are choices for the pool and the delivery bay

You may have noticed by now that over the years, the goals for this project keep moving. What's more, the school is getting confusing and seemingly contradictory guidance at times. With these many different choices for the size and configuration of the garage, you can hopefully find a fair compromise that will stop this constant shifting of the debate.

The delivery options on Emerson both vastly improve on current conditions, moving deliveries further on campus and below grade or behind a sound wall. Both options take neighbors' needs and concerns into account. I see that the school, again in the spirit of compromise, is open to either option.

At the same time, I hear opposing voices who seem to be open to nothing at all. It becomes harder and harder to honor those perspectives when the school has spent years listening, adjusting, and making changes that just never seem to be enough.

Please, approve this project AGAIN.



**From:** [Jim Fitzgerald](#)  
**To:** [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 2:11:27 PM

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Hello Committee Members and Council Members,

I'm Jim Fitzgerald, a long-time resident of Palo Alto. I am here tonight to provide my unqualified support for Castilleja's new redevelopment plan. I want to thank all of you for your support and endorsement of the previous redevelopment plan and it is just unfortunate we need to tie up your time to address this project once again due to a small group of objectors. Everything about this updated project provides improvements for all parties. Including exceptional education for more young women, reduced traffic flow, enhanced beautification of the campus and neighbor facing building and grounds. I might add This was accomplished with the first plan you all approved. This new plan just goes further in that direction.

This new Castilleja plan goes even further in preserving trees, reducing traffic and car trips, limiting hours of operation and educational events, and further enhancing the aesthetics of the campus for neighbors with lower rooflines, increased setbacks, and more underground square footage. These steps have created additional burdens on Castilleja in delivering on its noble mission, but in continuing to be a quality neighbor they are committed to these changed plans and working through the operational inefficiencies they may create. In doing so they can finally build the modern facility needed to nurture and educate our next generation of Women leaders.

As always Castilleja has bent over backwards to meet the concerns and objections of those who oppose this project. However, No one is deluded that any plan will satisfy this obstinate group, so I would advise you to not hold your breath waiting for concurrence from them. What matters most is this committee has already endorsed an excellent redevelopment plan. This new plan addresses the concerns of the City Council and is an even better plan than the last. This plan should receive your enthusiastic RE-recommendation and in particular support for the larger parking option of this plan and I request you provide that as soon as possible.

Thank you.

Jim Fitzgerald

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Jim Fitzgerald

M: 650 888-1293

Email: [jimfitz8@gmail.com](mailto:jimfitz8@gmail.com)

<http://www.linkedin.com/in/jimfitz8>

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**From:** [Lian Bi](#)  
**To:** [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** My comments for yesterday's hearing  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 2:39:47 PM

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Hi,

Below is my comments for yesterday's hearing.

As a near neighbor of Castilleja, I want to speak about two issues: TDM and the garage.

I am happy that after your hearings about Castilleja last fall, it was finally fully understood that the garage would not bring more cars to the neighborhood. Opposing voices have tried to confuse the issue, but I appreciate that you read the EIR carefully, studied the proposal, and were able to see through those attempts. Castilleja is a TDM leader. I wish other organizations in Palo Alto would follow its lead.

Throughout the pandemic, Castilleja has only improved upon its TDM, with additional buses for students who are not ready to return to Caltrain yet. Castilleja's commitment to keeping car trips low will not waver because that is the only way the school will be permitted to enroll more students in the high school. No cause for doubt here. Castilleja is already pivoting to do whatever it takes to keep car trips low.

As for the garage, I am a strong supporter. It is a gift to the neighborhood, a wise investment in the long-term aesthetics and infrastructure of Old Palo Alto. The options before you all improve quality of life and preserve trees. Please remember that the new tree plan also adds over 130 new trees to campus, another HUGE gift to our neighborhood.

I am looking forward to seeing this project finally begin. Please act quickly to lend your support again. Offer the city council clear guidance toward a better future for my neighborhood with underground parking on Castilleja's modernized, sustainable campus.

Thanks  
Lian Bi



**From:** [Andie Reed](#)  
**To:** [Planning Commission](#); [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Castilleja Expansion  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 2:43:50 PM  
**Attachments:** [PTC GFA+BasicNumbers.PDF](#)

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Dear Commissioners,

Thanks for studying this project and listening to all the public speakers, making for such a long night last night.

I appreciated Rachel and Madina getting me back on the schedule so I could speak, since I had technical difficulties. As a follow-up, I wanted to highlight some easy points.

### **PNQL**

There seemed to be some confusion during disclosures. Our neighborhood group, PNQL, offered our "**Neighbors' Perspective**" binder, containing documents previously sent to the PTC, to all 7 commissioners, asking where to deliver it. Five responded, two didn't.

### **VARIANCE/Gross Floor Area**

Thanks to the city council for asking staff to solicit a professional surveyor to confirm existing Gross Floor Area. It's a very important report, and needs to be addressed by the Planning Commission sooner rather than later.

Here's the link: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/planning-amp-development-services/new-development-projects/1310-bryant-street/castilleja-school-building-survey-and-gfa-111721.pdf>

I attach a **summary in two pages:**

1. The Dudek **GFA Survey** results, with the city staff's addition of 2 columns; the proposed demolished SF, and retained and proposed SF.
2. "**Basic Numbers**" chart, including the new information. I always send this page to you, because otherwise it's hard to see all of the important numbers together on one page.

A Variance is required for the difference between **Proposed Gross Floor Area (128,000SF) and Allowed GFA (81,000SF), or 47,000SF.**

A Variance is not granted for the difference between Proposed Gross Floor Area and current GFA, which is how it was presented in the "Finding" voted on by the **PTC 11/4/2020, staff report Packet Pg. 28**, <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/planning-and-transportation-commission/2020-agendas-minutes-and-staff-reports/ptc-11.4-castilleja.pdf>.

Please read **Code Section 18.76.030(c)(1)(B)** as you study the findings, and note that the school increased the size of their own lot by merging residential lots and getting the city to grant the 200 block of Melville to the school.

A Variance is not required if the applicant tears down and rebuilds in the same footprint.

The school keeps saying they are replacing the footprint, but they are tearing down 5 smaller buildings to be replaced by one very large building, and that requires a Variance. A Variance is not based on footprint, it is based on GFA. There is a problem when the square footage being requested for a Variance does not appear in the staff report.

Maybe this is an area that could be negotiated, to reduce the large building to save existing parking lots, but not require the school to go all the way back to 81,000SF. This would take away the need for the garage.

You have a tough job. We appreciate your work.

Thanks and have a good weekend.

Andie

--

Andie Reed CPA

[REDACTED]

Palo Alto, CA 94301

[REDACTED]



PNQL 12/9/21

**Castilleja Gross Floor Area (above grade Square Footage)**

12/3/2021

City Council requested accurate measurement of square footage for Castilleja's expansion project. The city planning staff solicited a professionally prepared "Building Survey and Gross Floor Area Assessment" (Nov 15, 2021), and it shows that current, existing Gross Floor Area is substantially in excess of what is allowed by code (138K vs. 81K SF). Please read this fascinating report.

The below schedule appeared in the ARB staff report, with staff's adjusting out Dudek's reporting. Subtracting out the volumetrics doesn't comply with code; these are the actual numbers.

Staff report for the ARB (12/2/2021) states that buildings were built earlier, before the zoning requirements of volumetrics. However, although the gym and fine arts building were both re-built after 1993, the year staff says volumetrics went into effect, they weren't correctly reported to the city. The mechanical building was built in 2001.

Not reporting the correct floor area that complies with code does not relieve the applicant from the reality that their **Gross Floor Area is 138,346, and their Proposed GFA is 128,687SF and allowed is 81,385SF.**

Castilleja's allowed Gross Floor Area is 81,385SF. Their proposed GFA is 128,687. Until this expert report was produced, there had been many inconsistencies as to the actual current GFA. Now we know.

Neighbors are not against the school rebuilding, just request a lowered profile and less increase in students.

This below is from the ARB report, packet pg 19.

	Original filing (Var request)	after 7,000 error found	TOTAL per Dudek	Demolished	Proposed
Arrillaga Campus C	33,600	33,600	33,793	33,793	
Admin, Chapel	17,781	17,781	17,754	-	17,754
Gym	13,944	13,944	33,513	-	33,513
Ely Arts Building	5,868	5,868	12,360	12,360	-
Maintenance	1,901	1,901	2,863	2,863	-
Pool Equipment	1,203	1,203	884	884	-
Rhoades Hall	42,000	35,000	37,179	37,179	77,420
<b>Dudek's results:</b>	116,297	109,297	<b>138,346</b>	87,079	<b>128,687</b>

Floor Area allowed by Code (PAMC 18.12.040 Table 2; see spreadsheet "Basic Numbers") (81,385)

Castilleja requested a Variance (att'd).

Square footage in excess of Code (Variance Request): **47,302**

PNQ  
12/9/21

BASIC NUMBERS UPDATED 12/6/2021 (SENT TO PTC SAME DAY)

**Basic numbers** from the Nov 2021 plans prepared by the school and Dudek Nov 15, 2021 "Building Survey and Gross Floor Area Assessment":

Square Feet  
Calculations:  

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268,783

1. The parcel size is **268,783SF** (top number on page G.001).
2. The proposed plans above-grade GFA is 109,297 (same page).
3. Previously, plans showed existing GFA = 116,297 per school. Existing GFA has been increased to **138,346SF** by Dudek report.
4. The allowed Floor Area Ratio (PAMC 18.12.040 Table 2) is **.3028**:  
which translates to 81,385 sq ft:

1st 5,000 sq ft @ .45 = 2,250	5,000	0.45	2,250
remaining sq ft @ .30 = 79,135	263,783	0.30	79,135
<b>Total allowed Floor Area Ratio: (81385/268783)=.3028</b>			<b>81,385</b>

(This has been confirmed in city documents)

**5. The proposed floor area per the ARB Dec 2, 2021 staff report:**

(using Dudek numbers, less proposed demo'd and plus new proposed bldg)

**128,687**

6. Additional lower level floor area not qualified as basement:

7,100

7. Total Proposed Gross Floor Area:

**135,787**

8. The proposed floor area exceeds allowed GFA by:

54,402

(or 47,302  
without  
newly discovered  
unaccounted-for  
lower level SF  
unqualified as  
Basement)

9. Actual Floor Area Ratio requested by the school: (#7 / #1)

0.505

10. Floor Area Stated in Request for Variance and these plans:

0.420

11. Allowed Floor Area Ratio (see above)

0.303

11. Percentage increase requested by school: (505- .303)/.303

67%

Double-check: Percentage increase in SF: (54400/81385)

0.67

**From:** [Bill Burch](#)  
**To:** [Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Appreciation for being able to speak at last nights PTC meeting  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 8:49:41 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts in support of Castilleja School during last nights meeting. Below I've included my notes "for the record" :-)

Bill Burch  
[REDACTED]

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Members of the Planning and Transportation Commission, thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of Castilleja School.

My name is Bill Burch. My family has lived in Palo Alto for over 40 years and in that time we've come to love and appreciate our community. We are blessed with wonderful natural resources stretching from the Baylands to Foothill Park. We also enjoy our cultural treasures including The Children's Theater, fantastic libraries, Stanford University, and yes, I would include Castilleja School as well.

We can thank the foresight of those who came before us for these gifts. We should also appreciate the stewardship of our *current* civic leaders for such great new resources as the new Baylands Bike Bridge and the Junior Museum. The "Palo Alto Process" can be painstakingly arduous at times, but wonderful things *can* be achieved.

It's in that spirit of "process" that I'd like to take you back nearly *10 years ago* when Castilleja first reached out to City staff and neighbors about their plans to upgrade the campus and desire to increase enrollment.



Since those initial meetings, Castilleja has shown good faith and a willingness to listen and compromise. For example, on-campus events were drastically cut to reduce impacts, deliveries & pickups have been reduced *and* limited (at a cost to the school ) to improve conditions in the neighborhood. And, the school has limited it's hours of operation.

Castilleja's TDM or Traffic Demand Management program has grown to become a "way of life" with daily trips reduced *by up to 31%*..by adding new bus routes, providing dedicated morning and afternoon shuttles to Caltrain and East Palo Alto, as well as requiring employees to commute by alternate means three days a week and park off-site on those days they *do* drive.

Castilleja advocates for internal carpools and ride-sharing while encouraging cycling and walking for all community members who can do so.

That willingness to *listen and compromise* is reflected in the evolving campus design. The architects have reduced the massing of the buildings along Kellogg and Bryant, while the underground parking and the pool area have been reconfigured to further protect trees. As you know, the school is now offering several different options for the garage and *two* choices for the location of deliveries in response to guidance from the City Council.

A 10 year process..and all the while, time keeps passing.

And all the while, Castilleja cannot offer admission to students who are seeking this education. Every year spent in process, negotiation, and compromise has resulted in *scores* of young women being shut out from joining the Castilleja community.

Time is passing.

The school is making compromises..many of them. And it begins to feel like it will never be enough, like there will *always* be a new issue to delay this process. This project has been receiving *unprecedented scrutiny for over 10 long years*.

Meanwhile, while we are spend so much time talking about setbacks and trees and traffic patterns, we are forgetting the human impact.

Castilleja is a school that is different from other schools. It's not the right place for everyone, and luckily Palo Alto has other outstanding choices for students who are seeking a larger coed environment. But for girls in Palo Alto who *are* looking for something else, Castilleja is right in our midst, walking and biking distance away, waiting for them.

And waiting.

Meanwhile, I know there are residents who take issue with the fact that some students come from outside Palo Alto; they want Castilleja to cater only to our direct community, not to the surrounding towns. I feel compelled to point out that this line of thinking sounds a lot like people want to build a wall around Palo Alto to keep the “outsiders” out and hoard our resources only for ourselves.

In truth, some of the students who come from surrounding towns live in areas where the schools are not as strong, where they don't have local options like Paly and Gunn and this chance to attend Castilleja is an opening to opportunities they can't access any other way.

Whether we like to admit it or not, independent schools—like Castilleja with 22% of its students receiving tuition assistance—are one of *the* most *powerful* ways to gain equal access to educational opportunity. Especially in the Bay Area where real estate values make living in well-resourced school districts impossible for many families.

Time is passing.

I realize that many Palo Altans are concerned about growth. But let me remind you this project is *not* an expansion. The proposed building has a smaller footprint, and car trips are capped. The school has responded to neighbors, community members, city staff, and city leaders with

modifications that improve everything from drop-off patterns..from facade materials... to rooflines.

Tonight you will weigh in about enrollment, the garage, and events. Let's run through what has already been done over the past ten years on these topics:

- Events have *already* been brought to within the limits you set. Quite frankly, a further reduction in the number of events would weaken the communal fabric of the school.
- The garage has been reduced to preserve trees and improve conditions in the neighborhood. The school has offered several different compromises there.

So let's return to enrollment—the actual students who want to learn at Castilleja. The school will *make sure* they do so without adding trips. I know that critics have cast doubt on this promise, but their doubts are unfounded. Castilleja is already keeping this promise, with better transportation demand management than anyone in the Bay Area.

Castilleja will do what it takes to keep car trips level because Castilleja *wants* to educate more girls. This isn't a big high tech company, factory or a corporate office park. It's a small school that seeks to build a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning space and gradually add more students..without adding traffic.

If we step back for a moment, one could argue that years spent on debate have begun to make the proposal seem much bigger than it really is.

Remember...small school, smaller footprint, and a gradual and modest increase in enrollment..with no new traffic.

Let's seize the opportunity to switch the onerous "Palo Alto Process" to one of Palo Alto "Progress".



The conditions of approval can be met. Let's continue to respect the ideals of Palo Alto..great schools, commitment to the greater good, opportunity, and community.

It would seem to me that this proposal "checks all the boxes."

Thank you.

**From:** [Vania Fang](#)  
**To:** [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Castilleja modernization project  
**Date:** Friday, December 10, 2021 12:20:56 AM

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Hi,

I spoke at the PTC hearing last night regarding the Castilleja agenda item and I would like to share my comments with you:

I live across the street from Castilleja on Kellogg Street, and I cannot wait for this project to be approved. I want to look out my windows onto an updated campus with more trees and green space.

The various garage plans, which we have seen today, will move parking from our neighborhood streets to below ground. Whichever plan you choose will also reroute some pick up and drop off below ground. All of this will improve conditions in the neighborhood and enhance the value of the homes in the nearby area.

As you all know, Castilleja is a highly sought after school. People move to Palo Alto because of our outstanding schools, and Castilleja is among them.

I truly appreciate the years of work that Castilleja has put into listening to neighbors' questions and concerns. Now, I hope you will listen to my concerns. I am counting on you to approve this project once and for all. You have sent it forward to the city council with your endorsement before. With these improvements, it should be easy to do so again. Please urge the city council members to do as they have been entrusted to do—to follow your informed and careful guidance to approve this project.

During this long process, the school has willingly met every change requested by City Council and City staff as the goal posts kept moving. This has now resulted in additional alternatives for you to review on their merits. I trust you to find the best among these plans and to help bring this long chapter to a close. Please continue to urge the city council to support this proposal. Thank you very much.

Vania

**From:** [Julia Ishiyama](#)  
**To:** [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** ARB and PTC statements  
**Date:** Friday, December 10, 2021 8:25:41 AM  
**Attachments:** [Ishiyama ARB statement 12.2.21.docx](#)  
[Ishiyama PTC statement 12.8.21.docx](#)

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Dear Council members, Commissioners, and Board members,

I have recently spoken at ARB and PTC meetings in support of Castilleja's modernization plan, and I am attaching both of my statements here for your reference. Thank you again for your consideration.

Best,  
Julia Ishiyama



Julia Ishiyama's December 2 statement to Palo Alto Architectural Review Board

Good morning board members and staff. Thank you for your hard work and your time today.

I'm speaking to you today as a child raised in Palo Alto and as an adult invested in its future. I was born here and attended Castilleja for seven years, walking from my family's house on Lowell Ave. I've recently moved back from Colorado to this place that I've always known was home. Since returning, I can see how much has changed—and what has stayed the same.

Palo Alto has grown and evolved.

Neighborhood mainstays like Paly High and the Junior Museum and Zoo have undergone major renovations to better serve the community. Castilleja deserves the same chance to modernize. I have followed the project since its inception, and I've seen how the school's plans have evolved in response to City and neighborhood input. From design to tree preservation to square footage, their project is ready for approval.

While much has changed in Palo Alto, much remains the same.

The Bay Area is booming, but in my personal experience, the residential blocks of Old Palo Alto are as quiet as ever—thanks in part to Castilleja's rigorous Transportation Demand Management efforts to reduce car trips in the neighborhood. I urge you to approve the proposed garage that maximizes the number of underground parking spots, which will go even farther to preserve neighborhood tranquility. I recognize that the City Council has suggested 52 spaces be allowed underground, and I hope you will support *at least* that many, but I'd ask this board to additionally consider the design that allows 69 spaces below grade. My understanding is that this would not increase the size of the garage or the number of total spaces. It would simply keep more cars off the street level, a win-win in line with the city's Comprehensive Plan,

which prefers underground parking to surface lots.

Another constant: the tree-lined streets that I loved as a girl and now value as a local homeowner still have a beautiful canopy. I'm grateful that Castilleja has worked diligently to preserve and add trees to the neighborhood. In particular, I hope the Board will appreciate the school's updated pool proposal, which includes plans to relocate a stairway and transformer to responsibly protect another tree. The new plans for deliveries also provide options that further reduce street-level impacts, whether deliveries stay above grade but off the sidewalk or move below ground.

I understand that you have already endorsed the school's prior plans. Please do so again and allow Castilleja to move forward so it can continue to educate more girls in a modern, sustainable, and beautiful campus that I would be proud to have as part of my neighborhood.

Julia Ishiyama's December 8 statement to Palo Alto Planning and Transportation Commission

Good evening commissioners and staff.

I appreciate your review of Castilleja's Conditional Use Permit and Transportation Demand Management plan. I live close to the school in Old Palo Alto, and I welcome a detailed analysis that will ensure residents the peaceful enjoyment of our neighborhood.

I am also confident that the current plan to allow a gradual enrollment increase up to 540 students stands up to scrutiny. I understand the concerns about traffic, but by making any enrollment increase conditional on "no net new trips" and imposing substantial fines, you have *already* created an incentive structure that guarantees compliance. And under its current leadership, Castilleja has been a good citizen and has kept its word on TDM.

A small, vocal group of residents still objects. But it is clear based on the public record that they won't be satisfied by any amount of additional mitigation or monitoring and are instead intractably opposed to anything other than de minimis enrollment increases. I understand that the City Council has asked you to identify procedures that would allow for a larger increase, and I ask that you approach this stage of the approval process by taking into account the five long years of hard work that you know even better than I do has included careful consideration of the right path forward. Please, hone your recommendation based on legitimate criticism, but don't let a refusal to compromise take us backwards.

Since I've been bold enough to suggest the motives of my neighbors, I'll reveal mine: I am a Castilleja alum who wants to see both my school and my city succeed—goals that I know from experience go hand in hand. Castilleja's unique educational environment is not available anywhere else in the area, and the option of a local, single-sex school has enabled thousands of Palo Alto's young women to grow and thrive. The students educated at Castilleja are your friends, neighbors, babysitters, and dog walkers. Castilleja alums, teachers, and staff members

shop alongside you at the California Avenue farmer's market and jog next to you at the Moonlight Walk and Run. We are part of this community, and as a Palo Alto who has always valued giving back, from serving on Congresswoman Eshoo's student advisory board as a high schooler to supporting local nonprofits as a working professional, I consider any good that I'm able to do here to be a return on Castilleja's investment in me.

I'm also proud that in the inclusive city where I was raised, Castilleja can offer a quality education to others throughout the region—particularly to young women from under-resourced school districts. In the past, I've heard commenters and city officials discuss residency as a potential enrollment factor, and I urge this commission not to limit the opportunities available to families who cannot afford to live in Palo Alto and access our excellent schools. Doing so would cut against the values of diversity and equity that we as a community espouse.

I want to be clear: I do not come by my support uncritically. I will always push my alma mater to do better as a member of this community. But I support the parking, design, and enrollment changes as currently proposed because this is a *good* plan on its merits—one that holds the school to good behavior *and* supports its ability to be a real force for good in Palo Alto. I urge you to support this plan as well.

Thank you.



**From:** [neva yarkin](#)  
**To:** [Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** from neva yarkin, regarding Castilleja  
**Date:** Friday, December 10, 2021 8:45:41 AM

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Dec. 10, 2021

Dear Planning Commission:

I decided to send in my speech from PTC meeting Dec. 8th. I live on Churchill Ave. also.

My name is Neva Yarkin

I live 600 Feet from Castilleja and my family has owned this property for close to 60 years.

Adding another 125 students, for Castilleja expansion, will only lead to more traffic and congestion in the area because 75% of students come from outside of Palo Alto.

Building a parking garage, with **entrance** off of Embarcadero/Bryant and **exit** Emerson/Embarcadero will only create more gridlock in the surrounding area. If Castilleja used a **school-wide** shuttling service like Nueva, and Harker Schools, this could help with some of the traffic problems.

Building a parking garage will need many **tons of cement**.

One ton of cement gives off 1 ton of **carbon dioxide**. (Bill Gates book).

Palo Alto should not allow **any more** parking garages if we are truly concerned about our environment for future generations to come.

I have **Safety Concerns regarding 5 years of construction**. Castilleja continuing to teach classes in portable buildings while **major building construction is going on** would be an accident waiting to happen. You would have students, cars, bikers, pedestrians, neighborhood residents, etc. trying to navigate in-between huge trucks and heavy equipment is playing with fire.

When **Stanford** was rebuilding their student housing, only construction workers were allowed into their construction site!!

**Stanford** continues to buy up properties all over the Bay Area. Castilleja should do the same if they want to keep expanding.

What about Palo Alto's future growth? Paly, Stanford and train crossings will also have impacts and need to be considered in the future.

In summary:

Lowering **student enrollment** to 450 students, **reducing traffic** by using a **school-wideshuttling service**, having a **construction safety zone**, cutting **greenhouse gases** would help reduce Castilleja's impacts in the area.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Neva Yarkin

[nevayarkin@gmail.com](mailto:nevayarkin@gmail.com)

Churchill Ave.

**From:** [Jeff Chang](#)  
**To:** [Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** In support of Castilleja project  
**Date:** Sunday, December 12, 2021 11:24:37 PM

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Dear Palo Alto Planning Commission,

As a twenty year resident of Palo Alto and parent of a Casti student, I am writing in support of the Castilleja project before the Commission.

Our daughter greatly benefits from her education at Casti, and its mission supporting Women Leadership.

I also feel that Castilleja has been working over many years in good faith with the city and the neighborhood to craft a plan which best suits all stakeholders.

I hope that you can support the plan.

Thank you,  
Jeff Chang

, Palo Alto

**From:** [Jeff Levinsky](#)  
**To:** [Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Castilleja Garage Exemption  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 14, 2021 5:01:22 PM

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Dear Commission Members:

I'm very glad that the Council adopted the position that Castilleja's underground garage is floor area. Council is now asking you to consider whether to recommend exempting that garage from floor area. As you work that through, please consider these five issues:

- 1) **GARAGE NOT NEEDED:** The proposed ordinance isn't needed because Castilleja already has more than the required surface parking. That is, with a 20% TDM, Castilleja needs to provide only 83 spaces but they currently have 89 spaces above ground. Castilleja confirmed at your December 8, 2021 meeting that they will be reducing their footprint, which means they should have more than enough room for 83 surface spaces. Also, the ramps and egress lanes for the garage require about 4,000 sq. ft. of surface space, so eliminating the garage creates more room for other uses.
- 2) **UNPRECEDENTED EXEMPTION:** The proposed ordinance would give Castilleja exemptions from floor area that no other Palo Alto property gets. In some of our zones, usable basements are exempted. In other zones, garages are exempted. But in no zone are both exempted, so the ordinance provides privileges no one else in the City receives. Here's a chart explaining that, based on 18.04.030(a)(65):

Zones	Usable Basement	Underground Garage
R1, RE, RMD, R2	Exempt from GFA <sup>1</sup>	Counts as GFA
Non-Residential & Multifamily	Counts as GFA	Exempt from GFA
What Proposed Ordinance Creates	Exempt from GFA	Exempt from GFA

Note 1: If under building footprint, per 18.10.090 and 18.12.090

- 3) **ORDINANCE LOSES MONEY:** Our city collects impact fees on new floor area. If you exempt the proposed garage from floor area, I estimate we'll lose at least \$700,000 in impact fees, based on Option E, the smallest of the garage proposals. Frankly, rather than exempting the garage as floor area, it would make more sense to allow Castilleja additional floor area, as then we'd at least collect those impact fees. There appears to have been no mention of impact fees so far in any staff report on this aspect.
- 4) **ORDINANCE SUBSTANTIALLY ALTERS COUNCIL DIRECTIVE:** The Council motion of March

29, 2021 says twice that the exempted floor area should be for no more than 50% of the required on-site parking. Essentially, the Council was considering a 50/50 split between surface and underground parking as a way to balance different interests. Here's their actual wording:

Direct Staff and the PTC to review an underground parking facility alternative that allows a maximum of 50 percent of the required on-site parking to be below grade without counting against the project floor area. No more than 50 percent of the required on-site parking may be located below grade;

TDMs reduce "required on-site parking," so if Castilleja gets a TDM to lower its parking requirement by 20% to 83 spaces, the council motion means that only 50% of the reduced parking requirement can in be the garage. But the ordinance offered to you changes the council wording subtly to be 50% of the "base" required parking, which allows more than 50% of the actual required on-site parking to be in the garage. Here's that part of the proposed ordinance, with highlighting:

(viii) Below-grade parking facilities that: (1) are accessory to nonresidential uses; (2) are located on a parcel that is six acres or greater; and (3) are located on a parcel that contains a listed historic resource; and 4) do not provide more than 50 percent of the base required on-site vehicle parking shall be excluded from the calculation of gross floor area.

A Council member who voted for the 50% cap in the motion confirmed to me it means what it says – so the altered wording by staff in the proposed ordinance is not correct.

A careful review of the March 29, 2021 Council session indicates that varying and incorrect numbers were given as to Castilleja's latest parking requirements, current surface parking, and potential surface parking. Right before the motion passed, the minutes state that, "Mr. Lait reported required parking was approximately 83 onsite spaces and approximately 26 spaces offsite." So with the Council being told required onsite parking was approximately 83 onsite spaces just before voting, the Council motion then directs review of a garage with at most 50% percent of that, or 41 spaces. Yet all five garage options offered by the applicant have significantly more than 41 spaces. Please ask for options that have at most 41 spaces to comply with the Council directive.

Also, as Vice Chair Commissioner Roohparvar noted, the term "base required on-site vehicle parking" is not actually defined in our municipal code.

- 5) **FLOOR AREA NUMBERS REMAIN UNCLEAR:** Before you make any recommendation on the garage, please be sure that you have all the facts, including the true gross floor area numbers. There were many substantial errors in the existing floor area numbers given to you and it took a vote by Council to obtain clarity on those. But as Andie Reed of PNQL



has mentioned, there appears to be two areas in the proposed plans that may be gross floor area but have not been included in the total. Specifically:

Page G.004 of the plans updated 11/03/2021 shows a 4,301 sq. ft. underground area with no structure above it. This cannot be a basement because it is not under a building footprint. It is then an accessory structure per 18.12.080. 18.04.030(a)(65)(C) explicitly says “accessory structures greater than one hundred and twenty square feet in area” in R-1 are considered gross floor area. Staff has offered no explanation for why this space isn’t included in the project’s gross floor area total.

Another unexplained discrepancy is on the very same page. It states the below grade floor of the main new building is 46,635 sq. ft. while the next page of the plans shows the first floor is smaller at 43,851 sq. ft.. The difference is 2,784 sq. ft., so at least that much of the below grade floor is not under the first floor! Since basements exempt from gross floor area cannot extend beyond the building footprint, there needs to be a detailed explanation as to how the proposed below grade area can be bigger than the floor above it and still be underneath it.

These two items total over 7,000 sq. ft. If both indeed should be added to the proposed gross floor area totals, Castilleja’s total proposed rebuild exceeds its existing non-volumetric gross floor area, making the EIR and prior representations incorrect. So it’s critical to address these issues as soon as possible.

Thank you!

Jeff Levinsky

**From:** [Alan Cooper](#)  
**To:** [Planning Commission](#); [Architectural Review Board](#); [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Tom Shannon](#); [Alan Cooper](#)  
**Subject:** Castilleja: Kellogg building acceptance  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 15, 2021 9:39:49 AM  
**Attachments:** [Kellogg facade submitted by Castilleja.pdf](#)

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Dear ARB, Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council Members:

We are Castilleja neighbors and our homes sit directly across the street from the proposed Castilleja Classroom building running along Kellogg Ave.

As neighbors of Castilleja, we would support the proposed Kellogg building and elevation submitted to the ARB **last year** (see attached elevation) and subsequently approved by the ARB prior to being forwarded to the City Council for final review and approval.

The City Council submittal incorporates all of the changes that the ARB made during their series of hearings last year. As neighbors, we are satisfied with the design of the Kellogg facade including the elevation, the materials and the articulation of the different sections of the building. Specifically, we would ask that the massing of the Kellogg building not be changed, the building height in particular should **NOT** be increased, nor should Kellogg become a major entrance to the school. We request that for noise reduction in the neighborhood, Castilleja install a transparent sound wall at the back of the 2nd-floor gap between the first and second "articulation" of building segments on the east end of Kellogg.

Given this building spans almost the entire block of Kellogg, we as neighbors approve of the proposed articulation in Castilleja's submittal if substantial landscaping including the planting of several 48" box trees and other plantings are added to soften this mass appearance and create an acceptable addition to our neighborhood.

We are two of the six neighbors that reside across the street from Castilleja's Kellogg Classroom building. We know from talking with other neighbors in our 200 block of Kellogg, they share similar feelings about this elevation, articulation and materials.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this statement of support,

Tom Shannon  
[REDACTED]

Alan Cooper  
[REDACTED]

# KELLOGG AVENUE PROPOSED



**From:** [Nanci Kauffman](#)  
**To:** [Planning Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Comments from Palo Alto Citizens  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 15, 2021 8:38:27 PM

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**Comments from Palo Altans at  
12/2/21 ARB Hearing and 12/8/21 PTC Hearing**

*I live across the street from Castilleja on Kellogg Street, and I cannot wait for this project to be approved. I want to look out my windows onto an updated campus with more trees and green space.*  
— Vania Fang

*Investing in education has always been a hallmark of Palo Alto values. Castilleja is investing in trees, sustainability, and education, and it's now time to move forward with this project.*  
— Jason Stinson

*This isn't a big high tech company, factory or a corporate office park. It's a small school that seeks to build a 21st century learning space and gradually add more students ... without adding traffic.*  
— Bill Burch

*I support the parking, design, and enrollment changes as currently proposed because this is a good plan on its merits.*  
— Julia Ishiyama

*As for the garage, I am a strong supporter. It is a gift to the neighborhood, a wise investment in the long-term aesthetics and infrastructure of Old Palo Alto.*  
— Lian Bi

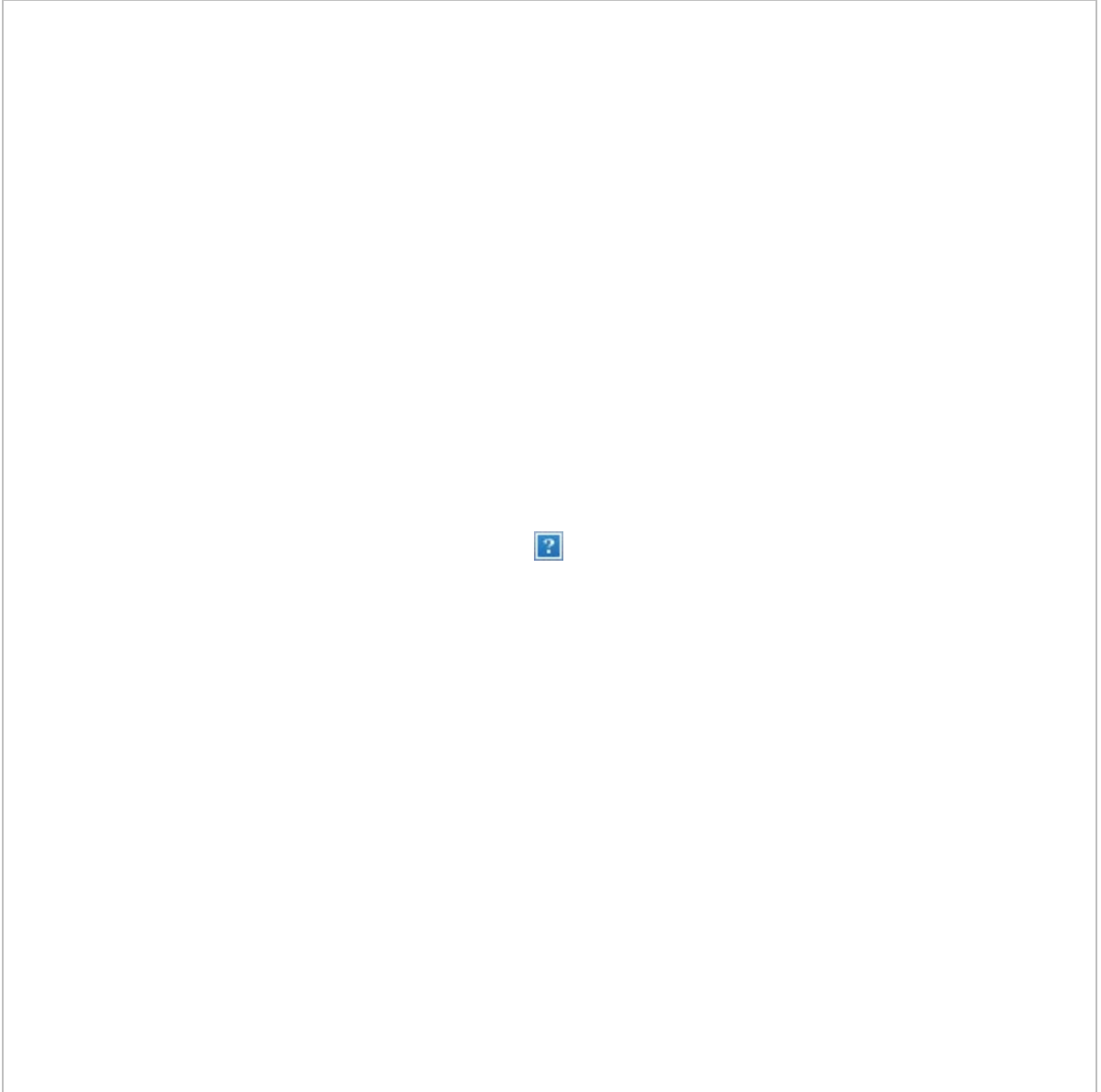
*Castilleja is a gem in our city, an absolute asset, and it has been frustrating to see these excellent plans move so slowly through the city process.*  
— Kathleen Foley Hughes

*I am ready for this exciting new project to begin. Please help facilitate this investment in the city.*  
— Cindy Chen

*Approve this project again. It's better than ever.*  
–Maya Blumenfeld

On Wed, Dec 15, 2021 at 10:07 AM Nanci Kauffman <[nkauffman@castilleja.org](mailto:nkauffman@castilleja.org)> wrote:

[Preview attachment Comments from Palo Altans Hearings Fall 2021.pdf](#)



[Comments from Palo Altans Hearings Fall 2021.pdf](#)

[47 KB](#)

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**Nanci Kauffman**

Head of School

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*Women Learning. Women Leading.*

For an appointment, contact: [adelafuente@castilleja.org](mailto:adelafuente@castilleja.org) or (650) 470-7702

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## **Nanci Kauffman**

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