

From: [Emily Brown](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: orgarb@cityofpaloalto.org; [Council, City](#)
Subject: Vote in Favor of Castilleja
Date: Tuesday, January 11, 2022 2:44:45 PM

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Dear Planning and Transportation Commissioners,

I grew up in Palo Alto, left for college and lived out of state for several years, and now have returned. I am so happy to be back in this city that I call home—where I can enjoy the beautiful climate and environment, appreciate the courage and creativity that define Silicon Valley, and remember the important ideals I learned as a child and young adult here.

I am a product of the Palo Alto public schools, all the way through, and I feel lucky to have had access to such an amazing education. Not all children in California—even in Silicon Valley—have the same privilege. Especially after the pandemic, we all can see the stark difference between living in this school district and one that is not as well resourced. Independent school is one solution to that imbalance. Granted, it's not the only one, but we need to do what we can at every level to work toward equity. That is why I hope you will support Castilleja's application to admit more students in the high school without adding more car trips. With 21% of students receiving tuition assistance, Castilleja is making a profound difference in the lives of many students who don't come from families like mine, families who can afford to buy or rent in a district like Palo Alto.

Castilleja's commitment to TDM builds consequences into the application. The school can only add students if car trips remain the same. I am not concerned about traffic—at least not from Castilleja. If other organizations in Palo Alto worked as hard to keep car trips down, this would be an even better place to live. For now, though, I am happy to be back. I am happy to be a voter in Palo Alto again, and I hope you will urge City Council to support this project.

Sincerely,
Emily Brown

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

You don't often get email from nkauffman@castilleja.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

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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

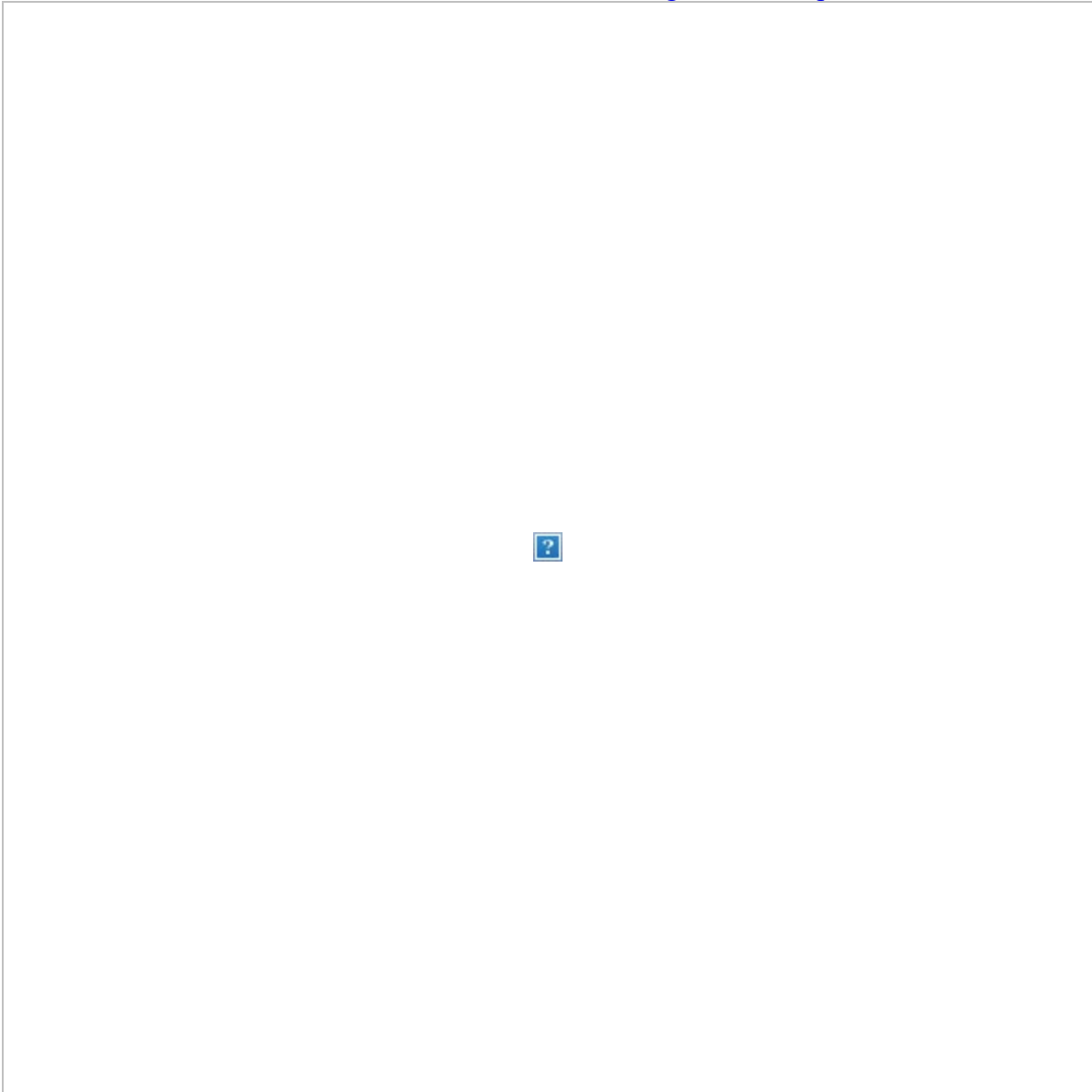
I am ready for this exciting new project to begin. Please help facilitate this investment in the city.

— 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> 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

Castilleja School

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Women Learning. Women Leading.

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

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Nanci Kauffman

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From: [Lesley King](#)
To: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Letter of support for Castilleja Project
Date: Friday, December 17, 2021 12:02:29 PM

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December 12, 2021

Dear PTC and ARB Members –

Below are the comments I made during the public comments section of the PTC meeting on December 8, 2021. Thank you again for your service to Palo Alto.

Lesley King

My name is Lesley King and I own a house about a block from Castilleja. First, I want to thank the commissioners for all the hard work they do on behalf of our town.

I am speaking tonight on behalf of a few other residents as strong supporters of the Castilleja Renovation and we have a few comments to make.

The nuances of this project review are very confusing as a lay person so some of our comments are meant to clarify some of the items that I believe should no longer be controversial.

As I read the Staff report issued in advance of this meeting, I understand that you, the Planning and Transportation Commissioners, have the **authority to make recommendations** on the C.U.P, the TDM plan, the variance, the parking adjustment, the Environmental Impact Report, and the text amendment proposed by city staff.

It's a long list, one that Commissioner Lauing mentioned tonight, and I know you take this responsibility seriously.

My first comment is about your recommendations on the C.U.P

I think this relates to the enrollment increase and the TDM measures to ensure no new trips. As of now, the mandate you have received from City Council calls for starting with an enrollment increase to 450 and identifying a procedure to allow Castilleja to increase to 540.... in phases.... contingent upon compliance to “no new trips.”

This procedure, as far as I can tell, is already outlined in the application. **For some reason, I feel that this “no new trips” fact has been hard for the community to grasp.** The application has specific language that outlines the very gradual and measured path the school would need to follow in order to be allowed to admit more students. If growth begins by taking the school to 450 from the current 426 number that Amy French just mentioned, the school will need to successfully meet the “no new trips” threshold before it is allowed to add more students. If that goal is met, the school can then add another 25 to 27 students in the next year. As you can see, the procedure seems to

already be in place. I was pleased to see that Castilleja put forth an even more detailed set of procedures in response to the City Council's latest comments, even though the procedures were already comprehensive.

In my study of the plans, I see that successful TDM measures were well-developed and in place, showing me the compromise and cooperation Castilleja has demonstrated throughout this prolonged process. From what I read in the Weekly, the school has again proposed additional policies, including new shuttles and bus routes, bike sharing, guaranteed rides home in emergencies for employees who don't drive, an internal Lyft program, and a "kiss and ride" program with parents dropping children at an off-site location to meet a shuttle. All of this comes in addition to the measures Castilleja has already taken over the past 10 years to reduce traffic by over 30 percent.

The school has already run a successful TDM program and seems determined to continue to succeed. So I want to reiterate the good news that the burden is on the school to show continued success with TDM. Since Castilleja **wants** to enroll more girls, the "no new trips" will need to be a priority. It's not the neighbors' or the City's or even the PTC's burden. It's on the school to earn the right to enroll more students.

The Second Point on this relates to the complaints I have heard from a few vocal opponents who point to the fact that the school over enrolled over a decade ago as evidence that it cannot be trusted....those days are clearly over.

The school has been under a microscope at every moment. The length of this renovation approval process, the depth of study invested in the EIR, the standards that have been applied to this project are not ones I have seen applied to other projects.

In my opinion, Castilleja has accurately recognized that accountability is essential to rebuilding trust and moving forward. Thus, accountability is built into the application.

The next item in the city staff's report that I want to address is the parking garage.

I really appreciate Commissioner Alchek's comment that the debate about the size of the garage is counter to the original request from the community asking for underground parking.

The City Council recently directed Castilleja to limit the size to 52 spaces—It's my understanding that this is 50 percent of what was required for total parking for the project.

At the ARB hearing last week, the board members supported Plan E because it complied with the City Council's guidance, However, all five of the five board members admitted that they ALSO supported Plan D with 69 spaces because it protected as many trees and maximized underground spaces, which they admitted seemed wise. **So the ARB board members were unanimous in their support of 69 spaces below ground.**

I agree with them. I was at the City Council meeting when the number 52 was introduced. This number seemed to have been pulled out of the air, or maybe just drawn from the idea that 50% is somehow fair. But since the desire to reduce the garage was driven by the effort to preserve trees and reduce construction scope, if the same benefits to trees can be accomplished with 69 instead of just 52 spaces, why wouldn't we put more cars below ground?

This plan was deemed superior by the EIR, is supported by the City's Comprehensive Plan, and even the city's ARB members were left tossing this question around at the end of their long hearing. They didn't seem to have a good answer as to why we are going forward with 69 spaces.

My final observation about the staff report is a very small and specific one that reveals a much larger and more general concern that I want to present to you as you consider this important proposal at this pivotal moment. On page 10, in a short aside, the report admits that even though the large chart and the previous several paragraphs suggest a shortfall of 30 spaces if the school enrolls 540 students, the chart and the parking demand study DID NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT ANY TDM MEASURES. This analysis is actually inaccurate and incomplete, but it is still presented as a problem that cannot be solved. I think that Amy French just referenced this quickly tonight but I want to underline this inconsistency.

We are relying on arbitrary numbers to determine whether this project can succeed and is in the best interest of Palo Alto?

:52 - The number of spaces City Council directed to be below

ground - Why are we wedded to 52 when 69 spaces can be accommodated while still preserving trees in the exact same way? Even the ARB was left questioning this.

:30 - The shortfall of spaces if the school reaches 540. This number doesn't take into account any TDM, so it is irrelevant. Why would we begin a conversation this important with such flawed data and unfounded assumptions?

:50 % - The amount of parking capacity that can be allowed below ground in the suggested text amendment. This amendment, which requires that only 50% of parking can be below ground or the entire measurement of the project will be redefined. Where did this guideline come from? How was this threshold derived?

I understand the need to compromise and believe, like you, that it's well past time to find a middle path that serves all parties. At this point, though, I'm troubled that even though the ARB and, you, the PTC have acknowledged that this is a project that should be approved, the staff report and the guidance from council do not heed that advice and instead have raised some seemingly arbitrary numbers and incomplete data to stall progress.

As a concerned neighbor, I ask you please to remember what you have already said about this proposal—that it should be possible to approve this. I would like to see this project approved and underway so that we can all move forward.

Sincerely,

Lesley King

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Lesley King
Back40Mercantile.com



"My work with the poor and the incarcerated has persuaded me that the opposite of poverty is not wealth; the opposite of poverty is justice. " - Bryan Stevenson, Just Mercy

From: [J Stinson](#)
To: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)
Subject: In support of Castilleja CUP
Date: Friday, December 24, 2021 9:40:48 AM

You don't often get email from jstinson1@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Planning Commissioners, Architectural Review Board, and Council Members,
I meant to send out my oral comments from the PTC meeting on 12/8/2021 but realize they've been sitting in my outbox. Please find them below.
Happy Holidays!

Good evening, Commissioners,
Here we are again, still discussing the Castilleja project. For years, the school has been modifying and reducing the scale of their proposed modernized campus, and I hope this evening you will recommend approval of the significantly smaller 69 car underground garage, as well as the modified pool design that includes moving a stairway.

I want to focus on trees this evening, because many of the school's recent changes have been designed to further protect their canopy. In particular, changes have been made to the pool and parking garage in order to mitigate impacts on protected trees.

1. First, the 69-car garage protects trees just as well as the 52-car garage. Yes, it also serves the neighborhood by moving more cars below grade, but importantly, it protects trees.
2. Second, making adjustments to the placement of the pool stairway and electrical transformer will further protect tree 89. In addition, choosing this pool option still allows deliveries to be moved below grade, which I have to believe is ideal for immediate neighbors from a noise standpoint.
3. Overall, the school is adding 100 new trees to campus. While it will be many years until the trees are mature, they are investing in the beautiful canopy for generations to come.

Like many in Palo Alto, I love the trees that line our streets and beautify our city. We also love our city's schools, and 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.

Sincerely,
Jason Stinson

From: [Trisha Suvari](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Architectural Review Board](#); [Council, City](#)
Subject: Castilleja Project
Date: Thursday, January 6, 2022 7:10:28 PM

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Dear Planning and Transportation Commission,

The Castilleja project, which you have already voted to support, is before your commission again. I hope that once again, you will support this latest design and demonstrate responsible decision-making that supports our community's schools. Unlike its neighboring schools, Castilleja is the only educational institution that has not had the opportunity to renovate its teaching and learning spaces. The school is in desperate need of modernization, and I think they've done an excellent job revising, and revising again, to incorporate the constructive feedback they've received. The only area of concern you raised last time was over the garage. Now they have offered five different options that all reduce the size, preserve trees, reroute cars from the neighborhood, and move parked cars below ground. All I see are benefits; what is holding up the process from allowing the school to move forward and provide updated buildings to its students and our community?

During your hearings last year, there was a lengthy conversation about whether the limits and restrictions that were being placed on Castilleja were at all consistent with the treatment other schools and nonprofits receive in Palo Alto and other nearby towns. I think that after these changes that the school has offered in compromise, that question will loom even larger unless city leaders like you find a reasonable path forward. I am a voter in Palo Alto and I hope you will represent me and the many others like me rather than a small number of neighbors who cannot and will not compromise. This project will improve traffic and parking, bring no new cars, and blend beautifully into the mix of homes on Bryant, Kellogg, and Emerson. More importantly, it provides the space to educate more young women so that those families seeking all-girls education can attain it for their daughters. All education, including single-sex, is a public benefit. In a city that lauds education, innovation, and knowledge, why are we facing so many obstacles in supporting an institution whose mission aligns with Palo Alto's forward-thinking values?

Thank you for your time.

Best,
Trisha Suvari



From: [Meg Gilbuena](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Architectural Review Board](#); [Council, City](#)
Subject: In Support of Castilleja
Date: Thursday, January 6, 2022 11:21:46 PM

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As a neighbor living on Churchill Ave, I want to affirm my support of Castilleja. Thank you for approving the very thorough and painstaking analysis in the Environmental Impact Report, which took years to research and produce, and found no significant impacts. Now I hope you will recommend this project for approval to the City Council for the second time. The lag in decision making over the years feels like a stalling tactic regarding a project that is ultimately about providing our children with knowledge and opportunities. Please listen to the copious voices who wish to see this project succeed.

Schools should always be part of residential neighborhoods. They sustain the children who live in the homes there and are a promise for the future. **Schools should not be driven out of residential zones.** They should be encouraged to thrive. Every other school in Palo Alto has grown and modernized their campus in recent years. Why shouldn't this very small all-girls school have the same opportunity? Castilleja has improved this project again and again, and now you have excellent options before you that allow a school to thrive quietly and sustainably in an area that was zoned as residential many years after the institution was established.

Castilleja's mission to educate girls for leadership is critical to support the broader societal movement to place more women in positions of leadership. With a budget of \$3.5 million in Tuition Assistance to grant access to any deserving student, despite her family's financial circumstances, Castilleja is actively working to rectify age-old disparities in access to education. Particularly important to me, Castilleja has a year-round program to support first generation college students as they prepare to take steps no one in their families has ever taken before. Supporting this should be a core value for our city. Palo Alto is a bellwether city, a community known for cutting a brave path into a better future. Castilleja is part of that effort, working to amplify young women's voices. Please think of the positive impact beyond our own city, and do not let a small number of neighbors hinder broader societal advancements.

Sincerely,
Megan Gilbuena

From: [marcela millan](#)
To: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Castilleja
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 2:37:58 PM

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Dear PTC,

It's clear that Castilleja's Traffic Demand Management program (TDM) will be vital to their mitigating traffic once their enrollment grows. I just wanted to write to express a few points about their successful, and ever expanding TDM program.

1. As has been well documented, the school has been very successful executing TDM results to date, reducing traffic by ~ 30% in the neighborhood.
2. It can not be said enough times: the school will not be able to increase their enrollment if traffic increases. **It seems that this requirement is not discussed enough.** Opponents who worry about growth or "expansion" must remember that the school *will not be able to grow unless they manage the car trips*. Let me repeat that in other words: Castilleja will only be able to gradually add more students each year IF the car trips remain under their current number. It is in their best interest to invest in traffic reduction—something that the neighbors also heavily desire.
3. To illustrate the school's agility and investment in TDM, they added new bus routes to school during the pandemic since families were uncomfortable putting students on trains. The goal of all of these shared rides is the same: keep cars and traffic from the neighborhood.

Companies and other organizations in Palo Alto should all be instituting TDM measures, and Castilleja is proving to be a strong test case for successful mitigation. Going forward, it sounds like Castilleja will further expand their rideshare options, and I hope other businesses do the same.

I appreciate your service, thank you.

Marcela Millan


From: [Tina Kuan](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board](#)
Subject: Castilleja project
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 3:37:56 PM

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Dear Planning and Transportation Commissioners,


Thank you for your service regarding the Castilleja project. It is a surprisingly contentious issue considering that both sides of this debate want the same thing: fewer cars in the neighborhood. Castilleja has done that in two ways:

1. By reducing daily trips to campus by 25–31%
2. By submitting plans to move street parking below ground.
3. By increasing shuttle options and adding bus routes.

As far as reducing trips, the school will continue to do this after the CUP is approved because in order to enroll more students, daily trips cannot rise above current levels. This simple fact seems to get lost, and I think it is important to highlight. The good work the school has done on TDM will only become more comprehensive if it is granted the opportunity to do so.

And as far as moving street parking below ground, you have five options before you. All of them move parking off neighborhood streets. All of them shift part of the drop off and pick up below ground. All of them reduce the overall size from the original proposal. All of them preserve trees. You can't go wrong. Just select a plan and make a recommendation to City Council. Why continue to hold up the process when you've already approved the project before? It is well beyond time for this excellent project to be approved and move into the execution phase.

Respectfully,
Tina Kuan



From: [Kathy Burch](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board](#)
Subject: Support for Castilleja School
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 4:05:38 PM

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Dear Planning and Transportation Commissioners,


I am grateful for the hard work you have already put into reviewing Castilleja School's project. And I thank you for recommending it for approval last year. This year, you have minor improvements to review, and excellent options to choose from in order to reach a compromise. It's time for Castilleja to update its outdated campus and provide opportunities to more girls who seek an education at this nationally-recognized institution.

One element of recent news to add to the conversation is Castilleja's capacity to adapt its outstanding TDM program in response to the pandemic. Before the pandemic, many students who live north of campus rode Caltrain to school and were met by Castilleja's electric shuttles to get to campus from the station. As school reopened when it became safe again, some students who had ridden the shuttles before chose not to continue to do so. Castilleja responded immediately, with two new bus routes picking students up near their homes, thereby preventing them from relying on smaller carpools or single-occupancy vehicles. Even as some students have become more comfortable riding Caltrain again, the bus routes are still running to make sure that daily trips remain low.

Please put these questions of increased car trips to rest. The cap on car trips directly impacts whether Castilleja can *gradually* increase enrollment. This is built into the project's approval process. Approve the project, and car trips will be capped. Simple.

The school has outstanding TDM and will immediately make any changes necessary to keep car trips below the cap. What other institution or organization in Palo Alto has achieved reducing their daily car trips by 25–31% percent? Approve this project and highlight Castilleja for being a leader in reducing traffic.

Thank you,
Kathy Burch


Palo Alto

From: nancytuck@aol.com
To: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Castilleja Proposal
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 4:38:43 PM

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Dear Planning and Transportation Commissioners,

Thank you once again for committing time to reviewing the Castilleja architectural plans. I am a neighbor on Melville Avenue and have actively advocated for the project's approval for years. I certainly appreciate the time you have put into this. Now, I believe you need to make a final decision to support this project again for the second and last time. The project checks all the boxes and is better than it's ever been.

The current campus is old and dated, and the school is long overdue for an upgrade that other local and comparable schools have been granted. I understand the school is also presenting options for the new underground garage and swimming pool that will further protect trees. I appreciate their time, effort, and care in offering these alternatives.

I would like to leave you with two key points of feedback regarding planning and transportation:

1. As a neighbor, I am grateful to Castilleja for all that it has done to reduce traffic. Have you come to school at drop off or pick up to see how smoothly it goes? The school does not deserve and should not be subject to car counting measures that are more stringent than those at Stanford. It is a disservice to compare the size of the two institutions; Castilleja is a small community, with minimal impacts, despite the outsized complaints from a few of my neighbors. I'm here on Melville without an agenda--other than supporting a school that is being a good neighbor. Please be reasonable.
2. I also would like to add my adamant support for the 69 car underground garage. To me, the Council's direction to limit the capacity to 52 cars seems arbitrary. If the capacity is 69 cars, the school can fulfill the number of spots required by city code AND get more cars off our streets. This addition of 17 cars creates no additional traffic, nor does it affect any trees. This maximized capacity is wiser for all parties involved and should be recommended. Further, the stipulation of no new car trips is built in to the project's approval process. Knowing this, what is holding up the approval process?

Thank you, as always, for listening to constituent and neighbor feedback. I appreciate the time you've dedicated to this effort and our city at large.

With gratitude,
Nancy Tuck - [REDACTED], Palo Alto

From: [Lian Bi](#)
To: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Castilleja Project
Date: Friday, January 7, 2022 8:53:31 PM

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Dear PTC,

I understand that you have continued assessing the Castilleja project, more than a year after you last reviewed it and recommended approval. I live close to the school and am anxious for the modernization to begin, so thank you for your renewed attention to the project. I think it's the best version for our community.

In particular, I appreciate that the school is putting forth several parking options for you to consider, so that an optimal solution can be recommended that best preserves trees, removes cars from our neighborhood streets, minimizes noise, and modernizes the very dated campus while offering an excellent all-girls education to more students AND reducing car trips.

Specifically, I understand that the school is presenting an option for the pool that can better protect one of the trees, as well as different options for the below grade parking structure. Over the past several years, the school has made countless modifications to their plans in response to neighbor feedback as well as feedback from Council, the ARB, and PTC. I greatly appreciate their investment and effort in designing a campus that best meets our community's needs. For the sake of our city and our children, I hope this latest round of revisions is the last. The goalposts for this project can not keep moving; please recognize the work that the school has done, including the latest options for your review. You have great choices before you; the decision should be easy. I hope that you will once again recommend approval of this project so that the divisive signs can come down, neighbors can again be friends, and construction can begin.

With great appreciation,
Lian Bi, [REDACTED]

From: [Kocher, Bob](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Architectural Review Board](#); [Council, City](#)
Subject: Support for Castilleja's project
Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022 10:44:58 AM

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Dear PTC Commissioners,

I am a near neighbor of Palo Alto and I am sure that among the FIVE (yes, count them, five) different parking designs that Castilleja has offered you, there is at least one that solves all of the concerns that have been voiced by only a very small number of opponents.

- **SAVE TREES**

All of the new designs preserve the trees that had been at issue in the previous designs.

- **REDUCE SQUARE FOOTAGE**

Again all of these new designs reduce square footage.

- **NO NEW TRIPS**

This was true before and it remains true now, despite the efforts that a small handful of opponents have made to insist otherwise. Car trips are capped. It's a non-issue

- **COMPROMISE**

This is it. The school has offered five different options and now you, as leaders, can lead by deciding on your priorities for the city and making a choice.

As a near neighbor to the school I urge you to support the option that maximizes underground parking. First of all, this improves traffic patterns, aesthetics, and quality of life for everyone without harming trees. But even more important, it allows the school to self-park its project without adding more surface parking to my neighborhood. I am grateful to Castilleja for providing this responsible and appealing option as an investment in and gift to the neighborhood. Why not park as many cars below ground when there are no negative impacts?

The school is again presenting architectural designs that are an improvement for my residential neighborhood; you know as well as I that the goalposts of this project have shifted over several years. I know you recommended approval last year, and now again, I hope you will approve the updated, elegant, and compliant plans.

Respectfully,

Bob Kocher - Neighbor, Emerson Street

Bob Kocher MD

Venrock

[@bobkocher](#) | [Insights](#)

From: [Aram James](#)
To: [chuck jagoda](#)
Cc: [Palo Alto Free Press](#); citycouncil@mountainview.gov; [Council, City](#); [Human Relations Commission](#); [Jay Boyarsky](#); [Sajid Khan](#); [Jeff Rosen](#); [Planning Commission](#); [Winter Dellenbach](#); [Joe Simitian](#); [Tanaka, Greg](#); [Kou, Lydia](#)
Subject: Re: Why Palo Alto needs a well resourced and monitored Tent City until it creates the low income housing quota the Santa Clara Grand Jury says Palo Alto is resisting
Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022 2:00:21 PM

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Hi Chuck,

Excellent piece! Any monitoring, and I didn't make this clear, would be by case managers assisting the unhoused into programs to move folks from tents to permanent housing and into living wage jobs.

In addition to hiring case workers to assist in monitoring the tenant city for any health and safety issues, and providing job program assistance, and living wage jobs, hiring members of the tent villages to perform these same functions would be a big priority. aram

On Jan 8, 2022, at 9:29 AM, chuck jagoda <chuckjagoda1@gmail.com> wrote:

"Monitored"?

Did you say "Monitored"?

I assume you mean monitored by police or police stand ins to make it safe and convenient for police to come work out their violent needs on the heads of the needy.

Police prove continuously their need to attack, main, and kill unarmed, unprotected, unwhite members of the community. It only costs the taxpayers of Palo Alto about \$135,000 a bloody workout.

Which IS more expensive than a gym membership but maintains white supremacy, the power of might over right, and establish the police rights to instant violence anytime they feel like it.

I agree with Mr. James. He's 100% correct. We need some well maintained tent cities rather than trying to sweep the victims of the wealthy of this bountiful land off the streets. Whether it's Cupertino, Palo Alto, or San Jose, there's one thing the municipalities of the Bay Area agree on. It's the sovereign right to remove homeless shelters for any or no reason without hardly any thought or action to replace the lost housing for the poor people.

That's just one of the ways the cities are creators of their own residents' homelessness. Just like US support of Latin American dictators who abuse their people cause the immigration problems we then have to deal with. And just like taking all this beautiful land from the Indian nations who'd cared for it for millenia encouraged the great American party of

Whites Firsters to the point where we (our corporations and their police) attack the water and land defenders who stand in the way of further erosion and weakening of our vital needs (clean land and water).

The police need therapy BEFORE they commit more atrocities. We think we're getting protection by the police against danger. Actually, we are paying the police for danger FROM the police.

And don't be fooled by the rhetoric. There is NO monitoring of police and their unbridled violent attacks on defenseless residence: before, after, or during those attacks.

The truth is we are completely at the mercy of "The Fuse" and other hero-violent cops.

There is no active structure or procedure for monitoring cops. They won't work under those conditions-- not without their clubs and other weaponry and the right to use them at any time they are frightened, challenged, or emotionally upset.

Chuck Jagoda, son a NYState policeman

On Fri, Jan 7, 2022 at 9:57 PM Aram James <abjpd1@gmail.com> wrote:
<https://www.mercurynews.com/2021/12/17/grand-jury-praises-mountain-view-rips-palo-alto-for-their-affordable-housing-efforts/amp/>

Sent from my iPhone

--

Chuck

From: [Laura Stark](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Architectural Review Board](#); [Council, City](#)
Subject: Please support Castilleja's project
Date: Saturday, January 8, 2022 9:59:14 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to ask you to approve the Castilleja project, which is once again before you. As you know, the City Council asked the school to again revise their plans, so the project has improved since you last approved it a year ago. Now, the massing of the academic building is smaller (and ensures no new square footage is included), the garage is smaller, and more trees are preserved. These changes are in addition to the many changes/compromises made by the school in previous rounds with regard to hours of operation, events, drop off and pick up patterns, etc. I hope you all recognize and acknowledge the copious changes the school has made so that they can at long last move toward approval.

People talk about "the Palo Alto process," a reference to the lengthy and consensus seeking approval process that applicants must adhere to in our city. No applicant has endured a lengthier process than Castilleja. The school has faithfully revised its plans for several years, each time integrating input from neighborhood stakeholders. This is a school, not a massive tech company or conglomerate. Their goal is to educate girls who want a single-sex, non-sectarian education. But they need to renovate their buildings to best fulfill this goal in the 21st century. Palo Alto is a leader in innovation, education, and in investing in the future. Knowing this, it seems enabling the successful completion of this project should be high-priority.

I hope you will vote to support their project, including the 69 car garage, and enable this process to move expeditiously to City Council. The school has delivered, and it is time to approve the project.

Thank you.
Laura Stark

--

Laura Stark 645 Hale St. Palo Alto, CA 94301

From: [Heidi Hopper](#)
To: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Please approve the Castilleja project
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 9:50:13 AM

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Dear PTC -

I'd like to express my strong support for Castilleja's updated design with different options to review. In particular, I want to comment on the lengths the school has gone to protect more trees and be flexible and open to feedback. They have offered you five options for the garage that all improve the neighborhood and protect trees. Which will you recommend to City Council? Will you recommend the option that parks as many cars as possible below ground, knowing that doing so, according to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), will have no negative impacts?

Castilleja has been very responsive and thoughtful about the city staff's, the Council's, and neighbors' concerns for over almost ten years now, correct? We have all watched the project evolve. Changes have been made to the massing of the buildings, the patterns for pick up and drop off, the materials on the facades, the pool location, the parking garage exit and size to protect homes and trees. The school has taken feedback from all sides and made dozens of changes. They have listened. And every time, they respond. Have any other Palo Alto schools, or businesses, been held to the same standards?

The latest proposal further protects both tree 89 and tree 155, preserving existing trees while still adding 100 new trees to the canopy. It also shows an array of choices for the garage that all preserve trees. The school is doing everything possible to integrate feedback and move toward a positive future for the neighborhood, the city, and girls who want a single sex education.

Please review these improvements and select the one you believe is best. This process has gone on too long, and your leadership is critical to helping our community move forward.

Sincerely,
Heidi Hopper

From: [Priyanki Gupta](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board](#)
Subject: Castilleja School project
Date: Sunday, January 9, 2022 12:54:32 PM

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Dear Planning and Transportation Commission.

After your thoughtful review and approval of Castilleja's project last year, it should be easy to approve it again, especially as the garage size is reduced to preserve more trees and the pool and the delivery access is also improved to further protect other trees. The project has only gotten better since the last time you approved it.

Since that time, the TDM at school has also proven to be agile and responsive, doing whatever it takes to keep car trips level in any circumstances—including a once-in-a-century pandemic. As fewer people rode the Caltrain during the pandemic, the school opened new bus routes and expanded its already-successful carpool matching program to ensure that when students returned to campus, they did not do so in single-occupancy cars. The community is committed to sustainability and improving quality of life in the neighborhood and the city by reducing traffic. TDM is not a passing phase, it is a way of life at Castilleja.

I think we are all finally on the same page in understanding that the garage will not bring more cars to campus. There is cap on daily car trips. If the school exceeds the cap, it will not be allowed to enroll more students. There is built-in accountability to the project. After all the years that the school has invested in this new CUP process, it's abundantly clear that the school wants to enroll more students. Thus, they will stay under the cap. However, for critics who need more reassurance, there are external audits and consequences and the increase in students is GRADUAL and CONDITIONAL. It is ALREADY SELF-LIMITING: 25 to 27 students can be added each year IF CAR TRIPS REMAIN LEVEL.

I was delighted when you approved the project the last time, and I look forward to your endorsement of these improvements.

Respectfully,

Priyanki Gupta
80 Crescent Drive

From: [Lorraine Brown](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board](#)
Subject: Please recommend approval of Castilleja's project. It's time!
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 6:45:36 AM

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Dear Planning & Transportation Commission,

I live, work, and vote in Palo Alto, and I continue to strongly support Castilleja's proposal to modernize campus, increase enrollment, and build an underground garage to remove cars from the neighborhood streets - and I hope you all do as well. The EIR, for which you voted to recommend certification, made clear that all of these improvements can be made with no negative impacts on the neighborhood. The assertion, by one opponent, that the data in the EIR is now out of date is outrageous and a blatant attempt to further stall progress. Our city process is embarrassing when I reflect on how this project has been derailed and stalled by a few vocal opponents for 6 years!

Now, Castilleja has presented several options for the garage, all improved versus last year's submission, and I urge you to vote to approve this meaningful compromise. This plan preserves trees, significantly reduces the square footage of the parking facility, and importantly, will bring no additional cars to the neighborhood. We can not forget that car trips for the school are capped; they can only increase enrollment if traffic does not increase in the neighborhood.

It's long overdue for this project to be approved, so that you and our city leaders can focus on far more pertinent issues, such as housing. Thank you for closely reading the studies submitted by the school, and again recommending approval of their project.

Thank you,
Lorraine Brown

, Palo Alto

From: [Roy Maydan](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Architectural Review Board](#); [Council, City](#)
Subject: Castilleja Proposal
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 11:37:18 AM

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Dear Members of the PTC,

Once again, the Castilleja project is before you, and I hope you will once again vote to support their plans. Their latest submission looks like it gives you several options to consider, in particular for the underground parking garage and the pool. The school has made revision after revision in response to valuable feedback, ultimately landing on a master plan that is aesthetically pleasing, sustainable, and mindful of reducing traffic. In reviewing the options before you, I hope you will support the following:


Garage: I strongly support the garage with the capacity of 69 cars (vs. 52 cars). The 52 car limit seemed to be randomly suggested at a Council meeting, but 69 cars can be parked with no additional impact, AND it will allow the school to meet their required number of spaces without having to remove green space to do so. It would make no sense at all to require surface parking when the additional 17 cars can be parked below grade. Why not choose an option that moves as many cars as possible underground? This is the best solution for the neighborhood.

Pool: Two options are before you, one that moves the pool to better protect tree 89 (but will require deliveries to be above ground). A second option moves a pool stairwell and transformer, still protects tree 89, and allows for below ground deliveries. I would think the second option is preferable. Bringing deliveries below grade reduces noise in the neighborhood, and that option still better protects tree 89 compared to the previous plan.

What's most obvious to me are the lengths the school has gone to respond to feedback, protect trees, and still meet the objectives of their project. This has been an interminable approval process, and I certainly hope this will be their final round of revisions. Years of professional review by multiple third parties support the approval of this project. Let's listen to the facts and move forward.

Thank you for considering my input, and thank you for your service to our community.

Sincerely,
Roy Maydan



From: [J Stinson](#)
To: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Castilleja Master Plan review
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 1:14:49 PM

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Planning & Transportation Commissioners,

Since you will be once again discussing Castilleja's new master plan, I'd like to again express my strong support for the building design, and in particular comment on the lengths the school has gone to protect more trees. I live near the school on Churchill and appreciate the beautiful landscaping on the Castilleja campus, including the canopy which includes protected redwoods and oak trees.

Based on the many plan revisions the school has submitted, it's clear that protecting trees has been a high priority. Castilleja has been very responsive to the Council's and neighbors' concerns. In particular, significant changes have been made to the pool and the parking garage in order to mitigate impacts on protected trees. It is clear that Castilleja has gone to great lengths to re-evaluate and re-study *every single tree* to further protect a treasured part of our environment and our community. My understanding is that their latest proposal further protects both tree 89 and tree 155 (the latter, in particular, if the pool is moved). They're doing everything possible to preserve existing trees while still adding 100 new trees to the canopy.

Please recognize these improvements and approve their latest submission. This project has stalled under the review process for far too long. Everyone has had multiple opportunities to voice their opinion on the matter. Now, we turn to your leadership to make a decision that will enable Castilleja to meet its goals while also respecting our neighborhood.

Thank you so much for your attention,
Jason Stinson
Churchill Ave

From: [Joel Brown](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Architectural Review Board](#); [Council, City](#)
Subject: It's time: please recommend Castilleja project approval
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 1:27:21 PM

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Dear PTC -

It's time to approve Castilleja's project. You can clearly see that the small handful of opponents are losing steam, and the supporters throughout the city and in the neighborhood are stronger than ever, eager to see the tired old building be replaced by new, more sustainable and more beautiful structures.

And as you delay, risk of lost opportunity increases.

I understand that traffic is a concern for Palo Alto residents in general (including me), but Castilleja's enrollment increase will bring no new cars to the neighborhood. The school has set an example of excellent TDM for all businesses in the area. By requiring employees to rideshare, park offsite, and take public transportation (AND by adding new bus routes for students during the pandemic), Castilleja has continued to reduce traffic to campus. They have shown both the commitment and flexibility needed to keep car counts low, and their plan makes clear that their TDM measures will broaden once enrollment increases. These measures are not just for show -- the school is teaching their students and employees the sustainable measures necessary to make life better in our shared community. It's an imperative, not a choice.

With no new cars, with more trees preserved, with lower square footage, why this continued delay? Please recommend this project for approval. It is time.

Thank you,
Joel Brown - Walter Hays Drive

From: [Karen Robin](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Council, City](#)
Date: Tuesday, January 11, 2022 7:53:38 AM

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To the PTC of the City of Palo Alto,

Thank you for your service. I am writing to ask you to support Castilleja's application for a new conditional use permit to modernize the campus and admit more students without increasing traffic. There are a vocal few who oppose the project, but residents across the city broadly support it, including many neighbors who live right across the street from the school.

In particular, I believe it's time to approve this project after seeing how many times the school has taken in feedback and revised the plans. Recent reporting about your last hearing highlighted that the goalposts are always changing on this project, and I couldn't agree more. At this point, it is time to look at the improvements and compromises the school has already made:

- Reducing traffic by up to 31% through outstanding TDM
- Creating an underground garage to appease some neighbors and reducing the size of the garage to appease others
- Revising plans to preserve existing trees and adding over 100 new trees to campus
- Reducing events and limiting school hours
- Designing a sustainable campus that is much more beautiful than the current one and takes into account feedback from direct neighbors
- Reducing the area of footprint to below the current level

Within the proposal, the school cannot add students if daily car trips increase, and the growth will be gradual. This is a small school that wants to become a little bigger with no traffic impacts. It's time to stop shifting the goalposts and approve the project on its merits.

Sincerely,

Karen Gould, Martin Avenue

From: [Ashmeet Sidana](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Yuko Watanabe \(yknabe@hotmail.com\)](#)
Subject: Castilleja Project approval
Date: Tuesday, January 11, 2022 9:50:14 AM

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Dear PTC,

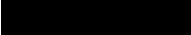
I want to make sure that you hear from enthusiastic supporters again as you consider the Castilleja project. I'm surprised that this project has not yet been approved, and I want to do what I can to urge your 'yes' vote.

I would like to bring you back to the discussions you had in late 2020. At the time, there was a great deal of discussion about the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the Conditions of Approval. Here are some key findings:

1. The Final EIR, which you all endorsed, stated clearly that the Castilleja project had no negative impacts which couldn't be mitigated.
2. The school can have no new car trips; if they do, they will not be allowed to increase enrollment.
3. The garage will bring no new car trips; it simply makes the neighborhood more beautiful by moving cars below ground and preserving greenspace.
4. The garage improves traffic patterns in the neighborhood. Drop off and pick up will be distributed around campus, and the garage creates a distribution such that traffic will improve for everyone.

The project is even better than before. You approved this project before, and I urge you to approve it again. This project has so much neighborhood support, and those voices sometimes get drowned out by a small number of vocal opponents. Let's get to 'yes' -- and let's finally get this project moving so more girls-including those in Palo Alto-can benefit from this extraordinary educational opportunity.

Gratefully,
Yuko Watanabe and Ashmeet Sidana



From: [Bertolet, Summer](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Lanferman, David](#); [Francois, Matthew](#); msr@ismf.com; klayendecker@castilleja.org; nkauffman@castilleja.org; [Shikada, Ed](#); [Lait, Jonathan](#); [French, Amy](#); [Stump, Molly](#); [Yang, Albert](#)
Subject: Castilleja School CUP/Variance (File No. 16PLN-00238)
Date: Wednesday, January 12, 2022 3:07:42 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[2022 0107 D. Lanferman Letter to PTC re Text Amendment for Underground Parking Facility.pdf](#)

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Good afternoon,

Please see the attached correspondence executed by Dave Lanferman.

Thank you,
Summer

Summer Bertolet
Office Manager

Five Palo Alto Square, 3000 El Camino Real, Ste. 200 | Palo Alto, CA 94306

O. (650) 320-1500 | D. (650) 798-5671

sbertolet@rutan.com | www.rutan.com

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January 12, 2022

VIA E-MAIL [Planning.Commission@CityofPaloAlto.org]

Honorable Bart Hechtman, Chair
and Members of the Planning & Transportation Commission
City of Palo Alto
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301

Re: Castilleja School CUP/Variance (File No. 16PLN-00238).

Dear Chair Hechtman and Members of the Planning & Transportation Commission:

We serve as co-counsel with our colleague Mindie Romanowsky of Jorgenson, Siegel, McClure and Flegel, LLP, on behalf of our client, Castilleja School (“Castilleja” or the “School”), and write in support of their application to improve educational opportunities for young women at its long-standing location at 1310 Bryant Street (the “Project”). This letter is sent in advance of the Planning & Transportation Commission’s (“PTC”) January 19, 2022 hearing at which we understand you will consider a proposed amendment to the text of the City’s existing Zoning Code related to the Project’s proposed underground parking facility (the “Text Amendment”).

This correspondence explains why the Castilleja application should be recommended for approval under the City’s existing zoning and land use policies, without any need for the Staff’s proposed Text Amendment. We also respectfully highlight several reasons that such a proposed Text Amendment would be legally problematic were the City to take such action.

In Section I, below, we provide an overview of the Project and the applicable planning and zoning designations. In Section II, we address the misperception that the City Council mandated a zoning text amendment, and explain how the PTC lacks jurisdiction to consider the Text Amendment because the City Council did not require (or initiate the process to require) one. In Section III, we outline the myriad of legal infirmities associated with the proposed Text Amendment.

Among those infirmities is the fatal conflict and inconsistency between the City’s Comprehensive Plan—which “strongly encourage[s]” the use of underground parking facilities in lieu of surface parking lots—and the proposed Text Amendment. Another infirmity is the conflict between the existing Zoning Code, which does not count the square footage of non-residential underground parking facilities as “gross floor area” in this zoning district, and the Text Amendment which proposes to change the Code to add a new limitation as to the exclusion of underground parking facilities. Further, the Text Amendment would unlawfully subject Castilleja

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to different or more burdensome requirements than imposed on similarly situated property owners, thereby depriving Castilleja of its constitutionally-protected rights to due process and equal protection. And the proposed Text Amendment appears vulnerable to challenge as an arbitrary and irrational action (without consideration of appropriate land use planning principles).

In light of these facts and controlling legal constraints on quasi-judicial land use actions, we respectfully urge the PTC to find, consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and the current Zoning Code, that the Project underground parking facility is an allowed use and does not count as gross floor area, consistent with how the City treated the Congregation Kol Emeth project, and that the PTC provide its constructive and favorable input in support of the Project as proposed.

I. Overview & Background.

The Project site is located at 1310 Bryant Street, Palo Alto (the "Property"). Castilleja has operated its all-girls school on the Property since 1910. The School has operated under a conditional use permit ("CUP") since 1960. The latest amendment to the CUP was approved in 2000.

The Property has a Comprehensive Plan land use designation of Single-Family Residential. "This designation applies to residential neighborhoods primarily characterized by detached single-family homes, typically with one dwelling unit on each lot. Private and public schools and churches are conditional uses requiring permits." (Comprehensive Plan, Land Use & Community Design Element, p. 36.)

The Comprehensive Plan identifies schools, among other public-serving uses, as "essential components of neighborhood life" which "help build the bridge between neighborhoods and the wider community." (Comprehensive Plan, Introduction, p. 2.) The City is committed to maintaining distinct neighborhoods and "delivering top-quality community services that meet the needs of and benefit all residents." (*Id.*)

The Property is similarly zoned Single-Family Residential District (R-1). Private schools are allowed in the R-1 zoning district with a conditional use permit. (Palo Alto Municipal Code ["PAMC"] § 18.12.030, Table 1.) The floor area ratio ("FAR") applicable to public schools is 1.0. (Comprehensive Plan, Land Use & Community Design Element, p. 40.) The R-1 zoning district includes FAR standards aimed at single-family residential development with maximum FARs of 0.45 for the first 5,000 square feet of lot size and 0.30 for the square footage of lot size in excess of 5,000 square feet. (PAMC § 18.12.040, Table 2.)

The Project proposes to demolish four older buildings and replace them with a modern, seismically-updated academic building, with state-of-the-art air filtration and energy-efficiency

Honorable Members of the Planning &
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systems, build a new swimming pool to replace an existing pool, and construct an underground parking facility to accommodate parking demand and Code requirements.

Castilleja has a successful track record reducing vehicle trips by nearly 30 percent between 2012 and 2019. In connection with the Project, Castilleja will implement an even more robust transportation plan that ties student enrollment increases to current trip generation rates (no net new trips). As shown by the comprehensive Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) prepared by the City’s expert environmental consultants—described by Chair Hechtman as the “gold standard”—all significant environmental impacts will be satisfactorily reduced to a “less than significant” level with the proposed Alternative 4 which includes a Dispersed Circulation/Reduced Garage. This environmentally superior alternative reduces the garage footprint, retains two homes, preserves trees, and disperses vehicle circulation to three drop off/pick up locations around the campus.

Castilleja submitted the Project application on June 30, 2016. The City deemed the application “complete” on April 27, 2018. The Final EIR was published on July 29, 2020. Both the Architectural Review Board (“ARB”) and the PTC recommended approval of the Project at meetings held in the Fall of 2020.

At its March 29, 2021 meeting, the City Council adopted a motion directing 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.” (Summary Minutes, March 29, 2021 City Council hearing, p. 23.) There is no reference whatsoever in the Council motion to a Zoning text amendment. Nevertheless, in its report for the December 8, 2021 PTC meeting, Staff included the proposed Text Amendment. (Staff Report for December 8, 2021 PTC Meeting, Attachment A.)

In contrast to the existing Zoning Code which does not count the square footage of non-residential underground parking facilities as “gross floor area” in this zoning district, the Text Amendment would change the Code by including “underground parking facility” in the definition of “gross floor area” in low density residential zoning districts, and creates a limited exception that seemingly applies only to Castilleja, provided the parking facility does not exceed 50 percent of the amount of Code-required parking.

With this background in mind, we turn to a discussion of the key fact that the City Council did not require a zoning text amendment related to underground parking and an overview of the numerous legal infirmities associated with the proposed Text Amendment.

Honorable Members of the Planning &
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II. The PTC lacks jurisdiction to recommend the Text Amendment as the City Council did NOT require/initiate it.

In order to lawfully proceed with a text amendment, the change must be initiated by motion of the City Council, by motion of the PTC, or by application of a property owner that would be subject to the proposed text amendment. (PAMC § 18.80.080(a).) Changes to the Municipal Code initiated by the City Council must be forwarded to the PTC for its review and recommendation, supplemented by such explanatory material as the Council deems appropriate. (PAMC § 18.80.080(b).)

The City Council’s actual March 29, 2021 motion does NOT refer to any text amendment. While there was discussion of a possible zoning amendment, the approved final motion did not direct any action for further consideration of an amendment. Instead, the Council directed 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.”¹ (Summary Minutes, March 29, 2021 City Council hearing, p. 23.) Three of the four supporters of the final motion voted against an earlier motion to proceed with a text amendment. (Summary Minutes, March 15, 2021 City Council hearing, p. 26.) The fact that the Council did not initiate a text amendment is further evidenced by a lack of any explanatory materials provided to the PTC for its December 2021 hearings, causing Commissioner Summa to state she had polled Councilmembers as to the intent of their March 29th motion regarding underground parking.

Vice Mayor Burt and Councilmember Cormack, both of whom supported the March 29, 2021 motion, stated that they did not want to micromanage the process or be “overly explicit” with respect to the mechanism. They reiterated that their role is to manage impacts, not mechanisms. Councilmember Cormack stated that the PTC could determine that the garage needs to accommodate more than 50 percent of required parking space to make up for a parking reduction. These comments support the plain language of the Council motion and evidence the Council’s intent in construing the Project’s underground parking facility under the existing Zoning Code.

The fact that the Council did not initiate a zoning amendment is further evidenced by the fact that the PTC would have been required to forward its recommendation on any such proposed change to the City Council no later than September 25, 2021. (PAMC § 18.80.090 [“In the case

¹ The “required” on-site parking refers to the amount required by the City Code. (PAMC § 18.52.040, Table 1.) For the Project, the Code required parking is 104 spaces. The Director is authorized to adjust this amount of Code-required parking for, among others, a transportation demand management program, when in his or her opinion the adjustment will not create undue impact on existing or potential uses adjoining the site or in the general vicinity, and will be commensurate with the reduced parking demand created by the development. (PAMC § 18.52.050.)

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of proposed changes initiated by the council, the commission shall forward its recommendations to the council within a reasonable time period, but not to exceed one hundred eighty days in any event unless extended by the council.”.] There was no referral of a text amendment nor an extension of any time granted by the PTC to consider any such text amendment.

In sum, no zoning text amendment has been initiated by Council action and the PTC lacks jurisdiction to make a recommendation on any such amendment.

III. There are numerous legal infirmities associated with the proposed Text Amendment.

A. The Text Amendment is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

“The propriety of virtually any local decision affecting land use and development depends upon consistency with the applicable general plan and its elements.” (*Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors* (1990) 52 Cal.3d 553, 570.) A city’s general plan is effectively the “constitution for future development” in the community, and any zoning ordinance or other subordinate land use action must be consistent with the general plan. (*Leshner Communications, Inc. v. City of Walnut Creek* (1990) 52 Cal.3d 531, 540, 545-546 [zoning amendment that was inconsistent with the general plan adjudged to be void *ab initio*].)

In order to be deemed “consistent,” the zone change must actually be “compatible with the objectives, policies, general land uses, and programs specified in the general plan.” (*Napa Citizens for Honest Government v. Napa County Board of Supervisors* (2001) 91 Cal.App.4th 342, 378-79 [county abused its discretion in adopting a specific plan that permitted development without “definite affirmative commitments to mitigate” impacts to traffic and housing contrary to policies and objectives set forth in its general plan].) “Consistency requires more than incantation, and [an agency] cannot articulate a policy in its general plan and then approve a conflicting project.” (*Endangered Habitats League, Inc. v. County of Orange* (2005) 131 Cal.App.4th 777, 789.)

Failure to comply with even one general plan policy is enough to render a project “inconsistent” with the general plan, and any project approvals would be invalid. (*See, e.g., California Native Plant Society v. City of Rancho Cordova* (2009) 172 Cal.App.4th 603, 640-642 [finding that the City improperly failed to comply with a single general plan policy requiring the City to “coordinate” with specified resource agencies on mitigation for impacts to special-status species] and *Endangered Habitats League, supra*, 131 Cal.App.4th at 789 [finding inconsistency where the City failed to comply with a single general plan provision calling for use of a prescribed traffic study methodology in considering a project application].)

The City’s Comprehensive Plan “strongly encourage[s]” below-grade or structured parking facilities instead of surface parking “for new developments of all types . . .” (Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element, Policy T-5.6; *see also* Comprehensive Plan, Land Use &

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Community Design Element, Policy L-9.2 [encourages placing parking underground or behind buildings “wherever possible” and encourages other alternatives to surface parking lots] and Policies L-9.10 and L-6.6 [design garages to meet high-quality urban design standards, including elements such as screened parking or underground parking].)

The Text Amendment, including its arbitrary limit on the size of the Project’s underground parking facility (thereby forcing more surface parking), runs afoul of the Comprehensive Plan policies which strongly encourage below-grade parking. The notion of requiring more surface parking is anathema to modern planning/design principles and practices as reflected in the Comprehensive Plan policies. Indeed, the ARB considered the underground parking facility to be a superior design solution to surface parking lots.

In sum, the proposed Text Amendment fundamentally and irreconcilably conflicts with the Comprehensive Plan and is not required to effectuate the below-grade parking priorities promulgated by the Comprehensive Plan for non-residential uses.

B. Underground parking facilities for non-residential uses do not count as gross floor area; the City has allowed such facilities in the R-1 zone without restriction.

Subterranean parking facilities are permitted in the R-1 zone for non-residential uses. (PAMC §§ 18.12.080(a)(1) [listing parking facilities as a permitted accessory use], 18.54.020(a)(1) [listing dimensions for parking facilities “at, above, and below grade”];² Staff Report for March 8, 2021 City Council hearing on the Project, p. 13 [Staff observes that “there is no prohibition [on underground parking] for non-residential uses in R-1 zones.”].)³ In every non-residential zoning district in the City, parking facilities for non-residential uses do not count as gross floor area. (PAMC § 18.04.030(a)(65)(B)(i) [for non-residential and multifamily zones, gross floor area does not include parking facilities located on the same site].)

For low density residential zones, including R-1, “gross floor area” is defined in reference to surface structures and features. (PAMC § 18.04.030(a)(65)(C) [defining gross floor area as “the total covered area of all floors of a main structure and accessory structure . . . including covered parking and stairways, measured to the outside of stud walls . . .”].) “Covered parking,” in turn, is defined as surface-level garages and carports. (PAMC § 18.04.030(a)(41).)

² Unless otherwise noted, emphasis in quotations is supplied and citations are omitted.

³ By comparison PAMC Section 18.12.060(e) prohibits underground parking for single-family uses, except pursuant to a variance, in which case the area of the underground garage shall be counted in determining the FAR for the site.

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Nothing in the Municipal Code authorizes the City to include the Project’s below-grade parking facility as part of gross floor area. This is evidenced by the fact that Staff is recommending the Text Amendment to add below-grade parking facilities to the definition of “gross floor area” in the R-1 zone—because the existing Code does not include them in the calculation of gross floor area. This point is further exemplified in that the City previously followed the plain language of the Code and did not include the underground parking facility for a non-residential use in gross floor area, in the R-1 zone, when it approved the entitlements for Congregation Kol Emeth. For that project, the City allowed replacement of a 11,691 square foot synagogue with a new 23,555 square foot synagogue served by a 109-space underground parking facility.⁴

The Congregation Kol Emeth site is located on a 1.37 acre site with no listed historic resource. Like Castilleja, Congregation Kol Emeth operates as a conditional use, located in the R-1 zoning district. Yet, the City did not require or condition its approval of Congregation Kol Emeth (or its much larger parking facility) on an amendment to the existing zoning text. Instead, it determined that the below-grade parking facility did not count as gross floor area. (Staff Report for January 21, 2016 ARB Hearing [“CKE ARB Staff Report”], p. 9 [identifies variance request for 4,942.7 square feet to exceed the maximum allowable gross floor area of 18,612.3 square feet]; CKE ARB Staff Report, Attachment F [FAR analysis refers only to the 23,555 square foot synagogue facility]; CKE ARB Staff Report, Attachment G [finding the proposed use to be located and conducted in a manner in accord with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code].)⁵

In sum, underground parking facilities for non-residential uses do not count as gross floor area under the City’s existing land use plans and zoning.

C. The Project must be evaluated in accordance with existing rules and standards, which do not include the proposed Text Amendment.

The Project application seeks quasi-adjudicatory approvals. The City must apply existing standards and policies in considering the Project application, not invent new policy requirements or pretexts for denial, or arbitrarily attempt to change the existing zoning that should be applied to the permit applications. As the California Court of Appeal famously admonished a city in a similar situation involving an application for a use permit: “You cannot change the rules in the middle of the game.” (*Woody’s Group, Inc. v. City of Newport Beach* (2015) 233 Cal. App. 4th 1012, 1016

⁴ We hereby refer to and incorporate into the record of proceedings for this item, the Agendas, Staff Reports, Video Recordings, Minutes, Resolutions, as well as any “documents” as that term is defined by the Public Records Act, pertaining to the Congregation Kol Emeth project (File No. 15PLN-00129).

⁵ See also Staff Report for March 8, 2021 City Council hearing on the Project, p. 14 [“There is at least one recent project, Congregation Kol Emeth (2016), that includes a subterranean parking facility in the R-1 zone, which was not counted as gross floor area.”].

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[writ of mandate issued, ordering a city council to set aside its unlawful denial of a use permit application].)

Similarly in *Security National Guaranty, Inc. v. California Coastal Commission* (2008) 159 Cal.App.4th 402, 419-420, 422-423, the Court of Appeal ruled that an administrative agency lacked jurisdiction to change existing land use laws or to create new laws affecting the use under appeal. In reaching this conclusion, the court reasoned that the applicant “was entitled to have its development proposal judged by the standards in effect at the time of its application.” (*Security National Guaranty, supra*, 159 Cal.App.4th at 422; *see also Citizens of Goleta Valley, supra*, 52 Cal.3d at 574 [California Supreme Court observes that requiring “a reexamination of basic land-use policy with every permit application would impose an unnecessary and wasteful burden on local governments.”].)

The Permit Streamlining Act (“PSA”) also requires an agency to post a list of information needed from the applicant for a development project as well as all zoning and development standards applicable to each parcel. (Gov. Code §§ 65940, 65940.1.) Any revisions to these lists “apply prospectively only” and cannot form the basis for finding an already-submitted application to be incomplete. (Gov. Code § 65942.) Once an application is complete, the agency shall not subsequently request any new or additional information which was not included on the list prepared pursuant to Section 65940. (Gov. Code § 65944(a).)

Palo Alto’s Zoning Code likewise recognizes that once an application is deemed complete, it “shall be eligible to be acted upon on its merits.” (PAMC § 18.77.030(c); *see also* PAMC § 18.77.060 [Director to act on a proposed application for a variances or use permit within 21 days following the date an application is deemed complete] and PAMC § 18.77.070(c), (d) [ARB to set a hearing “[u]pon receipt” of a completed application for Architectural Review, with the Director taking action within five working days of receipt of the ARB’s recommendation].)

The rules in effect allow underground parking facilities for non-residential uses and do not count the square footage of such facilities as “gross floor area.” (*See* Section III.B, above.) In general, any change to these rules could apply only prospectively to applications arising after the effective date of the new ordinance. (*City of San Jose v. International Assn. of Firefighters, Local 230* (2009) 178 Cal.App.4th 408, 419-420 [Sixth Appellate District observes that “[n]ew statutes [and local ordinances] are presumed to operate only prospectively absent some clear indication that the Legislature intended otherwise.”]; *Evangelatos v. Superior Court* (1988) 44 Cal.3d 1188, 1207 [this presumption embodies “[t]he first rule of construction[, namely,] that legislation must be considered as addressed to the future, not to the past.”]; and *Brenton v. Metabolife International, Inc.* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th 679, 688-689 [“[I]f a statutory change is *substantive* because it would impose new, additional or different liabilities based on past conduct, courts are loath to interpret it as having retrospective application.”] [emphasis in the original].)

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In sum, the Project application must be evaluated against existing rules and standards, which allow underground parking facilities for non-residential uses and do not count the square footage of such facilities as gross floor area.

D. The Text Amendment is arbitrary and irrational and not shown to be rationally related to a legitimate government interest.

The touchstone of substantive due process is the protection of the individual against arbitrary government action; the due process clause was intended to prevent government officials from abusing their power or employing it as an instrument of oppression. (*Wolff v. McDonnell*, (1974) 418 U.S. 539, 558; *Collins v. City of Harker Heights* (1992) 503 U.S. 115, 126.) A violation of substantive due process rights occurs if a government agency's actions are (1) irrational or arbitrary or (2) not rationally related to a legitimate government interest. (*Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.* (1926) 272 U.S. 365 ["Due Process" applies in local zoning actions]; *Lingle v. Chevron* (2005) 544 U.S. 528.) The test is disjunctive. Thus, a property owner need only demonstrate facts to support one of the two bases in order to state a viable due process claim.

In *Arnel Development Co. v. City of Costa Mesa* (1981) 126 Cal.App.3d 330, 337, the Court of Appeal ruled that enactment of a zoning ordinance downzoning certain property was arbitrary and discriminatory where enacted without considering appropriate planning or land use criteria and for the sole and specific purpose of defeating a single development proposal.⁶ (*See also Del Monte Dunes, Ltd. v. City of Monterey* (9th Cir. 1990) 920 F.2d 1496, 1508 [court finds local agency's land use decision, motivated by "political pressure from neighbors" instead of legitimate regulatory concerns, to support a substantive due process claim].) In addition, the California Supreme Court has held that a city must consider the "regional welfare" in making zoning decisions, not just parochial concerns. (*Associated Home Builders etc., Inc. v. City of Livermore* (1976) 18 Cal. 3d 582, 611.)

The proposed Text Amendment would plainly subject Castilleja to more restrictive zoning than Congregation Kol Emeth. The arbitrary 50 percent limit is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and certainly does not advance any legitimate government interest. As in *Arnel* and *Del Monte Dunes*, both *supra*, the City does not appear to be considering appropriate planning or land use criteria—such as promulgated by the Comprehensive Plan policies which strongly encourages underground parking and the Zoning Code and other City policies generally allowing underground parking and not counting it as gross floor area for non-residential uses in other situations.

⁶ The *Arnel* court noted that the ordinance was "not rationally related to the general regional public welfare, but, at best, to conserving the interests of the adjoining property owners and residents of the immediate area." (*Arnel, supra*, 126 Cal.App.3d at 337.)

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The arbitrary and irrational nature of the Text Amendment was commented on by multiple commissioners at the last PTC meeting. Commissioner Alcheck questioned the City’s constantly shifting goal posts when it comes to the Project. (“Planning Commissioner calls out city for shifting ‘goal posts’ on Castilleja,” *Palo Alto Weekly*, December 16, 2021.) Further, a majority of the Commissioners questioned the necessity of a text amendment that applied *only* to Castilleja.

In sum, the proposed Text Amendment is arbitrary and irrational and not rationally related to a legitimate government interest. We urge the PTC to find, based on the current Zoning Code, the Comprehensive Plan, and precedent, that the Project underground parking facility does not count as gross floor area.

E. Subjecting Castilleja to different or more burdensome requirements than imposed on similarly situated non-residential property owners would deprive Castilleja of its constitutionally protected rights to equal protection.

The Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides that no state shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. (*See also* Cal. Con., art. I, sec. 7.) The concept of equal protection has been defined to mean that no person or class of persons may be denied the same protection of law that is enjoyed by other persons or other classes in like circumstances. (*Hawn v. County of Ventura* (1977) 73 Cal.App.3d 1009, 1018.) A claimant must show that the state “has adopted a classification that affects two or more *similarly situated* groups in an unequal manner.” (*Walgreen Co. v. City & County of San Francisco* (2010) 185 Cal.App.4th 424, 434 [emphasis in the original].) “[A] deliberate, irrational discrimination, even if it is against one person (or other entity) rather than a group, is actionable under the equal protection clause.” (*World Outreach Conference Center v. City of Chicago* (7th Cir. 2009) 591 F.3d 531, 538.)

In *Village of Willowbrook v. Olech* (2000) 528 U.S. 562, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a plaintiff stated a viable equal protection cause of action based on claims that a municipality required a 33-foot easement from her as a condition of connecting her property to the municipal water supply when it had only required a 15-foot easement from other similarly situated property owners. The Ninth Circuit has likewise upheld equal protection claims brought by property owners that were discriminated against or treated unfairly by local agencies as part of the land use approval process. (*See, e.g., Herrington v. County of Sonoma* (9th Cir. 1987) 834 F.2d 1488 [denial of proposed subdivision and subsequent downzoning violated property owner’s equal protection rights where there was evidence that county had approved sizable residential development projects on three other agricultural properties shortly after it rejected the owner’s proposal] and *Del Monte Dunes, Ltd., supra* [allegation that city arbitrarily and unreasonably limited use and development

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of property and set aside open space for public use, whereas owners of comparable properties were not subjected to these conditions and restrictions states viable equal protection claim].⁷

Here, the City is proposing to treat Castilleja differently from how it is has treated other similarly-situated developments. The larger Congregation Kol Emeth underground parking facility was not counted as gross floor area. Requiring the Text Amendment as a precondition for approval of the Castilleja Project when none was needed for Congregation Kol Emeth raises obvious concerns of disparate treatment. At the last PTC meeting, Commissioner Alcheck equated the City’s treatment of Castilleja to the oppressive treatment of women in the novel, The Handmaid’s Tale. (“Planning Commissioner calls out city for shifting ‘goal posts’ on Castilleja,” *Palo Alto Weekly*, December 16, 2021.) Recognizing the fact that Castilleja is an all-girls school, such unequal treatment could implicate heightened scrutiny by a reviewing court. (Cf. *Califano v. Westcott* (1979) 443 U.S. 76, 85; *Orr v. Orr* (1979) 440 U.S. 268, 279; and *Craig v. Boren* (1976) 429 U.S. 190, 197.)

The California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) requires that an agency certify an EIR within one year from the date the application was deemed complete and to act on a non-residential project 180 days thereafter. (Public Resources Code § 21151.5; CEQA Guidelines § 15108; Government Code § 65950; PAMC § 18.77.040.) The City is woefully delinquent in its obligations to timely act on the Project under CEQA and the PSA. Any further delays, such as the unnecessary and ill-advised consideration of the Text Amendment, would increase the City’s potential exposure to liability for damages. (Cf. *Sunset Drive Corp. v. City of Redlands* (1999) 73 Cal.App.4th 215 [developer stated action for violation of due process and equal protection due to agency’s failure to complete and certify an EIR within the one-year timeframe specified by CEQA].)

In short, requiring a Text Amendment for the Project when none was needed for any prior comparable use would deprive Castilleja of its constitutionally-protected rights to equal protection.

In conclusion, no zoning text amendment was requested for the Project underground parking facility nor would the Staff-recommended Text Amendment pass legal scrutiny. We urge the PTC to find, consistent with the City’s Comprehensive Plan and City Code, that the Project underground parking facility does not count as gross floor area.

At the March 29, 2021 Council meeting on the Project, Councilmember Tanaka urged his colleagues to avoid an “infinite loop” of review by instead providing concrete, clear direction to

⁷ (See also *Fry v. Hayward* (N.D. Cal. 1988) 701 F.Supp. 179 [zoning restrictions applicable to just one of several open space areas in City invalidated for denial of equal protection].)


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Staff and Castilleja. We respectfully ask the PTC to heed that warning and provide clear direction with minimal further requests of Staff and Castilleja so that Project review can proceed in accordance with the PTC's prior positive recommendation for approval.

Thank you for your consideration of Castilleja's views on this important matter. Representatives of Castilleja will be in attendance at your January 19, 2022 meeting. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions regarding this correspondence.

Very truly yours,

RUTAN & TUCKER, LLP



David P. Lanferman

DPL:cm

cc: Nanci Kauffman, Head of School
Kathy Layendecker, Associate Head for Finance and Operations
Mindie Romanowsky, Co-Counsel
Ed Shikada, City Manager
Jonathan Lait, Planning & Development Services Director
Amy French, Chief Planning Official
Molly Stump, City Attorney
Albert Yang, Assistant City Attorney

From: [Andie Reed](#)
To: [French, Amy](#); [Lait, Jonathan](#); [Planning Commission](#); [Architectural Review Board](#); [Council, City](#); [Shikada, Ed](#)
Subject: Castilleja GFA
Date: Thursday, January 13, 2022 11:39:36 AM
Attachments: [ARBpktpg19GFA,12-2-2021.pdf](#)
[Dudek-Nov 2021 GFA page A-1.pdf](#)

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

Jan 13, 2022

Dear Amy,
(cc: Lait, Shikada, ARB, PTC, CC)

1. Please make the **Dudek "Castilleja School Building Survey and Gross Floor Area Assessment"** report dated Nov 17, 2021 easily available to interested parties. City council requested this official third-party count on March 15, 2021, and it significantly changes the applicant's request for variance.

Locating this report is very difficult, and its importance is thus diminished. However, it is exceedingly pertinent to any discussion of Castilleja's project's request for a variance. The PTC vote on the variance, on 11/4/2020, Packet Pg 28:

Finding 1: doesn't mention that the school's **increasing their own property site by 1.36 acres in 1992** expressly excludes them from using size as a basis for a variance, and Finding 2: doesn't mention **allowed FAR (.30)** at all, and gave only (we now know) inaccurate current FAR (.43) and proposed FAR (.42). In order for the PTC to make a reasonable analysis, they need to know all three: **allowed FAR (.30), current FAR (.51) and proposed FAR (.48).**

Current existing GFA is 138,345SF, proposed new buildings is 128,687SF. Allowable GFA is 81,385SF. Buildings added in the last couple of decades that didn't go through the PTC or usual channels in the development process and didn't get recorded properly are now coming to light; **the site is significantly over-built. The actual square footage being requested in excess of allowed FAR is 47,300SF.**

Currently, planning commissioners learn vaguely about the report in the 12/15/21 PTC staff report, Packet Pg 26, although it is not called by the same title in the two places where it is referenced, and can only be accessed by a link which leads to the ARB 12/2/2021 staff report. From there, one has to scroll down to ARB Packet Pg 18 and footnote 9, for a link to a report called "City's consultant report on existing gross floor area..".

A. The first link below is the ARB page, and it is important because it shows the flow of the GFA from the Dudek report to the project's plans, by segregating out, in different columns, the existing, proposed demolished, and proposed retained/new buildings (Packet Pg. 19). This ARB page states that volumetrics came into code in 1993. Both buildings that are counted with volumetrics were built (re-built) after that date (arts building 1998, gym 2006), so that's not a basis for reducing the professional measurement. Developers have to comply with current code, not some prior code from previous years, even if it pertained, which it doesn't.

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/architectural-review-board/2021/arb-12.02-castilleja.pdf>. I attach Packet Pg 19 below, to save you time.

B. This second link is the source data for that ARB analysis, the **Dudek "Castilleja School Building Survey and Gross Floor Area Assessment"**. The page following Page

8 (A-1) shows that the total existing gross floor area is 138,345SF, which flows through to the ARB Packet Pg. 19, so now you have the whole picture. I attach Page A-1 below, to save you time.

<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> Pertinent numbers are on page A-1 (after pg 8).

2. Secondly, please identify who made the measurements and calculations and when they were made. The report, as you've explained to me, was provided by Dudek, and then city staff reviewed and studied and vetted it. However, I only see Katherine Waugh's name on it, and I'm sure you hired a professional surveyor (or Dudek did). I did notice that the summary page A-1 (after page 8) transposes the Rhoades building's numbers and the Arillaga building's numbers.

Thank you,
Andie

--

Andie Reed CPA
Palo Alto, CA 94301



portion of the garage from the GFA calculation. This direction was further refined on March 29th when Council directed staff and the PTC to review an underground parking garage alternative that allows a maximum of 50% of the required on-site parking to be below grade without counting against the project GFA. More information on this amendment will be included in the PTC staff report scheduled for December 8, 2021.

- 2. Re-Analyze Existing and Proposed Gross Floor Area.** Leading up to the City Council's March 8, 2021 public hearing, staff learned of a discrepancy in the size of one of the existing campus buildings; more GFA was attributed to an existing building than should have counted. Specifically, 7,000 square feet (SF) of exempt below grade floor area was incorrectly included in the total existing gross floor area count. However, the applicant had also undercounted existing gross floor area in another portion of the building reducing this discrepancy to 4,370 SF of gross floor area.⁸

Due to the confusion regarding floor area, the City Council directed staff to prepare an independent (third party) analysis of the project site's existing and proposed building areas, including basement space. Staff engaged a subconsultant to the City's environmental consultant to prepare this analysis. The consultant report⁹ and findings are available online (link below). This analysis was prepared using a laser measurement tool and provides a greater level of precision than previously existed. Some assumptions were made regarding wall thickness, but in general, the results are the best possible calculation of existing floor area. This data was then evaluated to the existing code, which defines floor area that is included and excluded from GFA calculations, including volumetric spaces exceeding 17 feet and 26 feet in height. A 1993 code change for GFA required double and triple counting of this volumetric floor area, also known as second and third floor level equivalences, toward GFA. This was intended to recognize the impact of these spaces on overall building mass. It is clear these volumetric requirements were not considered in previous campus renovations and are not reflected in the applicant's architectural plans.

Existing Campus Gross Floor Area

The applicant's most recent project plans show an existing campus gross floor area (GFA) calculation of 109,297 square feet (SF), which is down from 116,297 SF previously presented to Council. This reduction accounts for corrected discrepancies and applicant-initiated floor plan adjustments. These numbers were provided by the applicant.

⁸ More information on this floor area discrepancy was provided in a March 8, 2021 memorandum to Council: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/at-places-memo/03-08-21-agenda-item-7-at-places-memo.pdf>

⁹ City's consultant report on existing gross floor area <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>

The City's independent consultant analysis concludes the actual existing campus has 114,819 GFA, not including volumetric gross floor area, which adds another 23,526 SF from the gym (17,346 SF) and fine arts building (6,180 SF). Accordingly, Castilleja's total existing campus GFA, based on current code definitions and using enhanced measurement techniques, is 138,345 SF.

Staff's evaluation of the consultant's analysis and the applicant's project plans concludes that the discrepancy between the two data sets is mostly due to the omission of the volumetric floor area. The balance of the discrepancy is assigned to the applicant's use of decades old permit records to report the existing GFA. This was a less precise way to measure GFA than the readings provided by the laser measurement tool to determine existing built conditions.

Demolition and Replacement of Previously Entitled Gross Floor Area:

Based on the foregoing analysis and after reviewing the most recent architectural plans to current code, the applicant proposes the following:

Campus Building	Existing GFA	Demolished GFA	Proposed GFA ¹⁰
Arrillaga Campus Center	37,179	37,179	0
Administration, Chapel, Theater	17,754	0	17,754
Gymnasium	33,513	0	33,513
Leonard Ely Arts Building	12,360	12,360	0
Maintenance Building	2,863	2,863	0
Pool Equipment Building	884	884	0
Rhoades Hall	33,793	33,793	0
New Academic Building	0	0	77,420
TOTAL	138,345	87,079	128,687
<i>TOTAL (Not Including Volumetric Area)</i>	<i>114,819</i>	<i>80,899</i>	<i>111,341</i>

If the volumetric second and third floor equivalency GFA were excluded from all calculations, staff concludes the total existing GFA would be 114,819 sf and the proposed plus existing to remain GFA would be 111,341.

Project Design Revisions

Related to, but independent of the GFA analysis described above, the applicant made some revisions to the proposed building and site planning. These changes resulted in reduced building floor area or relocation of structures to reduce impacts to protected trees or accommodate more surface parking.

1. **Academic Building Changes.** In the May 2021 submittal, the applicant modified two roofed portions of the academic building at the second-floor level: one was previously a conditioned interior building space, and the other was a solidly roofed second floor

¹⁰ Includes existing to remain (not demolished).

**Attachment A
Raw Square Feet and
Gross Floor Area Tables**

Castilleja School Existing Campus Building Space

Summary			
Building	Level ¹	Raw Square Feet ²	Gross Floor Area ³ (square feet)
Rhoades Hall			
	B1	7,252.90	0.00
	L1	18,924.62	18,924.62
	L2	17,836.79	17,836.79
	L1-L2	417.46	417.46
Subtotal		44,431.77	37,178.87
Administration-Chapel-Theater			
	B1	8,594.56	0.00
	L1	10,072.27	10,072.27
	L2	7,682.03	7,682.03
Subtotal		26,348.86	17,754.30
Gymnasium			
	B2	13,032.03	0.00
	B1	6,794.69	0.00
	L1	16,166.57	33,512.54
Subtotal		35,993.29	33,512.54
Leonard Ely Fine Arts Building			
	L1	6,179.85	12,359.70
Subtotal		6,179.85	12,359.70
Maintenance			
	L1	1,941.01	1,941.01
	L2	921.98	921.98
Subtotal		2,862.99	2,862.99
Pool Equipment			
	B1	832.53	0.00
	L1	883.84	883.84
Subtotal		1,716.37	883.84
Arrillaga Campus Center			
	B1	4,636.40	0.00
	B1-L1	263.24	0.00
	L1	10,980.51	10,980.51
	L2	11,093.47	11,093.47
	L3	11,093.47	11,093.47
	L1-L3	625.13	625.13
Subtotal		38,692.22	33,792.58
Total		156,225.35	138,344.82

Notes:

1. Level indicates the building floor level as follows:

- B1 is the first level below grade.
- B2 is the second level below grade.
- L1 is the ground floor level.
- L2 is the second level above grade.
- L3 is the third level above grade.
- L1-L3 indicates exterior stairways between the ground floor and third floor above grade.
- B1-L1 indicates exterior stairways between the first level below grade and the ground floor.

2. **Raw Square Feet** identifies the measured square footage of each building area.

3. **Gross Floor Area** identifies the Gross Floor Area (GFA) for each building area as defined in the Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC). Areas shown as having a GFA of 0.00 are excluded from the GFA. Areas shown as having a GFA that is greater than the Raw Square Feet are counted twice or three times. Refer to the individual building sheets for additional detail.

From: [Barbara Gross](#)
To: [Council, City](#); [Architectural Review Board](#); [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Castilleja Modernization Project
Date: Thursday, January 13, 2022 12:18:23 PM

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

Dear Commissioners,

Please accept my brief note thanks for the work you did last year in advancing the Castilleja School modernization project. The dated, academic building that has been in the neighborhood since the 1960s is long overdue for updating with a sustainable new building that truly suits the needs of a 21st century education. Your feedback to the school last year was helpful, and I want to thank the school for the beautiful design they've put forward in accordance with your direction, City Council guidance, and feedback from neighbors. While it's been an excessively long process, it's been productive, and all of us can benefit from a school that blends nicely into the neighborhood using sustainable building materials and drought resistant landscaping.

The school has done an excellent job providing you with design options that will preserve more trees and improve quality of life in the neighborhood AND that take neighbors' needs and concerns into account. It has been an eight-year-long process of the school compromising and revising their project. Why have they stayed in the game so long? They want to educate more girls. Simple. So they have come up with many options to make that happen.

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. In any process, it is critical to listen to all viewpoints. There is a difference between being heard and consequently invoking all suggestions.

I appreciate that considering opposing perspectives on this project may put you in a challenging position. However, sometimes leaders must make difficult choices. As leaders of Palo Alto, I trust you to make recommendations that will allow this project to move ahead. Supporting education—even single-sex education—should be a city-wide priority.

Thank you very much,
Barbara Gross



From: [Teresa Zepeda Kelleher](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board](#)
Subject: Castilleja Project
Date: Friday, January 14, 2022 1:47:26 PM

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Dear PTC Members,

I'm writing to ask you to approve the Castilleja project for the second and last time and express my fervent support for allowing the school to revitalize its campus. I appreciate your support for the project last year, and your continued attention to the school's proposal. Let's move forward with a plan that fulfills requests from both parties.

TREES


Yes, we care deeply about them. We take great pride in our city's beautiful trees and appropriately protect them. Castilleja has found a way to both protect trees AND carefully move ahead with necessary updates. Throughout Castilleja's many project revisions, I particularly appreciate the efforts they've made to protect their campus' trees and add abundantly to our canopy. **The new Master Plan adds over 100 new trees to the campus.**

PARKING OPTIONS

Now, you have their revised proposal in front of you which *further* protects trees. First, they have recommended an underground parking garage which serves the important purpose of removing cars from the neighborhood streets while NOT harming trees. Please support any of these FIVE excellent solutions. **Weigh the pros and cons, think of the constituents involved, and select one underground parking plan that will serve the city and the citizens and the school.**

By recommending approval of their project, you can help the school educate more students, while at the same time adding no additional traffic, improving the neighborhood aesthetic with a modernized campus and underground garage, and protecting trees and adding to our canopy. This project cannot continue receiving unclear and mixed feedback. Consider the facts that have been presented, and that the number of neighbors who enthusiastically support Castilleja far outweighs a few opposing individuals. As leaders in our community, we look to you for sound decision making that will support our current and future children.

Sincerely,

Teresa Kelleher


From: [Cindy Chen](#)
To: [Council, City; Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Support for Castilleja
Date: Friday, January 14, 2022 3:06:18 PM

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Dear Members of the PTC,

I live near Castilleja School on Emerson Street and am writing to urge you to support Castilleja's recommendations so that their dated buildings can be updated and surface parking can be reduced. As a near neighbor, I implore you to take the lead, follow the code, and move this project toward approval.

The school has been making changes and compromises for years. I have been watching closely, very grateful and very impressed by the care and responsiveness. Now we are at a point where trees are preserved; there is a balance of cars below ground and on the surface—an attempt to appease neighbors on both sides of that question; the rooflines are lower and setbacks increase; 100 new trees will be added to a net-zero campus; and no new cars will come to our neighborhood because Castilleja is better at TDM than anyone on the Bay Area. All of this is ready to happen, just waiting on city approval.

And while that process marches on, every year there are girls who could have access to the education they are hoping for but don't. The time matters. It may feel like it doesn't but it really matters to real kids.

Thank you for your continued attention to our city and schools. Please do not allow further delays to this project, which is good for our city, children, and neighborhood.

Thank you,
Cindy Chen, 

From: [ROBERT HALLEWELL](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: OBJECT TO CASTILLEJA CURRENT EXPANSION PLANS/ RESIDENT OF COMMUNITY CENTER DISTRICT
Date: Saturday, January 15, 2022 7:43:34 PM

You don't often get email from hallewell@icloud.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Commissioners,

I write yet again to register our family's objection to the current Castilleja expansion. It should be within (actually by rights it should be more than within, given past and ongoing flouting of agreed limits) existing planning regulations. No special exemptions.

I write because of your upcoming meeting and because I gather that the square footage of the existing Castilleja buildings have also exceeded city regulations.

Councillors, it is time to stand up to expensive lawyers getting wealthy organizations illegal preferential treatment.

sincerely, Robert Hallewell

I've copied the resident's detailed objections below just to flesh out my above summary:

DOES THE CASTILLEJA EXPANSION PROJECT SERVE THE BEST INTERESTS OF PALO ALTO?

The answer is **NO** and here's why:

- 75% of Castilleja's students come from outside Palo Alto

This is not a public school that serves any/all local students.

- Castilleja is requesting a 30% increase in enrollment after 20 years of illegal over-enrollment

Castilleja is legally zoned for 415 students. At the height of their over-enrollment they reached 448 students. It is estimated that over \$12 million was pocketed by the school on this over-enrollment and never publicly accounted for. The school still exceeds its legal limit of 415 students, to allow a 30% enrollment increase on top of this violation makes a mockery of City rules and regulations.

- This project will significantly increase traffic on Embarcadero Rd., Alma St. and narrow neighborhood streets

Castilleja projects that a 30% enrollment increase will bring 300 additional cars a day during school hours to the school site, which will dramatically impact Embarcadero, Alma, and neighborhood streets at peak traffic times.

- Destruction of the Natural Environment

At a time of increasing pollution and global warming, Castilleja plans to remove mature oaks and redwoods and replace them with saplings that will take many generations to provide shade, a carbon collecting canopy as well as an aesthetically interesting neighborhood.

- Construction of an Underground Garage is a threat to Pedestrians and Cyclists

Despite Castilleja's claims that neighbors want an underground garage, we do not! And 47 households surrounding the school all signed a letter to Castilleja and the City attesting to this fact in 2017 and wrote a “neighbors’ summary statement signed by 60 surrounding households protesting the scope of this project in 2018! Castilleja's plans though call for the construction of a highly polluting underground parking garage in an R-1 residential neighborhood, the destruction of mature redwoods and oaks.

This tragic result adds ZERO additional parking spaces. There currently exists 86 on-site parking spaces that no one complains about, which is a sufficient number for a modest increase in enrollment, as they have received over the years when they modify their Use Permit. Further, the entrance to the garage is just off of Embarcadero Rd. along the Bike Boulevard, which is heavily used by students and commuters. Cars re-enter Embarcadero from Emerson, an already very dicey traffic situation.

- Construction of a Costco-Sized Facility

Castilleja’s plans call for the construction of an oversized, boxy and institutional type structure, which does not fit in with the character of the neighborhood, is not compliant with municipal code and causes dramatic densification of one residential block.

- Precedent-Setting Project for All Palo Alto Neighborhoods

If this project is approved, what does this mean for all Palo Alto neighborhoods? Would you want a commercial underground garage exit next to your home, constant weekday traffic and off-hour special events? And what about 5 years of major construction for a project that largely serves the affluent of other communities?

- **Neighbors’ Plan**

1. Submit a Code Compliant Project
2. Modernize and rebuild the school without an underground garage (simply not moving the pool retains the required parking spaces to service the school).
3. Lower requested enrollment. Don’t make the residents suffer the consequences and take all the risk.
4. Once enrollment is lowered (e.g. 450 students), sufficient parking will exist,

eliminating the need for an underground garage and the destruction of healthy, mature oaks and redwoods.

5. To reduce traffic congestion and promote environmental sustainability, students and staff must arrive at the Castilleja campus via school-sponsored shuttling and public transportation as well as by non-motorized transport (e.g. walking, biking, etc.).

From: juliekaye@gmail.com
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Consideration
Date: Sunday, January 16, 2022 5:11:06 PM

You don't often get email from juliekaye@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Planning and Transportation Commissioners,

Thank you for the time you commit to the greater good of Palo Alto. We are writing to you about that very topic—the greater good in relation to Castilleja’s application for a new Conditional Use Permit (CUP). By definition, schools contribute to the greater good by educating children. In particular, Castilleja provides a particular benefit as the only nonsectarian 6-12 school for girls in the Bay Area. This isn’t the right setting for all girls, but for some it makes the difference in their lives at an important stage.

Castilleja also contributes to the greater good as a leader in TDM. Businesses and organizations across Palo Alto should look to Castilleja for ways to reduce THEIR car trips by up to 31%. Rather than incorrectly attributing the traffic on Embarcadero to Castilleja, we should credit Castilleja with finding creative and effective solutions. No one else has done more to reduce their traffic impacts in Palo Alto.

Excellent schools benefit everyone by providing a place for children to learn and grow, by fortifying property values, by outreach in the community. Castilleja does all of this and would even do more if the terms of the CUP allowed it. Most of all, if more students can attend in the high school (without adding more traffic) all of those benefits increase.

With accountability built into the plan, the school will only be permitted to grow if traffic remains the same. This proposal is all about public benefits.

Thank you,
Julie and Todd Kaye
[REDACTED], Palo Alto

From: [Mary Sylvester](#)
To: [French, Amy](#)
Cc: [Lait, Jonathan](#); [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Fwd: Castilleja School Expansion Project--1/19/22
Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 9:48:12 AM
Attachments: [Castiella PTC Comments 211208 \(2\).rtf](#)

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

Dear City Staff and Commissioners,

I am writing today as a 44-year neighbor of Castilleja School, living ½ block from the entrance to the school's Emerson St. parking lot.

Neighbors have long supported modernization and rebuilding of the Castilleja campus and been highly encouraging of the school's educational mission. However, since the school filed its new CUP Application and Project Plan on June 30, 2016, neighbors have had significant concerns about the scope of the school's plans and how it will impact the immediate neighborhood as well as the Palo Alto community generally.

My overarching concern about Castilleja's expansion project currently before you is: *Does Approval of the Project In Its Current Form Serve the Best Interests of Palo Alto?* In light of my question, please consider the following:

1. The Variance Granted to Castilleja for Additional Square Footage (2020) is based on Inaccurate Data and Consequently Needs to be Set Aside. The square footage submitted by the school to the City was a significant undercount and was later updated by Castilleja's consultant, Dudek, in July 2021. This expansion project has been designed and reviewed by public boards, commissions and City Council.

2. The Underground Garage is Poorly Located and Designed:

(1) the entrance to the underground is on a Safe Routes to School and poses a risk to cyclists biking to and from school,

(2) to enter the garage most drivers will need to turn left at the busy intersection of Embarcadero and Bryant,

(3) given the design of the garage, drivers are going to need to cue up back onto Embarcadero to enter the garage at commute hours,

(4) exiting the garage will also pose safety risks to pedestrians and cyclists utilizing Emerson St.,

(5) exiting the garage on Emerson St. will also necessitate blinking lights and beepers to alert other drivers, pedestrians and cyclists and negatively impact quality of life of neighbors, and

(6) the garage design calls for toxic CO2 fumes to be exhausted into the residential neighborhood above.

3. The Castilleja Expansion Project Poses a Threat to Fragile, Valuable Public Resources such as Protected Oaks and Redwoods as well as Palo Alto's Water Table. These trees belong to the people of Palo Alto and Castilleja's plan of replacing them with numerous saplings is an insult to the trees and community. Why the school did not design around these trees, which are an asset to their school site remains unanswered. And as to Castilleja's impact on groundwater, please see Keith Bennett of Save Palo Alto's Groundwater 12/8/21 letter (attached) about how the pool's move and lowering of it impacts the water table. If the pool is left where it currently is, groundwater will not be threatened and 56 onsite parking spaces will be retained thereby obviating the need for an underground parking garage.

4. The Much Touted Transportation Demand Management Project is a Smoke and Mirrors Campaign to Allow Students, Parents and Staff to Drive to School with the School Proposing to Monitor its own Compliance. Castilleja is proposing to have 1440 trips a day for 540 students, coming to and from campus, which is far too many cars coming through narrow neighborhood streets. Please note that 75% of Castilleja's students come from outside Palo Alto and the school resists mandatory shuttling and senior-only driving. I request that the PTC recommend to Council senior-only driving and mandatory shuttling. Why have Sustainability Goals when we essentially encourage students and teachers to drive by building an underground garage and not limiting student drivers?

5. An Enrollment of 450 Students is a Reasonable Number for the Castilleja Site.

At this point, it is important that Castilleja receive a C.U.P. for no more than 450 enrollees and demonstrate to the City and community that it can live within the law and effectively maintain its TDM program without problems for neighbors or Palo Alto residents generally. An underground garage will not be needed and thereby help meet the City's sustainability goals if Castilleja is: allowed 450 students; not given approval to remove its current 56-parking spots; and mandatory shuttling of students is required with limited on-street parking.

6. The Castilleja Expansion Project represents an erosion of the City's Municipal Code, Zoning Ordinance, Safe Route to Schools Program, Tree Ordinance, Sustainability Goals and the Comprehensive Plan. For clarification, the Comprehensive Plan talks about underground garages being favored in commercial zones and in locations with multiple family housing, not in R-1 neighbors. In fact, the Comprehensive Plan (2017) calls for: *the importance of maintaining a thriving urban forest, maintaining neighborhood character and reducing reliance on the car.*

In sum, is the Castilleja School Expansion Project really the project the PTC wants to make so many exceptions for at this time, given that Castilleja has the resources to update their school within existing laws as other local private schools have done? Castilleja will set a precedent for other Palo Alto development projects requesting exceptions to our planning documents. If such variances and exemptions are going to be made at this time, shouldn't they be made for those projects seeking to address vital public needs such as affordable housing?

Thank you,
Mary Sylvester
Melville Avenue
Palo Alto

Castijella Planning and Transportation Comments
December 8, 2021

I am Keith Bennett with Save Palo Alto's Groundwater. Our concerns are primarily with the impacts of underground construction particularly on our community groundwater, which is becoming increasingly more valuable as a result of climate change and population growth. Underground construction has impacts during and after construction. We believe these impacts should be avoided and minimized through design and construction processes.

First, decisions on any underground construction need to be made based upon relevant and up-to-date geotechnical studies. The environmental impact reports must be specific for the actual project design and include accurate and current ground conditions. The DEIR for this project was prepared in 2017, the geotechnical studies have a clearly stated expiration date in early 2020 and the DEIR does not consider the excavation proposed for the swimming pool, but only contemplates a single-level underground for the garage. This is a very material difference.

The pool deck is 15 feet below ground surface and excavation for the pool will extend to approximately 27 feet below ground surface allowing for the 7 foot depth of the pool, pipes and pumps below the pool and an approximately 2 foot thick slab of concrete to reduce buoyancy when the pool isn't filled. The water table at this location is about 25 feet below ground surface in autumn, rising to about 18 feet below ground surface during winter storms. We must assume groundwater will be encountered during construction, as it was in 2006 for construction of the gym. Palo Alto building code requires contractors to dewater to at least 2 feet below the deepest excavation, and contractors invariably dewater further. Therefore, we can assume groundwater will be lowered at least 5 feet to 30 feet or more below ground surface. Applicants often cite compliance Palo Alto's Dewatering Ordinance as providing necessary protections from impacts. However Palo Alto's dewatering ordinance does not impose any, I repeat any, restrictions on the rate or total amount of groundwater pumped. Contrary to the perception of many, unless specifically required as a condition of approval, the ordinance does not require use of cutoff walls to limit groundwater waste.

The extent and impacts of dewatering are significant. Based upon measurements in Old Palo Alto with similar soils, groundwater will likely be lowered by 5 feet or more for many months, likely over an area extending 500 feet from the construction site, and 2 feet or more over a circle of ½ to 1 mile in diameter, and tens of millions of gallons of a valuable resource will be discarded. Castijella is on the border of area of high recharge for deeper aquifer levels that Palo Alto uses for our emergency potable water supply, so pumping groundwater here reduces aquifer recharge.

It is well-known that lowering the groundwater table results in subsidence, which is permanent. For the alluvial fan soils typical of Old Palo Alto, typical subsidence is about 1% of the amount of groundwater lowered, which corresponds to ½" or more for this project. I have clearly observed and documented such subsidence from residential dewatering at my house from basement construction 100's of feet away, as well as associated permanent damages. Furthermore, groundwater is a source of soil moisture especially for trees, as soils above the water table are moistened by water wicked-up through the soil, and mature tree roots grow down into the moist soil zones.

An often overlooked environmental impact of underground construction in high groundwater areas is the greenhouse gas emissions from the concrete used. To prevent the structure from floating up, Palo

Alto's building code requires the building to be heavier than the water it is displacing for the highest anticipated groundwater level. Although an accurate geotechnical estimate is needed for design, considering the very large rise in groundwater levels during major storms, I estimate the design will require prevention of buoyancy for groundwater rising at least 8 feet above the bottom of the excavation. For a pool of the size indicated, 1,350 tons of concrete will be needed just to counteract buoyancy. That's 675 cubic yards. The pool deck and underground walls will likely use another 400 tons (200 cubic yards) of concrete. Another approximately 2,000 tons (1,000 cubic yards) of concrete is required for the floor, roof and walls of the garage, for a total of 3,350 tons. The manufacture of concrete releases roughly 400 pounds of CO₂ per ton of concrete. The CO₂ emissions for the underground construction are therefore approximately 1,340,000 pounds. Let's put some perspective on this number. Palo Alto is strongly encouraging residents to replace their gas-burning ranges with electric. We use 3 therms / month of natural gas for cooking and hot water combined. Burning 1 therm of natural gas results in the emission of about 11.7 pounds of CO₂, so our consumption of natural gas for heating and hot water emits about 420 pounds / year. The CO₂ emitted for this proposed underground construction is about the amount we emit due to cooking and hot water heating in 3,200 years. Retrofitting 320 residences with all electric ranges and water heater would offset these emissions over 10 years. Assuming a cost of \$10,000 per retrofit, the cost would be \$32 million. Or, for another way to look at it, I could drive a Prius getting 60 miles / gallon for 10,000 miles a year for 265 years. Or, 132 commuters to Castijella could drive 50 miles round trip for 200 days / year for 2 year. This is a lot of CO₂ to relocate an existing ground-level pool two levels below ground and build underground parking.

This large underground construction increases the load on our stormwater management system. Approximately 80% of stormwater is absorbed by soil, then flows over time to the Bay. This buffering system both filters the runoff and reduces load on our stormdrain system, and is a motivation for Valley Water and the City of Palo Alto to encourage and require rain gardens, permeable pavement and other features for capture stormwater. The proposed playing field is entirely impervious, and moreover, the soil permanently removed.

Underground construction is very expensive – in fact, in presenting their proposals for new high-density housing, Stanford explicitly stated they intend to use above ground parking and increasing building heights due to costs; and buoyancy is not a concern for their projects.

In summary, construction of the pool underground has many impacts on groundwater and greenhouse gas emissions. While construction of the underground garage likely will not directly impact groundwater during construction, the loss of soil for absorbing stormwater and greenhouse gas emissions are significant. An updated and comprehensive DEIR is needed at a minimum, and we suggest the applicant seriously consider design alternatives, including ways the need for parking could be ameliorated through quality transportation demand management.

From: [Andie Reed](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Castilleja Expansion - Events
Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 12:19:41 PM
Attachments: [Castilleja Events Analysis \(summary by weeknights&weekends\).pdf](#)

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

Dear Commissioners:

As you know, Castilleja's current CUP limits events to "5 Major" and "several other" (see CUP, items #27, #28). Feeling inundated, neighbors, during 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years, tracked events and recorded over 100 per school year.

Neighbors have been asking for the city to limit **nighttime and weekend** events for the new CUP. I believe the City Council motion mentions between 50 and 70 events, plus the 5 major.


Understanding the school's chart of events gets very tricky, because there are factors that combine in different ways. For example, time (day or night), day (weekday or weekend) and attendees (from 50 to 700) all come into play. Neighbors don't generally mind daytime events. Neighbors care about limiting nighttime and weekend events, which have grown over the past couple of decades (since 2000). Nighttime events called Alum Receptions, Parent meetings, Admissions events, and Grandparents and Special friends day sound like fund-raisers, could be held elsewhere. Global Investigator nighttime events could be held elsewhere. If the school had a larger site, it would certainly enhance their ability to do these things and easily park them and not bother neighbors, so it's hard to understand why they want to make everything happen on this small R-1 site.

I can't read the most recent submissions from the school about events, even if I blow them up on a copier, so I put together an analysis of the most recent submission that I could read (from 10/28/2020 PTC packet) and attach it here. I sorted the school's schedule into the 4 areas: Daytime, Evening, Saturday, Saturday evening. It shows the school is asking for 90 events (**which I believe they have since reduced to 74**) and the neighbors have **casually agreed to 53**, so we're not that far off (see attmt).

I know the school says they won't have any events on a Sunday, but that isn't something we've been necessarily strict about, but something the school decided that the neighbors want. Rather we would like fewer events at nighttimes and weekends, with fewer attendees, spread out and not bunched together. Logically, as a compromise, with the exception of the 5 Major events that we have always agreed to, please require that any events over 300 or that they cannot park on their field be held elsewhere.

Thank you,
Andie Reed

--

Andie Reed CPA
Palo Alto, CA 94301


Analysis:	How many events/attendees:	Proposed by Castilleja	Suggested by neighbors
D	28 Daytime events	7@100, 12@200, 5@300, 3@400, 1@700	no change
E	42 Evening events	15@100, 16@200, 8@300, 2@400, 1@500	10 events, fewer attendees
S	14 Saturday events	11@100, 3@200	10 events, fewer attendees
SE	6 Saturday Evening events	2@100, 2@200, 1@400, 1@700	5 events, fewer attendees
events broken down by attendees		total 90 events	total 53 events

			Organized by Day/Time	Special Event Additional Limitations	Illustrative Examples
			Hours and Days	Size	
1.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Admissions Event
2.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Admissions Event
3.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Admissions Event
4.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Parent Meeting
5.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Parent Meeting
6.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Parent Reception
7.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Parent Reception
8.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Dances and Socials
9.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Upper School Play
10.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Admissions Event
11.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Parent Meeting
12.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Parent Meeting
13.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Student Dinner
14.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Student Movie Night
15.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Parent College Night
16.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Parent College Night
17.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Upper School Preview Night
18.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Alum Reception
19.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Parent College Night
20.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Athletics Reception
21.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Admissions Reception
22.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Art Gallery Reception
23.	S	1	Sa.: 8 00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Dance Rehearsal
24.	S	1	Sa.: 8 00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Admissions Event
25.	S	1	Sa.: 8 00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Admissions Event
26.	S	1	Sa.: 8 00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Admissions Event
27.	S	1	Sa.: 8 00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Admissions Event
28.	S	1	Sa.: 8 00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Dance Rehearsal
29.	S	1	Sa.: 8 00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Dance Rehearsal
30.	S	1	Sa.: 8 00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Dance Rehearsal
31.	S	1	Sa.: 8 00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Dance Rehearsal
32.	S	1	Sa.: 10:00am-5 00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Alum Reception
33.	S	1	Sa.: 10:00am-5 00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Alum Reception
34.	SE	1	Sa: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Alum Reception
35.	SE	1	Sa.: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 100 Guests	Dances and Socials
36.	E	1	M-F: 8:00am-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Junior Senior Banquet
37.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Faculty Staff Party
38.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Events up to 200 Guests	Student/Parent Forum
39.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Parent Meeting
40.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Parent Meeting
41.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Festival of Learning
42.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Alum Reception
43.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	8 th Grade Promotion
44.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Summer Camp Opening Day
45.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Summer Camp Opening Day
46.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Summer Camp Opening Day
47.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Summer Camp Opening Day
48.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Summer Camp Opening Day
49.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Parent Meeting
50.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Parent Meeting
51.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Parent Meeting
52.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Admissions Info Session
53.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Upper School Play
54.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Upper School Play
55.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	8 th Grade Arts Showcase
56.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Global Investigator Celebration
57.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Global Investigator Info Meeting

58.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	DC Trip Info Meeting
59.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Global Week Community Evening
60.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Arts Showcase
61.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Dances and Socials
62.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Winter Concert
63.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Vision & Voice Performance
64.	S	1	Sa.: 8:00am-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Upper School Play
65.	S	1	Sa.: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Admissions Testing
66.	S	1	Sa.: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Admissions Testing
67.	S	1	Sa.: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Admissions Testing
68.	SE	1	Sa.: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 200 Guests	Dances and Socials
69.	E	1	M-F: 8:00am-10:00pm	Special Events up to 300 Guests	MS Swim Meet
70.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Events up to 300 Guests	Grandparents and Special Friends Day
71.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Events up to 300 Guests	Upper School Open House
72.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Events up to 300 Guests	Middle School Open House
73.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Events up to 300 Guests	Middle School Open House
74.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Events up to 300 Guests	Spring Music Concert
75.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Events up to 300 Guests	Middle School Explo!
76.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Events up to 300 Guests	Celebration of Sports
77.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Events up to 300 Guests	Dances and Socials
78.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Events up to 300 Guests	Dances and Socials
79.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Events up to 300 Guests	New Parent Reception
80.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Events up to 400 Guests	Family Day
81.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Events up to 400 Guests	C-STEam
82.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Events up to 400 Guests	Class Day
83.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Events up to 400 Guests	Dances and Socials
84.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Events up to 400 Guests	Arts Show Performance
85.	SE	1	Sa.: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Events up to 400 Guests	Arts Show Performance

This table includes additional limitations on the proposed size, hours and days for the Major Events. The Major Events will not change in quantity or in the specific name of the event unless given written permission by the City of Palo Alto. A Major Event is defined as events that bring almost all students and parents to the Castilleja campus.

28				Major Event Additional Limitations	Event Names
				Size	
1.	SE	1	Sa: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 700 Guests	Back to School Night
2.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 300 Guests	Gator Gathering
3.	E	1	M-F: 5:00pm-10:00pm	Special Event up to 500 Guests	Founder's Day
4.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 300 Guests	Opening Day / Tie Ceremony
5.	D	1	M-F: 8:00am-5:00pm	Special Event up to 700 Guests	Baccalaureate / Graduation

From: [Carla Befera](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Council, City](#)
Subject: PTC agenda item: Castilleja School - 1.19.22
Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 3:17:04 PM

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Dear Members of the Planning and Transportation Committee:

My family has lived directly across the street from Castilleja since 1968. We have seen many recent comments to the PTC and City Council from residents self-identifying as “neighbors,” who do not in fact reside near the school and are less likely to be aware of its daily impacts, and from other average “citizens” who neglect to mention they are school parents, alums, and donors. We appreciate that *everyone* is entitled to an opinion of how/whether the school should improve and grow, and that the school is entitled to encourage its supporters to speak up in favor of its hoped-for expansion. But we hope the Commissioners recognize that those who live in its immediate vicinity have first-hand experience of the school's many impacts on its residential neighborhood, as well as how the school's decisions will continue to affect this area, as well as the greater City.

We certainly value the education the school provides to young women, and understand its desire to modernize its buildings. But in terms of student population, we feel it has already outgrown its current site, and do not understand why the city should approve an expanded CUP that will allow the school to even further expand operations. We ask the PTC and City Council to separate the issues of building modifications from enrollment expansion.

Among the items we specifically hope you will consider:

1. The site is overbuilt, a fact recently endorsed by an official third party surveyor ([see Dudek report, packet page 19 – actual page 11](#)). The school has been adding buildings over the last few decades, in non-compliance with code that existed at the time. It is of interest that there is no mention in the reports of the **allowed FAR** (.3028) in a residential area, only that the school is proposing to replace existing GFA of 138,345sf (.5147 FAR) with a smaller footprint of 128,687sf (.4788 FAR). The school has been allowed to build over the years without the hindrance of following code, as all of its neighbors would be required to do, and is now requesting 47,300 above-grade square footage **in excess** of what's allowed by code. It is my understanding that developers must comply with current code – ***why would the PTC allow such an enormous variance, creating a precedence for future projects?***
2. The Kol Emeth project does NOT provide a similar case. That underground garage did not require a variance for additional square footage - it qualified as “a basement” (not counted against FAR) because it was located underneath the building, unlike Castilleja's. That project

only required a variance for small encroachment issues, and an exemption in FAR for its heightened lobby. It should not be used, as the attorneys for Castilleja assert, to set a precedence relevant to Castilleja's plans.

3. Parking issues: the [Fehr & Peers report](#) makes frequent reference to using local on-street parking to meet future demand, as in "The school frontage parking has an average occupancy of ~80 percent during the middle of the day. Therefore, it should be possible for persons to easily find parking in the non-frontage on-street parking segments." **Utilization of on-street residential parking in order to meet future increased demand is the backbone of this report.** *In what other scenario would a private concern be allowed to expand, with the understanding that its expanded parking needs would be met by the available parking in a residential neighborhood?*

7. Traffic: all ingress and egress to this school (with 75% of users coming from outside Palo Alto) is via one of the city's already clogged arteries - which will become deeply exacerbated should Churchill be closed temporarily or permanently. Also all the traffic reports focus only on cars driving into the school's drop off areas, with no consideration of all the self-driving students who park throughout the area and are NOT monitored by the school. Neighbors are acutely aware of this activity. **We advocate mandated shuttling and the elimination of self-driving juniors/seniors – already a rule at many other local private schools located in residential areas.** Page 22 notes incentives examples such as "restricting sophomores and juniors from driving to campus ... and allowing on-site parking for carpools with three or more passengers." **We would like to see this a requirement, not a suggestion.**

5. TDM: There is mention of future programs that will increase the level of carpooling by faculty/staff and the use of shuttles. What other private company would be allowed to expand its operations without specific off-site parking assurances, but only a hopeful promise to implement carpools? **We ask the PTC to require specifics, such as off-site parking and shuttles, no self-driving students, etc. rather than trust the school to implement, and the City to monitor, a TDM that experience has shown is not enforced.**

6. Construction: Please require the school to move to a temporary site during construction, to reduce the construction period and less impacts on traffic, contamination, noise, and construction parking issues.

Many thanks for your consideration of these points, and for your service.

Carla Befera



Palo Alto

From: [Kimberley Wong](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [French, Amy](#); [Lait, Jonathan](#); [Shikada, Ed](#); [Council, City](#)
Subject: Castilleja's expansion proposal: PTC Meeting 1/19/2022
Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 4:18:29 PM

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Dear Members of the Planning and Transportation Commission,

I have written a number of letters to you over the years, but stay steadfast in my beliefs that Castilleja DOES NOT NEED AN UNDERGROUND GARAGE. Palo Altans will be subjected to significant negative impacts to their commute, community and quality of life during construction and in the future with the increase enrollment. The focus should be on how to solve the Castilleja's Significant and Unavoidable Impact traffic problem that they are bringing into the neighborhood with long term sustainable environment friendly solutions such as distributed campuses, replacing student and parent driving with satellite parking and shuttling. If the traffic problem is truly fixed, there should be no need for an underground garage.

A Single Family Neighborhood is a residential zone. Does it make sense for a business like Castilleja which requires a Conditional Use Permit(CUP) to operate in a residential neighborhood to have more rights than the surrounding residents who are prohibited from building an underground garage? Castilleja's newly hired lawyer calls for Castilleja to have the same property right as others, then it is obvious that Castilleja should NOT be allowed to have an underground garage. What gives them the right to divert traffic for years to building a garage that will wreak havoc to the environment, disturb groundwater tables, destroy trees, and interfere with the Bicycle Safety Boulevard which was created to offer safe passage to bicyclists old and young alike? What gives them the right to permanently alter the traffic flow along the Embarcadero Corridor and interfere with the Bike Safety Boulevard indefinitely.

We look to you of the Planning and Transportation to vote for what is right for Palo Alto. Please assess the traffic and congestion that already exists along this major artery of Palo Alto and do NOT allow a self serving business with 75% of its student body living outside of Palo Alto to upend the quality of life of our community.

If Castilleja was sincerely working with the neighbors 5 years ago to present a plan that truly has the neighbors well-being in mind, then they could have been like Bowman School which started their application at the same time and has completed building their new campus. It's the tale of two schools, one who plays by the rules and the other who tries to strong arm others to yield to their unreasonable requests. If Castilleja just wants to "modernize" their current campus, then they could have built a separate new campus to distribute many more girls that are outside of

Palo Alto by now. But instead, Castilleja chose to stubbornly and myopically insist on having an underground garage as the guiding light to achieve their expansion ambition. The reason the community has been firmly against their proposal is because even after multiple redesigns, Castilleja has still yet to provide a single viable NO garage option that will be good for the environment and good for the neighborhood.

Please do not cave into Castilleja's requests to build a garage. This does not provide any benefit Palo Alto or its residents for now and in the future. An underground garage is NOT sustainable and will just invite more traffic that will be hazardous to everyone's health!

Thank you for your consideration.
Kimberley Wong

From: [Meimei Pan](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Council, City; Shilada, Ed; French, Amy; Leit, Jonathan](#)
Subject: Being a Responsible Neighbor
Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 4:27:46 PM

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Dear Planning Commission,

It is disturbing as a neighbor and former Castilleja parents and active volunteers (for cumulative 9 years, two daughters) to see this badly planned project that directly affects our local lives move forward. Our daughters loved the small school feel with intimate interactions with other students and teachers, but even back in the late 1990's and early 2000's, traffic and safety to student pedestrians was already an issue. Mentoring has always been an argument for keeping all class levels together, but in our time at least, it was more lip service than a reality. Neither of our girls experienced mentoring from an older classmate. It could be encouraged at the current enrollment level on one campus, but a split campus seems like a more reasonable alternative as is done by other schools.

We still cannot understand the proposed 30% increase to 540 students on a 6 acre campus that barely supports the current population. The traffic patterns on Bryant, Emerson and Embarcadero cannot possibly support built-up traffic from an underground garage with even more parking and cars. We have witnessed so many accidents at these intersections, and the wait time for turning from Emerson with fast oncoming traffic from Town & Country, as well as back ups on Embarcadero because of Town & Country, make it quite untenable for Embarcadero to continue as a major artery in the city.

We really are appalled that the original agreement to enrollment limits have been so cavalierly and illegally ignored, and we urge you to preserve the scale of our neighborhood (especially as most Casti students are from outside Palo Alto), as well as the preservation of trees. Girls' education is important to support but its quality depends not on size and increased budget, but on scale, intimacy, smaller teacher/student ratios, and a supportive environment which we think will be compromised with this expansion.

Please do not support the current plan even with revisions. There is plenty of above ground parking to support the campus and absolutely no need for an underground garage. The city needs to put its foot down, as it has not done in the past. And look where it has gotten us. If we give way to the school, our peaceful neighborhood will be clogged with congestion during construction and in the future. We understand the push for expansion and growth in Palo Alto, especially in the housing area, and this is not a case of NIMBY, but these were the agreements made by the school with the city for a reason, given its location inside a residential neighborhood.

thank you,
Raehua Pan and Lynn Jacobson

Palo Alto, CA 94301

From: [Rob Levitsky](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Cc: [Council, City](#); [Lait, Jonathan](#); [Shikada, Ed](#)
Subject: castilleja proposal
Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 5:45:36 PM

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PTC members:

Your charter allows you to make recommendations on land use, zoning codes, Use Permits, Variances.

Early on, Castilleja figured they could break any zoning ordinance, and their first design asked for 5 variances - breaking rules for lot merging, FAR limits, removing Protected Oaks and Redwoods, encroachment in setbacks from Embarcadero, Emerson, and Bryant.

And city staff, including Staff Reports, generally supported the proposal.

Only neighborhood actions have slowly pared back some of the questionable designs, such as the proposed bulldozing of 1235 and 1263 Emerson, the proposed removal of a dozen protected oaks and redwoods.

There are 3 major areas left to be worked on - Enrollment, Parking, and FAR (floor area ratio), as far as the neighbors are concerned.

As neighbors have had to deal with overenrollment for the last 20 years, Castilleja should be granted at most a limited increase to 450 students, with some verifiable process for any increase above that.

Parking Garage (and its toll on neighborhood) not needed, as the agreement not to park on the Castilleja side of the street has worked, even at the highest enrollment-cheating level of 448 students. Parking needs can be decreased by not allowing juniors and/or seniors to drive to school.

FAR - this is a guardrail to limit monstrous big box structures.
Current law would limit Castilleja to 31% lot coverage, and they are trying to jam it up to 47%. 47% is way too high.
Do something about it!

Other design problems - Pool should not be set 15 feet below grade. This causes groundwater pumping, just like with the Gym in 2005, as the bottom of the pool digging would be 25-30 feet below grade, in the water table.

Digging deep into the groundwater and placing the pool 15 feet under grade is insane.

Proposed encroachment into Melville Utility Easement, to build the parking garage is not allowed without a City Manager Approval, and i havent seen any such approval.

And the design shows a tunnel for the girls 2.5 feet under the Melville Sewer line that runs across the Utility Easement, that connects the parking garage to the rest of the school.

What could go wrong???

If thats not enough to trigger yet another re-design, lets examine the fact that 1/3 of the classrooms are

UNDERGROUND,
with no windows, light wells, or possibility of fresh air. Has the Virus not taught the Architects anything about fresh air and ventilation?

Or is windowless basement classrooms the new Pedagogical standard?

Some ARB members didnt think so.

PTC members - please protect our neighborhood from this overdone expansion

Rob Levitsky



Sent from my iPhone

From: [neva yarkin](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: from neva yarkin regarding Castilleja expansion
Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 8:01:15 PM

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Jan. 18, 2022

Dear PTC Commissioners:

I live 600 feet from Castilleja and I have no daughters at the school. My family has owned this property for almost 60 years when Castilleja was a boarding school. The traffic was sparse at that time.

Making an underground parking garage with **entrance** off of Embarcadero/Bryant and **exit** Emerson/Embarcadero will only compound traffic in my opinion.

Increasing the student population by 125 students when 75% of students come from outside of Palo Alto will clog the entrance and exit to this parking garage. How will traffic flow with this student expansion?

What about train crossings and possible closure of Churchill, or the major construction that could happen at Churchill and Alma for trains?

There is a reason why Castilleja's expansion plan has not been approved in the last 5 years. Here are some examples of Castilleja not following city codes and over-reaching:

- 1) **trees** – trying to have trees cut down without following the tree codes in Palo Alto for construction.
- 2) Not having the **right square footage** for their expansion plans.
- 3) **Enrollment numbers** should have been 415 students. In 2013 they had 448 students so they were fined \$300,000. It should have taken 5 years to reduce enrollment to 415 but we are now on the 9th year with a CUP filed in-between.

Castilleja should have split their campus years ago.

Why does the city continue to pay staff time, money for consultants, and everything else associated with this project?

Isn't it time for the city to say, enough is enough so we can all go on with our lives.....

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Neva Yarkin



From: [Keith Bennett](#)
To: [Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Comments re: Castilleja, Agenda 3, January 19
Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 9:51:04 PM
Attachments: [Castilleja_PTC_Letter_220119.rtf](#)

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To Members of the Planning and Transportation Commission.
Please find comments from Save Palo Alto's Groundwater regarding Agenda Item 3, Castilleja Conditional Use Permit and Variance attached.
Our comments are related to groundwater protection and CO2 greenhouse emissions during construction.

Thank you in advance of your kind consideration.

--

Keith Bennett
<http://savepaloaltosgroundwater.org>

To: Members of the Planning and Transportation Commission

**From: Keith Bennett, Ph.D.
Save Palo Alto's Groundwater**

January 19, 2022

Re: Agenda Item 3, **Castilleja School CUP/Variance and Amend PAMC Chapter 18.04 GFA Definition.**
Planning and Transportation Committee meeting, January 19, 2022

Summary

Save Palo Alto's Groundwater recommends the project to be modified so as to leave the pool at or slightly below ground level and to reduce the size of the garage. We have no objections to the changes proposed to the above ground buildings.

1. Construction of the underground pool (in place of the current pool at ground level)
 - a. Is not addressed at all in either the geotechnical study or the DEIR.
 - b. Requiring the bottom of the pool excavation to extend no more than 15 feet below ground surface would substantially avoid the impacts below including groundwater interactions.
 - i. Unless a proper cutoff wall or sheet piling are required and properly used to minimize groundwater flows as a condition of approval, pumping and dumping of a very large amount of groundwater and associated subsidence extending well beyond the subject property should be expected.
 - ii. Approximately 1,520 tons of concrete, resulting in nearly 550,000 pounds of CO₂ emissions from the manufacture of the concrete will be needed to counteract buoyancy.
2. Impacts of the large underground garage:
 - a. The entire surface area is impervious to water, increasing load to the storm drains.
 - b. The entire volume of soil removed is no longer available to store / buffer stormwater
 - c. Approximately 2,000 tons of concrete, resulting in 720,000 pounds of CO₂ emissions, will be used for the parking floor, ceiling and sides of the garage.
3. Palo Alto S/CAP has clearly stated a goal of reducing GHG dramatically by 2030. The total of 1,270,000 pounds of CO₂ emitted in the manufacture of the concrete for the underground construction is significant. It is equivalent to over 3,000 years of emissions from the CO₂ emitted by our family's use of natural gas to heat all of our hot water. Alternatively, it is equivalent to the CO₂ emitted by driving a Prius getting 60 miles per gallon 10,000 miles per year for 410 years (4,100,000 miles).
4. Members of the PTC are reminded the current Palo Alto Dewatering Ordinance does not place any restrictions on the amount or rate of groundwater pumped and discarded, nor does it require the use of cutoff walls, even for large-scale projects, such as this.
5. The current DEIR does not reflect the actual project modified so as the pool is underground, which requires deeper excavation to a level which will almost certainly require dewatering. The DEIR should be revised to be consistent with the actual project currently proposed.
6. Keeping the pool at ground level substantially reduces the impacts from groundwater and CO₂.

7. We request the applicant seriously consider design alternatives to a) place the pool at grade, not underground and b) reduce or eliminate underground parking.

The following are substantially similar to oral comments from Mary Sylvester presented at the PTC Meeting on December 8, 2021.

**Castilleja Planning and Transportation Comments
December 8, 2021**

Our concerns are primarily with the impacts of underground construction particularly on our community groundwater, which is becoming increasingly valuable as a result of climate change and population growth. Underground construction has impacts during and after construction. These impacts should be avoided and minimized through design and construction processes.

First, decisions on any underground construction need to be made based upon relevant and up-to-date geotechnical studies. The environmental impact reports must be specific for the actual project design and include accurate and current ground conditions. The geotechnical study for the DEIR for this project was prepared in 2017; the geotechnical studies have a clearly stated expiration date of 1/2020. Importantly, neither the geotechnical study nor the DEIR consider the excavation proposed for the swimming pool. Rather they only contemplate a single-level underground for the garage. This is a very material difference.

The pool deck is 15 feet below ground surface and excavation for the pool will extend to approximately 26 feet below ground surface allowing for the 7.5 foot depth of the pool below the deck, 1.5 feet for pipes and pumps below the pool plus an approximately 2 foot thick slab of concrete to reduce buoyancy when the pool isn't filled. The water table at this location is about 25 feet below ground surface in autumn, rising to about 18 feet below ground surface during winter storms. We must assume groundwater will be encountered during construction, as it was in 2006 for construction of the gym. Palo Alto building code requires contractors to dewater to at least 2 feet below the deepest excavation, and contractors invariably dewater further. Therefore, we can assume groundwater will be lowered by at least 5 feet to 30 feet or more below ground surface. Applicants often cite compliance with Palo Alto's Dewatering Ordinance as providing necessary protections from impacts. However Palo Alto's dewatering ordinance does not impose any, I repeat any, restrictions on the rate or total amount of groundwater pumped. Contrary to the perception of many, unless specifically required as a condition of approval, the ordinance does not require use of cutoff walls to limit groundwater waste.

The extent and impacts of dewatering are significant. Based upon measurements in Old Palo Alto with similar soils, groundwater will likely be lowered by 5 feet or more for many months, likely over an area extending 500 feet from the construction site, and 2 feet or more over a circle of ½ to 1 mile in diameter, and tens of millions of gallons of a valuable resource will be discarded. Castilleja is on the border of area of the high recharge zone for deeper aquifer levels that Palo Alto uses for our emergency potable water supply, so pumping groundwater here reduces aquifer recharge.

It is well-known that lowering the groundwater table results in permanent subsidence. For the alluvial fan soils typical of Old Palo Alto, typical subsidence is about 1% of the amount of groundwater lowered, which corresponds to ½" or more for this project. I have clearly observed and documented such

subsidence from residential dewatering at my house from basement construction 100's of feet away, as well as associated permanent damages. Furthermore, groundwater is a source of soil moisture especially for trees, as soils above the water table are moistened by water wicked-up through the soil, and mature tree roots grow down into the moist soil zones.

Palo Alto S/CAP has clearly stated a goal of reducing GHG dramatically by 2030. An often overlooked environmental impact of underground construction in high groundwater areas is the greenhouse gas emissions from the concrete used. To prevent the structure from floating up, like a boat, due to pressure from the water, Palo Alto's building code requires the building to be heavier than the water displaced at the highest anticipated groundwater level. Appendix A provides a summary of the calculations used to estimate CO₂ emissions from this project. For a pool of the size indicated, approximately 1,456 tons of concrete will be needed just to counteract buoyancy. Although accurate geotechnical estimates are needed for design, based upon measurements taken during storms and geotechnical reports for other properties, we estimate the design will require prevention of buoyancy for groundwater rising at least 9 feet above the bottom of the excavation (to 17 feet below ground surface). To be conservative in our estimates of the pool impacts, in this calculation, we have assumed the project can be designed so that the concrete (400 tons) used for the pool deck are reduced from the added weight required to counteract buoyancy, leaving a net additional weight of provide some of the weight required, and are not separately computing CO₂ emissions from the concrete from the pool deck. Additionally, about 2,175 tons (1,075 cubic yards) of concrete is required for the floor, roof and walls of the garage, for a total of 3,631 tons. The manufacture of concrete releases roughly 360 pounds of CO₂ per ton of concrete. The CO₂ emissions for this underground construction are therefore approximately 1,307,000 pounds. Let's put some perspective on this number. Palo Alto is strongly encouraging residents to replace their gas-burning ranges and hot water heaters with electric. Our family uses 36 therms per year of natural gas for hot water. Burning 1 therm of natural gas results in the emission of about 11.66 pounds of CO₂, so our annual consumption of natural gas for hot water emits is about 420 pounds of CO₂. The CO₂ emitted for this proposed underground construction of the pool is equivalent to the amount we emit due to cooking and hot water heating in 3,112 years. Retrofitting 311 residences with all electric water heaters would offset these emissions over 10+ years. Assuming a cost of \$10,000 per retrofit, the cost would be \$3.11 million. Or, for another way to look at it, I could drive a Prius getting 60 miles / gallon for 10,000 miles a year for 400 years. Or, 100 commuters to Castilleja could drive 50 miles round trip for 200 days / year for 4 years. This is a lot of CO₂ to relocate an existing ground-level pool and build underground parking. Low-carbon concrete modestly reduces, but does not eliminate GHG emissions from concrete.

This large underground construction increases the load on our stormwater management system. Approximately 80% of stormwater is absorbed by soil, then flows over time to the Bay. This buffering system both filters the runoff and reduces load on our stormdrain system, and is a motivation for Valley Water and the City of Palo Alto to encourage and require rain gardens, permeable pavement and other features for capture stormwater. The proposed playing field is entirely impervious, and moreover, the soil for absorbing groundwater permanently removed.

Underground construction is very expensive – in fact, in presenting their proposals for new high-density housing, Stanford explicitly stated they intend to use above ground parking and increase building heights due to costs; and buoyancy is not a concern for their projects.

In summary, construction of the pool underground has many impacts on groundwater and greenhouse gas emissions. The underground garage excavation is not as deep and likely will not directly impact groundwater during construction, however the loss of soil for absorbing stormwater and greenhouse gas emissions are significant. At a minimum, an updated and comprehensive DEIR is needed, but more importantly we suggest the applicant seriously consider design alternatives, including ways the need for parking could be ameliorated through quality transportation demand management.

Appendix A
Calculations of CO₂ emissions from concrete and equivalencies

Estimated concrete required for placing the swimming pool underground

Pool dimensions: 60' x 77' x 7'

Pool excavation: (allowing for side walls, drainage, slab for mass, etc.): 64' x 81' x 11' = 57,024 ft³

Depth of pool excavation: 15' (height of top deck of pool) + 11' (7' pool + 4' for underpool drainage and slab) = 26'.

Typical "summer" groundwater level: 25 feet below ground surface (bgs)

Design groundwater level (maximum expected during the project lifetime): 17 feet bgs

Design groundwater rise above bottom of excavation: 26' - 17' = 9'

Estimated minimum weight of concrete and steel used for construction of the pool, pool deck and underground walls to counteract buoyancy: 81' x 64' x 9' x 62.4 lbs/ft³ = 2,911,000 lbs. (1,456 tons)

CO₂ emissions from the manufacture of concrete: 180 kg/metric ton = 18% of concrete weight (embedded CO₂ emissions from steel are higher on a weight basis).

Estimated CO₂ emissions from pool: 2,911,000 x 18% = 523,980 lbs.

Estimated CO₂ emissions from concrete used in the underground parking

(A) Area of garage: 20,000 ft² (estimated)

(B) Thickness of concrete: 6" for top + 6" for floor = 1 foot.

(C) Volume of concrete for floor and ceiling: A x B = 20,000 ft³

(D) Perimeter of garage: 600 ft.

(E) Depth of garage (bottom of concrete): 15+ feet

(F) Estimated thickness of concrete used for sides (including allocation for internal supports): 1 foot

(G) Total volume of concrete (sides and supports): D x E x F = 9,000 ft³

(H) Total volume of concrete for garage: C + G = 29,000 ft³

(I) Weight of concrete: 150 lbs/ft³

(J) Total weight of concrete: H x I = 4,350,000 lbs (2,175 tons)

(K) Estimated CO₂ emissions from concrete used for underground garage: 4,350,000 x 18% = 783,000 lbs.

Total CO₂ emissions: 523,980 + 783,000 = 1,306,980 lbs.

Equivalency calculations

(A) CO₂ emitted from burning natural gas: 11.66 lbs / therm

(B) Amount of natural gas used by us for water heating (tankless) and gas range: 36 therms / year

(C) CO₂ emitted by us for hot water: A x B = 420 lbs.

(D) CO₂ emitted burning gasoline: 19.6 lbs / gallon

- (E) Gasoline required to drive 10,000 miles @ 60 miles / gallon: $10,000 / 60 = 167$ gallons
- (F) CO₂ emitted driving 10,000 miles: $D \times E = 3,270$ lbs.