

**Baumb, Nelly**

---

**From:** Sheri Furman <sheri11@earthlink.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 15, 2021 7:57 PM  
**To:** Council, City  
**Cc:** jdong@paweeekly.com; gsheyner@paweeekly.com; price@padailypost.com;  
jgreen@dailynewsgroup.com; Cook, James F.  
**Subject:** PAN Letters regarding 955 Alma and 2239 Wellesley  
**Attachments:** 955 Alma PAN Letter.docx; 2239-41 Wellesley PAN Letter.docx

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

---

Please see the attached letters regarding items 1 (955 Alma) and 2 (2239 Wellesley) on the May 18 Council agenda.

Thank you,  
Sheri Furman

## **Subject Line: 955 Alma is a \$4 Million Developer Giveaway**

Dear Councilmembers:

955 Alma is an unprecedented giveaway of millions of dollars to a private developer under the guise of affordable housing. At the May 2021 PAN (Palo Alto Neighborhoods) meeting, our members voted to have us communicate to you about this and other major concerns we have about the proposal.

### **20% AFFORDABILITY IS VASTLY OVERSTATED:**

The staff report incorrectly claims that, "Twenty percent of the housing units (seven total) are proposed to be affordable," which amounts to seven units.

- Three of those will actually be rented at market rate (\$3,000 a month) and a fourth at \$2,973 a month, which is less than a 1% discount.
- These four tiny studios will average just 342 sq. ft. in size, which is smaller than a two-car garage, and many will have no parking space.
- So these four units are being offered at top market rates and are not at all "affordable."
- That means only three units out of the 36 in the building will truly be below-market, or about 8% of the housing units, not 20%.

### **STAFF REPORT FAILS TO EVALUATE THE TRUE PUBLIC BENEFITS**

A key question that has plagued PCs in Palo Alto for years is whether the City is receiving adequate benefits in exchange for the bonuses it allows developer. The staff report does not attempt to evaluate this at all, but we calculate that the City is receiving \$4 million less in benefits than the value of the bonus the developer seeks.

Here's how we figured that:

First, the developer is asking for the right to build about 16,073 square feet in excess of what the normal zoning allows.

- Other developers have had to pay for the right to do this by purchasing TDR (Transferable Development Rights).
- Back in 2018, the city itself sold TDRs for about \$341 per square foot.
- At that rate, 955 Alma should be paying about \$5.5 million for the extra square feet it wants.

Next, what is the benefit of the three below-market units the building will provide?

- The rent on each would be \$1,382 a month, representing a discount of \$1,618 off the regular \$3,000 rent, which means the building will collect \$58,248 less in rent a year for all three units combined.
- At a typical 4.2% capitalization rate, a rental property earning that much less a year will sell for a discount of about \$1.4 million.
- In other words, a potential buyer assessing what the building is worth would want to pay about \$1.4 million less because of those three below-market rate units.
- So we think it reasonable to say that the economic benefit to the tenants of those three units over the life of the building, and thus to the City for its affordable housing goals, is that very same amount, namely \$1.4 million.

The obvious problem then is that the \$5.5 million in extra square footage that developer gets at no cost exceeds the \$1.4 benefit to the City by more than \$4 million dollars.

Simply put, this is a terrible deal for the City and for its goals of affordable housing!

### **HOW TO FIX THE IMBALANCE:**

It's easy to fix this problem. The City can simply insist that instead of three units being offered for \$1,382 a month, the building should have 12 such units. That would increase the affordable housing benefit to about \$5.5 million, or about what the City would collect if it were to sell a TDR for the same amount of extra square footage.

In general, we urge you to never look only at the percentage of a building that's "affordable." To say that a PHZ project requires 20% affordable housing and is thus better than the 15% often required already by the city is misleading.

One must look at the specific rents for each unit to avoid being misled.

For example, note that 955 Alma's units at the 81% to 120% "moderate income BRM" level will be rented at \$2,978 a month, which is just a few dollars under the market rate of \$3,000 a month. If the project switched to having all units at this rent level, it could call itself 100% "affordable," and yet tenants and the City would receive virtually no benefit.

Calculating how much less a building is worth due to its mix and type of affordable units is a far better way to evaluate the public benefit.

## **PARKING PROBLEMS**

955 Alma's request for a 30% residential parking reduction is worrisome. Although the staff report does not provide details for this particular building, parking reductions of 30% in Palo Alto generally require both a TDM (Transportation Demand Management) plan and a joint-use reduction. But a joint use reduction makes no sense for 955 Alma for many reasons, including:

- 1) 2019 U.S Census data shows that 94% of Palo Alto households have at least one car and that's especially likely for employed renters who earn enough to pay \$3,000 a month in rent.
- 2) A joint-use reduction relies on residents driving off on workdays, freeing up parking spaces for office workers. But 955 Alma's residential units are being promoted as work-live, meaning residents wouldn't leave during the day. Instead, their cars will remain parked at the building and their parking spaces won't be available to the office workers.
- 3) A strong TDM encourages people to walk, bike, carpool, and use transit. So that's another reason why residents won't move their cars during workdays, leaving them parked at the building and not freeing up parking spaces for the office workers.
- 4) The offices at 955 Alma will themselves be under-parked by 40% to 56% (25 are required but only 11 to 15 will be provided), thanks in part to grandfathering. So there won't be many free office parking spaces for the residents to use at night – plus the staff report says the office parking spaces will be dedicated and thus not available for resident use.
- 5) The City has eliminated the requirements for residential guest parking. But guests will still come, exacerbating parking problems on the street.
- 6) Past mixed-use reductions have relied on statistics compiled from comparable situations elsewhere. 955 Alma's unique combination of tiny residential units, a work-live rather than commuter modality, inconvenient stacker parking, and under-parked offices will have no parallel, so there simply won't be any good statistics to use for the parking analysis required by our Municipal Code section 13.52.050 as the basis for granting joint-use parking reductions.

We therefore recommend the Council allow instead very conservative parking reductions for this project, given its proposed work-live residences and severely under-parked offices. We also urge the Council to help insure the building's TDM goals are met by not allowing any of its occupants to purchase RPP permits.

Thank you for consideration of these important issues,

Sheri Furman and Rebecca Sanders  
PAN (Palo Alto Neighborhoods) Co-Chairs

P.S. Here's some further information about using TDR pricing to evaluate the benefit of extra square footage.

Square footage purchased via TDRs can be used to build housing, although it is generally used for offices, which might cause some to think TDR pricing may not be the right metric to use for the value of extra square footage for a mostly-residential project like 955 Alma. However, the small units proposed for at 955 Alma actually earn gross rents of \$5.32 per square foot (factoring Subject Line: 955 Alma is a \$4 Million Developer Giveaway

**Baumb, Nelly**

---

**From:** Chris Robell <chris\_robell@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 14, 2021 9:18 AM  
**To:** Council, City  
**Subject:** 955 Alma St  
**Attachments:** L. Beaton Letter to City Council re 955 Alma - 5-13-2021.PDF

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

---

Dear City Council,

I want to express my support for the attached letter recently sent to you regarding the proposed project at 955 Alma. Thank you in advance for carefully considering the four key points described so that the community and housing affordability goals are met.

Chris Robell

## Baumb, Nelly

---

**From:** Laura Beaton <Beaton@smwlaw.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 4:33 PM  
**To:** Council, City  
**Cc:** Neilson Buchanan  
**Subject:** Letter re May 18, 2021 City Council Study Session: 955 Alma (Item 1)  
**Attachments:** L. Beaton Letter to City Council re 955 Alma - 5-13-2021.PDF

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

---

Dear City Council,

Please find attached a letter on behalf of Neilson Buchanan regarding Agenda Item 1 for the City Council's May 18, 2021 meeting.

Please let me know if you have any problem opening the attachment.

Best,  
Laura Beaton



Laura D. Beaton  
Attorney  
Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP  
396 Hayes Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4421  
p: 415/552-7272 x231 | she/hers  
[www.smwlaw.com](http://www.smwlaw.com) | A San Francisco Green Business

May 13, 2021

**Via Electronic Mail**

City Council of the City of Palo Alto  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA 94301  
E-Mail: [city.council@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:city.council@cityofpaloalto.org)

Re: 955 Alma Street: Comments re PHZ Prescreening

Dear Council Members:

I represent Neilson Buchanan and submit this letter on behalf of Mr. Buchanan and other concerned residents in the neighborhood regarding the City Council's prescreening of a proposal to redevelop 955 Alma Street with a four-story mixed-use development. The proposed development would include over 6,300 square feet of office space and 36 residential "microstudio" apartments, including 7 income-restricted inclusionary housing units. Mr. Buchanan strongly supports the development of more affordable housing in Palo Alto, especially in transit-rich locations like 955 Alma. We provide these comments to seek the Council's consideration of a few key issues that could ensure a project that is beneficial for the project's future residents, the surrounding neighborhood, and all of Palo Alto. Specifically, the Council should (1) maximize affordable housing requirements with a focus on deep affordability, (2) ensure equitable access to amenities for affordable housing residents, (3) prevent units from being removed from the housing market for use as short-term rentals, and (4) exclude the development from the existing Downtown Residential Preferential Parking (RPP) District.

**I. Maximize Affordable Housing.**

The City Council should ensure that transit-rich, dense housing like the development proposed at 955 Alma includes as much affordable housing as possible within the current proposed footprint and height. Currently, the project proposes 7 designated affordable units: three very-low income units, one moderate income unit, and three "workforce" housing units, relying on the "weighted" approach in Option 2 for

calculating affordable housing for PHZ projects, which was approved by the City Council at its September 21, 2020 meeting.

Mr. Buchanan strongly supports the City’s goal to include below-market-rate units in new developments like these. We note, however, that due to the “micro” size of these units, there is little actual benefit to moderate income and workforce housing tenants, who would pay the same or virtually the same rent as market-rate tenants. The pre-screening letter from the applicant’s architect indicates that designated workforce units would be rented at the same rate as market-rate units, and moderate income BMR units would enjoy a mere \$27 per month discount on market-rate rent. This renders the benefit of the so-called affordable units somewhat illusory.

Affordable rent for BMR units is calculated based on the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program methodology, which establishes rents at 30% of the AMI tied to the unit, taking into account how many people are assumed to live in the unit. Relevant here, the maximum rent for *any* very-low-income studio in Santa Clara County is \$1,382, and for *any* moderate-income studio is \$2,973. This allowable rent does not take into account the size of the unit. This allows the developer here to collect market-rate rent while claiming units fulfill below-market-rate requirements. The result is that the developer can arguably meet the letter of the City’s inclusionary housing policies for PHZ projects, without satisfying the policies’ intent.

Instead, the City should aim for a more deeply affordable mix of inclusionary units in this project—or even seek to find a way to develop a 100% affordable development—that which would provide actual affordability to the most vulnerable Palo Alto residents, who desperately need access to housing. Either way, the Council should seek to encourage truly affordable developments, instead of allowing the developer to meet its affordable housing requirements while renting 4 of its 7 “affordable” units at essentially market rate.

## **II. Ensure Affordable Units Have Equal Access to Amenities.**

When considering this project, the Council should also ensure that affordable units are treated equitably to market-rate units, as required by Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) section 16.65.075. Specifically, affordable units should enjoy dispersal throughout the building, equal size to market-rate units, equal outdoor space, and equal access to parking. Each of these issues is discussed in more detail below.

Unit location. Alma Street and the adjacent train tracks are known to have very high noise. Six of the 36 units (16.6%) directly face Alma and the train tracks and

thus will experience more noise impacts. To avoid inequitable treatment of affordable units, no more than 16.6% of the affordable units (or, roughly, one affordable unit) should face Alma Street.

Unit size. The proposed developments' microstudio units range in size from 329 to 516 square feet, with most units being between 329 and 347.5 square feet, and 6 larger units being between 377 and 516 square feet. The Council should direct the developer to designate at least one of the 6 larger units as inclusionary housing, and the remaining affordable units should be equally distributed among the range of smaller unit sizes—not all designated as the smallest, 329 square foot units.

Outdoor space. The Council should confirm that the rooftop common space is equally accessible to affordable unit residents, and that affordable units are not left with only the smallest private decks.

Parking. The proposed project would include 40 parking spaces, though City staff has indicated that the four spots on Alma Street are problematic as designed. Only 25 of those spots would be available to the 36 residential units, potentially leaving 11 residents without available parking. As required by the PAMC, the affordable units must have equal access to parking, and so at least a proportional number of parking spots should be allocated specifically to the affordable units.

If the developer intends to “unbundle” parking from rental units and rent the parking separately, the Council should require that the spots reserved for inclusionary units be provided for free, or at least rented at reduced rates that would be affordable to those tenants. For example, the City of San Francisco requires unbundled parking to be rented to BMR tenants at significantly reduced rates that such tenants can afford.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, we urge the Council to consider allocating *more* parking spots to affordable units than would be proportional to the number of those units. Lower income tenants are more likely to be car-dependent than their wealthier counterparts. They are more likely to be unable to work from home, have longer commutes without employer

---

<sup>1</sup> See City & County of San Francisco Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development, *Inclusionary Affordable Housing Program Monitoring and Procedures Manual*, at 68 (Oct. 11, 2018), available at <https://sfmohcd.org/sites/default/files/Documents/MOH/Inclusionary%20Manuals/Inclusionary%20Affordable%20Housing%20Program%20Manual%2010.15.2018.pdf>



subsidies like transit passes or private commuter buses, and have irregular hours that make reliance on public transit impractical.

### **III. Ensure Housing Remains Housing.**

The PAMC currently does not allow use of rental units as short-term, hotel-like “AirBnB” rental units. Nonetheless, such units have proliferated in Palo Alto and have reduced residents’ access to housing. The Council should consider measures to ensure that this much-needed housing remains available to long-term residents and does not become the subject of a bait-and-switch like one that recently occurred in San Francisco.

A San Francisco development at 2100 Market Street achieved support from residents and the Board of Supervisors by touting the large number of units it would add to the City’s strained rental market. But after securing widespread buy-in, acquiring approvals, and building the project, the developer pivoted and leased the entire building to a startup called “Sonder,” which rents apartments for short periods of time – but longer than 30 days – at a premium.<sup>2</sup> This unexpected transformation from housing to de facto hotel angered neighbors and officials alike, who felt duped. One San Francisco Planning Commissioner stated, “I feel like we are being played. ... The whole idea that we are solving the housing crisis—really we are solving a hotel crisis.”<sup>3</sup>

Here, the Council should ensure that the developer rents units on an individual basis to actual tenants and that the building does not become a de facto hotel.

### **IV. Don’t Let the Developer’s Parking Problems Become Everyone’s Parking Problems.**

Finally, the Council should ensure that this new, dense housing and office development is not able to export its parking problems to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Specifically, the Council should expressly exclude the development—which is currently outside the border of the Downtown RPP—from future addition to the RPP.

---

<sup>2</sup> “‘Corporate rentals’ draw scrutiny from city officials,” *San Francisco Examiner* (July 25, 2019), <https://www.sfoxaminer.com/news/short-term-corporate-rentals-draw-scrutiny-from-city-officials/>.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

Parking is already quite constrained in the area, and the proposed development at 955 Alma would not include enough parking for all of the residential and office tenants. Providing less parking can reduce car ownership, but this goal would be undercut if there is easy and cheap access to permits to park on streets in the surrounding neighborhoods. Indeed, if the developer rents parking stalls separately from units, comparatively inexpensive RPP permits could become tenants' first choice, further burdening neighborhood parking supply.

Anticipating just such an issue, the City of San Francisco has taken affirmative steps when developing RPPs to exclude new, dense housing. San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Staff explained the problem:

The [relevant specific plan] includes policies for new developments that limit the number of off-street parking spaces to no more than one per unit or fewer, and require developers to meet trip reduction measures in order to encourage new residents to use alternative modes of travel. Over the last few years, as new high-density housing has been constructed and occupied, residents of such developments have sometimes opted to keep their cars and park them on-street rather than pay between \$250 and \$400 per month for onsite parking. The residential parking permit program allows residents of those developments, if built within existing parking permit areas, to obtain RPP permits, allowing them to forgo the pricier on-site parking and keep their extra vehicles. Over time, this tends to weaken planning efforts to discourage car use and ownership.<sup>4</sup>

To resolve the issue, the City designed the RPP “include existing housing but exclude the larger high-density, low-parking projects built since 2016.”<sup>5</sup> The Palo Alto City Council should adopt the same approach here, and not consider adding this project to the existing Downtown RPP.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this issue.

---

<sup>4</sup> San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Staff Report (Apr. 10, 2018), p. 9, available at [https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2018/04/4-17-18\\_item\\_12\\_residential\\_parking\\_permit\\_area\\_ee\\_-\\_dogpatch.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2018/04/4-17-18_item_12_residential_parking_permit_area_ee_-_dogpatch.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

City Council of the City of Palo Alto  
May 13, 2021  
Page 6

Very truly yours,

SHUTE, MIHALY & WEINBERGER LLP



Laura D. Beaton

cc: Neilson Buchanan

1371458.1

## Baumb, Nelly

---

**From:** Melanie Grondel <mel.grondel@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 18, 2021 12:01 PM  
**To:** Council, City  
**Cc:** Melanie Grondel  
**Subject:** 955 ALMA Street Micro Studio Development.

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

---

Dear Mayor Dubois and City Council members,

How tiny can you go with micro dwellings ? 342sf ??!!

The developer and the architect claim this as a contribution to the solution for the lack of multi - family housing. I seriously doubt that.

The developer refers to a tiny studio in his backyard that he rents out with great success. From that example he extrapolates that a large and dense stack of tiny dwellings is even better.

He forgets that a tiny unit in a backyard is surrounded by green space in a single family neighborhood is an entirely different situation. While the space inside may be limited, the outside green space makes up for it, even with outside seating space.

Please do not consider a tiny garden cottage a valid model for stacking it in a dense stack of 35 units like shoeboxes in a department store holding space.

All principles of overcrowding will apply.

Thank you for your consideration.

Melanie Grondel,  
Resident of Palo Alto

## Baumb, Nelly

---

**From:** geetha srikantan <gsrikantan@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 17, 2021 8:28 PM  
**To:** Council, City  
**Cc:** geetha srikantan; Neilson Buchanan  
**Subject:** Letter re May 18, 2021 City Council Study Session: 955 Alma

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

---

Dear City of Palo Alto Council Members,

Neilson Buchanan and other concerned residents have submitted a letter, dated May 13, 2021, represented by Laura Beaton, of Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger, LLP, regarding 955 Alma St, PA CA 94301. I am as concerned as Neilson and other residents about the items noted in this letter and respectfully urge Council members to please give serious consideration to all the comments noted in this letter.

As a long time resident of Downtown/Downtown North, and seeing how and what issues need to be addressed in this part of our city, I am in support of the proposals put forth in the letter.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

(Dr) Geetha Srikantan  
385 Waverley Street  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

## Baumb, Nelly

---

**From:** Mary Dimit <marydimit@sonic.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 16, 2021 5:36 AM  
**To:** Council, City  
**Cc:** Clerk, City  
**Subject:** 955 Alma Project -- 5/18/2021 Study Session/Special Meeting Item 1

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

---

Dear City Council Members,

I have three areas of concern related to the housing component of the 955 Alma Project:

- Affordable housing requirements and equity issues
- Parking requirements and restricting access to the Downtown RPP District
- Ensure the rental units are part of the housing market and not commercial use as short-term rentals

### Affordable housing requirements and equity issues

The micro-units designated as affordable housing are misleading. Four of the seven (moderate income and workforce housing) are being offered at or almost at the market rate which does not really benefit those tenants. City Council can strongly encourage and preferably require the developer to offer more realistic affordable housing.

The affordable housing units should be treated equitably with the market-rate units, meaning there should be a mix of unit sizes (not just the smallest units assigned to be affordable housing), not all the affordable housing units be assigned along Alma St., all common spaces are accessible to all unit residents, and all affordable housing should not have to pay for assigned parking spaces on the premises.

### Parking requirements and restricting access to the Downtown RPP District

It is great that there will be both short- and long-term bike parking on the premises. However, the project is under-parked for cars with only 25 spaces for 36 proposed units. The intent of providing insufficient parking spaces for tenants is to reduce their car ownership. That is difficult given that transportation options between homes and jobs do not always match the needs of the commuter. (That said, even though our four environmentally-conscious family members have almost always walked, biked, or taken trains, bus shuttles, light rail, instead of commuting to our jobs via car -- we still have needed a car for all our other activities.)

The City of Palo Alto's RPP Districts have been designed for existing housing and not for the high-density, low-parking projects built in the last five years. City Council must not add the 955 Alma project to the Downtown RPP District, otherwise the residents in this project would be able to park in the nearby neighborhood and limit parking availability to the existing neighborhood housing. This parking intrusion will be even more likely if the developer rents the limited parking spaces separately -- instead of including them in the unit's rental fee.

### Ensure the rental units are part of the housing market and not commercial use as short-term rentals

I encourage City Council to ensure that this much-needed housing will be used to meet long-term housing needs and does not reduce residents' housing options by converting the rental units to short-term commercial (hotel or AirBnb-like) housing.

Thank you for your contributions to Palo Alto,

Mary Dimit  
University Ave.

## Baumb, Nelly

---

**From:** Donald A. Barr <barr@stanford.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 14, 2021 3:42 PM  
**To:** Council, City  
**Subject:** 955 Alma Street: PHZ Prescreening

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

---

Dear Council Members,

As a close neighbor to 955 Alma Street and as someone who has worked for more than two decades to expand affordable housing in Palo Alto, I would like to express both my support for the proposed project and my serious concern about the level of affordability in the project as currently proposed.

The proposed project would include 36 rental apartments labeled as “micro studios”, the majority of which would be between 325 and 350 square feet in area. I believe these units would be a valuable addition to the housing in the downtown/SOFA area, especially given the proximity of the CalTrain station. However, I find the proposed level of affordability for these units to be unacceptable. I would urge the Council:

- To require that 12 of the 36 units be available to low-income and very-low-income tenants (6 low-income and 6 very-low-income);
- To assure that rents for these units will not exceed 30% of household income;
- To assure that these units will remain as affordable rental units for a minimum of 30 years.

If these requirements were met, the project would be a valuable addition to the affordable housing resources in Palo Alto.

I have serious concerns about the stacked parking proposed for the project. The very small area of the garage space would, in my opinion, create a substantial risk of vehicular damage. I ask the council to consider this issue in their review of the project.

Thank you for your support of additional affordable housing in Palo Alto.

Sincerely,  
Donald Barr



## Baumb, Nelly

---

**From:** Allen Akin <akin@arden.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 14, 2021 2:12 PM  
**To:** Council, City  
**Subject:** May 18, 2021 Council Meeting Item 1: 955 Alma Prescreening

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

---

Council,

I support this project if three conditions are met. One additional matter would be worth discussion.

### Condition 1: Commitment to reduced parking

The project is based on the belief that proximity to transit will significantly reduce the need for personal vehicles and the amount of parking required for them. While the main purpose of reduced parking is to increase the developer's return on investment, it also advances the City's sustainability goals. If this belief turns out to be mistaken, nearby residents and businesses would bear the costs of increased contention for parking resources, and the sustainability goals would be compromised.

Therefore, for fairness and for consistency with the City's goals, neither commercial tenants nor residential tenants of the building should be eligible to purchase parking permits in the commercial district lots and garages or in the Downtown RPP district. This condition, and provisions for enforcing it, must be stated in the project's TDM plan. The condition must also be explicit in all sale or lease agreements in perpetuity.

### Condition 2: Secure bicycle storage

Perhaps I missed it, but when I examined the project plans I didn't see a secure weatherproof enclosure for bicycle storage. To reduce the need for personal vehicles, one should be provided, preferably at ground level.

### Condition 3: Noise protection for lower-income tenants

Any window or balcony with line-of-sight to Alma will be unusable due to high noise levels. I assume the architect will specify noise-reducing construction for doors and windows. However, it's unavoidable that some units will be subject to much more noise than others, particularly at the balconies. As a matter of fairness, the affordable units should not be concentrated in the noisiest locations.

### Discussion Item: Increasing the number of affordable units

The fraction of affordable units proposed for this project is less than the fraction of Santa Clara County's population that meets the corresponding income definitions. As a result, this project increases gentrification. It would be worthwhile for the developer to conduct a good-faith discussion with Staff to check the project financials and see if any increase in the number of affordable units would be possible. The results of that negotiation should be made available to Council.

Best regards,  
Allen Akin

## Baumb, Nelly

---

**From:** Amie Ashton <aashton@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 18, 2021 10:25 AM  
**To:** Council, City  
**Subject:** Support for HOUSING!

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

---

Honorable City Council,

I am writing in **support of the housing projects** that are on the agenda tonight, the **36 units on Alma** (microunits are amazing, after all - half of Paris lives quite happily in small units like this) and the **24 apartments on Wellesley**.

I support a community that is diverse and providing a diversity of housing is the first step in that journey. Housing also supports our vital retail areas by creating more customers and supporting longer business hours for sales to occur. Our downtown areas cannot survive as malls (which are dying by the hundreds right now). We need more residents to provide retail and restaurant demand.

I also urge the removal of barriers to housing on all fronts, from removing parking requirements to lessening fees. We cannot simultaneously support affordable housing while creating additional barriers for housing developers.

Thank you,

Amie Ashton  
236 Middlefield Road

## Baumb, Nelly

---

**From:** slevy@ccsce.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 16, 2021 5:02 PM  
**To:** Council, City; Planning Commission  
**Cc:** Lait, Jonathan; Wong, Tim  
**Subject:** Study session items 1 and 2 5/18/21

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

---

Dear Mayor DuBois and council members,

The council has a chance to give positive feedback to an mixed use, mainly housing project on Alma on a site close to jobs, services, shopping and transit and at the same time correct a premature decision with regard to the application of PHZ projects in R-1 neighborhoods.

The Alma project would add housing and reduce office space on a desirable site.

The Wellesley project would add housing oriented to both the missing middle and low income residents. That site, like the Alma site, is close to jobs, services, shopping and both freeways and public transit.

Both projects meet a city goal of projects with 20% BMR units.

Taking any housing options off the table either with regard to PHZ zoning or the NVCAP area before the housing element site review process even begins strikes me as reckless and irresponsible and puts the city at legal risk since it is very likely that we will easily find suitable sites and policies to incentivize 6,000 units or even a bit smaller if the city wins an appeal.

One of the requirements of the housing element is to identify and overcome challenges to meeting our housing goal.

I understand that there is political pressure to to oppose state law and many projects but your job as the Mayor has said is to proceed with a good faith effort to meet ALL of the housing element update requirements.

Please let the housing element process develop findings before taking housing options off the table.

Stephen Levy