



May 7, 2026

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO POSSIBLE DESIGNATION OF ELMWOOD GARAGE FOR ELMWOOD HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

From Steven Finacom, member, Landmarks Preservation Commission

ADD statement that the Commission adopts by reference the lists of Features to be Preserved in the individual building / property descriptions provided in the Landmark Application, with the following additions / deletions / revisions>

**Property #7: Claremont Garage.**

**ADD** to Features to be preserved: *“Three original shopfront spaces (one on the west, two on the east) that flanked the automobile service bay, including unpainted brick piers on the facade.”*

**Property # 8: Koerber Building 5**

**ADD** to features to be preserved. *“any original transoms or other facade features that might be extant behind the remodeled upper facade.”*

**Property # 10: Scott Building**

Features to be preserved. **Delete** ~~“The tower, courtyard-entries, windows, iced awnings, and stucco exterior of the corner two fifths of the building.”~~

**Property # 13. Sparhawk Building**

ADD material in boldface below to features to be preserved:

**“The Moorish arches, both hidden and uncovered, including clerestory windows from the original design.”**

**“A symmetrical streetfront facade containing four matching bays”.**

**(Delete)** ~~“All remnants of the Roger Lee alterations from the 1950s”.~~

**Property #14: Wilson Tulanian Building**

ADD to Features to Be Preserved section this statement:

*“A lighted commercial billboard added to the southern facade covers some original architectural elements and is not a contributing feature of the building.”*

**Property #20: Dray Building.**

ADD to Features to be preserved *“A rhythm of three storefront bays separated by piers.”*

**Property #21. Romie Building.**

ADD to Features to be preserved: *"Should a future remodel provide the opportunity, lost elements of the original Gothic ornamentation of the facades could be recreated."*

**Property #22. Pillars and park strips.**

In Features to be preserved REPLACE *"the lawns"* with *"a planted area between sidewalk and adjacent private buildings."*

**Property #23: Mercantile Trust Building.**

ADD to Features to Be Preserved: *"the building has three public facing facades on west, south, and east. All are largely intact and are significant contributing aspects of the building."*

**Property # 24: Wells Fargo Bank Parking Lot.**

DELETE *"the lawn"* from Features to be Preserved and replaced with *"a perimeter landscape setback which visually connects to the adjacent City owned park strip (Property #22)."*

**Property #25: Stover Building:**

ADD to Features to be Preserved: *"Concrete grid form wall / glass block panel on the rear (east) elevation of the current structure if further research can determine that this panel dates to the early to mid-20th century era when several Concrete Grid Form structures were constructed in Berkeley. Panel not necessarily to be preserved in situ."*



POSSIBLE REVISIONS / ADDITIONS FOR STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE.

2. Statement of Significance

The district is significant under Berkeley's Landmarks Preservation Ordinance and National Register Criteria A and C (California Criteria 1 and 3) as a rare and highly intact example of a streetcar-era neighborhood commercial district. It embodies the patterns of early 20th-century suburban development and neighborhood-serving commerce, while also representing a cohesive body of commercial architecture distinguished by 1920s storefront design, decorative tilework, and pedestrian-oriented scale.

The Elmwood Commercial Historic District is not simply a collection of older buildings—it is a remarkably intact and continuously functioning artifact of early 20th-century urban planning, transit-oriented development, and neighborhood life. As one of the best-preserved examples of a streetcar-suburb commercial district in California, it meets landmark criteria at the local, state, and national level.

Remarkably it has retained not only retail establishments but several of the key features that once identified many older neighborhood-serving commercial districts throughout the Bay Area and California: its own branch Post Office; a neighborhood bank branch; its own theater.

The district is also culturally and historically significant as the locus of several successful, community based, efforts to respond to economic conditions and other changes that, in the second half of the 20th century, threatened to obliterate much neighborhood commercial throughout California's urban areas.

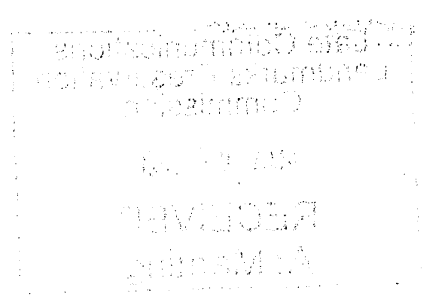


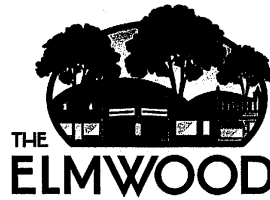
These efforts included:

- successful opposition in the 1960s, to a State proposal to construct a freeway through South Berkeley, which would have demolished much of the commercial and residential district (as was the case with the construction of Highway 24 through Oakland's Rockridge neighborhood.).
- successful opposition in the early 1980s to a pattern of rapidly rising retail rents that threatened to displace many locally owned, neighborhood-serving businesses. Activism resulted in Berkeley's adoption of a Commercial Rent Control ordinance, which, although later overturned by the State Legislature, did contribute during its existence to the retention of key shops and opportunities for merchants to purchase buildings that contained their shops.

Establishment in the later 20th century of:

- a commercial quota system that endeavored to balance types and varieties of retail establishments within the commercial district.
- one of Berkeley's first Business Improvement Districts (BID), established in 1991.
- The Elmwood Theater Foundation, organized to save the Elmwood Theater after closure due to an adjacent building fire in 1988.





Sarah Price-Secretary  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Land Use Planning Division

5/7/2026

Ref: Application for Elmwood Commercial Historic District

Dear Commissioners,

The Elmwood Business Association (EBA) Board of Directors discussed the application for landmark designation of the Elmwood Commercial Historic District on College Ave. at our board meeting on April 28, 2026.

The Elmwood is one of Berkeley's best preserved neighborhood commercial districts. It is defined by locally serving businesses and strong community identity. It is the heart of a local neighborhood where architecture, history, and community life still come together. After discussion of the application, the directors present voted unanimously to ask you to approve the application.

Thank you for your consideration

Claudia Hunka  
Co-president Elmwood Business Association

Eric Green  
Co-president Elmwood Business Association

EBA Board: Andrew Han, Monique Rodriguez, Tarah Ornelas, Trevor Ledergerber, Jesus Chavez, Robert McCourt

**RE upzoning letter written by Peter Calthorpe, emailed May 5, 2026:**

Forty years ago, I wrote a book called *Sustainable Communities* which launched a legion of movements to rethink the way we shape cities. Ten years later I authored *The Next American Metropolis* which helped create the Congress for New Urbanism and idea of Transit Oriented Development.

Over the years I worked for HUD developing the HOPE VI program to build over 160,000 units of the nation's decaying affordable housing and for the State of California as principal author of *Vision California 2050*. This plan was the first statewide land-use study to identify polices to create affordable and environmentally sustainable forms of infill growth. I also developed the University Ave Plan for Berkeley, the first time the idea of infill housing on moribund strip commercial land was tested at scale. It took time but it was a success.

Over these years, I think I have learned a few things about sustainable development, housing, and equity.

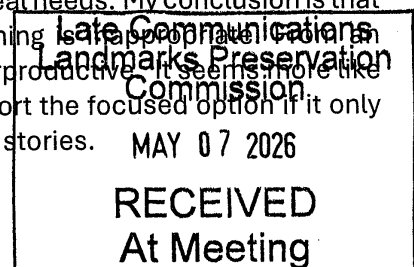
Recently I helped conceive, analyze, and shape state legislation to address the workforce housing crisis in California -- AB 2011. Adopted in 2022 this bill rezones 'by right' all strip commercial lands in the state to mixed-use, mixed-income multifamily housing. It mandates that such mixed-income infill be located in developments on roads of at least 4 lanes.

Regarding the rezoning of the Elmwood, I think one has to look at it from two perspectives — urban design and social equity. From an urban design perspective, it is inappropriate to build mid-rise buildings on two lane streets. Not only is it functionally difficult, but it doesn't respect the context of the street or meet any urban design standard that I've ever come across. AB 2011 establishes height limits based on street width, starting at 4 lanes. It is completely consistent with the vision for Shattuck and Solano -- but not Elmwood.

The second issue is social equity in areas that consist of largely wealthy housing. Elmwood offers little opportunity to address that with mid-rise development given the small parcel sizes. If up-zoned it would result in high end, big-view condos -- not diverse housing. Even though the city has an affordable inclusionary element, the in-lieu fee will allow developers to sift the affordable units away from Elmwood. Adding high-end housing to Elwood doesn't increase equity. In fact, the small parcels on College will cost a lot to build, further frustrating the goal of affordability.

For decades I have designed places that try to replicate the sensitive and rare local retail chemistry that exists in Elmwood. The place has so much history, human scale, and life -- a rare place in America today. It should be preserved and nurtured.

Finally, the potential development is trivial in the context of real needs. My conclusion is that from an urban design and functional standpoint the rezoning is inappropriate. From an equity standpoint it is at best symbolic and at worst counterproductive. It seems more like an act of retribution, not intelligent problem solving. I support the focused option if it only includes 7-11 and Post Office sites. And the height limit is 4 stories.

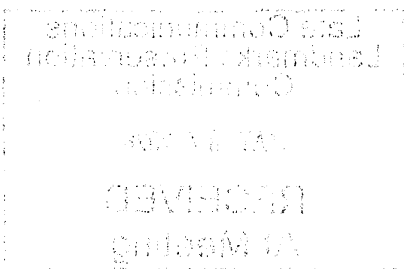


**Peter Calthorpe**

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Peter Calthorpe





## Statement in Support of Elmwood Historic District Designation

### Introduction

"Good evening, Chair and Commissioners. My name is Carole Burns and I am a resident of District 8 in Elmwood for 32 years. I am speaking tonight in strong support of the application to designate the Elmwood commercial district as a historic district.

### The Significance of the 1907 Fabric

As you know the Elmwood is far more than just a cluster of storefronts; it is one of the most remarkably intact examples of an early 20th-century 'streetcar suburb' in the East Bay. Since its inception in 1907, this district has served as a physical timeline of Berkeley's evolution. Its significance lies in its **architectural continuity**. Unlike other areas that have seen fragmented development, the Elmwood retains a cohesive 'sense of place' defined by Edwardian-era craftsmanship, shingle-style textures, and classic Craftsman detailing.

### The Merit of the District as a Whole

While individual buildings like the Elmwood Theatre are iconic, the true historical value here is the **district-wide integrity**. The relationship between these structures—their shared human scale, the recessed entryways, and the original clear story windows and detailed title work—creates an outdoor museum of early California retail architecture. This visual harmony is a finite cultural resource. Once these original materials and proportions are altered or lost, the historical 'legibility' of the neighborhood is gone forever.

### Preservation as Essential Oversight

By granting landmark status, this Commission provides the necessary framework for **responsible stewardship**. It ensures that any future alterations or construction are held to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, requiring that new work be compatible with the old. This is not about freezing the Elmwood in amber, but about ensuring that any evolution of these blocks respects the craftsmanship and historical narrative that have defined this community for over 115 years.

### **Closing**

I urge you to support the landmark designation for the Elmwood commercial district. Its historical significance lies in its visual and physical cohesion—a quality that is increasingly rare in our region, one that creates a “Main-Street small-town atmosphere. By granting this status, the LPC ensures that this district remains a legible piece of Berkeley's history, where any future changes must respect the architectural language and craftsmanship that have defined College Avenue for over a century.”



May 7, 2026

City of Berkeley  
2180 Milvia St,  
Berkeley, CA 94704

Re: Proposed Elmwood Historic District

By email: [planninglpc@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:planninglpc@berkeleyca.gov)

Cc: [planning@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:planning@berkeleyca.gov); [clerk@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:clerk@cityofberkeley.info); [attorney@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:attorney@berkeleyca.gov);  
[CManager@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:CManager@berkeleyca.gov)

Dear Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission,

The California Housing Defense Fund (“CalHDF”) submits this letter as a public comment regarding item 8a on the agenda for the Landmarks Preservation Commission meeting of May 7, 2026. Specifically, we write to remind the City of its obligation to abide by all relevant state and federal laws when evaluating the proposed Elmwood Historic District. These laws include the Housing Element Law as well as state and federal fair housing laws.

In short, the proposed landmark designation of this area, undertaken to stop multifamily development, would continue the pattern of racial segregation in the Elmwood neighborhood that began more than a hundred years ago. This action would violate the City’s legal duty to affirmatively further fair housing.

### **Adoption of this Historic District Would Create a New Constraint on Housing Development**

Historic districts effectively freeze the built environment in place and make it highly challenging to develop multifamily housing. They represent a major new constraint on housing production.

Housing Element Law requires local governments to analyze governmental constraints on housing production. (Gov. Code, § 65583, subd. (a)(5).) The results of this analysis then inform the policies and programs in the housing element. (See *id.*; *id.* at subd. (c)(3); *Californians for Homeownership, Inc. v. City of Beverly Hills* (2023) Los Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. 23STCP00143, at p. 6, [finding planned rezonings for housing element site inventory

must consider constraints identified by the housing element's constraints analysis] [opinion attached to this letter].)

However, because this proposed historic district was not analyzed in the City's housing element, the City cannot rely on its housing element programs to fulfill its portion of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation unless it analyzes these new constraints and offsets their impact on housing production.

Furthermore, as discussed *infra*, adoption of this historic district would violate the City's obligation to affirmatively further fair housing in the preparation of its Housing Element. (See Gov. Code, § 65583, subd. (a)(3), (b)(1).)

### **Adoption of this Historic District Would Enshrine a Legacy of Segregation**

The Elmwood neighborhood has a remarkably shameful history of segregation. As is well known in Berkeley, developer Duncan McDuffie placed racial covenants on his developments in the area in order to ensure that only whites would be able to live there. He also spearheaded the invention of single-family zoning to ensure that Black-owned dancehalls and Chinese-owned laundromats would not be allowed to open in his Elmwood developments.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, federal policies ensured that the neighborhood would remain segregated. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) only insured developments in the area that would be whites-only, a policy that continued throughout the 1950s, with the result that Elmwood is now one of the whitest areas in the East Bay.<sup>2</sup>

Single-family zoning, along with the segregationist policies of the FHA, ensured that across the country, single-family zoning was tantamount to declaring an area "whites-only." Elmwood was the origin point for this practice.

The nominating report whitewashes this shameful history. Instead, McDuffie is portrayed as a civic visionary. From page 11 of the nominating report:

Duncan McDuffie, developer of the Claremont district, whose abiding interests were nature conservation and city planning, was appointed president of the commission. McDuffie had introduced building restrictions in Claremont, knowing that this was the only way to ensure a neighborhood of homogeneous use.

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<sup>1</sup>

<https://www.berkeleyside.org/2024/07/23/berkeley-zoning-has-served-for-many-decades-to-separate-the-poor-from-the-rich-and-whites-from-people-of-color-2>

<sup>2</sup> <https://eastbayexpress.com/elmwood-scene-neighborhoods-past-is-not-its-future/>

When the report mentions people of color at all, it is to highlight their presence in the commercial area. The report makes no mention of their segregation from the surrounding residential community.

Furthermore, it is clearly the intent of this nomination to prevent multifamily development in the area. From page 8:

The City Council would like to up-zone the blocks of College Avenue between Dwight Way and the Oakland border in order to allow much taller buildings. Of course, up-zoning would destroy the historic character of the entire length of College ...

This nomination is clearly seeking to prevent the development of lower-cost housing options, such as multifamily buildings, in the Elmwood area. This would continue the legacy of segregation in the community.

Local governments have an obligation under California to refrain from any actions that would discriminate against protected classes, or against the “intended occupancy of any residential development by persons or families of very low, low, moderate, or middle income.” (Gov. Code, § 65008, subs. (a)(3), (b)(1)(C), and (b)(2)(B).) In addition, both local governments and California state agencies are tasked with affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH), requiring “meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics.” (Gov. Code, § 8899.50, subd. (a)(1).) The obligation to AFFH works in conjunction with, and independently of, local governments’ housing element obligations. Local governments are required to include a plan to AFFH as part of a compliant housing element, and are required to carry out this plan and other policies consistent with their obligation to affirmatively further fair housing. (*Id.*, § 65583, subd. (a)(3), (b)(1).)

The proposed historic district, undertaken to stop multifamily development in a historically segregated neighborhood, is wildly inconsistent with the City’s obligation to take “meaningful actions . . . to overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics.” (Gov. Code, § 8899.50, subd. (a)(1).)



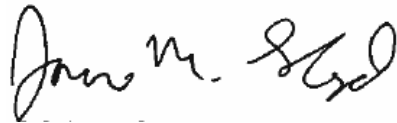
We urge the City to reject the proposed historic district, in keeping with its obligations under state and federal fair housing law and the Housing Element Law.

CalHDF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation whose mission includes advocating for increased access to housing for Californians at all income levels, including low-income households. You may learn more about CalHDF at [www.calhdf.org](http://www.calhdf.org).

Sincerely,



Dylan Casey  
CalHDF Executive Director



James M. Lloyd  
CalHDF Director of Planning and Investigations

**Rierner, Allison**

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**From:** James Lloyd <james@calhdf.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 7, 2026 5:52 PM  
**To:** Landmarks Preservation Commission  
**Cc:** City Clerk; City Attorney's Office; Manager, C; Planning Dept. Mailbox  
**Subject:** Re: public comment re item 8a for tonight's LPC meeting  
**Attachments:** Californians for Homeownership v. City of Beverly Hills (2).pdf

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

Please see attached the court case referenced by our public comment for tonight's LPC meeting.

James M. Lloyd  
Director of Planning and Investigations  
California Housing Defense Fund  
[james@calhdf.org](mailto:james@calhdf.org)  
CalHDF is grant & donation funded  
Donate today - <https://calhdf.org/donate/>

On Thu, May 7, 2026 at 5:14 PM James Lloyd <[james@calhdf.org](mailto:james@calhdf.org)> wrote:

Dear Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission,

The California Housing Defense Fund (“CalHDF”) submits the attached public comment regarding item 8a on the agenda for the Landmarks Preservation Commission meeting of May 7, 2026, the proposed Elmwood Historic District.

Sincerely,

James M. Lloyd  
Director of Planning and Investigations  
California Housing Defense Fund  
[james@calhdf.org](mailto:james@calhdf.org)  
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**FILED**  
Superior Court of California  
County of Los Angeles

**Superior Court of California  
County of Los Angeles**

**SEP 12 2023**

David W. Stayton, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court  
By: M. Mort, Deputy

CALIFORNIANS FOR  
HOMEOWNERSHIP, INC.,

Petitioner,

Case No. 23STCP00143

vs.

CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS,

Respondent.

**RULING ON VERIFIED FIRST  
AMENDED PETITION FOR  
WRIT OF MANDATE**

Dept. 82 (Hon. Curtis A. Kin)

Petitioner Californians for Homeownership, Inc. petitions for a writ of mandate directing respondent City of Beverly Hills to adopt a revised housing element pursuant to Government Code § 65754.

**I. Factual Background**

The State of California requires each city to have a “comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development” of the city. (Gov. Code § 65300.)<sup>1</sup> Each general plan must have a housing element. (§ 65302(c).) The housing element consists of ‘standards and plans for housing sites in the municipality that ‘shall endeavor to make adequate provision for the housing needs of all economic segments of the community.’ [Citations.]” (*California Building Industry Assn. v. City of San Jose* (2015) 61 Cal.4th 435, 444; *see also* § 65580 [legislative findings concerning housing element law].)

“A municipality must review its housing element for the appropriateness of its housing goals, objectives, and policies and must revise the housing element in accordance with a statutory schedule.” (*Martinez v. City of Clovis* (2023) 90 Cal.App.5th 193, 222, citing § 65588(a), (b).) “The interval between the due dates for

<sup>1</sup> All statutory references are to the Government Code, unless otherwise specified.

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the revised housing element is referred to as a planning period or cycle, which usually is eight years.” (*Martinez*, 90 Cal.App.5th at 222, citing § 65588(e)(3), (f)(1).)

“A revised housing element’s assessment of needs must quantify the locality’s existing and projected housing needs for all income levels, which includes the locality’s proportionate share of regional housing needs for each income level.” (*Martinez*, 90 Cal.App.5th at 223, citing § 65583(a)(1).) “The projected regional housing needs for a planning period are determined by the HCD [Department of Housing and Community Development] in consultation with regional ‘councils of government.’” (*Martinez*, 90 Cal.App.5th at 223, citing §§ 65584(a) & (b), 65584.01, 65588(e)(3).) “Based on the HCD’s regional housing needs determination, each regional council of governments adopts a ‘final regional housing need plan that allocates a share of the regional housing need’ among the cities and counties within its region.” (*Martinez*, 90 Cal.App.5th at 223, citing § 65584(b).)

For the 2021-2029 planning period, the City Council of respondent City of Beverly Hills (“City”) adopted a housing element on October 12, 2021 and submitted it for review to HCD. (JR 776.) On January 14, 2022, HCD determined that the housing element did not fully comply with the housing element law and provided necessary revisions. (JR 1309-16.)

On September 28, 2022, the City submitted a revised housing element to HCD. (JR 776.) On November 28, 2022, HCD determined that the revised housing element did not fully comply with the housing element law and provided necessary revisions. (JR 1318-24.)

On February 21, 2023, after having revised the September 2022 housing element, the City adopted the revision. (JR 5.) On February 21, 2023, petitioner Californians for Homeownership, Inc., who monitors local compliance with the housing element law, sent a letter to the City asserting that the revised housing element was inadequate for reasons identified by HCD and petitioner. (JR 1584-85.) On May 12, 2023, HCD determined that the housing element does not substantially comply with housing element law. (RJN Ex. B.)

## II. Procedural History

On January 18, 2023, petitioner filed a verified petition for writ of mandate. On May 24, 2023, pursuant to stipulation, petitioner filed a verified first amended petition for writ of mandate.

On June 22, 2023, during the trial setting conference, the Court set the hearing on the instant petition for September 12, 2023.

On July 14, 2023, petitioner filed an opening brief. On August 15, 2023, respondent filed an opposition. On August 31, 2023, petitioner filed a reply.



which the party is entitled, and from which the party is unlawfully precluded by that inferior tribunal, corporation, board, or person.”

“Any action brought by any interested party to review the conformity with the provisions of this article of any housing element or portion thereof or revision thereto shall be brought pursuant to Section 1085 of the Code of Civil Procedure; the court’s review of compliance with the provisions of this article shall extend to whether the housing element or portion thereof or revision thereto substantially complies with the requirements of this article.” (§ 65587(b); *see also* § 65751.) Substantial compliance means “actual compliance in respect to the substance essential to every reasonable objective of the statute, as distinguished from mere technical imperfections of form.” (*Martinez*, 90 Cal.App.5th at 237, internal citations omitted.)

“[A] city’s adoption of a housing element is a legislative enactment, something which is generally entitled to some deference.” (*Fonseca v. City of Gilroy* (2007) 148 Cal.App.4th 1174, 1191.) “If the municipality has substantially complied with statutory requirements, we will not interfere with its legislative action, unless that action was arbitrary, capricious, or entirely lacking in evidentiary support.” (*Ibid.*) The challenging party has the burden to demonstrate that the housing element is inadequate. (*Ibid.*)

## V. Analysis

### A. This Dispute is Not Moot

As a preliminary matter, respondent asserts that the City anticipates adopting a revised housing element in November of this year to address concerns about the current housing element. (Wiener Decl. ¶ 2.) However, there is no guarantee that a revision will be completed by November or that the City will adopt a revision at that time, or at any time thereafter. The Court can only rule based on the current housing element. The instant petition is entitled to preference. (§ 65752.) Further, if the Court were to enter judgment in favor of petitioner, the housing element law provides deadlines for the City to address the deficiencies in the housing element and to submit the revision to HCD. (§ 65754(a).) If respondent were to appeal, the appeal would be given preference also. (§ 65752.) Accordingly, there is no reason to delay ruling on the merits of the operative first amended petition.

### B. Whether Sites Inventory Meets Statutory Requirements

#### 1. Realistic Development Capacity

The inventory in a housing element must “specify for each site the number of units that can realistically be accommodated on that site and whether the site is adequate to accommodate lower income housing, moderate-income housing, or above moderate-income housing.” (§ 65583.2(c).) For a city that does not require a

minimum residential density,<sup>2</sup> the city “shall demonstrate how the number of units determined for [each] site...will be accommodated.” (§ 65583.2(c)(1).) As part of the calculation, “ [t]he number of units calculated...shall be adjusted as necessary, based on the land use controls and site improvements requirement identified in paragraph (5) of subdivision (a) of Section 65583, the realistic development capacity for the site, typical densities of existing or approved residential developments at a similar affordability level in that jurisdiction, and on the current or planned availability and accessibility of sufficient water, sewer, and dry utilities.” (§ 65583.2(c)(2).)

An “assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to the meeting of these needs” shall include an “analysis of potential and actual governmental constraints upon the maintenance, improvement, or development of housing for all income levels...including land use controls, building codes and their enforcement, site improvements, fees and other exactions required of developers, local processing and permit procedures, and any locally adopted ordinances that directly impact the cost and supply of residential development.” (§ 65583(a)(5).)

To demonstrate that its inventory is adequate, respondent relies on a Mixed Use Overlay Zone (“Overlay Zone”) adopted by ordinance on November 17, 2020, where the maximum residential density within the zone was increased from 0 in commercial areas to 79.2 units/acre. (JR 200, 209.) The Overlay Zone spans the length of the City from east to west and partially north to south, along its largest commercial corridors, including Wilshire Boulevard, Robertson Boulevard, Olympic Boulevard, South Doheny Drive, and South Beverly Drive. (JR 125; *see also* JR 213 [map of Overlay Zone].) In the housing element, the City describes the purported benefits of the Overlay Zone: “This wide-scale rezoning allows for the creation or conversion of non-residential space into residential units, and therefore will create all net new housing, since it does not involve the displacement of any existing occupied housing/residents.” (JR 125.)

Respondent argues that the maximum residential density exceeds the minimum 30 units per acre that is statutorily deemed appropriate to accommodate housing for lower income individuals. (§ 65583.2(c)(3)(B)(iv).) Respondent also argues that existing commercial buildings in the Overlay Zone may obtain a permit to convert to a mixed-use building and obtain relief from having to comply with standards concerning parking requirements, loading facilities, outdoor living space, commercial-residential transitional setbacks, or height limits if compliance is physically infeasible. (JR 1636; *see also* Chen Decl. Ex. G [Beverly Hills Municipal Code (“BMMC”) § 10-3-1888].) The vacancy rates for commercial buildings also purportedly create an incentive for commercial building owners to convert their buildings to mixed-use projects. (JR 201.)

<sup>2</sup> It is undisputed Beverly Hills does not mandate a minimum residential density.



City does not have to provide an analysis demonstrating how its adopted density accommodates its share of the regional housing need for lower income households. (§ 65583.2(c)(3)(A-B).) However, the City still must adjust the number of units for each site based on the realistic development capacity of the site under section 65583.2(c)(1) and (c)(2) and provide an “analysis of potential and actual governmental constraints upon the...development of housing for all income levels” under section 65583(a)(5).

Petitioner also argues that the City designated the majority of the sites on the sites inventory as 100% low-income or 100% moderate-income housing without explaining the basis for such designation. (OB at 10:6-7.) Petitioner further argues that the City did not adjust the unit counts based on “typical densities of existing or approved residential developments at a similar affordability level in that jurisdiction,” as required by section 65583.2(c)(2). (OB 10:7-8.)

Petitioner, however, does not reference any statute that requires an explanation for the basis for the low-income or moderate-income housing designation. The housing element law only requires that the City specify “the number of units that can realistically be accommodated on that site and whether the site is adequate to accommodate lower income housing, moderate-income housing, or above moderate-income housing” and demonstrate “how the number of units determined for that site...will be accommodated.” (§ 65583.2(c), (c)(1).) The sites inventory indicates the total number of units for each site. (JR 229 [“Total Units” column].) By indicating the number of units that are designated as low-income or moderate-income housing, the City also indicates “whether the site is adequate to accommodate lower income housing [or] moderate-income housing.” (JR 229 [“Lower” and “Mod” columns].) While the City did not explain how the total number of units will be accommodated for the reasons stated above, the designation of housing as low-income or moderate-income is not deficient.

Nevertheless, it is not apparent from the sites inventory whether the City adjusted the numbers for low-income and moderate-income housing based on “typical densities of existing or approved residential developments at a similar affordability level in that jurisdiction.” (§ 65583.2(c)(2).) By multiplying the land area by the maximum residential density of 79.2 units per acre and designating all housing as low- or moderate-income housing, the City assumes that all units built on the site will be low-income or moderate-income housing. The City does not account for the possibility that only a certain percentage of the housing on the site will be designated for residents with low- or moderate-income. A revised housing element would need to contain an adjustment based on typical densities at similar affordability levels.

In sum, with respect to realistic development capacity, the housing element is deficient for the following reasons: (1) for conversions, the sites inventory calculates the total number of units based on a product of land area and the maximum residential density without accounting for the floor area of the building; (2) the sites

inventory does not contain any adjustments based on land use controls for new construction; (3) the housing element contains no analysis of the governmental constraints on the development of housing; and (4) the sites inventory does not contain any adjustments based on typical densities of existing or approved residential developments at similar affordability levels in the City.

2. Nonvacant Sites

For nonvacant sites, the housing element law imposes the following additional requirement:

[T]he city or county shall specify the additional development potential for each site within the planning period and shall provide an explanation of the methodology used to determine the development potential. The methodology shall consider factors including the extent to which existing uses may constitute an impediment to additional residential development, the city's or county's past experience with converting existing uses to higher density residential development, the current market demand for the existing use, an analysis of any existing leases or other contracts that would perpetuate the existing use or prevent redevelopment of the site for additional residential development, development trends, market conditions, and regulatory or other incentives or standards to encourage additional residential development on these sites.

(§ 65583.2(g)(1).)

Petitioner argues that the City does not explain how its methodology relates to the sites it has included or excluded in the sites inventory. For underutilized nonvacant sites, respondent explains that it selected sites that were more likely to be redeveloped or converted based on evidence of a lack of investment in the property, such as a lack of maintenance or lack of recent upgrades and improvements; parcels with underutilized improvements; and parcels with existing commercial buildings that are higher than 3 stories but whose floor plan is conducive to residential conversion. (JR 202-03, 210-11.) Respondent also explains that existing uses do not constitute an impediment to additional residential development because the creation of the Overlay Zone creates opportunities for residential development; conversion from non-residential to residential use costs less than new construction; and high residential property values in the City create financial incentives for residential development. (JR 209-10.) However, respondent discusses its methodology for determining development potential generally, without engaging in any site-specific analysis.

Respondent contends that it need not engage in an analysis of the methodology of the development potential for each site. The Court disagrees. Section

65583.2(g)(1) states that, for nonvacant sites, “the city or county shall specify the additional development potential for each site within the planning period and shall provide an explanation of the methodology used to determine the development potential.” Reading the subdivision as a whole, the City is required to provide an explanation of the methodology for each site in the sites inventory. Among the factors that the methodology must consider are “the current market demand for the existing use” and “an analysis of any existing leases or other contracts that would perpetuate the existing use or prevent redevelopment of the site for additional residential development.” (§ 65583.2(g)(1).) These factors necessarily relate to specific sites and cannot be discussed generally. Because the Legislature included these factors, the Legislature surely intended that the City provide “an explanation of the methodology used to determine the development potential” for each site.

Without a site-specific analysis, it is unclear how the methodology was applied. For example, as petitioner points out in the opening brief, the City purports to have excluded commercial buildings that contained medical uses and car dealerships from the sites inventory. (JR 210.) However, the sites inventory includes medical buildings and car dealerships. (*See, e.g.*, JR 229-30 [153 S. Doheny Dr., 239 S. La Cienega Blvd., 8833 W. Olympic Blvd., 8845 W. Olympic Blvd., 9134 W. Olympic Blvd.]) The City does not explain how the existing use does not serve as an impediment to residential development.

For the foregoing reasons, with respect to section 65583.2(g)(1), the housing element is deficient because the City did not provide an explanation of the methodology used to determine the development potential for each site, including a discussion of the factors probative of likelihood of redevelopment set forth in section 65583.2(g)(1).

Further, the sites inventory shows that the City is meeting all of its share of the need for lower-income housing through nonvacant sites. Accordingly, section 65583.2(g)(2), quoted below, is implicated:

In addition to the analysis required in paragraph (1), when a city or county is relying on nonvacant sites described in paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) to accommodate 50 percent or more of its housing need for lower income households, the methodology used to determine additional development potential shall demonstrate that the existing use identified pursuant to paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) does not constitute an impediment to additional residential development during the period covered by the housing element. An existing use shall be presumed to impede additional residential development, absent findings based on substantial evidence that the use is likely to be discontinued during the planning period.

(§ 65583.2(g)(2).)

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For nonvacant sites, the “Field Notes/Existing Conditions & Analysis for Keeping/Removing” column in the sites inventory only indicates the existing use of the site and whether the site is designated for conversion or has conversion potential. (JR 229-34.) The City does not engage in any discussion of occupancy rates, lease terms, viability of the business operating at the sites. Nor does the City present any other discussion demonstrating that the existing use for each site “does not constitute an impediment to additional residential development during the period covered by the housing element.” (§ 65583.2(g)(2).) Without any evidence concerning the existing use of each site, the existing use is presumed to impede additional residential development. (*Ibid.*)

Respondent maintains that Culver City and Gardena obtained HCD approval based on a chart similar to its sites inventory. However, unlike Beverly Hills, Gardena’s sites inventory sets forth the existing use of each site and why the existing use is likely to be discontinued during the planning period. (Reply RJN Ex. B; cf. Chen Decl. Ex. B at 71 [listing criteria used in selection of sites].) With respect to Culver City, the sites inventory does not set forth the reason why the existing use is likely to be discontinued. (Chen Decl. Ex. A at Appendix B.) However, elsewhere in the housing element, Culver City discusses sites that present opportunities for development based on positive responses from property owners and developers. (Chen Decl. Ex. A at B-9 to B-10.) Unlike Beverly Hills, Culver City discussed how the existing use at certain sites would not impede residential development. Beverly Hills did not engage in any site-specific analysis concerning how the existing use would not impede additional residential development.

Respondent contends that the Court of Appeal in *Martinez v. City of Clovis* (2023) 90 Cal.App.5th 193 determined that no site-specific analysis concerning the methodology used to determine development potential and additional development factors is required. This is not quite accurate. In *Martinez*, the Court of Appeal found that section 65583.2(g)(1) “does not mandate the City ‘specify the additional development potential for each [nonvacant] site within the planning period and ... provide an explanation of the methodology used to determine the development potential’ *in the housing element itself.*” (*Martinez*, 90 Cal.App.5th at 248-49, emphasis added.) While specification of the additional development potential for each site does not have to be part of the housing element, the City still must demonstrate the additional development potential for each site. In *Martinez*, for example, the City of Clovis provided evidence outside of the housing element to demonstrate the development potential of a nonvacant site. (*Id.* at 249-51.)

Here, there is no analysis of the additional development potential for each site listed in the sites inventory in the housing element or elsewhere. Further, the housing element does not contain findings based on substantial evidence that the existing uses of nonvacant sites are likely to be discontinued, as required by section 65583.2(g)(2).

In sum, with respect to nonvacant sites, the housing element is deficient for the following reasons: (1) the City did not provide an explanation of the methodology used to determine the development potential for each site in the sites inventory, including a discussion of the factors probative of likelihood of redevelopment set forth in section 65583.2(g)(1); and (2) the City fails to demonstrate with substantial evidence that the existing use for each site in the sites inventory does not constitute an impediment to additional residential development during the period covered by the housing element.

C. Specific Sites

Petitioner also contends that certain sites were improperly included in the sites inventory. (OB at 15:6-17:1.) Petitioner maintains that the City did not make the findings based on substantial evidence that are required to rebut the presumption under section 65583.2(g)(2) that the existing use will impede additional residential development. (Reply at 4:13-14.)

However, in contending that additional residential development is not possible on certain sites, petitioner relies on extra-record evidence. For example, for 55 North La Cienega, the sites inventory indicates that the property will have 70 low-income units. (JR 229.) However, petitioner presents a Planning Commission Report and meeting minutes to assert that the City's Planning Commission approved development on the site with only 11 units of very low-income housing. (Gelfand Decl. Exs. C at 1, D at 3-4.)

"[W]here the scope of review of factual findings is substantial evidence, review limited to the administrative record is appropriate because extra-record evidence is irrelevant to whether the agency's decision is supported by substantial evidence." (*Cinema West, LLC v. Baker* (2017) 13 Cal.App.5th 194, 208.) Petitioner cannot challenge the inclusion of sites in the inventory based on extra-record evidence. Ironically, petitioner would have the Court consider the propriety of certain sites based on extra-record evidence, but then bar respondent from presenting extra-record evidence to rebut petitioner's argument. (Reply at 4:18-5:13.)

With respect to sites which petitioner contends are unlikely to disappear based on their existing use (OB at 16:21-17:2; JR 1557-58), the Court already finds that respondent did not make findings based on substantial evidence that the existing use for each nonvacant site in the sites inventory is likely to be discontinued. The City must make such findings in revising the housing element.

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**VI. Conclusion**

The petition is GRANTED. Pursuant to Local Rule 3.231(n), petitioner shall prepare, serve, and ultimately file a proposed judgment and proposed writ of mandate.

Date: September 12, 2023

  
HON. CURTIS A. KIN

09142023

**Rierner, Allison**

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**From:** Sheila Schwartzburg <sheilaschwa@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 7, 2026 5:36 PM  
**To:** Landmarks Preservation Commission  
**Subject:** Preservation please

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

Hello,

We are 53 year residents of the Elmwood and hope the Elmwood will be preserved and landmarked. It is a joy to visit all the high points of the Elmwood with our grandchildren and we wish that for future generations. The library feeds our minds, the restaurants feed us and the stores clothe us and supply us with everything one could possibly want in these few blocks. Thank you for making a wise decision.  
Sheila and Toby Schwartzburg

**Riemer, Allison**

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**From:** Jan Volz-Kelly <jvk4peace@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 7, 2026 6:12 PM  
**To:** Landmarks Preservation Commission  
**Subject:** Landmarking of the Elmwood District

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

Dear Commission members,

My name is Jan Volz-Kelly.  
I have been a resident of Berkeley for more that 40 years.  
I support the Landmarking of the Elmwood District.

Regards,  
Jan Volz-Kelly

**Riemer, Allison**

---

**From:** Andrew Hess <andrewclaytonhess@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2026 5:33 PM  
**To:** Landmarks Preservation Commission  
**Cc:** Humbert, Mark  
**Subject:** Elmwood Historic District

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

Hello,

I read the Berkeleyside article and I'd like to voice my objection to the proposal for Elmwood to be made into a historic district.

While there could be some merits, the current proposal is far too broad and comes across as NIMBY blocking tactics. It lost all credibility with its arguments for both the parking lot and the 7eleven strip mall.

Could you please forward this note to those voting on the matter? I couldn't figure that out from your website.

Thanks,

Andrew Hess  
(and I live in Elmwood)

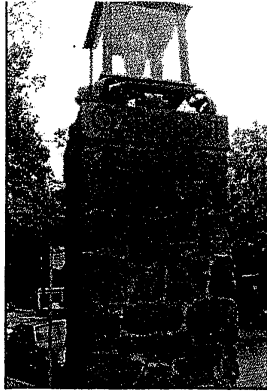
Hello, Allison,  
Here's a copy of  
the summary  
article about the  
Pillar at the south  
east corner of Ashby  
and College. Important  
history + confirms  
that although this

Pillar looks  
"original" with  
visible "cracks" at  
the top, etc., it  
has a very stable  
inside design - NOT  
the original "bubble  
core" ... part of  
the important  
Elmwood history -

All this is just  
one example of the  
importance of  
"Landmark" history  
and integrity of  
the Elmwood  
Business District.  
Be well.

Doris Nausing

# Pillars of the Community



Chester King Vega

**'You can't save the whole world, but you do what you can ... and see it through.'**

DORIS NASSIRY

■ *Neighbors unite to preserve historic stone entry pillars around the city.*

By Sheila Holderness

Sometimes we humans don't even notice things that are part of our everyday personal vision plan — until they've gone missing.

For example, would many denizens of the Claremont-Elmwood district — or any of the many drivers and pedestrians who trek through the popular area daily — notice if the city of Berkeley dismantled and took away the two decaying stone pillars at the northeast and southeast corners of College and Ashby avenues? Heck, has anyone even noticed the pillars are

in a state of decay?

Don't jump into the car and drive to the intersection with intent to shackle yourself to one of these beautiful portals to the past: thanks to the fundraising and sweat equity of a small group of folks called "Pillars of Our Community," no one — not even Public Works, EBMUD or CalTrans — is going to snatch away this bit of history. In a short time the 1905 sandstone structures — one next to Wells Fargo Bank and the other across the street next to Mission National Bank — will be in a fine state of repair.

"Pillars" is the brainchild of Doris Nassiry and a couple of other people who noticed that the stone pillars installed by Duncan McDuffie (a founder of the Sierra Club,



Doris Nassiry

Noah Berger

See PILLARS, page C-13

## Pillars

Continued from front page

and of Mason McDuffie) in 1905, to define and landmark their Elmwood Park residential development, were cracked (dangerously so), ailing, and generally rundown. At the same time — about two years ago — the group was aware that PERS money (City pension fund rebates) was being earmarked for projects to improve parks and open spaces in Berkeley via mini-grants to qualified (demonstrable community support and volunteer sweat equity) community groups in amounts up to \$3,500.

Doris Nassiry thought, "Why not?" The definition of "parks and public spaces" has been widened to include such things as benches, creeks, stairways, balustrades, fountains, pathways, walls, traffic bollards, urns — anything that makes the urban cacophony of our environment more tranquil. Why not pillars?

Gail Keleman, who is active in Partners for Parks, points out, "A lot of the 'street architecture' in Berkeley is what makes walking in this town so wonderful. It should be included in the definition of open space resources. A lot of our structures are WPA — and many use stone quarried from La Loma Park here in Berkeley. Did you know that 36 of the stone pillars in Berkeley have landmark status?"

With that kind of in-house enthusiasm, the small Pillars group set about garnering the moral and monetary support of Elmwood merchants and residents: \$3,500 wasn't going to do the job, not even the bare bones job.

"I like the idea. I'm glad there is a move to save that connection with the past and happy to support it," says Peggy Casey, a contributor and proprietor of Bill's Trading Post on College Avenue for the past 30 years. "Kids climb on those pillars and they don't look safe. We even had one character who used to climb up and sit on the ball on top of a pillar every evening to watch the sun set. Think if he had injured himself!"

Nassiry got together with Joan Collignon, another Claremont-Elmwood resident; Mary Hardy, an architectural conservator; and Gail Keleman, a knowledgeable-about-mini-grants-and-pillars North Berkeleyan; and planned a long walk with a photographer. They surveyed all the pillars in the Elmwood, and included those on Hillcrest, the Uplands, Russell, Derby, Pine and Claremont at Avalon. (The dream of the group is to restore the most needy pillars in all of the areas of Berkeley.)

Interestingly, many of the pillars in the Claremont-Elmwood area were designed by the noted architect John Galen Howard, although it is not known whether he was

responsible for the Ashby/College structures (At one time, there were actually four pillars — two on each side — at the Ashby/College intersection.)

The Elmwood Park pillars are made from gray-green to golden sandstone — possibly Colusa sandstone — and appear to be the same stone as used in the wall surrounding the School for the Deaf and Blind, salvaged from the demolished original stone building. The stone also appears in the chimney of the Anna Head School, according to Mary Hardy, the conservator.

Hardy chronicled the varying levels of decay of the pillars — stuff we mortals tend to overlook when we are ooh-ing and aah-ing over antiquities: intrusion of plant growth, structures slipping off their

bases, pillars needing point work, areas needing cleaning and refilling with mortar, sloughing off of the surface, underground tilt problems from water and root damage.

Nassiry and her group decided to focus on a mini-grant application to restore the two pillars at College and Ashby avenues for starters. They consulted with a principal from Sullivan Masonry, a noted stonemason from Walnut Creek: he decided that some of the scut work could be taught to volunteers, fulfilling the sweat equity condition of a PERS mini-grant. Berkeley Partners for Parks, a nonprofit corpora-

tion, agreed to act as the fiscal agent for Pillars and acknowledged the group as an "adopt-a-park" group, another condition.

Now things started cooking: fund-raising appeals went out to residents and Elmwood Merchants, checks starting coming in. Finally, the \$3,500 PERS mini-grant application came through.

Is Doris Nassiry sitting on her laurels? Nope. More money is still needed for the Elmwood Park pillars and there are other pillars and architectural landmarks in the area that need restoration. Brad Ricards, a landscape architect for the Parks and Waterfront Department and program manager for PERS mini-grants says that small-scope efforts, such as Nassiry's group, "... are increasingly successful in expanding the city's resources — getting done what the city's maintenance

staff can't do. Our parks and open spaces — including architectural treatments such as pillars — are for the public enjoyment. They need ongoing maintenance and restoration."

Nassiry is a petite, Botticelli-pretty and seemingly strong-as-steel woman. She appears to have inherited the good neighborhood-activist bones of her late mother, Gerda Fulder, a German immigrant, noted photographer, longtime East Bay resident and self-proclaimed "rabble rouser." Gerda told her daughter: "You've got to be part of the solu-

tion (in your own community). It's your turn now to be an activist."

Nassiry has lived in her modest craftsman-style home on Webster Street east of College Avenue with her husband for 25 years (after living on Woolsey for seven). They raised two children there. She has always been active in her neighborhood — it was through her efforts the post office at Webster and College got spruced up and landscaped. She's Webster Street's block captain. It would be easy for a cynic to dismiss her to the ranks of "women-with-time-on-their-hands," but Doris worked outside her home up until a few years ago, with AFDC recipients in WIN, a State of California work incentive program. As Doris puts it: "The people I taught were basically demoralized when they came into the program. But within two to three weeks I saw them bloom because they found goals of the program 'doable' — a thing worth doing."

She expresses the same reaction to problems and projects she comes across in her community: "You can't save the whole world, but you do what you can — a small part — and see it through."

To support Pillars of Our Community, contact Berkeley Partners for Parks at 849-4356.

To learn how your group can apply for a PERS mini-grant, a meeting will be held on May 14, 1998, 7 PM, at the City of Berkeley Public Room, Corporation Assembly Building, 1326 Allston Way at Action Street.

PILLARS OF OUR COMMUNITY

Have you noticed how sad and neglected the stone pillars at the corner of Ashby and College Avenues look? Well, luckily these historic 1905 pillars which demarcate the Elmwood District may soon be restored. "The Pillars of Our Community" is a small group of volunteers whose aim is to see this project completed this summer. Since 1996 we've been accepting contributions, many from interested neighbors all around Berkeley as well as from the following Elmwood Merchants:

Better Homes & Gardens/ERI Realty  
Bill's Trading Post  
College Avenue Architects  
King Yen Restaurant  
La Mediteranéé  
Mission National Bank  
Supercuts

We are now within \$1200.-  
of the goal and would  
appreciate your  
tax-deductible contribution  
of any amount. Please make  
your check payable to:  
BPPF/Pillars of Our Community,  
and mail to: BPPF c/o Doris Nassiry  
2746 Webster Street  
Berkeley CA 94705

**THANK-YOU!!**

**NOTE:** The federal tax I.D. # is  
94-3228356 under the auspices of  
Berkeley Partners for Parks,  
a non-profit 501-C-3 Corporation.

**PILLARS OF OUR COMMUNITY**

Luckily the sad, neglected pillars at the corner of Ashby and College Avenues are just \$1,000.- away from being beautifully restored. You can be part of the "solution" in this endeavor. Join the many Berkeley residents and many Elmwood Merchants who have already contributed to this worthwhile project. **"The Pillars of Our Community"** is a small group of volunteers whose aim is to see the restoration of these pillars completed **this summer 1998**. The Merchants who have donated already are:

**Better Homes & Gardens/ERI Realty**  
**Bill's Trading Post**  
**College Avenue Architects**  
**King Yen Restaurant**  
**La Mediteranéé**  
**Mission National Bank**  
**Supercuts**

Here's something positive you can be part of!! Please send your tax-deductible contribution of any amount payable to:

**"BFPF/Pillars of Our Community"** and mail it to:

**BFPF**  
**c/o Doris Nassiry**  
**2746 Webster**  
**Berkeley, CA 94705**

**THANK-YOU VERY MUCH!**

**NOTE:** This project is being undertaken under the auspices of the **Berkeley Partners for Parks**, a non-profit 501-C-3 Corporation. so contributions are tax-deductible. Their federal tax I.D.# is 94-3228356.

PILLARS OF OUR COMMUNITY

December 1, 1997

Dear Neighbors:

In 1996 a group of Elmwood neighbors began organizing an effort to restore the historic 1905 stone pillars at the corner of Ashby and College Avenues.

We members of Pillars of Our Community are very happy to have received \$ 3500.- from the City's PERS Mini-Grant Fund. Also, in the last few months many of our neighbors and some Elmwood merchants have generously made contributions.

Now, all we need is \$ 2,000.- more to see the restoration actually happen!

Let's save the century-old Elmwood pillars and show what exceptional neighborhood pride we have. If you would like to share in the excitement and pride of seeing this project completed, please send your tax deductible contribution of any amount payable to: BFPF/ Pillars of Our Community. Then please mail it to: BFPF/Pillars of Our Community

c/o Doris Nassiry  
2746 Webster Street  
Berkeley, CA 94705

Thank-you very much!

Gratefully,

Doris Nassiry

Mary Hardy, Architectural Conservator, Siegel & Strain Architects

Joan Collignon, Aide to Councilmember Polly Armstrong

**NOTE:** Berkeley Partners for Parks (BFPF) is a non-profit 501-C3 corporation founded in 1994. Its purpose is to support Berkeley parks and open space. It's the fiscal agent for "Pillars of Our Community". Their federal tax I.D. number is 94-3228356. QUESTIONS? Call 849-4356 (Doris)

2746 WEBSTER STREET, BERKELEY, CA (510) 849-4356  
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF PARTNERS FOR PARKS, BERKELEY, CA

(3)

## Support 'Pillars'

### Editor:

Thank you for your generous coverage of the "Pillars of Our Community" effort in your April 30 issue.

For everyone's information, there are a few more details I would like to add. Many residents have already made generous contributions and many Elmwood merchants have as well. Those merchants who have contributed so far are:

Better Homes & Gardens/ERI Realty  
Bill's Trading Post  
College Avenue Architects  
King Yen Restaurant  
La Mediteranee  
Mission National Bank  
Supercuts

We are now within ??? t1200.- of the goal to restore the pillars at the corner of Ashby and College avenues. If you, too would like to help see these pillars restored this summer, please make your tax deductible (this project is being undertaken under the auspices of the Berkeley Partners for Parks) contribution of any amount payable to "BPPF/Pillars of Our Community," and mail it to:

BPPF  
c/o Doris Nassiry  
2746 Webster  
Berkeley, CA 94705  
Thank you very much!

Doris Nassiry  
Pillars of Our Community

VOICE  
5-7-98

THE PILLARS OF OUR COMMUNITY

**Just \$1000 to Go!**

You can be part of the solution to save the neglected stone pillars at the corner of College and Ashby Avenues. **We now need only \$1000 to restore these beautiful monuments.** Join the many Berkeley residents and Elmwood merchants who have already contributed to this worthwhile project.

*The Pillars of Our Community* is a small group of volunteers whose aim is to see the restoration of these pillars completed **this summer, 1998.**

Local merchants who have donated already include:

**CopyMat  
Better Homes & Gardens / ERI Realty  
Bill's Trading Post  
College Avenue Architects  
King Yen Restaurant  
La Mediterané  
Mission National Bank  
Supercuts**

You too can be part of this positive community project. Please send your tax-deductible contribution of any amount payable to:

**"BFPF / Pillars of Our Community"**  
and mail them to:

**BFPF  
c/o Doris Nassiry  
2746 Webster  
Berkeley, CA 94705**

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH!**

NOTE: This project is being undertaken under the auspices of the Berkeley Partners for Parks (BFPF), a nonprofit 501-C-3 Corporation. All contributions are **tax deductible**, Federal Tax ID: 94-3228356.

⑤

Subj: **FW: The pillars at Ashby and College Avenues**  
Date: 1/16/02 5:47:44 PM Pacific Standard Time  
From: JGeberg@ci.berkeley.ca.us (Egeberg, Jeffrey)  
To: Cypanjun@aol.com ('Cypanjun@aol.com')  
CC: RCardinaux@ci.berkeley.ca.us (Cardinaux, Rene), AChatterjee@ci.berkeley.ca.us (Chatterjee, Apurba)

doris, it's good to hear from you again. after all of our planning, i'm glad that the first resoration was successful.

of course, we would be glad to assist with the one on the opposite corner. i believe i recall we had a bid for about \$12,000. if so, we should plan on a project budget of about \$15,000.

so, it would appear that the main remaining question (as usual) revolves around finding the money. the city does not maintain a funding source for these items. you mentioned some "fund raising" activities. perhaps you already have the funding for this? that wasn't clear to me. otherwise, i believe the other issues and people are already in place.

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

From: Cardinaux, Rene  
Sent: Tuesday, January 08, 2002 2:40 PM  
To: Egeberg, Jeffrey; Chatterjee, Apurba  
Subject: FW: The pillars at Ashby and College Avenues

What's involved in continuing this to the second pillar, time, money, staff, etc? Let me know asap so I can respond. Thanks

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

From: Cypanjun@aol.com [mailto:Cypanjun@aol.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, January 08, 2002 11:11 AM  
To: rcardinaux@ci.berkeley.ca.us  
Cc: achatterjee@ci.berkeley.ca.us; wrucker@ci.berkeley.ca.us;  
PArmstrong@ci.berkeley.ca.us; 14karats@dnai.com  
Subject: The pillars at Ashby and College Avenues

Dear Mr. Cardinaux,

I am writing you this e-mail in the interests of saving time and also to try

to communicate most effectively. First, I'd like to thank you and Mr. Chatterjee so much for putting your supportive effort into effect by having the Pillar at the southeast corner of Ashby and College restored so ably by the stonemason/stonemaster Ben Apperley. Everyone who has followed this long, arduous process is cheering the fact that the Pillar has been saved.

As you probably know, this process began at Councilmember Polly Armstrong instigation 5 years ago, and as a longstanding volunteer/advocate for many issues in the Elmwood area, I was tapped by her to be the Pillar advocate. Words cannot express how happy so many of our neighbors and supporters and I

are to see the progress.

Now, we are asking your equal support and commitment to see that the

6

northeast Pillar also be attended to as the logical next step in the process  
of improving that corner and insuring that we "finish" the job, and consider  
that we all did our best to preserve this other historic Pillar. The  
stonemason, Mr. Apperly has presented Mr. Chatterjee with his details of how  
he would preserve the northeast Pillar and it requires less work than the  
southeast, though obviously would be treated as needed to insure its future  
security and preservation.

Many people from the Elmwood and beyond, over 100 of whom have contributed  
toward these restorations, are fervently awaiting the completion of the  
restoration this other pillar, and of course the Merchant Association under  
the leadership of Jon Moriarty, has been following this process with great  
interest as well.

Thank-you for all your support and we look forward to hearing how this goes  
forward.

Gratefully and respectfully yours,  
Doris Nassiry

----- Headers -----

Return-Path: <JEgeberg@ci.berkeley.ca.us>  
Received: from rly-yb01.mx.aol.com (rly-yb01.mail.aol.com [172.18.146.1]) by air-yb04.mail.aol.com (v82.22) with ESMTP id MAILINYB43-0116204743; Wed, 16 Jan 2002 20:47:43 -0500  
Received: from mail2.ci.berkeley.ca.us (mailb.ci.berkeley.ca.us [209.232.44.26]) by rly-yb01.mx.aol.com (v83.18) with ESMTP id MAILRELAYINYB11-0116204703; Wed, 16 Jan 2002 20:47:03 -0500  
Received: from exconnect.ci.berkeley.ca.us (mailin.dmz.ci.berkeley.ca.us [192.168.100.10]) by mail2.ci.berkeley.ca.us with SMTP (Microsoft Exchange Internet Mail Service Version 5.5.2650.21) id ZYD1NBQS; Wed, 16 Jan 2002 17:47:22 -0800  
Received: from SMTP (imsbridge.ci.berkeley.ca.us [10.1.70.10]) by exconnect.ci.berkeley.ca.us with SMTP (Microsoft Exchange Internet Mail Service Version 5.5.2650.21) id ZYC74LGM; Wed, 16 Jan 2002 17:40:13 -0800  
Received: from expworks.ci.berkeley.ca.us ([10.1.70.31]) by 10.1.70.10 (Norton AntiVirus for Internet Email Gateways 1.0) ; Thu, 17 Jan 2002 01:40:12 0000 (GMT)  
Received: by excent.ci.berkeley.ca.us with Internet Mail Service (5.5.2650.21) id <C3WVC126>; Wed, 16 Jan 2002 17:40:14 -0800  
Message-ID: <E503A8F893AED311A150009027D1047C62C485@excent.ci.berkeley.ca.us>  
From: "Egeberg, Jeffrey" <JEgeberg@ci.berkeley.ca.us>  
To: "Cypanjun@aol.com" <Cypanjun@aol.com>  
Cc: "Cardinaux, Rene" <RCardinaux@ci.berkeley.ca.us>, "Chatterjee, Apurba" <AChatterjee@ci.berkeley.ca.us>  
Subject: FW: The pillars at Ashtby and College Avenues  
Date: Wed, 16 Jan 2002 17:40:12 -0800  
MIME-Version: 1.0  
X-Mailer: Internet Mail Service (5.5.2650.21)  
Content-Type: text/plain;  
charset="iso-8859-1"

7

PILLARS OF OUR COMMUNITY

**IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE "THE PILLARS OF OUR COMMUNITY"!!**

●● THE PILLARS AT COLLEGE AND ASHBY HAVE BEEN  
RESTORED, THANKS IN GREAT PART TO YOUR GENEROSITY.

MR. BEN EPPERLY OF EPPERLY MASONRY RESTORATION, INC.

AND HIS CREW HAVE COMPLETED THE TEDIOUS WORK OF THESE  
RESTORATIONS. OUR PATIENCE HAS BEEN REWARDED!

PLEASE JOIN OTHER NEIGHBORS, FRIENDS AND  
MERCHANTS AS WE TAKE A STROLL DOWN COLLEGE AVENUE.

WE'LL MEET AT:

**1:30 P.M. ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2002**

AT THE NEW ELM AT WEBSTER STREET AND COLLEGE

AND THEN STROLL NORTH TOWARD THE PILLARS.

***HOPE YOU CAN BE PART OF THIS FUN, LONG-AWAITED  
CELEBRATION AS WE TOAST THE PILLARS TOGETHER!***

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE AND  
THANKING YOU FOR "BEING PART OF THE SOLUTION"!

DORIS NASSIRY  
"PILLARS OF OUR COMMUNITY"

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF PARTNERS FOR PARKS, BERKELEY, CA

BEAUTIFUL PAPER DONATED BY COPY CENTRAL  
2980 COLLEGE AVENUE BERKELEY  
TELEPHONE: 848 - 3114 FAX: 848 - 3603

8

5/26/26, 9:26 AM

Inbox - Fu, Boshi - Outlook



---

## Elmwood/college Avenue up-zoning proposal

---

**From** ron Kemper <joe41dan36@icloud.com>

**Date** Thu 5/21/2026 7:37 AM

**To** Landmarks Preservation Commission <PlanningLPC@berkeleyca.gov>

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

I am a strong proponent of retaining the shops on College Ave. & designating them for landmark preservation status. I have traveled extensively in my 84 years, currently I'm in Paris, and have never found a commercial district as iconic as the one on College Avenue. If the only way to stop the city council from destroying it is to landmark it, I urge you to do so.

Ron Kemper

Member of the Berkeley Board of Education, Retired

Member of the Berkeley Public education foundation for 19 years, Retired

Sent from my iPhone

5/26/26, 9:27 AM

Inbox - Fu, Boshi - Outlook



Outlook

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**preserve elmwood**

---

**From** Meow Leung <eeyoresenigma@gmail.com>

**Date** Thu 5/21/2026 9:57 PM

**To** Landmarks Preservation Commission <PlanningLPC@berkeleyca.gov>

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

hello,

i am writing to voice my support in preserving elmwood as a historical landmark. the stores and businesses in that area are amongst my favorite in berkeley and add to the uniqueness of what makes berkeley a nice livable city. i understand that there is a need to build more housing. however, all the new housing that has been built on shattuck and san pablo do not seem to be occupied and all the empty store fronts on the ground level make the city look abandoned.

elmwood is not one of those places, it's a thriving area with so many special and delicious places that makes me proud to call berkeley home for the last over 20 years.

please save the elmwood! preserve it as a historical landmark.

cheers!

michelle > ^ .. ^ <

From: ["Arjuna Alaganar" <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/24/2026 5:29:30 AM  
Subject: Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

---

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Arjuna Alaganar  
arjuna.alaganar@gmail.com  
247 Theresa St  
San Francisco, California 94112

**From:** ["Sarah Bell" <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)  
**To:** [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
**Date:** 5/24/2026 4:37:09 AM  
**Subject:** Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

---

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, and a 7-Eleven are pretty obviously not structures worthy of landmarking. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Bell, D1

Sarah Bell  
Bell.sarah@gmail.com  
1611 Delaware St  
Berkeley, California 94703

From: "[Heather Chicoine](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)" <[noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)>  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/23/2026 8:39:56 PM  
Subject: Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Heather Chicoine  
[heachic@gmail.com](mailto:heachic@gmail.com)  
1132 cedar st  
Berkeley, California 94702

From: ["Sean Golden" <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/23/2026 4:15:29 PM  
Subject: Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

---

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Sean Golden  
spgolden@gmail.com  
7287 Claremont Ave  
Berkeley, California 94705

From: ["Marina Golden" <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/23/2026 7:20:45 PM  
Subject: Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Marina Golden  
mrngldn@gmail.com  
7287 Claremont Ave , Unit 2634  
Berkeley, California 94705

From: ["Daniel Keller" <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/24/2026 5:58:40 AM  
Subject: Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Daniel Keller  
dankeller@gmail.com  
5356 James Ave  
Oakland, California 94618

5/26/26, 9:28 AM

Inbox - Fu, Boshi - Outlook



Outlook

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## Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

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**From** Jatin Pathangi <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Date** Sat 5/23/2026 7:28 AM  
**To** Landmarks Preservation Commission <PlanningLPC@berkeleyca.gov>

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Jatin Pathangi  
jatinshravan@gmail.com  
1142 Dwight Way  
Berkeley, California 94702

From: ["Luke Terlaak Poot" <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/23/2026 8:26:20 PM  
Subject: Don't landmark the Elmwood!

---

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

As a resident of the Elmwood, I am writing to ask you to REJECT the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that I and other residents value. However, the current application is way too broad, and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. In reality, it is a bald attempt to block much needed housing development.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. If the proposal were to identify specific historically interesting buildings, such as the Mercantile Trust Company Building, it would have more credibility. A narrower, more focused scope would show that the goal is, in fact, to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history. But the current application does not do this.

The Commission should take care not to preserve the practice of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing. It is to our city's shame that Berkeley pioneered this practice in the early twentieth century. I hope that today our institutions would have the courage to face our past with clear eyes, and do what is necessary to begin repairing these wrongs in the 21st century.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Luke Terlaak Poot

Luke Terlaak Poot  
luketerlaak@gmail.com  
2416 Stuart St  
Berkeley, California 94705

5/26/26, 9:28 AM

Inbox - Fu, Boshi - Outlook



Outlook

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## Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

---

**From** Rebecca Schonberg <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>

**Date** Sat 5/23/2026 7:37 AM

**To** Landmarks Preservation Commission <PlanningLPC@berkeleyca.gov>

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Rebecca Schonberg  
becca.schonberg@gmail.com  
2416 Stuart Street  
Berkeley, California 94705

From: ["Rachelle Hedges" <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/24/2026 7:31:52 PM  
Subject: Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Rachelle Hedges  
rachelle0914@yahoo.com  
2126 9TH ST  
Berkeley, California 94710

From: ["Molly Nicol" <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/24/2026 8:42:37 PM  
Subject: Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

---

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

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Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Molly Nicol  
molly.joan.nicol@gmail.com  
1324 Santa Fe Ave  
Berkeley , California 94702

From: "[Brad Chicoine](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)" <[noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)>  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/25/2026 2:52:17 PM  
Subject: Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

---

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

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Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Brad Chicoine  
[bradchicoine@gmail.com](mailto:bradchicoine@gmail.com)  
1132 , Cedar  
Berkeley, California 94702

From: ["Ron Kelly" <ronkelly@ronkelly.com>](mailto:ronkelly@ronkelly.com)

To: [lpc@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:lpc@berkeleyca.gov)

Date: 5/25/2026 11:12:24 PM

Subject: Letter re Elmwood Historic District

Attachments: [ElmwoodHistoricDistrict.pdf](#)

---

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

Dear Ms. Riemer,

Please confirm the attached PDF file came through in legible form, and that this letter will be distributed to each of the Landmarks Preservation Commissioners as soon as possible for their consideration in advance of their June 4, 2026 meeting.

Thank you,  
Ron Kelly

Chair Denise Hall Montgomery  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
City Berkeley Planning And Development Department  
Land Use Planning Division  
1947 Center St., 2nd Floor  
Berkeley, CA 94704

May 25, 2026

Via Email

**Re Top Four Reasons to Approve the Elmwood Historic District  
#LMIN2026-0001**

Dear Chair Montgomery and Members of the Commission,

**1. Staff Determined District is Eligible.** After thorough analysis, staff determined both that “the proposed Elmwood Commercial Historic District **does represent a group of architectural examples worth preserving** for the exceptional value it adds as part of the neighborhood fabric” and that “the proposed Elmwood Commercial Historic District **is eligible as a City of Berkeley Landmark for its historic value** under BMC Section 3.24.110(A)(4).” (pages 16 and 17)

**2. Overwhelming Public Support.** Over four hundred members of the public signed requests, and dozens attended the initial May 7, 2026 hearing, requesting the Commission add the Elmwood as Berkeley's fifth historic district.

**3. Unrelated Opposition.** Two commissioners who voiced opposition stated this was based primarily in considerations unrelated to evaluating architectural or historical merits of the application.

**4. Unique National Historical Significance.** In addition to the historic significance documented and determined by staff, the district also has unique national historical significance. In 1982 the two-block Elmwood business district became the first in the entire United States where commercial rent and eviction controls were enacted that applied only to a single neighborhood. Please see “The Elmwood Experiment: the Use of Commercial Rent Stabilization to Preserve a Diverse Neighborhood Shopping District” by Dr. W. Dennis Keating - Washington University Journal of Urban and Contemporary Law, January 1985.

Respectfully submitted,



Ron Kelly  
2731 Webster St.  
Berkeley California, 94705

Chair Denise Hall Montgomery  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
City Berkeley Planning And Development Department  
Land Use Planning Division  
1947 Center St., 2nd Floor  
Berkeley, CA 94704

May 25, 2026

Via Email

**Re Top Four Reasons to Approve the Elmwood Historic District  
#LMIN2026-0001**

Dear Chair Montgomery and Members of the Commission,

**1. Staff Determined District is Eligible.** After thorough analysis, staff determined both that “the proposed Elmwood Commercial Historic District **does represent a group of architectural examples worth preserving** for the exceptional value it adds as part of the neighborhood fabric” and that “the proposed Elmwood Commercial Historic District **is eligible as a City of Berkeley Landmark for its historic value** under BMC Section 3.24.110(A)(4).” (pages 16 and 17)

**2. Overwhelming Public Support.** Over four hundred members of the public signed requests, and dozens attended the initial May 7, 2026 hearing, requesting the Commission add the Elmwood as Berkeley's fifth historic district.

**3. Unrelated Opposition.** Two commissioners who voiced opposition stated this was based primarily in considerations unrelated to evaluating architectural or historical merits of the application.

**4. Unique National Historical Significance.** In addition to the historic significance documented and determined by staff, the district also has unique national historical significance. In 1982 the two-block Elmwood business district became the first in the entire United States where commercial rent and eviction controls were enacted that applied only to a single neighborhood. Please see “The Elmwood Experiment: the Use of Commercial Rent Stabilization to Preserve a Diverse Neighborhood Shopping District” by Dr. W. Dennis Keating - Washington University Journal of Urban and Contemporary Law, January 1985.

Respectfully submitted,



Ron Kelly  
2731 Webster St.  
Berkeley California, 94705

5/26/26, 9:39 AM

Inbox - Fu, Boshi - Outlook



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## Reject the Elmwood Historic designation

---

**From** Molly Miller <mollykbmiller@gmail.com>

**Date** Mon 5/25/2026 6:47 AM

**To** Landmarks Preservation Commission <PlanningLPC@berkeleyca.gov>

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

Hello,

I am a Berkeley resident requesting that your commission rejects the proposal to designate all of Elmwood as a historic district. I am sure that there are specific landmarks within the neighborhood that have historical value, but not every site is worthy of such a designation. I might be biased as a shared-housing renter who wants to have her own place, but I think some parts of Elmwood could best serve the city and region at large by being used for more housing. I urge your commission to consider very carefully what types of history this city wants to uplift, and what that will cost the people who want to make Berkeley their home.

Thank you for your work,  
Molly Miller

**From:** ["Adam Rogers" <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)  
**To:** [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
**Date:** 5/25/2026 6:31:20 PM  
**Subject:** Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Come on. Come on! Parts of Elmwood are lovely. But this is just people hoping to block new housing after the upzoning process for Elmwood was underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. And relying on the famously racist 1916 zoning ordinance does not comport with Berkeley's hopes to be an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application.

Adam Rogers  
jetjocko@gmail.com  
814 Jones St.  
Berkeley, California 94710

From: "[Heather Romero-Kornblum](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)" <[noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)>  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/26/2026 1:44:15 AM  
Subject: Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Heather Romero-Kornblum  
[heatherkorn81@gmail.com](mailto:heatherkorn81@gmail.com)  
2320 Howe St  
Berkeley, California 94705



---

## Why The Elmwood Village Should Be Designated as a Historical Landmark and Left Intact

---

**From** Lzamarra <lzamarra@aim.com>  
**Date** Tue 5/26/2026 9:07 AM  
**To** Landmarks Preservation Commission <PlanningLPC@berkeleyca.gov>

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

Hello Alison,

How do you do?

I have resided in The Elmwood for nearly forty years. Back then I had consciously chosen to live in this neighborhood because of its ambiance - it's self-contained, cozy, charming and is laden with architectural and cultural history.

The Elmwood Village is our communal area which very much embodies our neighborhood's (and that of greater Berkeley) architectural and cultural heritage. The Elmwood Village's physical beauty offers people something quite essential to human health and wellness - aesthetics. We are proud of and in love with our village and neighborhood.

We are sadly living in an era in this country wherein much of what is noble, civilized, essential and good is not only being ignored, but it is all too often being destroyed by unscrupulous, cowardly and/or inexperienced people who have no business wielding any power or influence.

I know a vast majority of Berkeley residents value that which is noble, civilized and good, and treasure and understand the health benefits of living in our charming, architecturally-significant town.

Most significant - changing the architecturally-historic beauty of The Elmwood Village is CRIMINAL because it is one of the few commercial areas in the United States that reflects the Craftsman Style of architecture. This is true of The Elmwood neighborhood ( it's the initial hub of Berkeley's brown shingle style - our contribution to Craftsman architecture) and most of Berkeley at large.

If our city government officials reflected the will of the people and were civilized human beings themselves, they would in fact work hard to ensure that Berkeley itself be on the National Register of Historic Places; for how many towns in this country are comprised of almost exclusively original Craftsman architecture?

Why would the city even consider demolishing any such precious buildings, destroying the affect and ambiance of our village? Why would the city consider replacing such significant architect with cheap, ugly tall buildings, changing the character of a unique commercial village and destroying its cohesiveness?

Why should Berkeley dummy itself down to replicate architecturally-bankrupt towns consisting of myriad hideous, sterile and cheap buildings?

Berkeley's residents don't want that and we know our town's worth. We also know demolishing existing buildings to put in cheap, ugly multistory buildings would benefit no one (except the developers and city government officials in the developers' pockets).

Preserving places which embody our heritage is essential and part of what mindful, civilized societies do. Why?

As I previously stated, human beings need beautiful buildings because aesthetics directly influence our psychological and emotional well-being. Thoughtfully designed, inspiring structures foster a sense of belonging, reduce stress, encourage community engagement, and provide a cultural anchor that connects us to our shared history and environment.

Beyond mere shelter, beautiful architecture fulfills several fundamental human needs:

- **Emotional & Mental Well-being:** Studies demonstrate that the visual appearance of our surroundings heavily impacts our mood. Aesthetically pleasing buildings can spark joy, reduce anxiety, and promote a sense of calm and dignity.
- **Social Cohesion:** Beautiful, well-designed public spaces and buildings encourage human interaction. When a space feels welcoming and grand, it draws people out of isolation, fostering stronger community bonds and a sense of shared civic pride.
- **Cultural Identity & Memory:** Historic and culturally resonant architecture links the past, present, and future. These buildings act as physical vessels for our heritage, reminding us of our collective history and giving neighborhoods a unique, grounding identity.
- **Sustainability & Longevity:** As explored by the [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#), human psychology shows we are more likely to care for, maintain, and adapt beautiful buildings over generations. Beauty inherently promotes sustainable practices because it prevents structures from being discarded or demolished.
- **Inspiration & Transcendence:** Great architecture has the ability to elevate the human spirit, offering an experience of awe, wonder, and inspiration.

The coziness and charm of our Elmwood Village supports our neighborhood's sense of community too. The history of each building is also precious. We Elmwood residents know what we have - we know what centuries of stewarding our village has perpetuated.

I ask you and all officials involved to respect and uphold the wishes of all immediately involved - the Elmwood business owners and we Elmwood residents and the wishes of the greater Berkeley population.

You are our elected representatives; your job is to uphold the will of the people.

Thank you,  
Lynn Zamarra

5/26/26, 9:43 AM

Why The Elmwood Village Should Be Designated as a Historical Landmark and Left Intact - Fu, Boshi - Outlook

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

5/28/26, 9:54 AM

Inbox - Fu, Boshi - Outlook



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## Landmarking the Elmwood -- 6/4/26 Meeting

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**From** Wxbyrne <wxbyrne@aol.com>  
**Date** Tue 5/26/2026 2:20 PM  
**To** Landmarks Preservation Commission <PlanningLPC@berkeleyca.gov>

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

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commission --

Please designate the Elmwood Shopping District an Historic District.

Doing so is just to state the obvious. The Elmwood is "historic": it has been a thriving shopping district for a long time.

It has a congruent, understated architectural style which is entirely appropriate to its purpose, pleasant to look at and, most importantly, unique in the city of Berkeley. It is a very compact two blocks with an outsize impact on the larger community.

Please recognize this beloved community resource.

Sincerely -- Warren & Lorna Byrne

From: ["Andrea Horbinski" <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/26/2026 8:26:36 PM  
Subject: Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

---

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

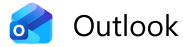
The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Andrea Horbinski  
andrea.horbinski@gmail.com  
250 Amherst Ave  
Kensington , California 94708

5/26/26, 9:42 AM

Inbox - Fu, Boshi - Outlook



---

(No subject)

---

**From** wayneh3412@aol.com <wayneh3412@aol.com>

**Date** Tue 5/26/2026 9:06 AM

**To** Landmarks Preservation Commission <PlanningLPC@berkeleyca.gov>

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

I am not part of Berkeley Together. I live up in north Berkeley but frequent the Elmwood regularly and would like it preserved.

Sincerely,

Wayne Huber  
1185 Sterling Avenue  
Berkeley, CA

From: ["Abbie Turiansky" <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>](mailto:noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org)  
To: [LPC@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:LPC@berkeleyca.gov)  
Date: 5/27/2026 3:53:08 PM  
Subject: Please reject the application to landmark the entire Elmwood

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

N/A Landmark Preservation Committee N/A,

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commissioners,

I urge you to reject the proposed Elmwood Historic District designation.

Elmwood has buildings and streetscapes that many residents value, but the current application is overly broad and lacks credibility as a preservation effort. It appears to be a thinly veiled attempt to block housing, submitted only after the upzoning process for Elmwood was already underway.

A parking lot, a strip mall, a 7-Eleven, and a mid 1970s post office do not justify a district wide landmarking designation. It would be better to more precisely identify specific historically interesting buildings like the Mercantile Trust Company Building. A narrower and more tailored process would be more credible to the community and to state housing regulators. It would show that the goal is to thoughtfully engage with Elmwood's history while allowing the neighborhood to evolve and not obstruct the zoning process.

The Commission should also be careful not to preserve the legacy of exclusionary zoning. The application's repeated grounding in the 1916 zoning ordinance, the ordinance that first introduced racialized single-family zoning to Berkeley, is not something we should be embracing as an inclusive and progressive city.

Please reject the current Elmwood Historic District application. Any future preservation proposal should be narrower, evidence based, and a good faith effort to compromise with the parallel zoning process.

Abbie Turiansky  
abbita@gmail.com  
2924 Ellis St  
Berkeley, California 94703

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
% Allison Riemer, Secretary  
Land Use Planning Division,  
City of Berkeley, CA

May 27, 2026

Commissioners:

I would like to provide the below comments for your consideration ahead of further discussion of the proposed Elmwood Commercial Historic District. I am providing these comments as a private individual. The opinions expressed are my own, and they do not reflect positions taken by my employer or any organizations with which I volunteer.

---

**1. The Elmwood Commercial Historic District need not impede the development of new housing utilizing the Corridor Zoning Update.**

Despite what the polarized YIMBY vs. NIMBY rhetoric would have one believe, the proposed Elmwood Commercial Historic District is actually very compatible with the corridor upzoning approach as recently recommended by the Planning Commission. The historic district boundaries, as recommended in the Staff Report, already exclude the two largest Opportunity Site parcels—the former Safeway and the post office. See Figures 1 and 2 below.

If the LPC wishes to align the proposed historic district with the Planning Commission proposal, Commissioners can choose to remove the remaining two opportunity sites from the district boundaries. The overall district would still be almost entirely intact, and it would no longer complicate development on upzoned parcels.

**2. The Commission should consider the significance of the district as a whole, then assess the individual parcels in terms of their contribution to that significance.**

At the May LPC hearing, commissioners referred to the historic district application as “34 landmark applications.” That is simply not true, and it risks missing the big picture.

The architectural significance of the Elmwood Commercial District is undeniable. It is an extraordinarily intact grouping of early twentieth century commercial structures that form a coherent urban fabric unique in the City. The continuity of the storefronts and the intimacy of the street combine to create the sense of an outdoor room: a very different spatial experience than along the expansive rights-of-way of Shattuck, Adeline, San Pablo, or Solano.

The buildings, although some are distinguished designs, are not necessarily significant on their own. In fact, as a pedestrian, it is easy to overlook where one building begins and another ends. What is important is the overall urban design they create; that is what is being designated under the proposed historic overlay district. Within the district, the individual buildings derive their significance based on their contribution to that urban design.

**3. The proposed historic district would not be symbolic. It would serve an important role in sustaining the significant urban design through future additions and alterations.**

At the May LPC meeting, Commissioners were clear that the historic district would neither prevent development nor necessarily protect existing shops from eviction. This is true, but this does not make the historic district a merely symbolic designation. Because the Elmwood's architectural significance is tied to the coherent design of its storefronts, a historic district will provide a valuable level of design review to ensure that alterations and additions to storefronts are compatible with the district's urban design. Structural Alteration Permits also provide an opportunity to encourage the repair and restoration of deteriorated elements.

Contrary to statements by Commissioners, this design review will not significantly impede the ability of future business to adapt commercial spaces to their purposes, as interior improvements by tenants will not require LPC review.

**4. The Elmwood Commercial District's association with Berkeley's 1916 Zoning Ordinance deserves a nuanced assessment, not reflexive judgment.**

As noted in the application and Staff Report, part of the Elmwood Commercial District's historic significance is its status as the first commercial area considered under Berkeley's 1916 Zoning Ordinance, one of the first zoning ordinances in the country. This ordinance is now infamous for its exclusionary policies, most famously single-family zoning, which were clearly articulated at the time in racist and classist terms.

However, although the history of this commercial district certainly intersects with this ugly aspect of Berkeley history, the proposed historic district is hardly a monument to single-family zoning. Rejecting the historic district out of hand for its association with the 1916 Ordinance ignores the full story of the district's origins and development, which extends both before and long after 1916.

- The June 23, 1916 zoning decision primarily dealt with the Elmwood Park neighborhood, which residents hoped to zone for single-family housing. The Civic Art Commission approved most of the single-family district (and actually expanded its boundaries), but it decided to leave existing commercial uses along College Avenue unzoned (no commercial districts existed in the Zoning Ordinance at the time) and allowed apartments on part of

Elmwood Park's College Avenue frontage.<sup>1</sup> This decision, although a major moment in the history of Zoning, hardly gave shape to the current commercial district.

- The overall commercial district was shaped mostly by later zoning decisions that had nothing to do with the single-family zoning of Elmwood Park. Today's commercial district is much larger than it was in 1916, or even in 1920 (See Figure 3), and its character says much more about the state of development by the 1930s than it does about zoning decisions in the 1910s.
- The Elmwood Commercial District has always been just as closely associated with the residential tracts to the west and the apartment houses along College Avenue as with Elmwood Park. Most of these areas were never zoned single family and have always had duplexes, small apartment buildings, and other middle housing.

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Thank you for your consideration of the above points. I sincerely hope that there will be a chance for robust Commissioner discussion at the June LPC meeting, as the proposed designation is a consequential application that deserves coherent and thorough consideration.

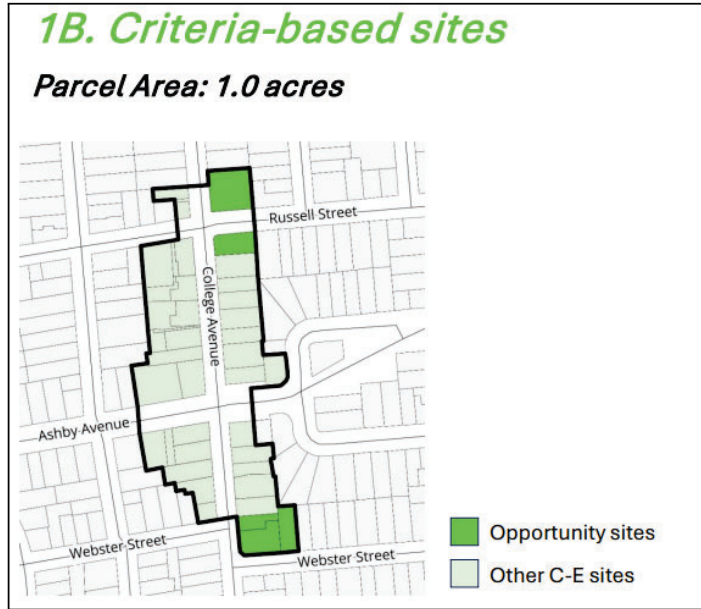
Respectfully,

Isaac Warshauer

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<sup>1</sup> Duncan McDuffie, "A Practical Application of the Zoning Ordinance," *Berkeley Civic Bulletin*, Vol. V, No. 1, p. 10-17, Aug. 22, 1916.

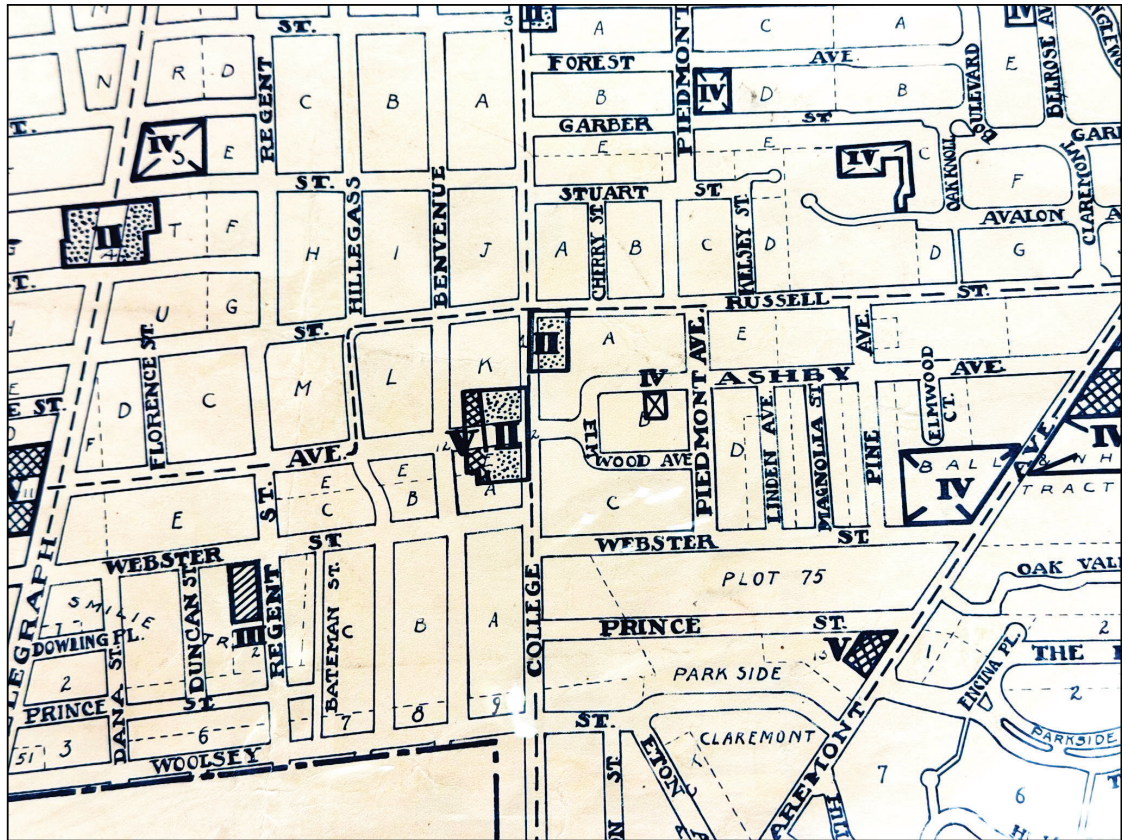
## Figures



**Figure 1:** The Elmwood opportunity sites recommended by the Planning Commission on May 6, 2026.



**Figure 2:** The proposed boundary of the Elmwood Commercial Historic District from the Staff Report already excludes the two largest opportunity sites.



**Figure 3:** The Elmwood Commercial District as zoned in Berkeley’s first comprehensive zoning map in 1920. The districts labeled “II” permit stores, offices, and residential use. The districts labeled “V” permit garages and laundries and some other uses excluded from “II” districts. The commercial area remains two disjointed commercial frontages: one along Ashby and another along College. The “urban room” of today’s cohesive commercial district was given form by zoning decisions and development later in the 1920s. From *City of Berkeley Zone Map: Ordinance No. 666 N.S., 1920*. Courtesy of the Earth Sciences and Map Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Received

MAY 26 2026

Land Use Planning

5/28/26

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commission,

The attached 12 pages include

48 signatures of Berkeley residents  
in support of Landmark designation  
of The Elmwood Commercial  
Historic District.

Claudia Hunka

*Claudia Hunka*

Property owner 2940 College Ave.

Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
Street Address(es) of Property:	<b>2840-3006 College and 2600-2629 Ashby</b>

We the undersigned residents of the City of Berkeley, petition the Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate the property identified above, for consideration as a Landmark, Structure of Merit or Historical District under the provisions of Section 3.24.120 of the Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Ordinance. We certify, under penalty of perjury, that we are residents of the City of Berkeley at the addresses indicated.

41	Name: <u>Marilyn Simons</u> Please Print	Address: <u>27 Hopkins Ct.</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94709</u>
	Signature: <u>Marilyn J Simons</u>			Date: <u>3/10/26</u>
42	Name: <u>Kathleen Keller</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2029 Channing Way, #2B</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94704</u>
	Signature: <u>Kathleen L Keller</u>			Date: <u>3/13/26</u>
43	Name: <u>Angelina Liu</u> Please Print	Address: <u>3154 College Ave. Apt 3</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>Angelina Liu</u>			Date: <u>3/14/26</u>
44	Name: <u>Helena Brykarz</u> Please Print	Address: <u>802 Colusa Ave</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94707</u>
	Signature: <u>Helena</u>			Date: <u>3/15/26</u>
45	Name: <u>Elizabeth Mackey</u> Please Print	Address: _____	City: _____	Zip: _____
	Signature: _____			Date: _____

Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
Street Address(es) of Property:	<b>2840-3006 College and 2600-2629 Ashby</b>

We the undersigned residents of the City of Berkeley, petition the Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate the property identified above, for consideration as a Landmark, Structure of Merit or Historical District under the provisions of Section 3.24.120 of the Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Ordinance. We certify, under penalty of perjury, that we are residents of the City of Berkeley at the addresses indicated.

41	Name: <u>Kathleen Garrison</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2834 Hillgass Ave</u> City: <u>Berkeley</u> Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>4/13/26</u>
42	Name: <u>SUZETTE CURRAN</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2615 BENVENUE</u> City: <u>Berkeley</u> Zip: <u>94704</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>4/15/26</u>
43	Name: <u>Patrick Sheahan</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2728 Russell St</u> City: <u>Berkeley</u> Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>4/15/26</u>
44	Name: <u>Janice H. Cecil</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2923 Ashby Avenue</u> City: <u>Berkeley, Ca</u> Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: _____
45	Name: <u>Mardi Sicular-Mertens</u> Please Print	Address: <u>980 Overlook Rd.</u> City: <u>Berkeley</u> Zip: <u>94708</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>4/21/26</u>

Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
Street Address(es) of Property:	<b>2890-3006 College and 2600-2629 Ashby</b>

We the undersigned residents of the City of Berkeley, petition the Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate the property identified above, for consideration as a Landmark, Structure of Merit or Historical District under the provisions of Section 3.24.120 of the Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Ordinance. We certify, under penalty of perjury, that we are residents of the City of Berkeley at the addresses indicated.

41	Name: <u>RUTH KAMPMANN</u> Please Print	Address: <u>590 VINCENTE AVE</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94707</u>
	Signature: <u>Ruth Kampmann</u>	Date: <u>3.23.26</u>		
42	Name: <u>Dorothy Nassiry</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2746 Webster Street</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>Dorothy Nassiry</u>	Date: <u>3/24/26</u>		
43	Name: <u>Sally Brook</u> Please Print	Address: <u>3206 King St</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94703</u>
	Signature: <u>Sally Brook</u>	Date: <u>3/25/26</u>		
44	Name: <u>EVELYN GOODWIN</u> Please Print	Address: <u>1241 HOLMAN RD</u>	City: <u>OAKLAND</u>	Zip: <u>9410</u>
	Signature: <u>Evelyn Goodwin</u>	Date: <u>3/27/26</u>		
45	Name: <u>Catherine LANGLOIS</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2741 Elmwood Ave</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>Catherine Langlois</u>	Date: <u>3/29/2026</u>		

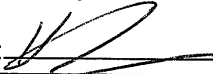
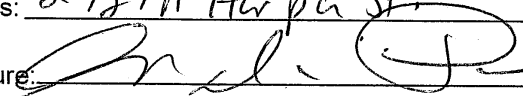
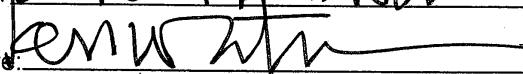
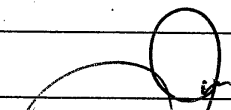
Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
Street Address(es) of Property:	<b>2840-3000 College and 2600-2629 Ashby</b>

We the undersigned residents of the City of Berkeley, petition the Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate the property identified above, for consideration as a Landmark, Structure of Merit or Historical District under the provisions of Section 3.24.120 of the Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Ordinance. We certify, under penalty of perjury, that we are residents of the City of Berkeley at the addresses indicated.

41	Name: <u>Margaret Goodman</u> Please Print	Address: <u>1425 1/2 Santa Fe Ave</u> City: <u>Berkeley</u> Zip: <u>94702</u>	Signature: <u>Margaret Goodman</u> Date: <u>2/2/26</u>
42	Name: <u>Martha Wing</u> Please Print	Address: <u>307 - 60th St.</u> City: <u>Oakland</u> Zip: <u>94618</u>	Signature: <u>Martha Wing</u> Date: <u>3/3/26</u>
43	Name: <u>Terry McCartin</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2627 Etna St.</u> City: <u>Berkeley</u> Zip: <u>94704</u>	Signature: <u>Terry McCartin</u> Date: <u>2/3/26</u> <u>3 Feb 2026</u>
44	Name: <u>ANN FORWARD</u> Please Print	Address: <u>605 PRIMROSE TERRACE</u> City: <u>PINOLE</u> Zip: <u>94564</u>	Signature: <u>Ann Forward</u> Date: <u>2/5/26</u>
45	Name: <u>Margaret Dorfman</u> Please Print	Address: <u>5935 1st Ave</u> City: <u>Oakland</u> Zip: <u>94618</u>	Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
Street Address(es) of Property:	<b>2840-3000 College and 2600-2629 Ashby</b>

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41	Name: <u>Heather Lucas</u> Please Print	Address: <u>40 Clement Cres</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: 			Date: <u>2/19/26</u>
42	Name: <u>Angela Price</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2927A Harper St</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94703</u>
	Signature: 			Date: <u>2/19/2026</u>
43	Name: <u>Vicki Oswald</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2224 Blake St</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94704</u>
	Signature: <u>Vicki Oswald</u>			Date: <u>2/19/2026</u>
44	Name: <u>KEN WATSON, ARCHITECT</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2540 BENVENUE</u>	City: <u>BERKELEY</u>	Zip: <u>94704</u>
	Signature: 			Date: <u>20 FEB '26</u>
45	Name: <u>Eric Matinez</u> Please Print	Address: _____	City: _____	Zip: _____
	Signature: 			Date: <u>2/20/26</u>

Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
Street Address(es) of Property:	<b>2840-3000 College and 2629-2650 Ashby</b>

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46	Name: <u>Emily Ladner</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2732 Bonaventure Ave #8</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>Emily Ladner</u>			Date: <u>2/21/26</u>
47	Name: <u>Maya Amago</u> Please Print	Address: <u>5464 Marilla Ave</u>	City: <u>Oakland</u>	Zip: <u>94618</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>			Date: <u>3/4/26</u>
48	Name: <u>MARSHA GALE</u> Please Print	Address: <u>1705 BUENA AVE</u>	City: <u>BERKELEY</u>	Zip: <u>94703</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>			Date: <u>3/4/26</u>
49	Name: <u>E. Hoadley</u> Please Print	Address: <u>1705 Buena Ave</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94703</u>
	Signature: <u>E. Hoadley</u>			Date: <u>3/4/26</u>
50	Name: <u>Jene Goodwin</u> Please Print	Address: <u>1276 64th ST.</u>	City: <u>Emeryville</u>	Zip: <u>94808</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>			Date: <u>3/11/26</u>

Marcia Abcarian Berkeley 94705  
 2705 Fulton Ave  
 Berkeley, CA  
 5/11/2026

Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
Street Address(es) of Property:	<b>2840-3006 College and 2600-2629 Ashby</b>

We the undersigned residents of the City of Berkeley, petition the Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate the property identified above, for consideration as a Landmark, Structure of Merit or Historical District under the provisions of Section 3.24.120 of the Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Ordinance. We certify, under penalty of perjury, that we are residents of the City of Berkeley at the addresses indicated.

41	Name: <u>Miranda Bourgeois</u> Please Print	Address: <u>316 51st St #1</u>	City: <u>Oakland</u>	Zip: <u>94609</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: _____		
42	Name: <u>Jo Ann Jones</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2824 College Ave</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>4/29/06</u>		
43	Name: _____ Please Print	Address: <u>2016 Allegess Ave</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: _____		
44	Name: <u>JACKIE EVANS</u> Please Print	Address: <u>30 ALTA Rd.</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94708</u>
	Signature: <u>Jacquelyn D EVANS</u>	Date: <u>5/2/26</u>		
45	Name: <u>Michele Moennig</u> Please Print	Address: <u>3200 King St.</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94703</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>5/4/26</u>		

Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
Street Address(es) of Property:	<b>2840-3006 College and 2600-2629 Ashby</b>

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41	Name: <u>Susan Berger Law</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2845 Alida Street</u>	City: <u>Oakland</u>	Zip: <u>94602</u>
	Signature: <u>Susan Berger Law</u>	Date: <u>17 May 2026</u>		
42	Name: <u>MICHAEL E PATCIT</u> Please Print	Address: <u>1432 ALLSTON WAY</u>	City: <u>BERKELEY</u>	Zip: <u>94702</u>
	Signature: <u>Michael E Patch</u>	Date: <u>5, 17, 26</u>		
43	Name: <u>Hilary Kitta</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2415 Russell St</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>Hilary Kitta</u>	Date: <u>5/18/26</u>		
44	Name: <u>Rafael Friedmann</u> Please Print	Address: <u>327 62nd Street</u>	City: <u>Oakland</u>	Zip: <u>94618</u>
	Signature: <u>Rafael Friedmann</u>	Date: <u>25/18/26</u>		
45	Name: <u>Naima Sweeting</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2980 College Ave, STE 8B</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>Naima Sweeting</u>	Date: <u>5/18/26</u>		

Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
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41	Name: <u>Donna Weinberg</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2822 Russell St</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>Donna Weinberg</u>			Date: <u>5-20-26</u>
42	Name: <u>Gregg Rickman</u> Please Print	Address: <u>1341 Carlotta Ave</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>			Date: <u>5-21-26</u>
43	Name: <u>IRENE ELMER</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2806 Cherry St</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>Irene Elmer</u>			Date: <u>5/20/26</u>
44	Name: <u>MARC ALLAN WEISS</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2980 COLLEGE AVE, STS 6</u>	City: <u>BERKELEY</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>Marc Allan Weiss</u>			Date: <u>5/22/26</u>
45	Name: <u>Eva Kathryn Bear</u> Please Print	Address: <u>22 Domingo Ave</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>E.K. Bear</u>			Date: <u>5/23/26</u>

Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
Street Address(es) of Property:	<b>2840-3000 College and 2600-2629 Ashby</b>

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41	Name: <u>CARL NABIN</u> Please Print	Address: <u>1326 Josephine St</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94703</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>			Date: <u>5/23/2026</u>
42	Name: <u>Kathryn Freistadt</u> Please Print	Address: <u>520 Santa Barbara Rd</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94707</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>			Date: <u>5/23/26</u>
43	Name: <u>FERNANDO AGUDELO-SILVA</u> Please Print	Address: <u>520 Santa Barbara Rd</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94707</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>			Date: <u>5/23/26</u>
44	Name: <u>Judith Bebelos</u> Please Print	Address: <u>3027 Hillegass Ave</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>			Date: <u>5/23/26</u>
45	Name: <u>Michael Lee Palmer</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2336 Blake St. #2</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94704</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>			Date: <u>5/25/26</u>

Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
Street Address(es) of Property:	<b>2840-3000 College and 2629-2650 Ashby</b>

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46	Name: <u>CHO MICZ KINGA</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2731 Regent St</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>9/5/25</u>		
47	Name: <u>Lindsay Knis</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2719 Webster Street</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>9/8/25</u>		
48	Name: <u>William Knis</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2719 WEBSTER ST</u>	City: <u>BERKELEY</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>9/8/25</u>		
49	Name: _____ Please Print	Address: _____	City: _____	Zip: _____
	Signature: _____	Date: _____		
50	Name: <u>Carrie Spellman</u> Please Print	Address: <u>64 Oakvale Ave</u>	City: <u>Berkeley</u>	Zip: <u>94705</u>
	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>9.9.2025</u>		

Name of Property:	<b>Elmwood Commercial District</b>
Street Address(es) of Property:	<b>2840-3006 College and 2600-2629 Ashby</b>

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41	Name: <u>JACK FRANK</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2924 CLAREMONT AVE</u> City: <u>BERKELEY</u> Zip: <u>94705</u>	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>2/27/25</u>
42	Name: <u>Teresa Vosper</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2328 7th St # B</u> City: <u>Berkeley</u> Zip: <u>94710</u>	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>2/28/26</u>
43	Name: <u>Cathy McIntosh</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2230 Woolsey St</u> City: <u>Berkeley</u> Zip: <u>CA</u>	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: <u>02 Mar 2026</u>
44	Name: <u>Enid Schreibman</u> Please Print	Address: <u>2828 Cherry St</u> City: <u>Berkeley, CA</u> Zip: <u>94705</u>	Signature: <u>Enid Schreibman</u>	Date: <u>02 March 2026</u>
45	Name: _____ Please Print	Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____	Signature: _____	Date: _____

27 May 2026

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1947 Center Street  
Berkeley, California 94704

Re: Elmwood Commercial Historic District application

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commission:

As the person who researched and wrote the Elmwood Commercial Historic District application, I have some points to make in response to the May Landmarks Preservation Commission meeting.

- Not only did the City Planning staff recommend designation, but the professional consultants retained by the staff reviewed the Elmwood Commercial Historic District application and also determined that the application met criteria for consideration and designation.
- While the consultants proposed refinements—such as narrowing the period of significance—these were normal technical recommendations intended to strengthen and clarify the application.
- The consultants did not reject the district’s historic value, integrity, or eligibility.
- It is not unusual for historic district evaluations to frequently involve:
  - Boundary refinements.
  - Period of Significance adjustments.
  - Clarifications of contributing resources.
- Such refinements are evidence of a serious professional process, not evidence *against* designation.
- Berkeley’s General Plan language recognizes compact historic commercial districts as being defining elements of Berkeley’s urban character.
- When both community support and independent professional preservation review align in favor of advancing an historic district, the Commission has strong grounds to continue the designation process.

Lastly, I must say how deeply offended I was by the motion to *reject* the application! I do not see how the Commission has the authority to reject it. The City has already *accepted* the application; otherwise it would never have been sent to you, the Commission. I felt that the motion was a needless insult to the person who had spent months researching and writing the application.

—Anthony Bruce

**Rierner, Allison**

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**From:** Gale Garcia <galeg13@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 28, 2026 10:02 AM  
**To:** Landmarks Preservation Commission  
**Subject:** Elmwood Commercial Historic District  
**Attachments:** R.A. Hawkins COURIER 1930.jpeg; Berkeley-Daily-Gazette-Aug-17-1929-p-10.pdf

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

May 27, 2026

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
City of Berkeley

Dear Commissioners,

Whatever the policies of the surrounding residential neighborhoods may have been, **the Elmwood Commercial District was far from exclusionary**. It could even be characterized, during the period of significance, as unusually inclusionary.

There were many Japanese-owned businesses on College Avenue starting as early as 1910, a time when there was growing opposition to Japanese businesses in downtown Berkeley. Japanese-owned endeavors continued to thrive in the Elmwood until 1942.

An Armenian genocide survivor opened an Oriental rug shop in 1922 and later purchased a prominent corner building at College and Webster, which remained as a family owned business for several decades.

An African American restaurateur brought traditional southern cooking to the Elmwood in 1929. See attached an article of February 1, 1930 in *The Courier* about Robert Hawkins and his Augusta Inn at 2988 College Avenue. Also attached is a 1929 advertisement in the Berkeley Daily Gazette for special Sunday dinners offered at the Inn.

The Elmwood Commercial Historic District appears to have been virtually devoid of the common prejudices of the times. It is therefore ironic that some LPC Board members would choose to deny it a landmark designation for perceived, but non-existent, exclusionary policies.

Sincerely,

Gale Garcia

EN

THE COURIER

13  
1573

Feb. 1, 1930

## Try Berkeley First—It's Home!

*This is the thirty fifth of a series of articles presenting to the Berkeley buying public certain of their reputable local manufacturing and distributing firms, and the men and women who conduct them.*



### DINING ROOM

**G**ENUINE Southern cooking, prepared by experienced negro chefs who learned the art of cooking in the South. Our customers come back—that is our recommendation.

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## THE AUGUSTA INN



When I entered his restaurant, the Augusta Inn, at 2988 College avenue, Mr. Robert Hawkins, the proprietor, was standing on a chair, adjusting a framed photograph on the wall.

"Mr. Hawkins?"

"The same, suh." He got down from the chair, stepped back a few paces, and cocked an eye at the picture. "Purty straight now, I guess," he remarked, and turned to me. "What can I do for you, suh?"

It was early in the afternoon, and there were no diners in the restaurant at the moment.

"Well, if you have time you might tell me something about yourself, Mr. Hawkins." My eye wandered back to the photograph on the wall; it was a picture of a neat store front with a sign across the top reading "The Dixie Inn." "Did you once own a restaurant called 'The Dixie Inn?'"

"Yes, suh, that restaurant has been in my family for four generations. Four generations is a long time. Sit down, suh."

"Thanks."

He himself sat down, slowly, his hands on his knees, with the air of a man about to relate an old story.

"That restaurant, suh, is in Richmond, V'ginia. You know," he leaned toward me confidently. "every negro orig'nally came from V'ginia. Yes, suh; an' so did I." He smiled, a broad genial smile that exposed his teeth. "My great-grandfather founded that restaurant in Richmond; then it belonged to my grandfather, then my father; an' now my brother is the proprietor."

"That's extraordinary indeed," I remarked. "The Dixie Inn must have served very excellent food to have lasted so long."

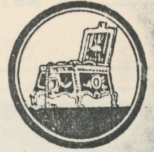
"The South has a reputation for good food, suh." There was a ring of pride in his voice. "From the early days in Jamestown Southern cooking has been famous. Even t'day V'ginia ham an' bacon, prepared by a genuine old Southern chef—there's nothing like it."

"And chicken?" I inquired.

"Yes, suh, not only fried, but chicken milanaise, chicken curry, Turkish pilan, chaud-froid of chicken, chicken picante, chicken daube, smothered chicken, creme de volaille, chicken a la Bordeaux, Maryland chicken—"

"What's Maryland chicken?"

"Sorta old fashioned fried; it's prepared this way: You take two chickens, an' cut each one up into about six pieces; dip each piece in milk, an' then roll them in flour. Then take some pieces o' salt pork, an' when the drippin' is hot put in the chicken. Cook it slowly on the back of the stove, turnin' it over an' brownin' both sides. When the pieces



### JEWELRY

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### W. H. MORRISON

Jeweler, Watchmaker & Eng.  
2161 SHATTUCK AVENUE  
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### WHOLESALE AND RETAIL

## COLLEGE COTTAGE CHEESE

### ELMWOOD CREAMERY

2642 ASHBY AVENUE  
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opened in 1929.



**Special  
Sunday Dinner  
85¢**

**SOUP**

Chicken Rice Broth

**SALAD**

Combination Fruit Salad

**ENTREES**

Augusta Half Fried Chicken  
Roast Lamb with Jelly  
Baked Ham with Candied Yams  
Roast Stuffed Young Duck

**VEGETABLES**

Succotash      Creamed Carrots  
Mashed Potatoes  
Hot Biscuits

**DESSERTS**

Strawberry Shortcake, Whip'd Cr'm  
Ice Cream and Cakes      Apple Pie  
Peach Cobbler, Whipped Cream  
Chilled Watermelon  
Butterscotch Pie

Tea -- Coffee -- Milk

Also a special 70c dinner served  
Service from 12 m. to 8 p. m.

**AUGUSTA INN**

2988 College Ave. between Ashby  
and Webster. Phone BERk. 8209

5/28/26, 10:00 AM

Inbox - Fu, Boshi - Outlook



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**Fwd: Commercial zone upzoning**

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**From** john selawsky <websky66@gmail.com>

**Date** Thu 5/28/2026 6:19 AM

**To** Landmarks Preservation Commission <PlanningLPC@berkeleyca.gov>

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

I'm writing to support any and all efforts to prevent unnecessary large-scale upzoning in the Elmwood district, as well as Solano and North Berkeley commercial districts.

If the city had been more successful with the downtown upzoning, I would be more sympathetic to attempts to upzone commercial districts in other areas of Berkeley. I can honestly say the downtown area, one I use every day, is the worst I've experienced in my 40 years in Berkeley.

Thank you for your work, and your consideration.

John T Selawsky  
1912 Blake St  
Berkeley CA 94704

"...for fascism is a lie, told by bullies." Ernest Hemingway

**Riemer, Allison**

---

**From:** Burl Willes <bwilles@lmi.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 28, 2026 11:50 AM  
**To:** Landmarks Preservation Commission; planning@cityofberkeley.info  
**Subject:** Late Communication

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

Greetings Commissioners,

The charming small town of Pt. Richmond became a National Historic Landmark District in 1978

Shortly thereafter, we moved the tiny 1906 hardware building to its present location where it is now the local history museum.

The town was landmarked even with newly-constructed buildings like the library and fire station.

The Elmwood has similar new buildings (Elmwood Village, for example) but this should not be a reason to deny landmarking.

Please do not confuse residential redlining with commercial Elmwood. An African-American owned the Augusta Inn cafe, Japanese-Americans owned a laundry (1914). Tulanian Rugs was opened by survivors of the Armenian genocide.

**COMMERCIAL ELMWOOD WAS NOT REDLINED.**

Sincerely,

Burl Willes  
2829 Russell Street  
Berkeley, CA 94705