

Supplemental Communications (1)

(The following are communications received after packet was published on **November 29**, by noon, **December 1**.)

From: Dorothy.Walker@comcast.net <Dorothy.Walker@comcast.net>

Sent: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 7:04 PM

To: Pearson, Alene <apearson@cityofberkeley.info>

Subject: RESPONSE TO ELMWOOD PARKING STUDY AND OTHER PROPOSALS FOR HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION

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TO CITY OF BERKELEY STAFF WORKING ON TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING

Response to Elmwood Parking Study and Recommendations About Housing

I lived in the Elmwood for 20 years and appreciated very much it's walkability, it's easy access to commercial uses, and its proximity to the best A/C Transit line in town.

As a retired planner and very long time resident I have comments below about the proposed parking study and also more extensive comments about the possible future development of both the Elmwood and the Claremont districts.

First- regarding the MTC funded study:

This study is living in the past. With global warming we must greatly curtail auto uses. We can no longer be facilitating auto use as this study intends. It is a bad idea to park more cars in residential areas and it is a bad idea facilitating driving and parking anywhere. MTC should be funding studies of how existing low density neighborhoods can be served by public transit and also studying new forms of public transit of all kinds for many different locations . When walking is not feasible, we must have innovative transit solutions to connect neighborhoods to their commercial districts as well as to BART and the Downtown.

Second- The Future of Neighborhood Commercial Districts in the Elmwood and Claremont as well as elsewhere in Berkeley:

Every part of Berkeley must play its part in meeting housing needs. A good start has been made by getting rid of single- family zoning, but having some 3 and 4 plexes on existing developed lots is not nearly enough to achieve the amount of housing that we need to make up for Berkeley residents' unwillingness to accept new housing for over 50 years.

During those 50 years almost every vacant lot in Berkeley was filled with a single family house, and now those houses are so valuable because of the scarcity of housing that it will be very costly to remove enough of them to create vacant spaces to build a lot of new, more dense housing. . Most parts of

Berkeley must create other places for a lot of new housing. Much of this housing should be in our neighborhood commercial areas.

In addition to College Avenue, a number of small commercial areas exist in the flatlands sections of the Claremont and Elmwood areas. Many of these commercial areas are under threat because of the changes in commerce and buying habits, primarily with Amazon easy ordering and delivering. We can help maintain and improve all of these commercial areas by adding lots of housing to them. Every neighborhood commercial area, large and small, should be rezoned to permit at least five stories, with four stories of housing permitted over ground floor retail /commercial. No new one story commercial buildings should be permitted anywhere. Many land owners of parcels in these commercial districts can be expected to take advantage of the rezoning in order to have much more income from their land as well as having many more potential customers for their retail spaces. This will be a win-win for everyone, including the residents of the surrounding areas.

Third- Integrating new transit services connecting low density neighborhoods with neighborhood commercial districts and creating new small neighborhood commercial areas at transit nodes in the low density hill areas.

Almost every resident of any of the hill areas now has to drive everywhere. There are no corner markets anywhere and little or no transit services. There will now be some added density in these areas because of the new regulations permitting up to four dwelling units on every parcel, but much more change in these areas is required to greatly reduce auto use that is a major contributor to climate change.

There must be new zoning regulations to permit small neighborhood markets throughout the hill areas. These small commercial areas should be located in relation to innovative neighborhood scale transit service throughout the area so that nodes of public activities are created. This will require close coordination of transit planning with the location of small scale convenience markets. New forms of transit, perhaps autonomous vehicles, should be considered for the sometimes narrow and winding streets of hill areas.

In closing, This must be a transformational time for all Berkeleyans. I believe that every neighborhood commercial area throughout the city should be rezoned for housing above retail. But the best place to start will be the Claremont Elmwood neighborhoods where long ago racial segregation by zoning was established. These neighborhoods need to be transformed, not only to respond to global warming and to provide a lot of new housing, but to begin to change their very long history of being white-only, single family areas.

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

From: Emily Marthinsen <emilymarthinsen@comcast.net>

Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 8:35 PM

To: Thomas, Beth A. <BAThomas@cityofberkeley.info>; Murray, Ryan P <RPMurray@cityofberkeley.info>; Pearson, Alene <apearson@cityofberkeley.info>

Cc: Sophie Hahn <sophie@sophiehahn.com>

Subject: Hopkins Corridor Traffic & Placemaking Study

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.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Hopkins Corridor Study. I have made additional comments using the on-line tool.

I live on Albina Avenue; and I am writing to oppose both current options (Option 1 and Option 2) for Hopkins Street. These options—and associated consultant “place-making” proposals—suggest a lack of understanding about this special place. The area is lively and attractive, appealing to both immediate neighbors and the wider community. People of all ages gather here to eat, talk, play sports, shop and more. Benches and seating areas are informal and idiosyncratic. The large sycamore trees that frame Hopkins Street east of Monterey provide imageable identity. People see each other unexpectedly as they do errands or drop-off children for school and sports. People get to know the business owners and workers where they shop. This is Berkeley at its small town/big city best. It is truly a multi-use environment that has developed over time to reflect community values. It has exactly what urbanists describe and what professional planners seek to achieve: a sense of place.

I urge staff and consultants to “think outside the binary box” and look for ways to improve bicycle safety AND to preserve the village-like character (albeit crowded with non-residents—a good thing for business) of our commercial and recreational hub. Neighbors have prepared an “Option 3,” and I support careful review of this option and the development of others instead of moving forward with a preferred option among the current choices.

Significantly, neither Option 1 nor Option 2 enhances our already rich pedestrian environment. Both create untenable access issues for many people, privileging bicycle transportation over other modes. The plans seem especially limiting for the many people who may not even have the choice to ride a bike. I note that among these are mobility-impaired people, slowly moving seniors, people with small children, the children themselves as well as others. Making parking more difficult—to make cycling more convenient—leaves these people out entirely and decreases, rather than increases, access to shopping and recreation in this area.

Not only will eliminating parking constrain access to many non-bike riders, but I do not believe that eliminating parking will convince people to use bicycles to do their errands on Hopkins Street or that children coming in carpools for sports

teams will suddenly all come by bike. People who need to drive will simply circle until they find a parking space. Eliminating parking thus seems unlikely to affect our community's carbon footprint. But it may well hurt the small businesses that rely on nearby parking for easy access to their stores.

Both options attempt to solve problems which need more comprehensive solutions (the Gilman Street freeway interchange and its impact, for example). Both options also seem strangely disconnected from common-sense actions that might address some of the specific traffic and safety issues. Why not consider simpler, more creative and less costly responses to help alleviate some of the problems here? Traffic calming measures, intersection pedestrian lights, creating shared streets and repaving uneven, potholed surfaces come to mind. All these would certainly improve both bicycle and pedestrian safety along Hopkins Street, enhancing rather than limiting access.

I am 70 years old, active and in good health. I walk almost everywhere I go in Berkeley. I believe that the two Hopkins corridor options will make this particular area, my own neighborhood, much less safe as pedestrians navigate across multiple vehicle lanes, cars open doors on both traffic and bicycle lane sides, and people, driving, circle adjacent streets looking for parking. This is a wonderful, walkable and urban neighborhood with many amenities shared by people of all ages and abilities throughout our community. It's so unfortunate that the proposed plans would undo what has been years in the community's making. Planning professionals—and I am one—know better.

Communication

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

From: Barbara Fritz <bfritz@sonic.net>

Sent: Monday, November 29, 2021 10:29 AM

To: Thomas, Beth A. <BAThomas@cityofberkeley.info>; Murray, Ryan P <RPMurray@cityofberkeley.info>; Pearson, Alene <apearson@cityofberkeley.info>; Berkeley Mayor's Office <mayor@cityofberkeley.info>; All Council <council@cityofberkeley.info>

Subject: Hopkins/Monterey

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.

To City of Berkeley Planning, City Council and Mayor Arreguin:

I have lived at 1639 California St. for over 40 years. Living on a Bicycle Boulevard and in this neighborhood has added to my quality of life. In those 40 years, I have used my car to drive to Monterey Market, King Pool and N. Branch Berkeley Library possibly 10 times. I do most of my errands on foot (esp. since COVID restrictions) or on my bike.

I conducted a 'facelift' on my front yard about 1 year ago and my strictest instructions to the contractor was "I need to see all around me from the driveway. We get BART commuters, Totland visitors, bikes, skateboards, etc., walkers." I love living on a Bike Boulevard and used it to get to work in North Oakland for many years.

1) I would seriously like to know, if surveyed, how many residences within 2 miles of the proposed development are supportive, or even enthusiastic. I am not. I haven't met anyone who thinks this is a great idea. I have asked neighbors, random folks on the street. I don't believe due diligence has been done outside algorithmic work. I don't have a sense of 'street level' surveillance being conducted.

2) Bad idea because:

There is already a useful Bike Boulevard.

The impact on businesses during construction.

Where are the workers supposed to park? How does this impact shoppers, customers, school kids (especially the Monterey Market corner)?

The kids at King School - let's face it, they're young 'uns and particularly unattentive to their surroundings.

Visually confusing on existing reconfigured streets and intersections - when I do take my car and have to maneuver some intersections, e.g. Milvia and Hearst, I *still* think the cars are coming at me. I take extra precautions on bike or driving on those streets, or avoid them (I'm not even going to talk about Bancroft across from Campus. . .).

Drivers will be even more lunatic and aggressive than they are now while looking for parking at Monterey/Hopkins.

I treasure my walkable neighborhood and "my" Bike Boulevard for the quality of life I am privileged to enjoy. ***The behaviors of drivers, cyclists and some pedestrians are really the most troubling and dangerous. Reconfiguring streets will not force people to their feet or onto bicycles. Public transit, paved streets and smoother sidewalks may help.***

Thankyou,
Barbara Fritz/bfritz@sonic.net
1639 California St.