



Views from the Terrace

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Message from the CTRA President

by James Felix Cook

College Terrace residents are living in interesting times, no doubt about that.

I want to start by thanking the neighbors you elected back in 2021 and who volunteered to serve as the 2021-2022 College Terrace Residents' Association board of directors:

Vice President: Dan Kaleba

Secretary: Eileen Stolee

Treasurer: Sukhi Nagesh

Communications Director:

Chris Saccheri

Social Coordinator: Mary

Bartholomay

Stanford Observer: Pria Graves

City Observer: Annette Ross

Cal Ave Business District

Observer: Ann Balin

Research Park Observer: Melanie

Grondel

In addition, I want to especially thank Eileen Stolee, Chris Saccheri, Mary Bartholomay, Ann Balin, and Melanie Grondel for serving several terms in a row including the full pandemic timeline. Your service to the community is both commendable and deeply appreciated. I'd like to give a shout-out to Dan Kaleba, Sukhi Nagesh, and Annette Ross for joining the board during the pandemic. Finally, I want to thank Pria Graves for extending her service above and beyond the duration she intended to, but persist she did. Thank you all.

Thank you in addition to the many neighbors who participated in CTRA meetings this past year.

This CTRA term was highlighted by four major concerns and events:

1. the poorly conceived Wellesley apartment complex,
2. community demand for expanded hours at the College Terrace Library,
3. the transition to a car-free Cal Ave and
4. our local, peaceful push for solidarity with the Ukraine and its people under siege from Russian aggressors.

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**Saturday,
March 26, 2022**

CTRA Annual Meeting

University Lutheran Church Sanctuary
Bowdoin St. at
Stanford Ave.

9:30 a.m.

MINGLE & RECONNECT

- Meet the Mayor and CTRA Board Candidates
- Bagels and Coffee

10:00–11:30 a.m.

ANNUAL MEETING

- Election of CTRA Board
- CTRA President James Felix Cook, State of the Terrace address
- Mayor Pat Burt
- Q & A

Kindly support
CTRA with a \$25
annual contribution,
details at
[collegeterrace.org/
ctra/donate](https://collegeterrace.org/ctra/donate)

Thanks!

To fulfill its mission, the CTRA represents the interests of College Terrace before appropriate organizations.

The proposed Wellesley apartment complex scheme garnered the most attention in 2021. When we heard through the grapevine, rather than directly from the developer, of the plan to demolish two homes and jam in 24 units across from four-unit apartments and next to single family homes, our community mobilized.

Thanks to Andrew Fetter and Anna Lembke ferreting out the developer and keeping the CTRA and community informed, the issue became the most actively followed and discussed topic at CTRA meetings. College Terrace residents immediately gathered and rallied to share their concerns.

In fact, our spring meeting on the topic attracted the participation of more than fifty neighbors, our most actively attended meeting in recent memory. At that meeting, all but three neighbors weighing in on the topic spoke out clearly against the project and a movement was born. CTRA conveyed this strong and clear community sentiment with a letter to the Palo Alto City Council. And by April, CTRA and College Terrace residents successfully convinced the City Council to clarify the City's Planned Housing Zone, shut down this ill-conceived plan, and guide future and much needed housing development to the best locations possible.

To fulfill its mission, the CTRA provides information and discussion opportunities on issues affecting the neighborhood.

Through the summer and fall, community concerns focused on staffing and operating hours for the College Terrace Library. At the December 2021 CTRA meeting, three library representatives attended and responded to concerns about scant library branch hours by committing to hire new staff and increase hours.

Thanks to former CTRA president and this term's communications director / webmaster Chris Saccheri, the CTRA provides information to the community, through our new website (www.CollegeTerrace.org) as well as the CTRA eNews mailing list and through

NextDoor (www.nextdoor.com).

Finally, CTRA sought out opinions and shared them around the question of keeping Cal Ave open to pedestrians at several meetings. CTRA shared the community's sentiments with the Palo Alto City Council as they extended the pedestrian-friendly arrangement for many months and launched a master plan to improve Cal Ave for pedestrians and businesses alike.

To fulfill its mission, the CTRA creates occasions for social interaction and community building within the neighborhood.

While the pandemic curbed our plans for community picnics, the CTRA—and, in particular, CTRA board member Mary Bartholomay—organized and held a candlelight vigil in support of the people of the Ukraine on March 1, 2022. Dozens of College Terrace residents and other concerned citizens gathered together solemnly and in loving solidarity for peace. ■

CALL TO SERVICE!
Join the CTRA
board and support
our neighborhood.
Homeowners,
renters, old-timers,
new arrivals...
WE NEED YOU!

CTRA Observer Reports

The CTRA has a group of board members known as "observers" who monitor relevant public meetings and news in their assigned area and then report back to the entire board on pertinent local actions and issues of interest to College Terrace.

California Avenue Business District *by Ann Balin*

The future of Cal Ave is still very much in the air. While some council members expressed a desire to keep the street closed to cars permanently at their February 28 meeting, Tom DuBois pointed out on Palo Alto Online: "That decision has NOT been made and will be coming to council before June. While council members stated their opinions at this point in time, the vote was only on whether to agendize the topic."

I watched that meeting and listened to the public speak to this item. Approximately half were in favor of keeping the avenue closed to vehicles. They support the benefits to residents of having this car-free zone.

Jessica Roth of the Cobblery pleaded with the council to open up the avenue to traffic as her business has decreased. Some argue that the internet, the lack of commuters pouring off the trains, and trends toward casual attire have impacted retail such as a cobbler. Another

Join the CTRA board and reconnect with neighbors as we emerge from the pandemic. Help us throw some epic summer picnics!

Neighbors gather in Werry Park for a candlelight vigil to support the people of Ukraine on March 1, 2022.



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voice in opposition to keeping the avenue closed was Shannon McEntee who says buses go down her street.

At the beginning of the discussion an architect presented a charrette showing an example of the successful State Street closure in Santa Barbara. This popular destination features the resurfaced street in a dark terra cotta-colored covering and featured greenery as well as accessible pedestrian walkways. The process before the City Council will take time as they listen to residents and merchants alike.

New businesses on and around Cal Ave: Nob Hill Hardware, Umé Tea (Bubble Tea), Shekoh Confections, and Local Kitchens

Closures: Anatolian Kitchen will be replaced by a restaurant serving Austrian cuisine. Avalon Yoga Studio has closed. Bank of the West Paribas is moving to 2700 El Camino Real.

City of Palo Alto by Annette Ross

"Soup to Nuts" pretty much describes the range of issues percolating in Palo Alto. To name a few:

It is quite likely you will be voting on a Business Tax in the next election. There's also the Castilleja Expansion plan that involves issues that always spark discussion (and division) in this town: trees, zoning, land use, enforcement (or lack thereof) of Conditional Use Permits. The spike in crime is an issue that claimed a fair amount of attention at this year's City Council retreat—and became a priority focus for 2022. This is promising because there have been instances of hate that require a response.

Moving on, there's the budget and cuts in services, some of which are slowly being restored. Grade Sepa-

ration: arguably a victim of analysis paralysis. Housing: the lack of it, the cost of it, the where of it; this issue will be with us for years. Related to that: rent protection is getting attention. Sustainability: the monthly S-CAP meetings are open to all and they offer an excellent peek at what sort of changes and restrictions are likely to be in our future.

Council has paused the Cubberley Concept Plan, so if you wanted to comment on that you will likely have another opportunity. Weeds were declared a public nuisance and gas-powered blowers continue to be an issue. Our Police Chief's resignation will be effective in July. And we should soon know about street closure on Cal Ave and a block of Ramona.

Stanford University by Pria Graves

It's been a year of changes for Stanford University.

After being closed for nearly a year, the campus reopened to the public in June. Classes will be returning to in-person after spring break and sports and live performance events (indoor and outside) are resuming. Testing and masking requirements are winding down though they still plan to impose limits on student gatherings as students return from spring break. Unlike other universities with huge COVID outbreaks, Stanford confirmed only a few thousand positive cases since March of 2020 and should be congratulated for their proactive approach.

After a year of meetings and a great deal of acrimonious discussion, the San Juan Residential District Historic Survey wrapped up in May. The intent of this effort was to determine if portions of the faculty hous-

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ing above the campus should be given protection as Historic District(s). In the end, although the consultant suggested designating one area as an historic district and another as a preservation district, because of conflicting rules, neither was done.

On the brighter side, the large number of empty Stanford houses in our neighborhood has been resolved. They still have a couple of properties under development but all of their completed houses are occupied. On the other hand, though not actually part of College Terrace, there are still a significant number of condominiums in the University Terrace development that are still on the market. Stanford is making a number of changes to their practices in the hope of attracting more interest.

Stanford Research Park *by Melanie Grondel**

In the context of the ongoing Palo Alto Housing Element 2023-2031 process, required by the State of California, multiple properties in Stanford Research Park are under consideration for housing development.

Stanford is developing plans to include both the McDonald's (3128 El Camino) and Fish Market (3150 El Camino) properties in a high-rise project with a significant number of housing units that creates a connection to Palo Alto Square with redeveloped outdoor space.

3300 El Camino Real is a property under development by Sandhill Property Company on a Stanford owned ground lease. A plan to include housing in this office development project is being reconsidered. After an unenthusiastic reception by the City Council in 2019 led to a withdrawal of plans by Sandhill, negotiations led by Stanford are taking place to include housing again for no less than 92 units, and potentially more.

At 3200 El Camino Real, Hotel Parmani is slated to redevelop the site and add two extra stories.

There are also sites that are not part of Stanford Research Park proper but slated for housing development projects by Stanford. They are under Stanford's control and are not subject to ground lease negotiations, which severely complicate several Stanford Research Park locations under consideration. These include the Palo Alto Transit Center, adjacent to the Caltrain station downtown, and a planned high-rise apartment complex at Pasteur and Sand Hill. ■

CTRA BOARD NOMINEES for 2022–23

*indicates 2021–2022 board member

Absentee ballot available via www.collegeterrace.org/ctra/absentee-ballot/

President: James Felix Cook* James lives with his wife Wendy and son Chris on College Ave (and dog Koda Bear). James volunteered on the CTRA board, the Utilities Advisory Commission and the Palo Alto PTA Council and is currently building up a start-up focused on utility scale renewable energy.

Vice President: OPEN position, seeking volunteer

Secretary: OPEN position, seeking volunteer

Treasurer: OPEN position, seeking volunteer

Communications Director: OPEN position, seeking volunteer

Social Coordinator: Mary Bartholomay* I'm a California girl through and through. Having grown up on the Peninsula, I remember the orchards fondly. Trained as an art historian, love art and literature, gardening and carbohydrates. My favorite thing about College Terrace is its village spirit.

Cal Ave Business District Observer: Ann Lafargue Balin* Ann's family moved from San Francisco to College Terrace in 1926. She worked in publishing in Manhattan for 10 years, then returned with husband Fred. She started up and ran the community volunteer dinner program at Ronald McDonald House for a decade, then worked for 15 years as an ESL teacher at Language Pacifica, formerly on California Ave. Her civic efforts included saving the Varsity Theatre and Saint Ann Chapel from demolition and work on several political campaigns.

City of Palo Alto Observer: Annette Ross* Annette has lived on Amherst Street since 1982 as both a renter and a homeowner. Her two children attended Escondido and she cherishes the eclectic, family-friendly vibe of College Terrace. In the past, Annette served on the CTRA Board as Research Park Observer. Prior to that she was involved with the group of neighbors that met regularly (weekly, for a while!) regarding the College Terrace Centre project. Annette tracks what is going on in town and watches City Council meetings.

Stanford Observer: Eileen Stolee* Eileen and her husband Richard moved to College Terrace in 1976, raised both their adult children here, and bought their home in 1988 after 12 years as renters. For 18 years, Eileen worked with Klutz Inc., a Palo Alto company, as a product designer. Eileen has been CTRA secretary and social coordinator in the past and would like to continue to serve on this board

Research Park Observer: Melanie Grondel* Melanie, an independent recruiter, moved to Yale St, in 1994. In 2002, she moved to Sunnyvale, but returned to College Terrace three years ago. She became involved in local issues by attending CTRA and city council meetings and advocating for a grocery market. She is a gardener and also a volunteer at the Bechtel International Center at Stanford.