

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

By **the Palisadian-Post** - December 23, 2021

DRB Responds to City's Approval of The Hydration Room

Toward the end of this year, The Hydration Room came to the Pacific Palisades Design Review Board asking for approval for an intravenous therapeutic business in a retail location [across from] the historic Village Green. After two meetings of review, the DRB unanimously (with one member absent) moved to deny the application. The denial was based on incompatibility with the Brentwood/Palisades Specific Plan. The sentiment was rooted in a commitment to preserve what is spectacularly unique about this community and to discharge our duties in a manner that reflects the character of the community in its inevitable growth.

The Hydration Room is an intravenous therapeutic service that provides vitamins and nutrients to its patients through intravenous delivery. On their website, they refer to the people who use their service as “patients.” Their objective is to keep “patients healthy and prepared to fight infection.” But the proposed hydration room wouldn't be in a medical building, it would be at the same location as a formerly popular coffee shop where some of our most recognized Palisadian community volunteers came together for conversation and coffee.

The proposed use is so incompatible with the surroundings that it necessitated a formal change of “use” designation for the location from retail to medical office use—a change which the city has approved without noticing the community.

The DRB had asked the applicant to consider reducing the scope of their back-lit signage and eliminating the words “IV and Injection Therapy” in order to be less obtrusive, given the location. They refused. We asked them to tint or somehow masque the front window so as not to leave passersby with a clear and direct glimpse of the great hall where patients would be seated while connected to their intravenous bag. They refused. The city nonetheless approved the project, and even initiated a change of use for the location.

We bring this to your attention because, while there may not be anything inherently wrong with this business, it does not belong at the center of our village. It certainly does not comport with our Neighborhood Specific Plan. Our board objects to this approval and protests the un-noticed change in use. We hope you will do the same.

The appeal period ends on December 30. Link to City Planning website to file an appeal online: planning.lacity.org/development-services/appeal-application-online.

Contact Nick Vasuthasawat (nick.vasuthasawat@lacity.org) for more information or comment.

Happy Holiday Season from LAUSD

As this unprecedented semester draws to a close in our Los Angeles Unified schools, I want to wish all of the families and school communities a joyful holiday season and happy, healthy new year from your LAUSD board member. Thank you for your continued partnership and support of your local public schools. This year's return to school would not have been possible without the community-wide efforts we've seen.

This week, the Board voted unanimously to finalize the selection of Alberto Carvalho as LAUSD's next superintendent. With a long-tenured track record of success in Miami, deep knowledge of teaching and learning, and unique ability to act as both an agent of change and a unifying force, he is the right person to lead LAUSD students out of this pandemic into a better future.

Supt. Carvalho comes to Los Angeles with more than an illustrious resume—his personal journey as an immigrant and English learner who overcame homelessness has undoubtedly ingrained in him the transformative power of a great education. We have no doubt that he will continue to lead with empathy, and work alongside parents, students, teachers and the broader community to realize a vision of opportunity and success for all our kids.

While we await our new superintendent's arrival early in the new year, our work continues to navigate the path to recovery in our school communities. We are both hiring additional school staff and working with partners to get more caring adults on campuses so we can help our kids heal and learn after the crisis they've endured.

To help ensure that our students, families and school communities have the best possible learning environments, we are continuing to plan and approve new campus upgrades and projects across the district. These plans will bring more than \$50 million in upcoming investments for the Palisades school communities, including projects at Palisades Charter High, Paul Revere Charter Middle, Canyon Charter Elementary, Palisades Charter Elementary schools and more.

This semester, and the year that preceded it, demonstrated firsthand how valuable in-person learning truly is for our families. As I spent time visiting classrooms over the past few months, I've been reminded of the innovative lessons, engaging activities and individual connections that help our kids learn and grow. We also know that the trauma of the pandemic and heightened anxiety have led to an increase in threats of violence on some of our

campuses, and we will continue to prioritize the safety and wellbeing of all our school communities while fully investigating each of these incidents.

Our efforts also include safety measures to make sure that schools remain open for in-person learning. As we continue to offer and encourage vaccines for all those eligible, nearly 90% of our eligible students aged 12 and up have received their shot. At the same time, we also want to ensure that as many students as possible can continue to learn and grow in a safe in-person learning environment, particularly students hardest hit by this pandemic. This includes delaying the transfer of students not in compliance with the vaccine requirement to the online program until fall of 2022.

To help reassure families and keep school communities as safe as possible in the new year, the district will also conduct baseline testing when students and staff return from winter break in January. Assuming health conditions remain steady, we will begin easing certain safety restrictions in accordance with county public health guidelines in February. I will continue to push for LAUSD to follow public health guidance as conditions evolve and we get closer to a sense of normalcy for our students. And, as always, I will continue pushing for students and families to be at the center of our decisions to meet their needs and get through the pandemic, together.

LAUSD Board Vice President Nick Melvoin

Sharing Gratitude

Since the Pacific Palisades Task Force on Homelessness launched its program in 2016, we knew that it would take our entire community to address the destructive consequences of homelessness in Pacific Palisades.

During this season of gratitude and giving, we thank our steadfast 13 Funding Partners, over 200 individual donors and 47 volunteers who have supported our effort to successfully move 154 individuals experiencing homelessness off of the streets, with 99 of those living in permanent supportive housing.

A Funding Partner is a special category of donor who makes a three-year pledge commitment to help ensure the sustainability of PPTFH. This financial stability allows the Task Force to contract with The People Concern to reliably provide a professional Outreach Team to engage and link our homeless neighbors to services and housing.

We honor our Funding Partners for their dedicated, unwavering support: St. John Health Center Foundation, American Legion Post 283, Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, the K & F Baxter Foundation, the

Vicki and John Cody Family Foundation, Corpus Christi Parish, Kimi and Graham Culp, the Gries Family Charitable Fund, Barbara Martin, The Parish of St. Matthew, the Cindy L. & William E. Simon Jr. Foundation, the California Riviera Homeowners Association and the Elaine P. Wynn & Family Foundation.

We recognize and appreciate 15 of our generous merchants for their support and sharing their best of the Palisades to make possible PPTFH baskets of gratitude for our Funding Partners: Batch 33, Black Ink, Cinque Terre, The Draycott, Gelson's Market, Gift Garden Antiques, Kayndaves, K Bakery, Kier Design, McConnell's Ice Cream, Porta Via, Skinner Winery, TOPS Malibu, Vittorio's Ristorante and the yogurt shoppe.

We thank every organization and person in the Palisades who has given time to making "Brown Bag lunches," donated supplies, clothing or a special skill, publicized our project, asked friends to support PPTFH, participated in the homeless annual count, emailed us about homeless persons in need, attended our community meetings and so much more.

We thank you for being the caring, supportive community that makes PPTFH and its work possible.

*Carol Sanborn
PPTFH Director and Fundraising Chair*