



# EL CERRITO COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume Fourteen: Number 12 December 2020

## Happy Holidays



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### El Cerrito Community Council Meeting

**MEET AND TALK WITH SEAN ELO-RIVERA, OUR NEW DISTRICT 9 CITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE**

**DECEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup> - 7:00 – 8:30 PM VIA ZOOM**

**Join us to get acquainted with Sean Elo-Rivera. Sean is new to District 9 so would like to hear from you on things you think are important for El Cerrito. We have presented ideas and issues to our City Council Members and we are still waiting for many so join in and let Sean know what you want done.**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

**<https://nu.zoom.us/j/8586428437>**

**Meeting ID: 858 642 8437**

**[Join by Phone - Dial and enter Meeting ID](#)**

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**Meeting ID: 858 642 8437**

### **FAMILY HEALTH CENTERS PROPOSED MIXED USE PROJECT FOR EL CAJON BLVD BETWEEN DAYTON & 55TH**

Last month Anthony White, Director, Community & Government Relations for Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHCS), David Whisenhunt, Vice President of Physical Facilities, Family Health Centers of San Diego and Matthew Winter AIA, LEED AP, Director of Mixed-Use Architecture LPA introduced plans FHC has for a mixed-use project on El Cajon Blvd, between Dayton Street and 55th Street.

The plan is for a 10-story building with two floors below ground and eight floors above, about 100 ft tall from ground level. The 3 lower levels will be for parking. The building will have medical offices, some retail space and 142 units of residential housing. 42 units will be for FHCS resident doctors, about half of the remaining 100 units will be studios, the other half will be one-bedrooms with a handful of two-bedroom units. We were told the housing would be in the affordable income range, but not what range is or who the target tenant would be – though we did ask.

The responses from residents at the meeting varied from liking the new development to concerns about the use of the building and that the building is too tall for the surrounding single family housing community.

For perspective, the student housing near SDSU on College Avenue is 6 stories tall. You can look at the heights at <https://www.sgpa.com/projects/sdsu-south-campus-plaza/> and look at an artist’s rendering of a 10-story building in a single family residential neighborhood from a San Diego Reader article <https://www.sandiegoreader.com/news/2020/jun/01/stringers-12-story-buildings-sprinkled-san-diego/>.

Family Health Centers of San Diego is one of the nation’s ten largest Federally Qualified Health Centers. It operates 49 sites across San Diego County, providing care to over 200,000 patients each year, of whom 91% are low income and 29% are uninsured. You can read more about FHCS at <https://www.fhcsd.org/>.

To get information first hand, FHCS will present the project at the College Area Planning Committee meeting via Zoom on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84572407383?pwd=RzN3VDdhTUxvUTZJNi9QYWVmWEc5UT09;> Meeting ID: 845 7240 7383; Passcode: 610097.

A few links to recent articles from Voice of San Diego that may interest you on forcing housing density are the following:

Kara Grant, "Encinitas Wants to Exempt Itself From New State Density Law," [https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/land-use/encinitas-wants-to-exempt-itself-from-new-state-density-law/?utm\\_source=Voice+of+San+Diego+Master+List&utm\\_campaign=db151d3609-Morning+Report&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_c2357fd0a3-db151d3609-84097105&goal=0\\_c2357fd0a3-db151d3609-84097105](https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/land-use/encinitas-wants-to-exempt-itself-from-new-state-density-law/?utm_source=Voice+of+San+Diego+Master+List&utm_campaign=db151d3609-Morning+Report&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c2357fd0a3-db151d3609-84097105&goal=0_c2357fd0a3-db151d3609-84097105)

Paul Krueger, "What the Census Taught Me About the NIMBY vs. YIMBY Debate" [https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/opinion/what-the-census-taught-me-about-the-nimby-vs-yimby-debate/?utm\\_source=Voice+of+San+Diego+Master+List&utm\\_campaign=db151d3609-Morning+Report&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_c2357fd0a3-db151d3609-84097105&goal=0\\_c2357fd0a3-db151d3609-84097105](https://www.voiceofsandiego.org/topics/opinion/what-the-census-taught-me-about-the-nimby-vs-yimby-debate/?utm_source=Voice+of+San+Diego+Master+List&utm_campaign=db151d3609-Morning+Report&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c2357fd0a3-db151d3609-84097105&goal=0_c2357fd0a3-db151d3609-84097105)

The first article explains how Encinitas is passing a law to change using net land area rather than gross land area to prevent overbuilding. The proposal makes sense for communities with lots of uneven and un-buildable terrain, like El Cerrito with its many canyons, would force full development onto the small area available for building, hence magnifying density. The second article is by a retired reporter who explains why increasing density south of I-8 will only make housing problems worse rather than better.

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### **GIVING DURING THE 2020 HOLIDAYS GIFT CERTIFICATES FROM OUR LOCAL SMALL BUSINESSES FOOD AND TOY DRIVES**

2020 with COVID-19 has been a really tough year on so many. Our El Cerrito businesses have been hit very hard with all of their adapting to new regulations to stay open, only to have to shut down at the worst time of the year.

**Support our Local Businesses** - One great gifting idea is to see if your favorite local restaurant, gym or other business has gift certificates that you can give for the open days to come. This will some money in our local businesses for support now and give you and friends a chance to visit your favorites later.

**San Diego Food Bank – Vons** We are hearing that many more people are in need of food this year. Vons and Albertsons are making it very easy to give with \$5 donations at check out that go to the San Diego Food Bank. The Food Bank is also taking online donations

and know how to make each dollar go a long way. If you are able to help, it will be appreciated this year – San Diego Food Bank [DONATE NOW](#).

**The Salvation Army** generally has a big food and toy collection event each year and has gotten creative this year with a **Drive-thru Toy & Food Drive - Saturday (12/19) from 10am - 1pm**. Take donations to The East County Red Shield Center at 1025 Main Street in El Cajon, where the staff will be in full PPE and ready to collect donations from your vehicle. Items most needed are non-perishable food, warm clothing/coats, and new unwrapped toys (especially for older children). Virtual Red Kettle donations can be made online [CLICK HERE](#).

**Toys for Tots:** The annual Toys for Tots toy drive asks for new, unwrapped toys to distribute to less fortunate children this season. Donors can bring a toy to any local San Diego Fire Department station. One of the nearest fire houses for El Cerrito is in Rolando, just south east of Vons at College and El Cajon Blvd. Monetary donations can also be made online to the campaign. [Link to donate](#).

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### **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH KEEPING OUR NEIGHBORHOOD SAFE**

There has been an up-tick in crime in San Diego, including in El Cerrito from what we are hearing and seeing on NextDoor. You may want to start a Neighborhood Watch Group sponsored by the SDPD. <http://www.sandiegoneighborhoodwatch.com/about.html> is an excellent, informative site to get started.

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### **VITAMIN D HELPS FIGHT COVID-19**

It is not known if the lack of vitamin D causes severe illness and death, or COVID-19 causes a deficiency in this crucial supplement, but many studies have shown the benefits of Vitamin D in protecting against the disease.

Vitamin D has been shown to protect against acute respiratory infections. Older adults are the group most deficient in vitamin D and are also the ones most seriously affected by the virus. Studies have shown that people who are deficient in the sunshine vitamin are almost twice as likely to contract COVID-19. Vitamin D is produced in the skin from the UVB rays of the sun. It is then carried into the liver and kidneys where it is synthesized into a hormone that carries calcium throughout the body to boost bone health and reduce the risk of osteoporosis. It also supports the immune system and helps fight viruses such as COVID-19. Very few foods contain vitamin D, so if you are not getting enough sunshine, taking supplements for this vitamin is a must.

Current guidelines recommend 600 IU daily for adults, 800 IU for those over 70, but some suggest 1,000 IU daily to fight COVID-19.

## A SOLDIER'S PLACE: VETERANS AND CIVILIANS SPEAKING ABOUT WAR

One of our neighborhood residents and ECCC Board member, Lorna Zukas, is a professor at National University and is the program director for "A Soldier's Place" which is a free Humanities class at National University that brings together veterans and civilians to reflect upon powerful literature and non-fiction writings that illuminate common patterns of deployment and homecoming. There is no tuition cost and all books and are provided free.

Dialogue programs help veterans gain new insight into their military experience by engaging rich humanities resources. Participants receive a program journal with an embossed pen to keep personal reflections on the readings, gain access to study guides, and join a network of supportive individuals who want to reflect deeply about the issues raised by war and its impact on individuals and societies. Veteran discussion leaders from four branches of the military will facilitate discussions.

96% of participants from five of these Dialogue programs indicated that the humanities materials helped them better understand their experiences.

One Veteran participant stated "For forty years, I have been looking for words to describe my experience and I finally found them right here in this ancient book" [The Odyssey].

Registration is now open. For more information and to apply, visit our website: <https://soldiers.place/>

You can also contact Lorna Zukas, Program Director [lzukas@nu.edu](mailto:lzukas@nu.edu) Allie Hall, Program Coordinator [ahal3@nu.edu](mailto:ahal3@nu.edu) Phone: (858) 642-8437

This program has been made possible in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities: Exploring the human endeavor. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this program do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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## COLLEGE AREA COMMUNITY ATLAS: EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

The College Area Community Atlas provides baseline information on existing conditions, opportunities, and challenges in the College Area for the Community Plan Update. The Atlas focuses on geographic resources, trends, and critical issues that will frame choices for the long-term physical development of the College Area and includes information relating to demographics, land uses, economic settings, community form, mobility, the natural environment and open spaces, and environmental and community health.

The Community Atlas is used as a basis for: Facilitating community input on planning issues, priorities, and visions for the future; Evaluating policy issues and options, and preparing alternative land use and transportation concepts; Identifying potential

community opportunities and constraints; and Formulating policies and implementation actions for the updated community plan. [Visit this link](#) to review the draft College Area Community Atlas or visit [www.PlanCollegeArea.org](http://www.PlanCollegeArea.org).

The Planning Department is hosting a special virtual meeting on Wednesday, December 16 to review the draft College Area Community Atlas: Existing Conditions Report. Register for the meeting by [visiting this link](#) and view the agenda [at this link](#).

Don't forget to [take the survey!](#) This survey is a chance for people with important connections to the College Area to provide early input about the community to help guide the Community Plan Update. **The survey will remain live until midnight on Friday, December 18.** The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. You do not have to complete the survey in one sitting if you use the same computer / mobile device and browser each time you access the survey. Please share the link to the survey with anyone that you believe is interested in shaping the future of the College Area. The survey could also be found at [www.PlanCollegeArea.org](http://www.PlanCollegeArea.org).

The College Area Community Plan Update Committee (CPU Committee) is an advisory committee of the College Area Community Planning Board, which is the City's recognized citizens' group for the College Area. The CPU Committee was created specifically for the Community Plan Update in order to provide feedback to the City throughout the process. The CPU Committee meets virtually on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

View all College Area Community Plan Update documents and materials by [visiting the CPU Committee webpage at this link](#).

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## WARM WISHES TO US FROM STOPHER

We in El Cerrito were very lucky to have Christopher Vallejo as Georgette Gómez's representative. Following is Stopher's au revoir message to us.

"District 9 Friends - It has been a tremendous honor to serve the residents and communities of San Diego's 9th Council District on behalf of Council President Georgette Gomez. Since I began with the office as an intern in 2017, I have had the opportunity to work and learn from each of you, and I am forever grateful for the lessons you have taught me.

Although I will miss working alongside you all to address the issues facing our communities, I am excited for the next chapter of my career and I know you will all be in good hands with Councilmember-Elect Sean Elo-Rivera and his team.

My last day, and the last day of our Council Office's administration, is tomorrow, Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020. I hope we can stay in touch as I am sure all of you will continue doing incredible work to improve our communities for the better.

Best wishes and thank you for everything! Stopher"

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