

# Palisadian-Post

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## Caruso Announces Major Parking Change to Project

**C**aruso Affiliated will be adding a third level of underground parking to its **Palisades Village** project among other improvements, developer **Rick Caruso** announced Wednesday, May 25.

The project's plans originally called for 470 parking spaces, which meets city code, but some people in the community questioned whether that would be adequate for employees and visitors.

"We know there is currently a shortage of parking in the Village and want to do our part as a member of the community," Caruso said in a statement.

The third level will provide an additional 90 parking spaces for a total of 560 spaces at minimum, according to the developer. The extra level will also add a few months to the construction timeline.

This adds up to four and a half times the current number of parking spaces on the existing surface lot.

Councilmember **Mike Bonin**, who has spoken in support of the project, lauded the firm for acting on the community's concerns.

"The Caruso Affiliated team has been eager to work with any neighbors who wanted to share their input, and they are doing more than just listening—they are making real and significant changes in response to the concerns expressed about parking," Bonin said.

The councilmember added, "I

am very happy to see these improvements, and I thank the dedicated members of the community who spoke up to offer suggestions that will make Palisades Village an even better fit in the neighborhood.”

Caruso also announced the return of a 1,250 square-foot community room to the project and said it will be relocated to a new space within the property.

The community room had been removed from the project earlier this year after some residents pointed to a lack of adequate parking for it. Some also questioned its original second-story balcony and location at the north corner of Swarthmore and Monument, which they claimed would carry noise into the adjacent residential neighborhood.

Others viewed its removal from the project as a loss for the community.

Laurie Sale, Executive Director of the Palisades Business Improvement District (BID), wrote in a letter to city officials on behalf of the BID, “We support Caruso’s Palisades Village project as submitted, we want to see it get started as soon as possible, and we support the return of the community room to the plan if possible.”

Councilmember Bonin also urged Caruso Affiliated to consider returning it to the project.

Community meeting areas in the Palisades are scarce—the Community Room at the Palisades Branch Library and the

**Pacific Palisades Woman's Club (PPWC) Clubhouse** are two of the most popular options.

Will the Caruso project's community room cut into the rentals at the PPWC, which relies on that income to help fund some of its many programs?

**Haldis Toppel**, PPWC President, doesn't think so.

"We, at the Pacific Palisades Woman's Club, appreciate that the free 1,250 square-foot community room for the Caruso project is back in the plan. It is certainly a much-needed service to our community, which we are always so eager to serve," Toppel told the *Palisadian-Post*.

"The Caruso facility is quite different from ours in size and decor and will supplement the need for a meeting space rather than compete for it," Toppel added. "We offer over 3,500 square feet in the main hall, a professional stage and a kitchen. There is ample and convenient parking, a great view and breathtaking sunsets. Our rates are low and we focus on meeting the needs of nonprofit, educational, service or self-help organizations. We wish the Caruso project much success and applaud their service to our community."

Lastly, Caruso Affiliated has addressed the internal square footage of the eight residential apartment units to add modest amounts of space to the floor plans, bathrooms and closets.

These changes will not impact required parking counts or alter the firm's traffic studies.

The Palisades Village project's next step in the path to entitlement is a hearing with the Planning and Land Use Management Committee that is expected to take place in June.



### **Your Two Cents' Worth**

*Got something to say? Call (310) 454-1322 ext. 13322 or email [2cents@palipost.com](mailto:2cents@palipost.com) and get those kudos or concerns off your chest. Names will not be used.*

#### **Market Madness**

I've often wondered why the Farmer's Market is not held on the lawn at the Palisades Recreation Center. I would love to spend more time and money strolling on the grass instead of fighting strollers in the narrow aisles on Swarthmore. I get in and out as fast as I can because it's not a very pleasant experience.