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October 14, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY:

Hon. Mayor Drew Combs
City of Menlo Park
dcombs@menlopark.gov

Council Members
City of Menlo Park
city.council@menlopark.gov

Tom Smith
Principal Planner
City of Menlo Park
tasmith@menlopark.gov

Re: Resolution to Declare Parking Plazas 1, 2, and 3 as Exempt Surplus Land

Dear Honorable Mayor, Members of the City Council, and Mr. Smith:

I represent Draeger's Super Markets in various capacities. I am also an officer, director and one of the owners.

This letter is written to express my client's strong opposition to Menlo Park City Council's plan to convert Parking Plazas 1, 2, and 3 to 450 units of the lowest level of affordable housing.

As you are probably aware, Draeger's has been operating a retail grocery business at 1010 University Drive since 1955. When Draeger's began in business all those years ago, it supported and helped pay for the parking plazas that have been slated by the City for housing and redevelopment.

The Parking Plazas have historically been, and continue to be, a vital public parking asset supporting the vibrancy and operations of the downtown Menlo Park community, as well as maintaining its small-town aesthetic that helps to support the economic vitality of the downtown Menlo Park area.

Alternatively, Burgess Park represents unencumbered city property that does not require additional non-housing investment (replaced parking) making it easier to economically establish low-income housing. Additionally, it will cause no displacement or disruption of business and sales tax revenue sources.

Honorable Mayor, Members of the City Council, and Mr. Smith
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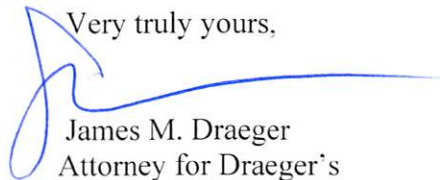
If the City proceeds with its current plans, this will have a devastating impact on retail businesses in the downtown area that rely on parking to accommodate their customers, forcing many businesses to close and others to relocate from downtown Menlo Park to other cities in the Bay Area. Monetarily, this will cause millions of dollars of damage to the downtown businesses.

In the end, Menlo Park will be left without its vibrant downtown community.

As you are aware, many Menlo Park residents strongly oppose this project and have qualified an initiative for the ballot to stop this action. Many of the businesses, like Draeger's, wish to continue to work with the City to obtain a better solution to the current plan.

In conclusion, my client respectfully urges that the City reject the proposed affordable housing project on Parking Plazas 1, 2, and 3, and not move forward with requesting proposals from developers. Conversely, my Client suggests that the City identify other alternative locations, such as the available space(s) at Burgess Park, which would be a more suitable site to place the City's proposed 450 units of the lowest level of affordable housing.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

James M. Draeger
Attorney for Draeger's