

## GREATER MULWOOD HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

August 22, 2020

City Council  
City Manager  
City Clerk

City of Calabasas  
100 Civic Center Way  
Calabasas, CA, 19302

Subject: Creekside Park

Dear Councilmembers,

For more than two decades the Greater Mulwood Homeowner Association has requested the residents on the east side of the city have unfettered access to Creekside Park which is the only developed park on this side of the city.

Other neighborhoods in Calabasas are fortunate to have parks close to residents' homes. Greater Mulwood does not. Although Creekside was purchased as a park, residents were asked to pay for bonds to implement that purchase, but never had real access to this park. In short, we have paid for it, but have never been able to use it as intended.

While originally purchased as a public use park, once the pre-school was created, the residents without seeing any written document, accepted the public policy and all public use was reduced to just weekends, early evenings and when pre-school children were not present. This was just accepted without any challenges by the City Council, although it was aggressively challenged by residents for decades.

Greater Millwood's need for park space (other than at the schools) has been routinely ignored in favor of meeting the pre-school needs of non-residents. Regretfully, in hindsight, it appears the city subsidized this pre-school for too many years, period. There was even a movement to give Viewpoint School the facility at no charge and without competitive bidding. Fortunately, that was quashed.

Neither the city pre-school, nor the current private contractor can effectively compete with the programs offered by the school district. That would indicate that this is the ideal time to return the facility to the use for which it was intended, namely, a general use park facility with unfettered access. The adults and children of the City, but especially residents of Greater Mulwood, the Highlands, and Old Topanga deserve to have access to use Creekside Park. We respectfully request Creekside Park be returned to full public use.

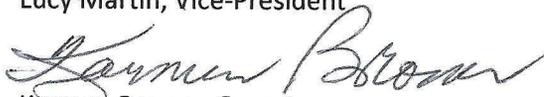
Sincerely,

  
Ed Albrecht, President

Richard Cassel, Treasurer



  
Lucy Martin, Vice-President

  
Karmen Brower, Secretary

August 24, 2020

To Honorable Mayor Alicia Weintraub and Councilmembers,

In 2005, I was one of two young women who found a home for their business in Calabasas, with the intention to offer and develop quality after-school programs for children and their parents in need. The relationship that my business partner, Bridget Nelson, and I formed with the city and community over the last 15 + years has solidified into a partnership because we've adapted our business model to incorporate changes in response to the community's needs.

The programs we have developed have evolved and we have always had a commitment to incorporate new ideas and overcome any challenges put in our way. We have learned to grow by overcoming challenges, partly because of our commitment to growth, but also because of the superb support from City representatives. It is our personal belief, that during challenging times, we need to work even harder to make sure the City, staff and families can rely on us. One thing that, over the years, has been our main focus is to always consider the families we serve.

Starting the journey with the Klubhouse a little over 2 years ago, was an easy decision. It is a program with sustainability, not only for its staff members but with the identity of the Klubhouse itself as a safe and loving environment, providing an essential program to the community. Blending our business's employees with the City staff was something that gave the comfort to the families we serve, knowing that their children were not going to experience too much change. It was a great blend of bringing new ideas and more staff into the classrooms, building on the Klubhouse's legacy.

Then, we encountered the COVID-19 pandemic. We closed our physical doors by order of the then City manager and worked to stay relevant by becoming a more creative virtual business. We began offering Zoom classes, sold in-home educational kits, and started 1:1 tutoring in order to keep staff working. We could've chosen to lay off all the full-time staff and encourage the City to do so as well, back in March. However, we didn't! We wanted to try and keep the same staff that the children know and love. If, and when, we went back to a physical classroom setting, we wanted the same safe environment for their children to

return to, we wanted the excellent program the parents were used to and the program to which they originally chose to send their children.

Eventually, we could reopen, but the majority of our families were scared to allow their children to return. Once we had a few families return, others heard how great everything was going and more families wanted their children to return. They wanted their children to return to the safe environment with a quality program that is sustainable and going to be there for them for a long time.

Bridget and I want nothing more than to bring the preschool back to where it was and have worked hard to ensure before, during and after this pandemic took control of our lives. We want Councilmembers to know that the current financial situation we find ourselves in the middle of, isn't something we want to defeat us. We want to continue to represent the City of Calabasas and offer the quality programs we have always loved and promoted. The financial situation is bleak. The only way to continue operating under current conditions is to hire the City staff directly and continue running the program that the City families rely on for their young children.

Countless families have responded positively with our employees and go out of their way to compliment us on the amazing care our staff has given their children. This is what families want the most! They want to know that their children are in good hands, in a safe environment and support a program that is sustainable and in it for the long run.

Thank you for your time,

Carly Armacost

Little Learners Co-Owner