

From: Zahra Billoo <zbilloo@cair.com>

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To: Planning@losgatosca.gov <Planning@losgatosca.gov>

Cc: Jeffrey Wang <jWang@cair.com>; mrístow@losgatosca.gov <mrístow@losgatosca.gov>

Subject: Concerns Regarding WVMA CUP Deliberations

Dear Los Gatos Planning Commissioners,

I write on behalf of the San Francisco Bay Area office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-SFBA) regarding tonight's continued deliberations on the West Valley Muslim Association's conditional use permit application.

CAIR-SFBA is an office of the nation's largest American Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, working to promote justice, empower American Muslims, and enhance the understanding of Islam across the Bay Area and broader region.

Like many Muslim communities across California, our community is grieving this week following the deadly attack at the Islamic Center of San Diego. In that context, we were shocked and appalled to see neighbors invoke that tragedy to justify additional restrictions on WVMA and its congregants.

A hate motivated shooting that left worshippers dead, families shattered, and children traumatized should never be used as ammunition in a local land use dispute.

WVMA would be the target in such an attack, not the source of danger. Muslim communities understand this reality all too well. Mosques across the country have had to invest in security planning, emergency preparedness, cameras, gates, volunteer security teams, and coordination with law enforcement precisely because anti-Muslim violence is real and ongoing.

By all accounts, WVMA has already been engaging responsibly with the Town, law enforcement, and fire officials regarding traffic management, emergency access, occupancy, and safety planning since acquiring the property. The draft conditions already address these concerns.

At the same time, we note the [Town Attorney has now acknowledged](#) that several previously proposed conditions likely raised concerns under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA), the federal law that protects religious institutions from discriminatory land use treatment. That acknowledgment should matter here.

The question before the Town is how to ensure Muslims are treated equally under the law.

CAIR-SFBA urges the Planning Commission to reject fear-based narratives, avoid singling out this congregation for unequal treatment, and ensure that any conditions imposed are lawful, neutral, evidence-based, and applied consistently across religious institutions.

We are monitoring this matter closely and stand ready to support WVMA and the Muslim community in protecting their civil rights, including through legal advocacy if necessary.

At a moment when Muslim families across California are feeling vulnerable and targeted, local government should be sending a clear message that they belong here and that their rights will be protected equally.

Sincerely,

Zahra

Zahra Billoo, Esq.

Executive Director

Council on American-Islamic Relations, California

San Francisco Bay Area Office