



Community Development  
Department

# Memo

DATE: November 7, 2024  
TO: Design Review Board  
FROM: Robert (Dean) Flores, Senior Planner  
RE: Additional Documents, Item No. 4  
Project No. DRX24-0012

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The project applicant has provided neighbor letters of support herein provided as **Attachment 1 – Neighbor Letters of Support**

Public comments from members of the public have also been included as **Attachment 2 – Public Comments Received**.

# **Attachment 1**

## Neighbor Letters of Support

To whole it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for my friend's family, the Kums, and their proposed home design in South Pasadena. Having purchased my own property here just last year, I have come to truly appreciate the unique character and vibrant community that makes this city so special. I believe that thoughtful, updated home designs like theirs add immense value to our neighborhood and enhance the charm that draws so many of us to South Pasadena.

Seeing this design come to life will greatly support my friends, who have invested their time, energy, and love into creating a home that meets their family's needs. This project is not only essential for their comfort and well-being but will also contribute positively to the aesthetic and communal appeal of the area. I hope the city will support them in completing this project efficiently, allowing them to enjoy a home that enriches their lives and reflects the high standards that make South Pasadena such a wonderful place to live.

Thank you for considering this project, which will benefit not only my friends but our community as a whole.

Sincerely,

Alaina Nikolin

South Pasadena Resident

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alaina Nikolin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alaina" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Nikolin".

November 1, 2024

Dear South Pasadena City and Design Review Board,

As a longtime resident of South Pasadena, *I am writing to express my full support* for the Kum family's proposed house design at 516 Arroyo Drive in South Pasadena. I believe this thoughtfully planned home will only serve as a positive addition to our community and the welcoming spirit of South Pasadena.

Thank you for considering my support of this project.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anca Rahman', written in a cursive style.

Anca Rahman

November 2, 2024

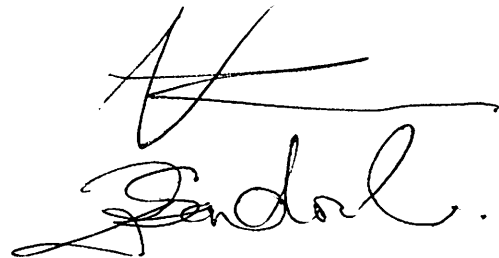
Design Review Board  
South Pasadena

To whom it may concern,

**I am writing in support of the proposed house design for Melvin Kum and family at 516 Arroyo Drive in this beautiful city of South Pasadena.** We have been long time residents of South Pasadena and Pilar has been dedicating her time giving back to the children of South Pasadena as a teacher at the Monterey Hills School. From getting to know this family over the years, this design thoughtfully considers both accessibility needs and family functionality, while harmonizing with the neighborhood's character and represents what it means to live in South Pasadena.

Thank you for your time.

Warm regards,  
Anibal and Pilar Sandoval

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anibal and Pilar Sandoval". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the name.

To the South Pasadena Planning Committee and Design Review Board Members,

I am writing to wholeheartedly support my friend's family, the Kum Family, in their home design proposal for 516 Arroyo Drive. Their plan is a perfect example of how to modernize a property while respecting the unique character of our area. They have meticulously crafted a design that not only enhances the appearance of their home but also complements the architectural style of surrounding houses. This attention to detail is something we as neighbors and the community truly appreciate, as it shows a strong respect for our shared space.

Furthermore, I believe that their home will bring increased value and enjoyment to our entire community. It's rare to find such a carefully considered design that offers both function and beauty. I sincerely hope the board sees the positive impact this home will have on our neighborhood, and I look forward to seeing their vision become a reality.

Sincerely,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is for Calvin Wong, and the signature on the right is for Iris Wong. They are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Calvin and Iris Wong, South Pasadena Residents

# The Low Family

1824 Via Del Rey  
South Pasadena, CA 91030

## Contact

Brenda Q. Low  
323-422-9975  
Prov31mom@gmail.com

Dr. Charles C. Low  
323-422-9912

October 22, 2024

Dear South Pasadena Planning and Design Review Board,

We are writing in support of our dear friends, the Kum family, and their proposed new house design at 516 Arroyo Drive.

As friends and longtime residents with them in this beautiful city, we believe their design is a wonderful addition to the neighborhood and reflects their thoughtful approach to creating a home that fits seamlessly into the community.

One key element of their design is the addition of the garage in the front, which we know will make a big impact on the Kum family's daily life by providing easy accessibility to meet their family's specific needs.

This thoughtful change will greatly improve their quality of life, while still maintaining the aesthetic of the neighborhood.

We hope the board will approve their design therefore they can move forward with their plans so they may be able to live happily in this house creating new memories. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Supportive residents of South Pasadena,



Dr. Charles Low & Brenda Low

Cheryl Kum  
1948 Alpha Avenue  
South Pasadena, CA 91030

November 1, 2024

Dear South Pasadena's Design Review Board Members,

I am writing to express my full support for the Kum family's proposed house design at 516 Arroyo Drive. As the sister-in-law of Melvin Kum and a fellow South Pasadena resident, I can attest to the deep roots our family has in this wonderful community. Many of our family members live here because South Pasadena provides the welcoming and supportive environment, we cherish for our families to raise in. The Kums' home design aligns with these values, reflecting a commitment to community and inclusivity.

This home project has personal significance, as it was designed with my late sister-in-law in mind, whose unexpected medical limitations and disabilities were taken into thoughtful considerations with each detail of the design as well as the overall family's needs to care for each other. This proposal not only honors her memory but will also have a positive impact on my niece, who lives with a disability she was born with. The accessible design elements, especially the front garage placement, are essential for her needs, ensuring she can enjoy a safe and comfortable environment.

The Kums' new home will be an asset to our community, both as a beautiful space and as a model of thoughtful accessibility. I hope you will support this proposal, which means so much to our family.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cheryl Kum". The script is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end of the name.

Cheryl Kum



*Resilient*  
LACTATION

1605 Hope Street, Suite 200  
South Pasadena, CA 91030  
(626)344-7505

October 29, 2024

RE: 516 Arroyo Drive, South Pasadena

Dear Members of the Design Review Board,

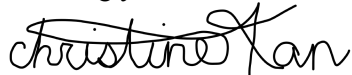
My name is Dr. Christine Kan, and I'm a licensed occupational therapist as well as a resident and business owner here in South Pasadena. I am writing to express my support for Melvin Kum and his Family's proposed home design, which I believe will greatly enhance their family's functional needs and quality of life.

As an occupational therapist, I work daily with individuals to help them overcome physical barriers in their environments, facilitating better access, mobility, and independence. The current layout of the Kum's home presents significant challenges for the family, impacting their ability to fully access and utilize their living space. The proposed design, which includes a front-positioned garage, is a thoughtful solution that will not only improve accessibility but will also provide essential proximity to the home for family members with mobility and functional needs.

This design prioritizes both practical and compassionate modifications, ensuring the family can safely and comfortably navigate their space. The front garage access will address their unique requirements, safety, and provide them with a foundation for a better quality of life within their home and neighborhood.

I urge the Board to consider these benefits, which align with *South Pasadena's values of inclusivity and support for residents' well-being*. Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. I am confident that this design will serve as a positive addition to our community, and I am proud to offer my full support.

Wishing you the best in health,



Dr. Christine Kan

Doctor of Occupational Therapy

October 31, 2024

RE: Melvin Kum's Design Review Board Designs  
516 Arroyo Drive, South Pasadena

Dear Members of the Design Review Board,

**I am writing to express my full support for the new design proposed by my brother, Melvin Kum, for his home at 516 Arroyo Drive.** As his neighbor just two doors down, I have closely observed the challenges his family has faced in making their current home more functional and accessible. This redesign represents a vital opportunity for them to create a space that will greatly improve their quality of life and enhance our neighborhood.

My niece's medical needs, which have required attention since birth, prevented my brother's family from being able to focus on remodeling their home when it was first purchased. Over the years, her care needs grew more demanding, leaving them little time or resources to address their own environment. When my sister-in-law began facing unexpected health challenges the past 2 years, they were motivated to start the process of changing their home to make life easier and more accessible for the entire family. Tragically, my sister-in-law passed away unexpectedly after the designs were submitted to the city earlier this year. We know that seeing this new layout would fulfill her hopes for her family, as she was part of the process and believed these changes would give everyone a better life.

Allowing the flexibility of a front-facing garage is essential to meet their needs due to the more narrow drive that he has compared to mine. This feature would give my brother the ability to accommodate a vehicle large enough to transport his daughter and any necessary medical equipment safely and conveniently, reducing the physical strain they currently face. The accessibility and ease of a front garage would be a transformative addition to their lives.

This new home layout, honors the love and care my sister-in-law showed her family. I believe it will bring comfort, joy, and relief to my brother's family and foster a sense of pride in our community, transforming their house into a more welcoming, open, and functional space. I urge the board to support this project, as it will make a significant positive impact not only on my brother's family but on our neighborhood as a whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



Dennis Kum  
530 Arroyo Drive  
South Pasadena Resident

November 1, 2024

Dear Members of the Design Review Board of South Pasadena,

**As the direct next-door neighbor to the Kum family, I am writing to express my full support for their proposed house design.** Having reviewed their plans, I see no negative impact on our neighborhood; in fact, their design complements our community's character and takes great care to consider the needs of all surrounding residents.

The front garage placement is a necessary accommodation to address the family's physical disability needs, and I believe it should be honored to ensure their accessibility. We are looking forward to this thoughtful update not only to support the Kums but also to enhance our neighborhood's aesthetic and property value.

Thank you for considering my support of the Kum family's design proposal.

Sincerely,



Dorene Craig

510 Arroyo Drive, South Pasadena

## Ed Lew, MD

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1505 Wilson Terrace, Ste. #250  
Glendale, CA 91206  
(818)550-1113

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October 28, 2024

Dear Members of the Design Review Board of South Pasadena,

As Melvin Kum's physician, a longtime standing resident of South Pasadena, I am writing to express my strong support for his proposed home design. I am aware of the ongoing health challenges he faces, including recent unilateral hearing loss and associated moderate balance issues, and other physical limitations associated with aging. In addition to his own needs, Melvin also cares for his daughter, who has permanent physical disabilities, making a supportive and accessible home environment crucial for both of them.

The current home layout has proven inadequate in meeting these demands, particularly as the family has navigated significant medical challenges over the years, including the limitations they faced after his late wife's traumatic brain injury that made her completely dependent on care. The proposed design incorporates accessible entrances, wider hallways, and open, adaptable spaces that will allow Melvin to move safely throughout his home while also making caregiving for his daughter more feasible and effective. These features not only address his immediate needs but create a long-term environment that will support caregiving and family support in the future.

Additionally, California law, particularly the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), protects the right of individuals with disabilities to modify their homes to meet physical and medical needs without discrimination. The proposed design exemplifies this commitment to providing reasonable accommodations, aligning with both the legal protections and the essential goal of enhancing quality of life and independence.

I strongly encourage the board to approve this project, as it will provide Melvin and his daughter with a home environment that supports their health, safety, and daily living needs as a family.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Ed Lew, MD

**Tina Yang, M.D.**  
128 N. Oak Knoll Avenue  
Unit 100  
Pasadena, CA 91101  
(626)797-3000

RE: Katherine Jane Kum  
516 Arroyo Drive  
South Pasadena, CA 91030

To the Members of the South Pasadena Design Review Board,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed home design for my patient, Katherine Kum. As Katherine's physician, I am acutely aware of the physical limitations they face due to a permanent disability. The new design incorporates many critical features that the original home did not have and will significantly enhance their quality of life and independence.

California law, including the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), emphasizes the need for reasonable accommodations to support individuals with disabilities. The proposed layout includes accessible entrances, wider pathways, and adaptable living spaces that are thoughtfully designed to accommodate Katherine's specific needs. These features will greatly reduce physical strain and the risk of injury, allowing them to navigate their home with greater ease and comfort.

Moreover, as Katherine ages, these design elements will ensure that the home continues to meet her evolving needs. The family plans to remain in this home indefinitely, making it crucial that the design not only addresses current accessibility requirements but also supports long-term living and independence.

This design reflects a commitment to fostering an inclusive environment that aligns with accessibility standards and enhances the well-being of residents. I urge the board to approve this design, as it will represent a vital improvement for Katherine and contribute positively to our community.

Thank you,



Tina Yang, MD

10/28/24

November 5, 2024

South Pasadena  
Design Review Board

Dear Members of the Design Review Board,

*I am writing to express my support for the proposed design of my dear friend's family home, 516 Arroyo Drive in South Pasadena.*

They have been long time residents of this beautiful city. I know this new design not only will enhance the neighborhood but provide a save space for the family to create new memories on top of what they already have.

I appreciate your consideration and am confident that these updates will make a positive impact for everyone involved from the city to the residents.

Thank you very much for your attention and support of this request.

Wishing you the best in health,

Hideko Brnak, South Pasadena Resident

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. Brnak', written in a cursive style.

FROM: Joan Ong  
625 Orange Grove Avenue  
South Pasadena, CA 91030

November 1, 2024

TO: The Design Review Board  
South Pasadena

Dear Members of the Design Review Board,

I am writing to express my support for the Kum family and their proposed house design at 516 Arroyo Drive. As a longtime friend and neighbor in South Pasadena, I have witnessed the Kums' deep commitment to our community and dedication to making their home accessible for their specific family needs while being very thoughtful in their design that respects the character of their neighborhood and city.

I believe their proposed home will be a valuable addition to our community, and I wholeheartedly support their design. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a horizontal line, representing the name Joan Ong.

Joan Ong

Dear Members of the Design Review Board,

I am writing to express my full support for my friend's family, the Kums. They have been longtime residents of South Pasadena and we are excited for their family's new home design.

As a fellow resident and someone who recently completed a remodel to accommodate a family member with special needs, I fully understand the importance of creating a safe and functional home environment. Their project is not only necessary but has been thoughtfully planned to meet their family member's unique needs.

Currently, the condition of their home not only impacts the family's quality of life but also affects the aesthetics of our neighborhood. Their new design will bring an attractive, well-maintained presence to the area, enhancing the overall appeal of South Pasadena. I am confident this project will increase the value of surrounding homes and contribute to what makes South Pasadena a great city to be a part of.

With the city's support, I hope they will be able to complete this remodel in a timely manner, allowing them to live in a home that truly supports their needs while benefiting our community as a whole.

Thank you for considering this impactful project, which I believe will enrich both their lives and our neighborhood.

-Jeff and Julie Su

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is a stylized, cursive 'J' followed by a vertical line, representing 'Jeff'. The signature on the right is a more legible cursive 'Julie Su'.



November 11, 2024

Dear South Pasadena Design Review Board Members,

My name is Nina, and my husband and I are longtime South Pasadena residents. We own Tomato Pie Pizza Joint in South Pasadena which has allowed us to connect deeply with our community over the years. I also had the privilege of serving as the doula for Melvin Kum's daughter, which gave me the opportunity to know the Kum family well and witness the warmth and care they bring to those around them.

I feel that the Kums' proposed design for 516 Arroyo Drive is beautifully planned and will create a welcoming space for a lifetime of memories. The design is thoughtful, accommodating their family's specific needs, and aligns with how it represents South Pasadena as a community. I wholeheartedly support their vision.

Thank you for considering my support of the Kum family's home design proposal.

Warm regards,

Nina Phelan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nina Phelan', written in a cursive style.

November 1, 2024

RE: Mr. Melvin Kum's Home  
516 Arroyo Drive

Dear Design Review Board,

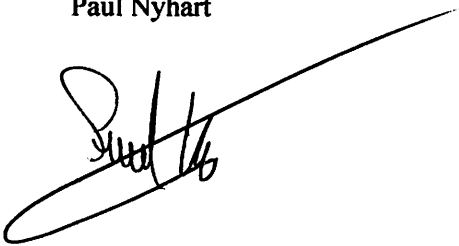
I currently live on Pasadena Avenue, not far from Mr. Melvin Kum and his family on Arroyo Drive.

Since moving to South Pasadena with my wife 4 years ago, I have gotten to know all of her friends and their family in this city. The Kum family over the years would share their design plans and the reasons behind them. I believe the plans will ease the burden of access to the home as well as maintain the overall aesthetics of what makes South Pasadena a desirable town to live in.

I *approve* of their design because it will be beneficial to the street they live on and this community and I hope the members of the design review board will agree as well.

Sincerely,

Paul Nyhart

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Nyhart", is written over a large, sweeping horizontal line that extends across the page.

October 25, 2024

Dear Members of the Planning and Design Review Board of South Pasadena,

We are writing to express our support of the Kum family's proposed home design at 516 Arroyo Drive. We are fellow property owners in South Pasadena and longstanding members of this community and recently completed a housing development in SoPas which has given us deep appreciation for the thought, effort, and compliance involved in designing a home that aligns with the character of our City. The Kum family's design embodies a harmonious blend of aesthetic appeal and functional accessibility, which can be a challenging balance to achieve. Their commitment to ensuring that the design complements the neighborhood shows their genuine respect for the architectural integrity of South Pasadena, while also creating a home that meets the practical needs of their family.

We understand firsthand the importance of a design that meets personal needs without compromising the values of the surrounding area. This proposed design does exactly that, preserving the charm of the neighborhood while thoughtfully enhancing it. We believe their home will add both beauty and continuity to our community, and we urge you to support their plans.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Richard & Ying Mercado*

Richard & Ying Mercado, South Pasadena Residents  
521 Mission Street South Pasadena CA 91030 (323) 253-2066

October 28, 2024

Dear Planning and Design Review Board Members of South Pasadena,

I am writing as a longtime business owner and proud member of the South Pasadena community in strong support of the Kum family's proposed home design at 516 Arroyo Drive. Over the past years, my business, TeaMorrow, has become a gathering place for neighbors, students, and families alike, including the Kum family, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing well.

The Kum family's proposal thoughtfully combines modern functionality with architectural respect for South Pasadena's unique heritage. Their design aligns beautifully with the aesthetic and communal values we cherish in our city. As a business owner, I understand the importance of balancing tradition with thoughtful progress, and I see this project as an excellent reflection of that balance. Their vision not only fits well within the existing neighborhood but enhances it, adding to the welcoming, cohesive feel that we all appreciate in South Pasadena.

I respectfully urge the Design Review Board to support the Kum family's proposal, as it represents both a high standard of design and a commitment to our community's values. I am confident this home will serve as a beautiful, long-lasting addition to our city, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact it will bring to the neighborhood.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

*Shawn*

Warm regards,

Shawn Zhao

Owner, TeaMorrow

1005A Mission St, South Pasadena, CA 91030

October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Dear South Pasadena Planning and Design Review Board,

I'm writing as a family friend to show my full support for the proposed of Melvin Kum and the family's new home at 516 Arroyo Drive. I believe their plans would bring a fresh and positive change to our community, while still maintaining the charm of the area.

Their thoughtful approach to the design reflects their dedication to creating something beautiful and in harmony with the neighborhood. I hope the city will approve the project so the can move forward in creating a space their family can create more memories in.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shirley L. Yu", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Shirley L Yu, South Pasadena Resident  
1105 Avon Place, South Pasadena, CA 91030

November 1, 2024


To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my support for Melvin Kum and family's proposed home design. I have known the Kum family for several years, as our daughters attended school together in South Pasadena for many years. During this time, I have come to know them as thoughtful neighbors who are committed to contributing positively to our community.

I believe their proposed design is a well-considered addition to the neighborhood, and I fully support its approval.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Tanya Yu

1221 Lyndon Street, South Pasadena

November 1, 2024

To South Pasadena's Design Review Board Members,

My name is Vicky Lee, and I have been a long-time resident of South Pasadena.

I grew up and graduated from South Pasadena. My love for this city is what drew me back as a place where my husband and I look forward to raising our son.

Having known Bethany and her family (Mr & Mrs. Kum and sister Katie Kum) from Arroyo Vista to high school, **I want to share that I am in full support of the new layout and design of their home.**

Growing up, I would go over to her family's home a lot and over the years it has been hard not to notice the challenges her family has had to encounter. Due to the home's current layout, it doesn't allow proper and safe transport of family members with disabilities into the home. This has caused a lot of mental and physical stress on the family members.

The family wants to respect the character of the neighborhood, one of the many reasons they've called South Pasadena their home for generations.

The proposed redesign, which includes a garage placed for easy access, will help make sure all parties are able to safely make it into their home. Such a change is to better the well being and safety of the family.

I have no doubt that with these updates it will have fulfilled the purpose of creating a safe home environment allowing the Kum family to finally be free of the mental and physical stress they've had to encounter over the years.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate the opportunity to share my support for this family and why I believe the proposed improvements are much needed for the Kum family.

Warm Regards,



Vicky Lee

## **Attachment 2**

### **Public Comments Received**



**From:** [Jason Claypool](#)  
**To:** [PlanningComments](#)  
**Subject:** 516 Arroyo Drive DRB Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, November 7, 2024 12:07:12 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the City of South Pasadena. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the City of South Pasadena. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

I am a resident and Architect who resides within 500 feet of 516 Arroyo Drive. On one hand, I applaud the applicant for renovating the existing home and addressing the needs of the resident. On the other hand, I am really concerned about the design in plan and street elevation.

The proposed street frontage is reminiscent of the unfavorable post-war single-family design where garages and concrete driveways dominate the front yard. In addition, only bedrooms and closets front the street in this design. The result is also less and smaller windows at the front. Due to the deep lot size, I don't think it's too much to ask the owner to accommodate the garage at the rear. The 9-foot driveway width along the side yard is also reasonable to navigate. The floor plan and elevation turn their back on the street and community. I would encourage the applicant to consider a welcoming front door that includes curb appeal like a pedestrian walkway, inviting grand front door, porch with a bench, living and family rooms with large picture windows to create hierarchy, etc. These active spaces also receive guests to provide buffer to the more private parts of the house and reinforce the notion of "eyes on the street."

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Regards,  
Jason