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MARCH 2024

A PUBLICATION OF THE KENSINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

VOLUME 82 NUMBER 2

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Recap of Options					
Possible Option	Available	Need to Purchase/ Lease Property	Counter-party/ Litigation Risk	Meets Min Requirements	Major Construction Involved
PSB	Maybe	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Commercial	Maybe	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes
Residential	Maybe	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes
Vacant Land (not KPPCSD property)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes
EBMUD	No	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes
UUCB	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe
County Properties	Maybe	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes
KPPCSD land south of library	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Eminent Domain	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Three KPPCSD Meetings in One Night Showcase a Long-Awaited Conclusion

By Linnea Due

On February 8, the Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District (KPPCSD) held three meetings: a Town Hall, a closed meeting, and the regular board meeting of the district that manages the police, solid waste, and Kensington Park. To say the Town Hall was ill-publicized is to give too much credit. It was unpublished except on the KPPCSD website and a paragraph in the *Outlook*, which was only provided after prodding. The purpose of the meeting was to inform residents about the five hazard mitigation projects the district is applying for. The hope is that the district will receive funding from FEMA for one or more of these projects.

The projects include building a police station (cited as protecting lives, increasing resilience, and avoiding damage to prop-

erty), which interim general manager David Aranda admitted in his presentation was “a long shot”; upgrading the Recreation Building for seismic, wildfire resistance, and solar generation; two projects in tandem with the Kensington Fire Protection District, reducing fuel loads in Tilden Park and installing an early warning system. The last is to prune trees and vegetation along Kensington’s streets to prevent damage to power lines or blocked streets during storms (Aranda also noted that this is the county’s responsibility, not the district’s). Several members of the tiny audience (eight citizens attended in addition to KPPCSD directors, who left midway for their closed meeting) made suggestions or pointed out issues, such as establishing a cooling center in the Rec Building violates

See KPPCSD, page 3

Fiscal Analysis of District Reorganization Takes First Step

By Linnea Due

Our elected officials and staff did not take a break over the holidays, and the fruits of such are showing. A necessary step to reorganizing the two districts—the Kensington Fire Protection District (KFPD) and the Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District (KPPCSD)—is to gain an understanding of the financial situation and outlook of both districts. Would it be fiscally sound to make two districts into one?

More commonly called consolidation, this process entails dissolving the fire district and creating a combined board of both districts’ directors, with fire district contracts with El Cerrito continuing unchanged. As board directors’ terms expire, those seats would drop off until the directors got back down to the mandated five directors. It cannot work the other way around, as the fire district’s mandate is solely to deliver fire-related services, while a CSD such as the KPPCSD can offer a myriad of services. At this point, the KPPCSD manages the police, the solid waste contract with Bay View, and Kensington Park. In a combined district, it would also manage fire and emergency medical services.

On November 10, the two districts put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) to take on the fiscal analysis. A couple firms declined to submit a bid, citing that the scope of the task was too large, with only one answering the call, a firm called Ridgeline. The firm named February 2024 as its two-week window for information gathering

See Consolidation, page 3

Kensington and Beyond Update

February 2024



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Kensington Market Update

JAN. 2024 TO PRESENT	JAN - FEB 2022
2 Closed Sales	4 Closed Sales
Median List Price: \$1,349,500	Median List Price: \$1,196,000
Median Sales Price: \$1,887,500	Median Sales Price: \$1,512,500
Median Sq. Ft.: 2,567	Median Sq. Ft.: 1,861
Median Cost Per Sq. Ft.	Median Cost Per Sq. Ft.
List Price: \$674.19	List Price: \$715.07
Sales Price: \$819.51	Sales Price: \$800.30
Median Days on Market: 11	Median Days on Market: 21

10 Questions a seller should ask the agents they are interviewing to list their home. (Always interview more than one brokerage when looking for an agent to represent you).

Price and commission are important considerations. But, is that all?

1. What is your marketing strategy?
2. What is your valuation and pricing strategy for my property?
3. How will you protect me from the risks of the sale not closing?
4. How will you retain interested buyers and develop momentum to achieve multiple bids?
5. Is now the best time to place my property on the market? Why? If not, when is it and why?
6. Please explain in detail the difference in the range and quality of services I should expect from you and your firm.
7. Why do you think you are the best person to represent me and my home?
8. What do you recommend I do to prepare my home?
9. How long have you been an agent and what is your track record?
10. Is there anything else?

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The Kensington Community Council is dedicated to the improvement, development, and education of the community, and to the promotion of social welfare in Kensington. It enriches the community by providing educational and recreational programs for all ages and by publishing the Outlook, a monthly newsletter that covers local events and issues. KCC also provides a forum for all Kensington community groups to meet and coordinate their respective efforts toward the common good of the community.

APRIL 2024 DEADLINES

Advertising Deadline ❖ MAR.8
Editorial Deadline ❖ MAR.10

Opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are those of the writers and do not reflect the opinion of the Outlook, its editor, or the Kensington Community Council. Letters must be signed and include the resident's phone number and address (which will not be printed). Letters 350 words or under will appear in the print edition (space permitting). Any letter over 350 words will be printed in the online edition only. Publication of letters and articles is subject to space and the editor's discretion. Obituaries of Kensington residents are printed without charge. All material must be received by the 10th of the month preceding issue date: submit by email to editor@kensingtonoutlook.com. No press releases or PDFs; Word documents or text in the body of an email are acceptable.

Use one space, not two, after all periods.

KENSINGTON OUTLOOK

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Letters to the Editor

Proposed Police Building Just Too Expensive

Dear Editor:

On February 8 the KPPCSD delivered its findings regarding building a new building in Kensington for the police department. The estimated cost for this 3000 square foot building is 8 million dollars in today's money. Two to three years from now, when all the site studies are done, the plans are drawn and a permit is issued, these costs will have ballooned to at least 10 million dollars, requiring a huge property tax increase for Kensington residents. The district has very little money for this project, and grants will only cover a fraction of the costs.

In order to raise taxes, the issue must be put on the ballot and approved by a two-thirds majority. In 2014, two-thirds of voters did not approve the proposed Community Center bond measure for one-quarter this amount. Many of our residents live on a fixed income, and all of us feel the sting of rising costs, so it's highly unlikely a tax increase to support a 25-year bond of 8 million with interest equal to almost the cost of the loan at today's rate will be approved.

The police board is currently reviewing bids from surveyors at \$10,000-\$15,000 as well as soils engineers, estimated at \$60,000 in 2019 when the fire board was considering rebuilding the Public Safety Building at the same site. We're told that FEMA grants can pay for all these upfront soft costs, but what a waste this would be of that money, which should really go only to projects that can be funded. Given the unlikelihood of voters approving the tax increase needed to fund this project, the police board should abort any and all further work on relocating the police department to a new building.

Deborah Lane

KPPCSD

...from Front Page

Kensington Community Council's contract with the district, and that the Community Center had air conditioning so it might function better as a cooling center.

Aranda hoped that residents would fill out the county's hazard mitigation survey, in which residents can express their concern about top hazards and safety needs. So far, very few residents have taken the survey. It can be found on the KPPCSD home page at <https://www.kppcsd.org/>. Once the survey is closed, findings specific to Kensington will be shared in a later Outlook article.

Not the Taj Mahal

When the directors emerged from their closed meeting, they vaulted right into the regular board meeting shortly after 7pm. The headliner was the final report by Sarah Gough and Alex Aquino-Fike, the two directors on the committee to search for a site within Kensington to house the Kensington Police Department and district staff.

Aquino-Fike and Gough are wizards with Power Point presentations, and this was no exception. They reminded people what their remit was—to keep the police in Kensington—and showed a slide of Must-Haves for any police department, and another of standard items in a police department. For example, a must-have for the KPD is a locker room, while a gender-specific locker room is standard in most departments. Their point is that the police need a facility between 2,000-3,000 square feet to fit in all the must-haves and some of the standards, as well as space for district administration. The most that can be generated from the first floor of the Public Safety Building is around 1,200 square feet, and that option was abandoned last summer.

A colorful slide later on provided the crux of their argument: Red, yellow, and green squares indicated Yes, No, and Maybe for a list of factors of possible sites: whether the site is available, if the property needs to be purchased or leased, if there is litigation risk, if it meets minimum space requirements, and if major construction is involved. These factors were applied to the various sites, and the slope south of the library was the only option with four greens. (See chart, cover.)

Gough ticked off the advantages: the district owns the property, the site is available, presumably there is no litigation risk, and it meets minimum space requirements. On that note, Gough assured those in the audience and on Zoom that a 2,000-3,000 square foot building would not be visible from recreation areas in the park, and that a hundred percent of district money would go towards construction rather than purchasing a parcel or taking out a lease. "This is a huge cost savings," she said. She suggested that having a visible police presence on the Arlington could be a deterrent to crime, and that the police station would be part of a town center concept, close to the library, the Community Center, and the park itself. "We do not need or want a gigantic new building," she said. "This recommendation is not the 'Taj Mahal' that was previously spurned. This is the opposite of that." She was referring to a plan put forth by a director on the fire board for a 12,000 square foot edifice to house police and fire on the same slope, a proposal that went nowhere.

The good news was all the green squares, the bad news was the cost, which Gough characterized as "crazy high." The committee presented ballpark figures from two experts, Candace Wong and Mallory Cusenbery, both with extensive experience designing public safety buildings. "These are called ballpark for a reason," Gough cautioned. "Nobody could have accurate numbers at this point."

Today's figure for a 2,000 square foot building is upwards of 5.5 million, for the 3,000 square foot around 8 million. But with a mandate to keep the police in Kensington, the two concluded that there is no other option that would meet minimum space requirements.

Architect Deborah Lane spoke during the public comment period, saying that by the time the project is started, 8 million will become 10 million. She called Kensington residents "fiscally conservative," and believes that a measure that would increase taxes to finance construction will not pass. "The key stakeholders that you're talking to are not the people who are going to pay the taxes," she said, referring to the police chief, district staff, and John Gioia, people cited by the committee as proponents of the plan. Lane warned that a great deal of community money could be sunk into the project before a vote was taken, money wasted if a financing plan does not pass.

Board president Dave Spath spoke of FEMA loans, even for the design process. Gough reiterated that she and Aquino-Fike are not "sugar-coating" the costs. The committee's recommendation was accepted unanimously. Now the full board will take up the project; ahead are feasibility studies, geo and drainage analysis, architectural engineering, and much more before a final decision is made.



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Consolidation

...from Front Page

and review necessary to understand the financial gains, if any, by combining the districts.

At its December meeting, the KPPCSD board accepted Ridgeline's \$49,620 bid with the proviso that the fire board also accept the bid at its meeting later in December (the two districts would split the cost).

At the fire district's December meeting, a number of objections were raised, such as that the fire board had already hammered out a five-year fiscal analysis as part of the Public Safety Building reconstruction project. The police district remained unsure where or how it would house the police and did not have much of the material requested for the analysis. Given that costs for housing the police was unknown (or where the money might come from), fire district president Julie Stein and director Jim Watt asked how the police district could submit meaningful material for a fiscal analysis.

After heated discussion among the board directors, it was agreed to hold off on approving the bid until the following meeting, when Ridgeline principal Dmitry Semenov would be invited to answer questions.

Semenov had been on the December call and was disturbed by the dissension. Two days after the fire board's December 20 meeting, he wrote to fire district manager Mary Morris-Mayorga and KPPCSD interim manager David Aranda, noting that "Bringing two agencies together will be a monumental task even if everyone is rowing in the same direction."

Later in the email, he wrote, "With the current attitude of the two fire district board members, I don't think we can [make the process a success]. As long as these board members have the attitude that they displayed in the last meeting, trying to do a fiscal study will be a waste of your money and of your and our time. Somehow the attitude of the fire district board needs to change, whether it is through the addition of another member, retirement of these two members, or an attitude adjustment of these two members. Until that happens, we are not prepared to commence the work, as we cannot guarantee that we can provide a good service for you." You can tell things are not going well when the not-yet-hired consultant calls for attitude adjustments or retirements of board directors.

Visioning necessary to move forward

Tempers had cooled by the January fire board meeting, and Semenov made a good showing, explaining that he believed a fiscal analysis must be preceded by a visioning of what the districts would look like in five or ten years as separate entities and as a single district. "Work through the scenarios," he suggested, "and see what you have to gain and what you have to lose... Only once you have the clear vision should you go into the fiscal analysis."

He volunteered to lead such visioning and also said that the timetable could and would change depending upon what happened in the visioning session and how much material the districts could gather. After these and other assurances, the motion to accept the RFP passed unanimously.

At that meeting, Watt and Stein expressed a concern: that the CalPERS obligations of the police district could sink the CSD, impacting the delivery of fire and emergency medical service. Stein also wondered, if consolidation was the goal, it made more sense to consolidate with other fire districts, such as Berkeley and Albany, to combine like-to-like services.



– March 31 – Easter Sunday Celebration!

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Colusa Circle 5K Benefits El Cerrito High Garden Program

By Rae Quigley

Get ready to lace up your sneakers for the 6th annual Colusa Circle 5K on Saturday, April 13! Hosted by Zip Code East Bay, this community fun run welcomes participants of all ages and abilities. Racers will start in Colusa Circle at 8am and follow the scenic sidewalk course as it leads through charming Kensington and El Cerrito neighborhoods.

What makes this year's 5K even more special is its wonderful cause. Proceeds from the event will support Growing Together, an organization dedicated to enriching the lives of students across West Contra Costa, Oakland, and San Lorenzo unified school districts. From greening schoolyards to providing vital youth environmental education, planting trees, and improving fresh food access, Growing Together is making a tangible difference in our communities. Funds raised from this year's Colusa Circle 5K will bolster Growing Together's garden program at El Cerrito High School, fostering greener spaces and hands-on learning experiences for students.

Mark your calendars, rally your friends and family, and let's run together for a brighter future at the Colusa Circle 5K! Secure your spot early at ColusaCircle5K.org for a discounted rate and join us in supporting this worthy cause. If running isn't your forte, consider lending a hand by volunteering—simply reach out to hello@zipcodeeastbay.com to get involved.

Come to Meetings

By Linnea Due

The two new district board presidents want people to participate in district government by coming to meetings or watching on Zoom during the meeting or after the fact. “We need people to come to these meetings,” Kensington Police Protection and Community Services (KPPCSD) district president Dave Spath said, bemoaning the fact that only a few people attended the January meeting. The fire board's head, Daniel Levine, echoed the same concern. Neither director wants to govern in a vacuum; both need citizen input.

Here's how to attend: KPPCSD meetings are held in the Community Center on the second Thursday of the month. Kensington Fire Protection District meetings are held in the Community Center on the third Wednesday of the month. Zoom links are listed on agendas at <https://www.kppcsd.org/> (go to Governance and click on Board Meetings); fire board meetings are at <https://www.kensingtonfire.org/board-meetings>. Click on Agenda for the Zoom link. Another way to give input is to send an email to district general managers or write a letter to the *Outlook*. Good governance needs participation; a couple hours of attention per month can make a big difference.

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KENSINGTON K-9s

Primrose and Candy: Guide Dogs Enjoying a Career Change
By Winston Churchill, Bulldog

Over the years, I've frequently seen Primrose, a black Labrador retriever, walking by my house. Often, she is with another retriever, also exceptionally friendly, calm, and well-behaved. It turns out that they were always passing by because my house was part of their one-mile loop, affectionately called Primrose Path, which is an essential part of their training as guide dogs for the blind.

Primrose has been a Kensington resident for 15 years. At just eight weeks old, she was the first guide dog puppy to join Sam and Cindy's family. Cindy learned about Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB), the largest guide dog school in North America, when volunteers brought puppies to her workplace and discussed their puppy-raising program.

They've now raised six guide dog puppies, including Primrose, who now has a two-year-old golden retriever sister, Candy. Both are enjoying lives of leisure following their “career change” from guide dogs to family pets.

GDB is always looking for puppy-raisers to help people with visual impairments have equal opportunities and live full, independent lives. Volunteers like Sam, Cindy, and their children, Sophie and Nick, raise the puppies for 18-20 months until they're recalled to GDB for further medical evaluations, behavioral assessments, and intensive training. Until they're recalled, the puppy-raisers work hard preparing their puppies to one day assist blind individuals.

Most pet parents feel significant accomplishment after successfully potty training and socializing their dogs. Some even complete obedience classes and teach them a few tricks. But guide dog puppy-raisers go much further.

The pups go everywhere with them, so they become accustomed to as many stressful situations as possible. Primrose and Candy traveled on trains, buses, airplanes, and cars; they went with their humans to airports, stores, restaurants, and offices. They were trained to walk across grates and puddles and to not relieve themselves for at least one mile, until they were directed to. This was instilled in them during their regular walks along Primrose Path. They're lovingly raised to one day empower individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

And when it's time for the puppy-raisers to bring their charges back to the GDB campus for the next step in their training, tears flow freely. Sam and Cindy explained that although it's never easy to bring their puppies back, they go into each new puppy experience with a prepared mindset, thinking of them as very special exchange students that will one day need to leave.

It's gratifying to see former puppies in their new lives as guide dogs and K9 buddy dogs. Without puppy-raisers like Primrose and Candy's family, GDB would not have been able to graduate over 16,000 guide dog teams over the years.

But the standards are incredibly high for guide dogs. Dogs that don't pass the stringent medical, behavioral, or guide dog training requirements undergo a career change. Although Primrose and Candy didn't graduate to become guide dogs, they are enjoying their new careers as pampered family pets.

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MARCH 2024

KENSINGTON OUTLOOK

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Sunday Movie at ACC March 17

By Ruth Robinson

Killers of the Flower Moon exposes the turbulent history of the relations between Whites and the Osage Nation. The book by David Grann and now the film provide a disturbing look at the deep-seated prejudices that continue to cast a shadow over our country.

At the end of the 19th century, the Osage Indians were driven onto a presumed worthless expanse of land in northeastern Oklahoma. But this territory turned out to be atop one of the largest oil deposits in the USA; to obtain that oil, prospectors were required to pay the tribe for leases and royalties.

By the 1920s the members of the Osage Nation had become the wealthiest people per capita in the world. And then the Osage began to die under mysterious circumstances.

Arlington Community Church offers this film and a discussion to follow on Sunday, March 17, at 2pm. Due to the length of the movie (3.5 hours), there will be a brief intermission. Following the film, a community meal of pizza will be served as we discuss this important, yet disturbing, period in history. Please sign up in advance (call the church office and leave a message: 510 526-9146) to indicate your attendance and if you will stay for dinner.

On Saturday, February 10, a helicopter landed on the big meadow at Kensington Park around noon. One of our firefighters is experienced in helicopter rescue missions, and the bird swooped down to pick him up for a rescue at Mt. Diablo. Mid-flight, the mission was scratched, so the copter returned to drop off our firefighter. Photo by Linda Lipscomb.

Kensington Author Out with New Book

By Linnea Due

Longtime Kensington resident Jeffrey Meyers is out with a new bio, *James Salter*, of an extraordinary life. Salter, who died in 2015, was a world traveler who graduated from West Point and served as a fighter pilot in the Korean War. He was a screenwriter, film director, and novelist. Using as source material Salter's writings and eighty letters the two exchanged, Meyers pays particular attention to Salter's fictional style, including his literary influences. Meyers has published 54 books, most recently *Resurrections: Authors, Heroes—and a Spy*.

The Void in the Unknown #9-10" (diptych), 2021

Retrospective Solo Exhibition of Kensington Artist

By Linnea Due

Longtime Kensington resident and artist Mariet Braakman died in 2021. Now her work will be featured in a retrospective exhibition in Half Moon Bay, at M. Stark Gallery. The show opens March 2 and runs through April 6.

Gallery owner Marianna Stark writes, “Mariet and I met through Berkeley Art Center when I joined the board in 2013. She was an active member who entered every member show and juried call. She and her husband Bernard attended every event. I loved her work from the first time I saw it, and we quickly became friends. When I first knew I was going to open my gallery in Half Moon Bay, she is the first artist I offered a solo show to because her imaginary landscapes remind me of the terrain of here, especially the cliffs of Poplar Beach.

“She accepted the invitation but also told me at the time that her breast cancer had returned, and she didn't know if she would make it. She began a monumental size diptych which she did complete before we lost her in November 2021. Bernard and I have been collaborating on the retrospective solo exhibition of her work. This would have been her first solo show. Although losing Mariet is sad, I think this is a happy story of the possibilities that come from being an active part of a community of people who share the same interests.”

Stark has issued a special invitation to Kensington residents to come to the opening reception Sunday, March 3, from 1-4pm or any weekend during the exhibition. The gallery is open Fridays from 4:30-6, Saturdays from 12-5, and Sundays from 12-4, at 727 Main Street in Half Moon Bay.

The Void in the Unknown #7, 2021

ACC's Black Wealth Builders Fund Successfully Completes Its Third year

By Susan Russell

The Black Wealth Builders (BWB) Fund, a project of Arlington Community Church (ACC), successfully wrapped up its third year, making three new loans for \$20,000 each, all in Oakland. The fund, and the ideas behind it, continues to gain traction nationally and even internationally.

Launched by ACC in 2021, BWB is designed to help offset the longstanding barriers to Black homeownership in the East Bay. The fund provides zero-interest loans for down payment assistance, to be paid back only when the property is refinanced or sold.

Since 2021, 20 loans have been made to first-time Black homebuyers throughout Contra Costa and Alameda counties. New Black homebuyers have been supported in Richmond, Concord, Pittsburg, Martinez, El Sobrante, Oakland, San Lorenzo, and Antioch. Loans range from \$15,000 to \$20,000.

“This is a wonderful example of our community coming together to support our Black neighbors,” says Jen Chapman, pastor at ACC. “Through the efforts of ACC and many other churches, organizations, and private individuals, over \$300,000 has been raised, and I think we're just getting started!”

The project continues to gain attention from the media. In 2023 BWB was featured in the Daily Kos, the Richmond Standard, the Lake Institute on Faith and Giving, public radio station KALW, and the German “solutions-based journalism” podcaster Squirrel News.

ACC has launched an initiative to help others in the United Church of Christ denomination become designated as Black Wealth Builders churches. In addition, other churches and denominations—notably Epworth United Methodist Church in Berkeley—are launching similar efforts.

In 2024, ACC plans to continue to raise money and spread the word, not only about this project, but about the need for reparations projects and the benefits they bring. “One of our 2023 loan recipients said it best,” noted Rev. Chapman. “She said, ‘I just thought homeownership was a pipe dream. But there were so many miracles.’ Her words inspire us to continue our work.”

Contributions to the Black Wealth Builders fund can be made by sending a check to the Richmond Community Foundation, 3260 Blume Dr., Suite 110, Richmond, CA 94806. (Please make sure to indicate Black Wealth Builders Fund in the memo line.) All contributions are fully tax-deductible.

ACC is planning a community fundraiser on Thursday evening, April 11, which will be an opportunity to eat good food, learn more about the BWB, and meet many of those involved in the project. Look for more information in the April issue of the *Outlook*.

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KENSINGTON

Community Education



KCC Summer Camp 2024

Join us for KCC Summer Camp 2024 where kids can enjoy the outdoors with exciting team games, arts & crafts, dance, sports, Olympic week, cooking, tennis and much more! Each week KCC Camp offers a 9am-5pm camp day filled with adventure and fun. KCC Camp is located at the Kensington Park Community Center and Recreation Building. Camp is available for Fall 2024 students entering 1st grade through incoming 6th graders.
\$425 Kensington Resident/\$470 Nonresident per week

Week 1 June 10- June 14

Theme: Rainbows & Unicorns • Specialty: Creative Crafts w/ April Schlanger • Mid-Week Activity: Sterling the Bubblesmith

Week 2 *June 17–June 21 (no camp Wednesday 6/19) *cost \$350/\$385

Theme: Superheroes • Specialty: Carpentry

Week 3 June 24– June 28

Theme: Enchanted Forest • Specialty: Fun with Food • Mid-Week Activity: Brian Scott Magic Show

Week 4 *July 1- July 5 (no camp Thursday 7/4) *cost is \$350/\$385

Theme: Stars & Stripes • Specialty: Dance Fitness • Mid-Week Activity: Cooking Creations

Week 5 July 8 – July 12

Theme: Dino Days • Specialty: Sports Medley • Mid-Week Activity: Visit from the Vivarium

Week 6 July 15 - July 19

Theme: Jr. Chef Showdown • Specialty: Cooking w/ April • Mid-Week Activity: Cooking Competition

Week 7 July 22 – July 26

Theme: Animal Adventures • Specialty: Cooking Creations • Mid-Week Activity: Petting Zoo

Week 8 July 29 - August 2

Theme: Under the Sea • Specialty: Legos • Mid-Week Activity: Chocolate Creations

Week 9 August 5 - August 9

Theme: Olympic Week • Specialty: Camp Olympics

Week 10 August 12 - August 16

Theme: Beach Week • Specialty: Sports Medley • Mid-Week Activity: Cooking with Vicky

Online Camp Registration opens February 27th at 7:00pm

Summer Camp Counselor Opportunity We have openings for summer camp counselors. If you are a senior in high school or older, enjoy working with children, and want to be part of a fun, energetic team, please download an application at [KensingtonCommunityCouncil.org/Summer-Camp](https://www.kensingtoncommunitycouncil.org/Summer-Camp)

KASEP

Spring KASEP Registration opens on Tuesday, March 5th at 7pm for Kindergarten and 7:30 for grades 1-6. You can find our full list of classes on our website as well as a link to register for classes.

Important dates

Summer Camp Registration February 27th

Spring KASEP Registration March 5th

Spring KASEP session begins March 18th



Adult and Family Classes

Mediterranean Cooking

When: Every Tuesday evening in the Community Center
Time: 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM.
Location: Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave, Kensington
Price: \$45 per class, which includes all materials needed for the class.
Flexible Attendance: Join us each week for a comprehensive culinary journey or drop in when your schedule permits
Feb 27th: Italy Featuring Elba Island
March 5th: Spain featuring Andalusian Cuisine
March 12th: Croatia
March 19th: Greece
March 26th: Moroccan Cuisine Part 1

Free Style Stone Wrapping Jewelry Making class

When: Friday, March 22nd Time: 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM.
Location: Recreation Building (Bldg E), 59 Arlington Ave, Kensington
Price: \$45 per class, which includes all materials needed for the class.

Family Toddler Yoga in the Park Lori Hess with Way to Glow Kids Yoga will host family yoga time when parents and kids will playfully explore yoga poses, breathing exercises, and mindfulness activities together.

Family Yoga will take place on Sundays @ 10:00-10:45 (kids aged 2 to 5) and @ 11:00-11:45 (kids aged 5 to 10) on the grassy lawn outside the KCC Office/Recreation Building (past the tennis courts) or, if raining, class will be inside the Recreation Building. Next classes will be 3/3, 3/17, 3/24, 4/14 & 4/28. If possible, please bring a waterproof blanket/tarp, two yoga mats (we will have extra mats available if needed), warm layers, and a water bottle. Masks are optional. Suggested cost: \$25 per person; discounted tuition

and scholarships are available. Please complete a registration form at <https://bit.ly/38Sq91k> and contact waytoglowkidsyoga@gmail.com with questions about the class.

Cardio Dance with Karma Smart

Fridays 11:15-12:15 Community Center

Cost \$15 drop in or register online

Yoga with Anja Borgstrom

Strength & Balance Yoga -Tuesdays at 8:30am

Strength & Balance Yoga -Thursdays at 11:30

Cost is \$20 drop in or register online

Tai Chi with Nobuo Nishi

Wednesdays & Fridays from 9:30-11:00am

Drop-in fee is \$15

Register at [KensingtonCommunityCouncil.org/adult-and-family-classes](https://www.kensingtoncommunitycouncil.org/adult-and-family-classes)

Keep checking our website for updated adult class schedules.

The Kensington Outlook can now be found at: [KensingtonOutlook.com](https://www.KensingtonOutlook.com)
Archive copies can also be found on our website dating back to 2003.
KCC/KASEP Office: 59 Arlington Ave., Recreation Building Kensington CA 94707
E-mail: Info@KensingtonCommunityCouncil.org, or call 510-525-0292.
Our website is: www.kensingtoncommunitycouncil.org.



Programs for Film Buffs, Babies, Dogs at the Library

Enjoy free programs offered by the Kensington Library at 61 Arlington Avenue. Call 510-524-3043 with questions.

Thank you to the Friends of Kensington Library for making library programs possible.

Tues, March 5, 6:30pm, Castoff's Knitting Club Meets the 1st Tuesday of each month. Open to all levels of knitters. Bring your own yarn!

Tues, March 12, 6:30pm Cinema Chat The library's Cinema Chat meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm. After

watching a monthly film selection at home, join other cinema enthusiasts for a light discussion on the movie. Please note, this program is not a screening, but all titles are available through the library's streaming service Kanopy, or please inquire regarding availability of DVDs for borrowing. This month's film is *Tokyo Story* (1953), by Yasujiro Ozu. The film, which follows an aging couple's journey to visit their grown children in bustling postwar Tokyo, surveys the rich and complex world of family life with the director's customary delicacy and incisive perspective on social mores. Direct link to movie www.kanopy.com/en/product/113267

Tues, March 19, 6pm Family Movie

Night Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem! Join us for a family-friendly movie evening with Leonardo, Donatello, Raphael and Michelangelo. Cowabunga!

Tues, March 26, 6pm Author Talk with Luisa Maria Giulianetti Join poet, professor and local author Luisa Giulianetti for a discussion of her multi-genre poetry book *Agrodolce*, which explores the complexities of 'home,' and draws on personal experience, as well as on the stories of ancestors. Copies of the book will be available for sale and check out.

Fridays, March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Baby and Toddler Storytime Fun stories, songs, action rhymes, and more! Great for increasing early literacy skills and making friends. Two identical sessions. 10am & 11am.

Tuesdays, March 5, 12, 26 Family Storytime Lots of picture books, songs, rhymes, and fun! Stuffed animals & pajamas welcome. 6:30pm.

Tuesdays, March 5, 19 Read to a Dog

Join a licensed therapy dog for a 15-minute reading session every first and third Tuesday afternoon. 3-4pm

Monday, March 25, 6:30-8pm Kensington Library Book Club The club meets online via Zoom, usually on the fourth Monday of each month. The selection for March is *Violeta* by Isabel Allende.

March 9 – April 30 Come to the library to enjoy a satellite art show from Art of the African Diaspora, showcasing works by Orin Carpenter: www.orincarpenter.com



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OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT. Kensington Village Center @ 268 Arlington Ave, 250 SF, 1st Floor, adjacent to waiting area. Private. Call Bart Jones @ 510-527-9328.

PARENT COACHING - early childhood specialist Susan Gann, former preschool teacher/director turned child psychotherapist (retired). Phone/Zoom sessions available. Resume and references available upon request. 510-604-2375

Worried about Earthquakes or Wildfires?

Fill out the countywide survey. Go to www.kppcsd.org to find the survey link on the home page. A robust response to the survey is the first step to getting grants.

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Palm Sunday
3/24
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GOOD NEWS: A KINGDOM FOR ALL

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Soup Supper & Service
GOOD NEWS: LOVE FOR ALL

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KENSINGTON EATS OUT

Kensington Eats Out at a Pop-Up

By Ittai Shiu

Amidst the bustling traffic in El Cerrito, there’s a hidden gem and a recent addition to the area. Blink and you’ll miss it. Even during a brief pause at a stop light when there’s a chance to look around, it’s highly probable that you’ll still miss it.

There’s no signage on the building itself, so look for the wine barrels sitting on the sidewalk as your clue, or perhaps you’ll spot their small sandwich board just outside their front door. Find parking somewhere near 10368 San Pablo Avenue, and you’ve arrived at Banter, a wine bar with a warm atmosphere, welcoming decor, and communal tables.

Offering a curated selection of old and new world wines, Banter focuses on small producers who prioritize minimal intervention from vineyard to bottle. On location, you can purchase a bottle from the shelves to enjoy at home or savor a glass (or bottle) in-house. If you’d like something to eat while you’re there, choose from various delicious snacks including cheese, charcuterie, and other tasty treats.

During the pandemic, while drinking wine and eating cheese in their backyard, owners Claire Sullivan and Devin Hohler were inspired to open a wine bar, but they wanted their wine bar to feel like “home”—comfy, casual, no frills, just...chill. A collection of cozy couches in the back creates an ambiance reminiscent of enjoying a drink in the living room of your most stylish friend.

Classic VHS tapes and ‘80s knick-knacks are precariously stacked high next to small vintage TVs playing films that will take you back in time. When I was there last, the original Flash Gordon (1936) was playing. but I didn’t get to hear it because the bar is constantly spinning LPs from an ever-expanding vinyl collection, fueled by contributions from patrons. Finally, a pinball machine in the back room provides an entertaining distraction between glasses and adds to the decor’s nostalgic charm.

With a partial kitchen, Banter partners with local talent and the community to create new opportunities by featuring “pop-ups”—temporary restaurants that allow chefs and restaurateurs to try out a new neighborhood, experiment with their menu, generate a following, or just get some great



experience for their staff.

During my most recent visit, I got a front-row seat at the bar to witness Chef Emmanuel Galvan from the restaurant Bolita Masa work his magic with fresh masa, a must-have ingredient at the center of all his signature dishes. Most notable was the Tamal de Calabaza which featured squash masa, mole negro tamal, roasted kabocha, and cashew crema. A nice complement was the Papas Rositazadas, simple roasted potatoes with black garlic aioli. Both were deliciously elevated and beautifully plated for such a casual environment.

Unfortunately by the time you read this Bolita Masa would have moved on to its next location, but you can track Galvan down at www.bolitamasa.com. Banter will continue to feature pop-ups. To find out what’s in store next, visit their location or follow their Instagram @banter_winebar.

As temporary as the pop-up food concept is, Banter is hopefully here for good as they focus on what’s most important, most fittingly stated by the intentionally sloppy, hand-painted sign in front “Bad Signs, Good Wigns!”

Banter Wine Bar
10368 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito

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KENSINGTON MARKET UPDATE

The median price of single family homes in Kensington increased over the course of 2023 to \$1,565,000. Inner East Bay inventory is higher than it was a year ago, and with the decline in mortgage rates, we expect 2024 to be even more active.

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MEDIAN SALE PRICE OF KENSINGTON SINGLE FAMILY HOMES

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\$1.4M

\$1.3M

\$1.2M

\$1.1M

\$1.0M

\$1,490,000

\$1,424,000

\$1,515,000

\$1,565,000

2023 Q1

2023 Q2

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2023 Q4

*Source: MLS

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