

Boero, Kristina

From: Juachon, Luz
Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2024 1:32 PM
To: Boero, Kristina
Subject: FW: Camp Ramah support letter

Forwarding for your information.

From: Rick Scott <pcmediaprinting@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2024 1:07 PM
To: Juachon, Luz <Luz.Juachon@ventura.org>
Subject: Camp Ramah support letter

WARNING: If you believe this message may be malicious use the Phish Alert Button to report it or forward the message to Email.Security@ventura.org.

Ventura County Planning Commission
800 S. Victoria Ave
Ventura, CA 93009

Dear Members of the Ventura County Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my strong support for Camp Ramah's permit application for the construction of the Goldstine Machon Shetach. As a recreation professional at a similar facility in the area, I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact that camps like Camp Ramah have on the youth in our community.

Camps provide a safe and nurturing environment where young people come together, grow, and thrive. They offer a unique space where children and teens can develop life skills, build lasting friendships, and explore their identities in an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding. Camp Ramah, in particular, has been a beacon of these values, contributing significantly to the well-being and growth of its participants and the broader community.

In a time when antisemitism is alarmingly on the rise in America, it is more important than ever to support and uplift our Jewish community. Camp Ramah has been a vital part of this effort, offering a sanctuary for Jewish youth to connect with their heritage and faith while promoting inclusivity and respect for all. The Jewish people have been a blessing to the world, contributing to the rich tapestry of our society in countless ways, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that spaces like Camp Ramah continue to thrive.

The construction of the Goldstine Machon Shetach is not just a physical expansion; it is an investment in the future of our youth and the enduring values of community, education, and respect. The new facility

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will provide essential programming space, enhancing the camp's ability to serve its campers and fulfill its mission of fostering leadership, character development, and spiritual growth.

I urge you to approve this project, recognizing the positive impact that Camp Ramah has had and will continue to have on the lives of many. Supporting this initiative is not only an endorsement of the camp's future but also a statement of solidarity with the values that unite and uplift our diverse community.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

Richard Scott

Boero, Kristina

From: Nancy Pepper <nancypepper6@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 18, 2024 1:55 PM
To: Boero, Kristina
Subject: Hi Kristina

WARNING: If you believe this message may be malicious use the Phish Alert Button to report it or forward the message to Email.Security@ventura.org.

My name is Nancy Pepper. I live at 851 McAndrew Rd. in Ojai.

I am writing to you about CUP No. 3697.

I feel that the expansion is not in keeping with our neighborhood. The increased noise and traffic and would negatively impact our semi-rural neighborhood.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Nancy Pepper

Boero, Kristina

From: Aaron Alpert <alpert1988@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 29, 2024 12:52 PM
To: Boero, Kristina
Subject: PL18-0052 & PL23-0002 – Planning Commission Public Comment for Camp Ramah

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Aaron Alpert
299 Franklin St., Unit 301
Redwood City, CA 94063
(818) 687-9717
aaron@nirkoda.com

August 26, 2024

800 S Victoria Ave #1920
Ventura, CA 93009

To the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors of Ventura County:

I was heartened to learn of the Goldstine Machon *Shetach* project at Camp Ramah in Ojai, what it means for the Jewish community and for Ventura County. I hope you will support this project, and that it will enrich the area and its inhabitants.

I myself am a beneficiary of the Jewish camping experience, and as a youth, I attended Camp Alonim in Simi Valley for 11 years. That connected me with many friends I still keep in contact with, and allowed me to explore my heritage in a safe, nurturing space. Jewish summer camps are hothouses that grow caring, empathetic, civil-minded individuals who help to raise up their communities, and I know this project will help move Ramah's program into its next era of seeding Ventura County with good citizens.

As I grew older, I became very involved with Israeli folk dance, a rewarding cultural activity, and today I run several Israeli dance events in Northern California. While looking for a venue for my weekend Israeli dance retreat, called Nirkoda Ba'Kerem, I did consider Ramah, but ended up choosing another venue. While the primary factor was the lack of availability on my preferred date, I also realized that the aging facilities did not serve my dancers' needs very well, and the same is true for campers. The Goldstine Machon *Shetach* is an important step in modernizing the camping experience for both campers and potential facility renters.

You have a fantastic opportunity to elevate a great cultural institution right in your backyard, one that means so much to me personally, to the Ramah community, and to the larger Ventura County community who benefit from having an educated, engaged populace. I trust that you will boldly support this endeavor.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron A.' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Aaron Alpert

Israeli dance teacher and friend of Camp Ramah in Ojai

Aaron Alpert

Mainspring Energy, Sr. Reliability Engineer

Stanford University, M.S. 2017

UC Berkeley, B.S. 2010, M.S. 2011

818-687-9717

Boero, Kristina

From: Noam H Arzt, PhD <arzt@hln.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 29, 2024 3:05 PM
To: Boero, Kristina
Cc: Rabbi Joe, Camp Ramah in California; jason@ramah.org
Subject: PL18-0052 & PL23-0002 – Planning Commission Public Comment for Camp Ramah

WARNING: If you believe this message may be malicious use the Phish Alert Button to report it or forward the message to Email.Security@ventura.org.

Dear Chair Zimmerman-Garcia and members of the Commission,

I write you today in full support of Camp Ramah in California and its updated conditional use permit. Camp Ramah has been in the Ojai Valley for nearly 70 years and is one of the premier camps of its type in the United States - Ventura County should be proud to have the camp located there. Ramah serves a wide set of constituents year-round, including summer childhood programs, off-season adult/family programs and retreats, weddings and other lifecycle events, and religious conferences. Ramah is one of the largest employers in the county. My son, Jesse, spent several summers as a camper, and several summers as a Ramah staff member working with special needs children including support for special needs kids working in the local community as part of Ramah's Ezra (Hebrew for "help") Program.

Ramah has always been a good citizen in its community. The new facility will reduce noise in part through the construction of additional indoor facilities to bring more programming inside. Ramah has made substantial investments in its campus - and therefore the county - through its long presence, and tries to be responsive to any concerns raised by its neighbors.

Please approve the CUP so the camp may continue to provide valuable programming and facilities for its community, the Ojai Valley, and the region.

Regards,

Noam

Noam H. Arzt, PhD, FAMIA, FHIMSS

President, HLN Consulting, LLC

858/538-2220 | arzt@hln.com | @noamarzt | @HLNConsulting | <https://www.hln.com/>

Boero, Kristina

From: Alana Rotter <alana.rotter@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 29, 2024 8:52 PM
To: Boero, Kristina
Subject: PL18-0052 & PL23-0002 – Planning Commission Public Comment for Camp Ramah

WARNING: If you believe this message may be malicious use the Phish Alert Button to report it or forward the message to Email.Security@ventura.org.

Dear Chair Zimmerman-Garcia and members of the Commission,

I urge you to approve Camp Ramah in California's updated conditional use permit.

My children have attended Camp Ramah for the past six summers, and my husband and I fondly remember attending weekend programs there when we were growing up as well. We treasure Camp Ramah because of the magical experience it provides for our children, and for so many others. It is also a valued community resource, providing education opportunities for public and private schools, meeting space for local and national non-profit organizations, and a based of operations for firefighting operations during regional emergencies.

Approving the updated conditional use permit will enhance Camp Ramah's offerings, thereby allowing Camp Ramah to continue attracting campers and other groups. And knowing the Camp Ramah leadership personally, I am confident that they will continue to do everything they can to be a good neighbor, a good steward of the land, and an asset to the Ojai community.

For these reasons, I very much hope you will approve the updated conditional use permit.

Thank you for your consideration,
Alana Rotter

Boero, Kristina

From: Richard Panush <panush@usc.edu>
Sent: Friday, August 30, 2024 1:15 PM
To: Boero, Kristina
Subject: PL18-0052 & PL23-0002 – Planning Commission Public Comment for Camp Ramah

WARNING: If you believe this message may be malicious use the Phish Alert Button to report it or forward the message to Email.Security@ventura.org.

Dear Chair Zimmerman-Garcia and Members of the Commission,

I strongly support this Camp Ramah initiative. Ramah is an institution that has played a profoundly influential role in my life and in the lives of many others. As a former Ramah camper and counselor in the 1950s and 60s, I experienced firsthand how Ramah fosters a deep connection to faith, lifelong values, and a commitment to bettering our communities. Ramah is more than just a camp; it is a nurturing environment that has shaped future leaders, thinkers, and philanthropists. My family has been involved with Ramah for 3 generations, with my wife being among the first Ojai campers. We have seen the positive impact that enhancing the Ramah experience can have on individuals and society.

Permitting this initiative would not only preserve a vital community resource but also continue the legacy of Ramah as a force for good in our society. Ramah will implement this as a "good neighbor", exceeding all requirements, compliant with all regulations, and as an asset to the community. I urge you to approve this proposal. It is a good thing for all of us.

Sincerely,

Richard S. Panush, MD
Master, American College of Physicians & American College of Rheumatology (ACR)
Distinguished Medical Educator Awardee, Alliance For Academic Internal Medicine/Association For Program Directors In Internal Medicine
Distinguished Service Awardee, American College of Rheumatology & Association of Chiefs & Chairs of Medicine
Past President, National Society of Clinical Rheumatologists & Association of Chiefs & Chairs of Medicine
Past Editor-In-Chief, Yearbook of Rheumatology, ACR Hotline, ACR News, & Postgraduate Advances in Rheumatology
Emeritus Professor Emeritus of Medicine
Keck School of Medicine at USC
University of Southern California

Boero, Kristina

From: Ron Schneidermann <schneid100@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2024 4:16 PM
To: Boero, Kristina
Subject: PL18-0052 & PL23-0002 – Planning Commission Public Comment for Camp Ramah

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Dear Chair Zimmerman-Garcia and members of the Commission,

My name is Ron Schneidermann. I attended Camp Ramah in the 1990s. It's where I met my wife. It's where we currently send our 3 children (ages 15, 12, and 8). Camp Ramah is so much more than just a Jewish summer camp. It's a center of gravity, one where communities of all faiths are welcome, where connections are made not just to other attendees, but to the local Ojai Valley residents who work there, and to the unparalleled natural beauty that surrounds the area.

In a time of so much division, fear, and uncertainty, the world needs more positive beacons of hope like Camp Ramah. Please approve their updated conditional use permit. Ramah has been a good neighbor for decades, one committed to Ojai, its community, and its environs, and this updated permit is a win for all.

Thank you in advance for your support.

- Ron Schneidermann
CEO, [AllTrails](#) (and proud Camp Ramah alumni)

Boero, Kristina

From: Vanya Green Assuied <vanya@vanyavoice.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 4, 2024 11:48 AM
To: Boero, Kristina
Subject: PL18-0052 & PL23-0002 – Planning Commission Public Comment for Camp Ramah

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Dear Chair Zimmerman-Garcia and members of the Commission,
I am writing to support Camp Ramah in California and its updated conditional use permit. Our sons attend the camp and have greatly benefited from the warm environment and focus on community. We entrust our children to Ramah because we know how seriously they take education, safety and conservation. We hope you will support them in this endeavor.

Sincerely,
Vanya and Patrick Assuied

--

Vanya Green Assuied
Licensed psychotherapist, educator, songleader

www.vanyavoice.com

Boero, Kristina

From: Rabbi Adam Schaffer <rabbiadam@hamakomla.org>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 10:39 AM
To: Boero, Kristina
Subject: PL18-0052 & PL23-0002 – Planning Commission Public Comment for Camp Ramah

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Dear Chair Zimmerman-Garcia and Members of the Commission,

I wanted to take a moment to write in full support of Camp Ramah in California its updated conditional use permit.

I could write for pages, but suffice to say that Camp Ramah has been an incredibly important part of my family's life for over a decade. It has provided my family (and countless others from Ventura County and the surrounding area) with memories that will last them a lifetime. While summers have been an large part of those experiences, Camp Ramah has meant so much more. For our family, it has been a highly helpful community resource because it has provided many opportunities for us to connect with organizations across the faith spectrum. As such, we regularly see how Camp Ramah plays a valuable role in the Ventura County ecosystem.

In short, I fully support Camp Ramah in California and the proposed conditional use permit. I urge you to approve the CUP so the camp may continue to provide valuable programming and facilities for the Ramah community, the Ojai Valley, and the region.

L'shalom,
Rabbi Adam Schaffer, Director
The Sevrans Jewish Learning Center (JLC)



Pronouns: he/him/his ([Why is this Important?](#))

Email: rabbiadam@hamakomla.org

Phone: (818) 854-7650, x7694

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https://protect.checkpoint.com/v2/___http://www.facebook.com/rabbiadam___YzJ1OmNvdmF2YW5hbjpjOm86NTJlY2FkYjg3NDhiNGMyNTNkNjMwNmEwNTkyZDJIOWY6NjowMWRiOmMyMjJlZjYyMWUwYTVlNTQ1MDU4MzNiNTFiNmRmMmYxMTcwMjcYyTM2YWFKOTZmMmQ4NTAyOTJhMzBlYWZlOTE6dDpUOk4

Twitter: @rockin_rabbi

Clubhouse: @rabbiadam

Mailing Address:

7353 Valley Circle Boulevard
West Hills, CA 91304

Boero, Kristina

From: Taliana Gordon-Knight <talianagk@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 15, 2024 1:36 PM
To: Boero, Kristina
Subject: PL18-0052 & PL23-0002 – Planning Commission Public Comment for Camp Ramah

WARNING: If you believe this message may be malicious use the Phish Alert Button to report it or forward the message to Email.Security@ventura.org.

Dear Chair Zimmerman-Garcia and members of the Commission,

I write to you in full support of Camp Ramah in California and its updated conditional use permit.

I truly believe in the power of Camp Ramah in California and the work they do—both for the Jewish community and beyond. Since 1955, Camp Ramah has been a hub for community-building, public service, environmental exploration, and so much more. I have been a member of the Ramah community for over a decade, and I can say, without a doubt, that this place has changed my life personally. The new Machon facility is critical in enabling camp to continue this work.

Therefore, I am writing to ask that you approve the conditional use permit so that the camp may continue to provide valuable programming and facilities for the Ramah community, the Ojai Valley, and the region.

Best,
Tali Gordon-Knight

Boero, Kristina

From: Trunk, Jennifer
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2024 8:25 AM
To: dbertoy
Cc: Boero, Kristina
Subject: RE: Camp Ramah CUP

Good Morning Diane:

Thanks for the email. Planning has not set a hearing date although we are close. You will be receiving a postcard when the hearing date is set; staff report will be posted a week in advance of the hearing. Kristina will keep you posted.

Hope all is well.

Jennifer

-----Original Message-----

From: Diane Bertoy <dbertoy@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2024 12:03 PM
To: Trunk, Jennifer <Jennifer.Trunk@ventura.org>
Subject: Camp Ramah CUP

WARNING: If you believe this message may be malicious use the Phish Alert Button to report it or forward the message to Email.Security@ventura.org.

Hi Jennifer, I am checking in and want you to know that our negotiations with the Camp have hit a stalemate. The neighbors want to limit yearly vents and especially rental events, and also want a 9pm noise curfew at least several days a week. The good news is that the noise volume is better. The good news is the volume is better because of the CUP review. The good news is that Camp invited neighbors to talk, and they were gracious. The bad news is that adults still yell into an amplified system that sounds like a loudspeaker. This loudspeaker type noise is startling and jarring, and we believe comes mostly from the rental groups. It would be nice to have a schedule of events to know when rental groups are there to help pinpoint the noise problems.

Diane Bertoy
1447 Foothill Rd
Ojai, CA. 93023
805-794-2792



August 22, 2024

Dear Members of the Ventura County Planning Commission,

On behalf of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for the construction of the Goldstine Machon Shetach – an indoor activities space -- at Camp Ramah in California.

The Harold Grinspoon Foundation has for the last 18 years been a supporter and champion of summer camps, including Camp Ramah. Summer camp experiences are outstanding for youth development -- away from their phones, exploring nature, developing deep friendships, learning interpersonal skills, trying new activities, connecting to traditions and values, gaining independence, and experiencing a fun and wholesome summer that is a welcome respite from the stresses and demands of the school year. For camps to continue to provide transformative and uplifting youth experiences, camps must continually maintain, upgrade and enhance their facilities. Our foundation has provided nearly \$1 million in support to Camp Ramah in California over the years for maintenance needs and capital improvements because of the camp's outstanding leadership and its track record for creating outstanding summer growth experiences for children and teens.

This summer, I had the privilege of visiting Ojai and touring Camp Ramah. I was profoundly impressed with the camp's ability to foster a deep sense of personal identity, connection, joy and leadership development for both campers and staff. The program and its impact on youth development is remarkable. While Ramah is an outstanding organization with a long and positive track record, it has not been able to improve the infrastructure of its aging campus and keep up with its program's needs, including providing adequate shade for its campers and counselors. The heat we experienced on our tour was intense, and it was apparent that the camp desperately needs more indoor spaces for gathering and activities. As the summer heats intensify, this need for indoor activity space will only grow in the years to come.





The physical improvement of Camp Ramah aligns with the broader economic benefits generated by the camp industry, as highlighted in recent research conducted by the University of Michigan's Economic Growth Institute (EGI) in collaboration with the American Camp Association. The study reveals that the youth camp industry contributes an impressive \$70 billion annually to the national economy through direct, indirect, and induced impacts. This includes \$23 billion in labor income, illustrating the significant role that camps play in supporting local economies. In the State of California alone, capital investments such as this new camper village inject \$998 million into the state economy.

The Harold Grinspoon Foundation is deeply committed to supporting Camp Ramah and its mission to inspire and educate the next generation of community leaders. We urge the Commission to approve this important project, recognizing both its significant cultural and economic contributions to Ventura County and beyond.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Winnie Sandler Grinspoon".

Winnie Sandler Grinspoon

President
Harold Grinspoon Foundation

