

Interview with

Tim MacKenzie

conducted by Michael Kahan

for the “Understanding the History of Housing in Mountain View: Stories of Racism, Anti-Discrimination, and Movement towards Inclusion” project by the City of Mountain View’s Human Relations Commission,

in collaboration with Senior Lecturer Michael Kahan and team from Stanford University.

Mountain View Historical Association
Mountain View Public Library

Conducted on June 27, 2022

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of “Understanding the History of Housing in Mountain View: Stories of Racism, Anti-Discrimination, and Movement towards Inclusion” is to document the history of discrimination and efforts to fight discrimination in housing in the city of Mountain View, California. Some of the information collected was shared with the public at an event sponsored by the Mountain View Human Relations Commission, held on July 26, 2022. In order to make the interviews available to researchers and members of the public, they will be added to the historical collection of the Mountain View Historical Association (MVHA) and/or the Mountain View Public Library (MVPL) and made available for public use. They may also be shared with other libraries and collections, including those at Stanford University.

BIO

Michael Kahan is the co-director of the Program on Urban Studies at Stanford University, and a senior lecturer in Sociology. His interest in the historical transformation of urban space has led to publications on topics including the integration of streetcars in the 1850s, sanitation reform in the 1890s, the geography of prostitution in the 1910s, and redevelopment in California in the 1990s. His teaching includes courses on gentrification and on the history of San Francisco. He holds a B.A. from Yale and a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, both in history. He has been a resident of Mountain View since 1999.

ABSTRACT



Tim McKenzie is a postdoctoral scholar at Stanford University, and a civic activist with the Mountain View Housing Justice Coalition and the Silicon Valley Democratic Socialists of America. He has advocated for rent stabilization and the rights of vehicle dwellers in Mountain View, explicitly Measure V and Measure C, soon after he moved here in 2015 after being a graduate student at Stanford.

Date of Interview: June 27, 2022

Interviewer: Michael Kahan

Interviewee: Tim MacKenzie

Michael Kahan: 00:04

All right. Hello, my name is Michael Kahan. I'm an interviewer working with the city of Mountain View's Human Relations Commission, in partnership with the Mountain View Historical Association. On a project called "Understanding the History of Housing in Mountain View: Stories of Racism, Anti-Discrimination, and Movement toward Inclusion". The purpose of this project is to document the history of discrimination and efforts to fight discrimination in housing in the city of Mountain View, California. Some of the information collected will be shared with the public at an event sponsored by the Mountain View Human Relations Commission, which is scheduled for July 26, 2022. Today is June 27, 2022 and I am interviewing Tim McKenzie. Tim McKenzie is a postdoctoral scholar at Stanford, and a civic activist with the Mountain View Housing Justice Coalition and the Silicon Valley, democratic socialists of America. He has advocated for rent stabilization and the rights of vehicle dwellers in Mountain View as and we'll hear more about that shortly. For safety reasons during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we are recording this interview by Zom teleconferencing technology. I'm doing so from my residence in Mountain View, California Tim, are you also at your home in Mountain View?

Tim Mackenzie: 01:45

I am at my home in Mountain View in the Monta Loma neighborhood.

Michael Kahan 01:49

Okay, very nice. We're also joined today by the research assistant for this project. I'll let her introduce herself and mention where she is dialing in from.

Kamilah Arteaga: 02:01

Hello, I'm Kamilah. I am the research assistant for the project for the summer. I am calling in from North Fair Oaks, which is unincorporated San Mateo County. Yeah, I'm excited to be here.

Michael Kahan 02:17

Thank you, Kamilah. Okay. Tim, just to start off, would you mind just saying your name just to make sure we get that correct.

Tim McKenzie 02:28

Yep. Tim McKenzie, you got it exactly right.

Michael Kahan 02:31

Excellent. You mentioned that you live in the Monta Loma neighborhood here in Mountain View.

Tim McKenzie 02:37

Yep. I moved in 2015, when I was a grad student at Stanford, and I've been here since then.

Michael Kahan 02:44

Fantastic. Well, let's start off. Could you tell us how you first became involved with the issue of housing here in Mountain View?

Tim McKenzie 02:55

I mean, the very beginning actually was shortly after I moved in. Measure V¹ in 2016, there was a rent control being put to the voters. An amendment to the city county city charter for the Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act. I had just moved into Mountain View, I wasn't really involved, and someone came, knocked on my door, and was like, hey, there's rent control, you should vote for it. I was very excited. I was like, "Oh, cool, heck yeah." Rent control that's never actually simultaneously two different measures that were going on. One was Measure V, which was citizen initiated. One was Measure W which was created and initiated by the city council. I wasn't really too aware of it at the time, I wasn't super involved essentially, the composition of the city council at that time had a lot of people who were opposed to the very idea of rent control. To try to act as if they were helping or give the appearance of something and maybe try to sue or pacify people who are fighting for rent control. They made their own version Measure W, which gave some versions of weak rent control, but was weaker than CSFRA, which eventually someone knocked on my door and was like, hey, there's rent control on the ballot. There's these two different ones. One of them is a little bit stronger, but vote for both of them because if Measure V passed, which it did, then we would have rent control and it would supersede Measure W because it was an amendment to the city charter I happily voted for it. I was just kind of like, "Okay, I've moved into a new place. I'm not on Stanford's campus anymore." Then someone came and knocked on my door and was like, "Hey neighbor, there's rent control." That really opened my awareness to it a little bit, and I just happily voted for it. Then it passed. I was like, alright, cool. We have rent control in Mountain View. Then as I slowly got more civically engaged, I learned about the fact that on city council, there was hostility towards the idea of rent control from some of the people who were on at that time. Actually, for the first several years of the rental housing committee, and the creation of rent control in Mountain View, the hostile majority on city council appointed people on the rental housing committee, the body that implements rent control, they appointed people opposed to the very idea of rent control. Which I didn't realize until I started getting more actively involved and then started to see that, oh, just voting for something that I think is good, that's not enough. Even if we voted for it, we had to keep pushing and fighting to protect it, and make sure it was implemented well. I think right now, I think there's a majority in favor of rent control, and the current composition of the rental housing committee is very, they're much more in favor of tenant protections and, and actually helping implement rent control to stabilize the community in ways that are nice.

¹ On November 8, 2016, Mountain View residents voted to enact Measure V, also known as the Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act (CSFRA), to stabilize rents and provide just cause eviction protections for certain Rental Units in Mountain View.

Michael Kahan 06:35

I want to just circle back to a little detail. You referred to this city charter amendment as the CSFRA. Can you just recall for us what does that stand for?

Tim McKenzie 06:50

Community Stabilization in Fair Rent Act. Which is the actual name. It was Measure V is what we voted for. That was that that was the one that actually passed, but the official name was the Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act, which is kind of a mouthful usually, I just say rent control or Measure V.

Michael Kahan 07:11

Great. You were involved, I guess, it sounds like to the extent that you voted for Measure V somewhere along the line, it sounds like you sort of increased your involvement from just kind of being a voter, to being someone who is more active in speaking out about these issues, and kind of trying to influence the city council and, maybe your fellow Mountain View residents. I wonder, can you tell us a little about that transition? How did that take place over the months and years that followed the passage of Measure V?

Tim McKenzie 08:00

I think the involvement was kind of almost a little contingent. I was biking near the San Antonio Caltrain stop. There's an underpass and on the underpass, there's a mirror that lets you sort of see around the corner, and I was biking there one day, and the mirror was broken. I didn't, I didn't know what to do, how to fix it; if it was Caltrain, if it was in the city. There was a city council meeting coming up and I went to the non-agenda public comment. I just pointed out that, hey, there's a broken mirror on the Caltrain underpass. It just so happened that that same meeting, Mountain View Housing Justice², was there doing advocacy for neighbors that live in vehicles. Like vehicle dwelling, RV dwelling residents. And that sort of opened my awareness to that as an issue which I didn't know about. Then I met some of the people there and talked. I don't even remember exactly how I started getting involved. I started showing up to Mountain View Housing Justice meetings and and attend becoming more aware becoming more civically engaged of knowing when the city council meetings were, one, keeping an eye on the agendas to see what was coming up if it was important to go speak or not, or at least listen and know what was going on, and I remember several months after that initial time, where I showed up to ask about the or refer to the broken mirror at the Caltrain underpass. Several months later, the city council was looking to ban RVs, which eventually did happen but I remember going to make a comment and saying, look, there's some real concrete things that you can do to make it easier to live in the city.

² From MV Housing Justice website: "The purpose of the Mountain View Housing Justice Coalition is to promote the rights of tenants across all rental units, including mobile home spaces; to protect against unjustified rent increases and evictions without cause; to end the displacement of individuals and families occupying naturally affordable housing; to end arbitrary and discriminatory actions by property owners and their representatives; to protect vehicle residents against harassment and exclusion; and to advocate for the development of affordable housing in the City of Mountain View."

Go fix this underpass that is a safety issue, the mirror being broken and out for months, it still wasn't taken care of. Then they were spending the time to try to remove vehicle dwelling residents from the city under the guise of traffic safety. Eventually, when Measure C, Measure C was the RV ban with the narrow streets ordinances, what it was also called. Trying to remove RVs from city streets that are narrow, which was somewhat arbitrarily decided as 40 feet and then try to the city eventually spent a million dollars putting up signs to kick out RV residents in the guise of traffic safety there had been people complaining about vehicle residents for years and not about traffic safety, just kind of like this is an eyesore, almost not viewing them as neighbors that are in an unstable housing situation. It just felt really discriminatory and like just a lack of engagement at the human level of recognizing our neighbors as people. It was just, we got to get rid of these RVs, we got to get rid of these RVs, then for years that had been attempted, and I was slowly learning a little bit about it. Then all of a sudden there was a shift to traffic safety. Traffic safety as the justification. It doesn't really seem to hold water to me. There was no no real talk about traffic safety beforehand. Then it was a switch to that to be able to justify and then Measure C³ was initiated by city council to try to do the RV ban. Then along with Mountain View Housing Justice and Silicon Valley DSA I was more involved with Mountain View Housing Justice at that point. We collected signatures to put the measures so yes, a referendum to the voters. We had to collect, I think it was, 5,000 signatures. I forget exactly how many. I just walk neighborhoods, knock on doors, talk to neighbors and ask. Talk to people and say hey, here's the situation. Some people were incredibly enthusiastic like, "Oh, my God, I used to live on the streets and like in a vehicle and this was impossible. I don't have the capacity to go do this right now, but thank you for doing this." There are other people who were just like, "Yeah, we should get rid of the RVs. They're terrible. I don't want to see those people." Other people even who were kind of like, "Well, I don't really like RVs, but you know what it is, I will sign to put it on the ballot, like so that we as the voters can say." There was kind of a wide range of everyone to talk to, but that was something that's really kind of stuck in my head. We've spent years and years and years before I even moved to California, bringing jobs, office buildings into Mountain View, and not building housing, which meant that there isn't enough housing. Costs have skyrocketed, and then because there aren't enough houses for people to live in, a lot of people have been pushed into these more unstable situations living in vehicles living in RVs. There's just, it's, we've been pushing those specific policy decisions that have been made, like, we're dealing with the decisions from city council 10 years ago, 15 years ago, that brought in a bunch of jobs without building any housing. Now that we're dealing with that, people are like, well, you shouldn't move to Mountain View if you can't afford it. It's a specific policy decision that has been made and it feels like it's a modern day redlining in a way. We're pushing out the more economically unstable people in neighborhoods. I know there are some people living in the RVs that are here because they have their doctors, they are cancer patients, their doctors are in this area. They need to be here. They have a support structure in place, this is their neighborhood, this is where they live. Where it seems like there's an official policy to try to push people out. In fact, now there is an official policy. We literally spent a million dollars over the past year

³ Passing in 2020, The city ordinance restricts the parking of oversized vehicles which exceed 22 feet in length, or 7 feet in width, or 7 feet in height, including boats, large trucks, and recreational vehicles (RVs).

to put up signs on every block across the city where the streets are narrow. Which seems to have been somewhat arbitrarily decided as 40 feet.

Michael Kahan 15:06

Yeah. Thank you, I mean that does clarify a lot of the recent history that you've been involved in that's impacted our city. You mentioned being involved with the Mountview Housing Justice Coalition. Can you tell us a little more about that organization? Do you know much about when it began and what does it mean, in the organization's definition? What does it see as housing justice? What is it kind of trying to achieve?

Tim McKenzie 15:46

Yeah, I'll do my best. I'm not an expert, because I just kind of glommed on, as I mentioned earlier. I showed up and saw people organize to speak at council and they were friendly, and talked with them. It's the composition skews a little bit older of the more of the people that are there. There are a handful of younger people as well, including some of the steering committee and like agenda setting, people are also younger. [Unclear] a bit older, some people that have lived in Mountain View for many, many, many years. One of the members actually lives in another city, but is a small landlord here has like a few properties, I think, I don't even actually know. He's concerned about making sure that people are able to afford housing and stay in the community. People who have been renters, homeowners, seem to be a good cross section of a lot of different people. I'm not even certain how exactly it formed. I think there maybe was a tenants coalition years ago. That then morphed into Mountain View Housing Justice, but I actually don't know the history of the organization. I'll speak about my impressions, not the official statement. I don't know if we've ever actually written out or published anything official, but at least in my view, housing is a human right. That seems to be a view of a lot of people in the organization of trying to push not for developer profits. The question always seems to come up with housing building up, how can we make sure that the developers are making enough money from this? Instead of there are people who are unhoused, they don't have shelter. What can we do to make sure that this basic physiological need is taken care of? Doing things to push and fight for that, I know Measure V rent control was a huge, huge lift, huge build. Then it also helps protect tenants in very real concrete ways. That's one direct way of going out and pushing for advocacy at city council meetings, but then also just going and talking with RV residents. Our neighbors in RVs, going knocking on doors letting people know, "Hey there, there's a lawsuit going through the city even though all these signs have come up, saying you have to move, actually, there's been a lawsuit that's been paused". Outreach and education, but then also tied with that, just like learning what people's needs are. Going and talking like, "Hey, what's going on? What do you need"? Helping try to connect people to existing resources. Finding out what issues are, so that we know we can either connect to resources or find out "Oh, hey, there's this is a problem that seems to be coming up. What can we do? How can we help either through direct mutual aid or recognizing a policy issue and trying to push for change on that?"

Michael Kahan 19:13

That kind of prompts me to ask, how has the rent control law impacted you? How has that affected you? Not just as an activist, but more personally, as a resident of the city.

Tim McKenzie 19:29

I can all but guarantee that without rent control, I would not be here talking with you right now. After I finished my PhD, I actually had a little bit of a gap before I got my next job. My postdoc that I'm in right now, there was a little bit of a gap, I really wanted to get a postdoc. I had a project that I designed myself and I wanted to work on. I was committed to trying to find a place where I could do that. I had a little bit of savings, enough to float for a little bit. I was actually about two weeks away from buying a one way plane ticket to go live with my parents, just because I was running out of my savings. My ability to actually afford rent. I happened to get a job and get the opportunity to pursue what I'm currently doing, what I wanted to do. I was just about to buy a one way plane ticket, going home back East. If there wasn't rent control, then I wouldn't have been able to float as long as I did. I'm certain that the rent would have gone up enough that I wouldn't have been able to stay and have the opportunity to try to pursue the job that I currently have now. I was like in the middle of the month about to be like "Alright, I'm going to tell my roommates like, 'Hey, you guys are gonna have to find someone else to come in, because I'm not going to be able to be here'". I just happened to get the job like, right before I was about to do that, and it worked out. If there wasn't rent control, even just a little bit more of rent, I wouldn't have been able to float as long as I did. I would have had to move and would be probably on an entirely different career path. I was really committed to trying to find the job that I had, but I was about to run out of all potential savings and was like, alright, well, I'll just go get whatever job I can. I was about to open up the search much more widely. I probably would be doing completely different things would not be still here, if there was no rent control.

Michael Kahan 21:52

Thanks. I want to just turn back for a moment to the kind of organizational story of the Housing Justice Coalition. Can you just tell us a little bit about who else is involved in the administration of the organization? Who are the founders are the members of the steering committee, kind of, prominent people.

Tim McKenzie 22:19

The steering committee we meet like, on I think it's Wednesdays, every other week or something like that. I actually forget exactly. I'm on the steering committee, but sometimes I don't attend every meeting and that's actually part of it. There are enough of us on the steering committee that sometimes wires cross a little bit, and not everyone is able to attend every meeting. There's a handful of like, secretary and treasurer, official roles of people who set up the Zoom meetings for us to get together. Since it's still the pandemic, we're still meeting virtually. Edie Keating and Kevin Ma are two people who are, not just steering committee, but I think have official roles. I forget exactly what they are. I know Lenny Siegel. He is a former Mountain View City Council Member. He also had leadership roles. He may have been involved in the founding, again, at the actual history of the group I'm not super up to date on. There's a

steering committee where we probably have like eight to fifteen of us, depending on the week, that show up and sort of do like the inside baseball, the mechanics talks of like, okay, here are the city meetings coming up, here are the issues, let's strategize of like, what are we going to do. There's also a general member list, which is a lot larger, it's like the email list. I don't even know how many people are on that. People who like who aren't showing up to these more frequent meetings, I think we meet like, quarterly or something like that with our general membership, just sort of bring people in to do a little bit of education or outreach. If there is a specific thing going on we think that it's important that more people beyond just the steering committee know. Then we either have a general meeting and or send to the broader lists. Then sometimes it's asking like, "Hey, here's this meeting coming up. Can you show up to comment or send an email to city council?" The steering committee meets every other week or so for the inside baseball sort of conversations. Then when we've sort of made some plans and thought through what we're going to do we share that more broadly.

Michael Kahan 24:50

Great. You mentioned that at a certain point, you also became involved with the Democratic Socialists of America, the DSA⁴. Can you talk a little more about how you got involved with that organization? What is their role in advocacy around these issues?

Tim McKenzie 25:13

Yeah, for sure I can. Part of it is that, whenever I showed up to Mountain View Housing Justice events, or anything sort of going on in the city, it seemed like there were already a couple of DSA people there. Anytime I showed up to something, DSA was already there. Eventually, I was like, maybe I should just get it straight from the tap and go join the organization. That was really how I started getting involved. DSA has a lot of different groups. Housing is one area, but there's like a mutual aid working group, which helps provide mutual aid. Directly helping people that need it, like putting together fire kits, having masks and distributing them to people, period product kits, like putting things together for feminine hygiene products and giving them out to people in need. A lot of advocacy around police reform. Things like eco-socialism, trying to advocate for the environment. It's a big tent organization where there are a lot of different pieces ongoing. When I got involved, I got pretty heavily involved with the labor working group. Go union power. I'd love to be in a union at my job, but we don't have one right now. That's one place that I got involved. Also over the past year or so I've been more involved in the Mountain View local group. When I first joined, there was a lot of emphasis on different project areas where people would work and focus. There's also been a little bit of a shift towards the hyperlocal municipal-level activism. I'm actually, I think I'm Secretary of the Mountain View local group, which basically just means I set up the Zoom meetings and then we all get together and talk or meet in person, if it's safe. That's been a shift that's actually happened within the organization a little bit and a way that I stay involved and aware of goings on of what's going on in Mountain View. Then also what's going on in other places. Silicon Valley DSA goes all the way up to parts of Redwood City down to Gilroy. It's really a big, big area. It's a great way to connect between Mountain View and regional issues and

⁴ A left-wing multi-tendency socialist and labor-oriented political organization.

hearing, like, sometimes things that we do in Mountain View can go bring up and tell to other people, “Oh hey, we have rent control in Mountain View”. Providing a model of how it worked out. I think I saw DSA people were some of the people who knocked on my door, in addition to Mountain View Housing Justice people telling me about rent control. Being able to share those models from Mountain View to other places is really useful. Then also, the other side of that coin of knowing what's happening in other places, makes it easier to bring things to Mountain View. This is one thing that we did in the Mountain View local group in collaboration with the socialist feminists working group. We advocated for Mountain View to get free period products in all municipal bathrooms. They intermittently commented like every couple of months at City Council meetings, and after a little over a year of doing that it happened. One thing right before Mountain View did it, the county board of supervisors followed through into making period products free in the county bathroom. The county courthouse or wherever it's under their domain. Being tapped into a regional advocacy group, it let us know, oh, here's the model of something that's already happened, which then made it easier to go to Mountain View and say, “Hey, look, this is already happening at the county level. You should do this”. Then Mountain View did it and after that, we actually created a little advocacy pack of like, here's what we did. Here's how we talked to city council and got this change to happen. Just about a month ago, actually, the City of Redwood City, a staff member emailed me and let me know that they have actually started putting period products in some of their municipal bathrooms. That's because after Mountain View did it, we emailed a whole bunch of different local cities mostly were ignored by a bunch of them, but then, just a month ago, got an email from I'm someone in Redwood City saying, “hey, you know, we talked a year ago and we've actually followed through”. Having that regional group that knows what's happening in each local area allows us to sort of try to spread it around a little bit and any positive model that happens or exists in one city we can take and bring to another.

Michael Kahan 30:23

Excellent. Are there other organizations that you think are allied with Housing Justice Coalition and DSA that are also playing a role, especially around housing issues in Mountain View?

Tim McKenzie 30:43

I know Mountain View YIMBY⁵ is one that's really pushing for housing. I actually don't know exactly their internal thing. I've seen some Mountain View YIMBY people in other progressive groups where we meet and talk. They're definitely pushing hard for housing. I don't know how much there's alignment on some of the other ideological issues, but there's definitely a push for, we should build housing. I think everyone has an idea or a noticing of the housing that we need to build is affordable housing, like below market rate. If we look at our RHNA, Regional Housing Needs Allocation, numbers over the past eight years, I forget exactly the time frame, over the past eight years or so. Mountain View actually exceeded the RHNA numbers, like the number of housing, we had to build for high income but we're way, way, way, way under for low income. It's active gentrification, it seems to be. We're going through the

⁵ Mountain View YIMBY (Yes In My Backyard) is a section of the South Bay YIMBY; from their website, their goals are to Legalizing Housing, Streamline Permitting, Fund Affordable Housing, and Fix Broken Incentives”.

housing element now. Planning possible locations, and some of them say, okay, maybe there will be housing here, but there doesn't seem to be really. We have to make sure that we're actually getting our below market rate. There doesn't seem to be difficulty building luxury housing, but building affordable housing that can serve the whole community rather than serve the profit interests of developers is where part of the issue lies.

Michael Kahan 32:24

In your work on these issues, who have you found is opposing the kind of work that you're trying to do? Are there specific organizations or interests in the city that you feel like are kind of an obstacle to what you're trying to achieve?

Tim McKenzie 32:43

Yeah, definitely, the California Apartment Association is very opposed to the idea of rent control. In fact, in 2018, so two years after we passed Measure V, or the Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act, there were some members of City Council, I believe it was, who were hostile to the idea of rent control, put Measure D on the ballot. Measure D was basically the sneaky repeal of rent control is how we characterized it a little bit. It was essentially trying to weaken rent control, tried to change the actual text of the Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act to instead of protecting tenants to just completely skew in the other direction. If I recall correctly, that was put on the ballot by city council, specifically. They wrote that some of the members who are ideologically opposed to rent control, who also I think get donations from California Apartment Association, or from Super PACs that are a front for the CAA. That's something that's actually that took a big amount of organizing energy from Mountain View Housing Justice of like, okay, we need to go out and talk to our neighbors and let people know that Measure D is actually trying to weaken rent control. It was passed as, or was proffered as an idea of "Oh, this will strengthen rent control". One example is that the mobile homes were initially excluded from rent control by a decision made by the hostile city council that didn't like the idea of rent control and or the rental housing committee that had been appointed with people who are opposed to the very idea of rent control. I forget exactly the mechanics of how it occurred. It was proposed by people against rent control, but in a way that they're saying, "Oh, this will actually help strengthen rent control, because we'll be able to provide the protection to mobile homes like in the text of Measure D, it explicitly included mobile homes." Whereas it was somewhat ambiguous, but city council had the authority to do that. It felt like a bad faith slight of hand argument of city council saying, "Oh, well, we can't protect mobile homes, and the only way to do it is with Measure D, which weakens rent control." That, we spent a long time going to talk to our neighbors. I remember that I talked to someone who was definitely pretty far right and conservative. They were enthusiastic Trump supporters. My guess is that we actually aligned very little on many political topics, but I mentioned "Oh, yeah, this is rent control." They were like, "Yes, I'm on board". It was cutting across ideological lines. Measure D ended up failing by like a two thirds majority, it was like 67%, or something like that, voted to not include it. We were able to communicate with our neighbors. I'm sure people sort of looked at it themselves and saw, "Oh, this actually weakens rent control." It was being sold as "This is strengthening rent control." I think that was

actually, as I think more upon it, that may have been in March 2020. I think it was in the primary where Measure D was up and we knocked and knocked on doors. In the November election, there had been rumors that in the same way that Measure V was voter initiated and like brought forward and put out to voters, there was rumors that landlords, like the California Apartment Association, were planning on like a more direct assault on rent control compared with Measure D. Which was kind of like the sneaky repeal. Measure D being overwhelmingly defeated, made them like, okay, we're not even going to invest the resources in this. That's one group that opposes rent control, but even with Measure D, it seemed like the people against rent control are starting to accept it. It was being framed not as we need to get rid of rent control, but we need to strengthen rent control. Even the people who seem to be opposed to the idea of rent control, at least rhetorically, are accepting it and realizing that it's a popular thing that people like. Framing things in a "Oh, we're protecting rent control." Even if it doesn't seem to be the case, if it seems a little bit like they're actually pushing against it, but they're couching it in terms of yay, rent control. California Apartment Association definitely is a major group that is opposed to the idea. Anyone who accepts money from them, I haven't actually done a deep dive into the finances of different candidates or different council members, but I'm sure that's all public and out there.

Michael Kahan 38:32

Yeah. I guess I'm curious, where do you think we stand on rent control now? Do you think it's become so well established? With the defeat of the sneaky repeal, and the landlord's pulling back their plan to try to really overturn it. Do you feel like rent control is now a pretty firmly established feature of life in Mountain View?

Tim McKenzie 39:03

Yes, right now, it seems to be especially the city council, there's a majority supportive of rent control. Which is like, the first time since I've been here, that seems to be the case. Which is really great because of that majority support, the real body that implements rent control is the route rental housing committee. That is, I think there's five people appointed on that and there's staff members that actually implement it and help tenants and things. The people on there are fighting for tenants. They're like they're not buying bullshit from the landlords who come in. It really feels like there's a strong support for it, at least right now. My guess is there will not be as many direct assaults. In fact, like the rental housing committee just this past week or two, officially clarified the interpretation of what base rent meant. Basically, a lot of landlords didn't read the text very carefully of the Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act. Then wanted to basically be able to sneakily increase rents beyond what is allowed with rent control by giving move-in specials that would suddenly increase rent by a whole lot at the end of the term. The committee sat through all the public comments and listened. Then voted to interpret the statute in the same way that staff had already been doing it. They were just clarifying it publicly for everyone. Landlords were trying to push back and say, Oh, no, we need to interpret it differently, or this will be impossible for us. There are some members of the RHC that were receptive to that, but not a majority. The majority was able to push for it. I think that we're in a good state or as good of a state as we can be. We have a statewide issue of Costa Hawkins, which prevents rent control of anything built after, I forget

exactly when it was passed. Any building after 1995, I think it is, is unallowed to be controlled through rent control. That I mean, even if we allow for the idea that, okay, we need to encourage new buildings or things. If we pass that back in 1995, and have a brief snapshot in time, there's no mechanism to keep moving that time frame forward. What were old buildings that should be covered by rent control, it's been decades since that occurred. Now there's no moving window of when the bill when rent control can pass. In another 10 years, it will be old ass housing that's already being knocked down, and we won't be able to have rent controls. There's a statewide issue with regards to how strong rent control can be. Another thing right now we have protection at the state level with SB 330. That says that any one to one replacement, any rent controlled units that get knocked down, have to be replaced with rent controlled or below market rate units. That state bill sunsets in a little bit. It goes away and unless it is passed, again at the state level, then those protections are gone and it's just a brief pause. I would love to see a local ordinance. Mountain View passing a local ordinance that says anytime that there is a knockdown of rent controlled units, if it is not one to one replacement, then the project gets rejected. I don't know how many times since I've been in Mountain View, I'm reading the Mountain View Voice and I see rent controlled units being knocked down to build a lower number of total units, none of which are rent controlled. Even if we do have rent control, if you keep knocking down the old buildings that are rent controlled and not replacing them, then it's rent control in name only. Which is a whole different conversation also, I think it's vacancy decontrol. Even with rent control, anytime someone else moves, someone new is going to come in, the landlord can skyrocket the rate, With vacancy decontrol, even if a new tenant is moving in, there's a limit to the amount of increases that can occur and putting the brakes on the market so that it's not just all money for landlord developments, but also, hey, you know, housing is a human right shelter is a basic physiological need that people need to have taken care of. That's elite, like we don't have that. I think it's Costa Hawkins that prevents that. There is no actual real strong rent control that is for tenant protections and that's a state issue. Right now, I do think that rent control is in a safe and stable place, given our current Council composition, the current RHC. Even so I think there's a lot of strengthening that could occur, like repeal Costa Hawkins, getting local SB 330 ordinance. Get vacancy decontrol so that the rent doesn't just keep climbing and climbing and climbing. Even if the anytime someone else moves out, those are local things. At the more regional level getting other cities' rent controls similar to what we have in Mountain View, so that at least we have a baseline here. That could be better, at least we have it, not everyone does. That's another place and maybe go on the offensive a little. Go spread rent control, go get community land trusts, community ownership of housing, that is run, not for profit, but for shelter. I'm not saying there is no rent. There is a cost to maintenance, like, entropy always wins. There's always a lot of ways for things to be disarranged or things to break. There is a need, if you need to call in a plumber or an electrician or whatever. There's basic maintenance that needs to occur and that doesn't just happen on its own. It costs money. In fact, it should, the laborers who come in should be paid a living wage, hopefully they have a good union. That doesn't have to just go into the pockets of someone that's just like, this is going to fund my fourth vacation home. I think that we're okay, but we have a lot of room to go.

Michael Kahan 46:17

Yeah. That notion of maybe spreading rent control beyond Mountain View raises an interesting question that I wonder if you could speak to. Which is, why do you think it is that Mountain View has rent control? And we are one of the very few municipalities in the region that does? Why do you think Mountain View has been able to enact, you know, fairly, progressive protections for renters, when that has not occurred in our neighboring cities?

Tim McKenzie 47:00

I think there are strong tenant organizations. Mountain View Housing Justice is a group that's been around, probably longer than I've been in Mountain View. Again, I don't know the exact history of the group. It's been people pushing and advocating for it for a long time. Measure V itself, like I mentioned, I moved into Mountain View then I was like, oh, cool, I can vote for rent control. There were years of people pushing to try to get city council to do some sort of rent control thing. There were people opposed to it. Tenants, tenant advocates, lawyers came together and wrote the amendment to the city charter, the Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act, and work together to create it, and then get the signatures to put it on the ballot as a municipal referendum. Really, it's the organizing work that having the groups that are actively working, actively advocating, and then coordinating together. There was a five year birthday of rent control, just a month or so ago, and there were a ton of groups there. There was a lot of Spanish speaking people. English is really the only language that's what I'm limited to more or less. There are a lot of Spanish speaking tenants that are organized and work together and were able to have the protections from rent control. That all happened because of tenant organizing, getting together talking to neighbors, finding out what are our concerns, and what can we do to address them? So I think really having the groups that are working together actively on it is a big, big piece. Then I know with Mountain View Housing Justice, actually, we are participating in a research study with researchers at UC Berkeley, I believe from the othering and belonging Institute, I forget exactly what. They're looking at rent control in I think it's Mountain View and I think maybe Richmond. They're looking at two cities that have rent control, and then comparing two cities that don't have rent control. Looking at the direct impacts on tenants. That's one thing that Mountain View Housing Justice has been doing by coordinating with the researchers, helping them set up questions and answering questions for the interviews. Then also advertising going out and talking to tenants. Being like, hey, here's some information about recent research if you want to talk. I think that's another year or two there's still going to be collecting and analyzing the data before that gets published. That will be a direct way like a peer reviewed quantitative way of comparing rent control without rent control in different municipalities. That could be a useful, informative thing to talk about why it might be here. Although I do think that it's a little bit more about the effects of after having rent control, not so much how it got there? I'm not designing that research I don't know exactly.

Michael Kahan 50:28

Yeah, that is really interesting and that kind of leads me to another question. I was just thinking about. When we started this project of tracing the history of housing and discrimination and inclusion in Mountain View. We were really thinking kind of more about issues of race and ethnicity and how

different groups have been excluded or included along those lines. On one level, what we've been talking about today are laws that have somewhat more to do with economics, you know, that rent control and so forth, that protects people, maybe of lower income. I wonder if you could speak to the overlap, if you see any, in those issues. Do you think that rent control has impacted communities of color and has changed the ways that communities of color are included in the Mountain View community and are able to find housing here in ways that that might not have been possible otherwise?

Tim McKenzie 51:57

I mean, just looking at who attended the Mountain View rent control celebration, there are a lot of Hispanic people, like Spanish speakers, that really just seem like it was a festive celebratory atmosphere at the rent control party. There were like, a lot of Spanish speakers actually got up to speak there. Like the speakers. They're either the ones who spoke in English, got a Spanish translator, or some of them came up in spoken Spanish and an English translator came in. There was clearly like, a big community that I'm not really integrated with personally, but that really felt strong protections from rent control. Even sort of related to that, I've been attending city council meetings for a couple years now at this point, and over the past, maybe year, year and a half or so, it seems like there has been more translation services offered. Especially at specific meetings where there may be a big community interest. Where the council sort of goes through says whatever's going on and there's translation services available. Then someone comes up and says, usually, it's Spanish and Chinese, that those are the main translation services, but someone will come up and say, like, here's how to access the translation services, and you click a button on the Zoom, and then you can hear the translation. That's something that is building inclusivity. It's something that I've seen a little bit more over over the past year or so, like having these translation services seems to be more present. There's always that intersection of economics and race. Generally, people of color are from lower socio economic backgrounds. That just has to do with historical realities of the United States. Even if we just think about how compound interest works, if you have a little bit of money, it becomes a lot more later on. If you start with less than with compounding interest, the gap grows more. I think that there's an inherent tie between economics and race, which is just kind of the historical fact of the United States. It doesn't have to be that way, that is the way that it is. Anything that is targeted towards helping people of lower socio economic backgrounds, tends to also increase equity across racial lines. That's a thing to keep in mind because I mean, also I'm really interested in seeing a lot of the things that are gonna come out of this project. The research that you guys have done to see the historical developments and what has been going on in terms of housing policy, how these things have manifested in Mountain View. How they continue to. About a month ago, at a city council meeting, there was a discussion about life moves, which is a recently created thing that 's been kind of a big old celebration as if it's providing housing. It's not housing, it's transitional shelter. It is people who are living on the streets get essentially like shelter and protection, and connection to caseworkers who help them transition from highly unstable situations living on the streets. They get transitioned into this housing or this shelter, and are provided help to look for housing. As we've talked about already, there isn't enough housing in Mountain View from decisions made by city council 10 or 15 years ago. Connecting people to housing services is an active policy of displacement. It's you are in

Mountain View, or Santa Clara County, there's a preference for people from Mountain View, but I think it's generally countywide, you can come here for a few months until we find you housing, and there isn't housing here, so it's get out of here. It's being celebrated as a solution to the housing problem, which is not the case. It is providing shelter, it's getting people out of unstable situations, which is good, but it isn't housing. It is, by definition, like by design, it is, you came here for a bit, and then you had to go and there's not housing here, so go away from Mountain View. It's a direct policy of displacement seems to be what is still ongoing right now. I'm certain in 10, 30, 50 years from now, those actions that we are currently taking are going to ripple and resonate through and may continue to widen gaps between socio-economic levels.

Michael Kahan 57:26

Yeah. I know that as you've been describing your involvement with these issues of housing, is fairly recent. I wonder if you've seen a kind of evolution over these recent years. How has your involvement with the issue changed, do you think?

Tim McKenzie 57:50

Well, I'll say one positive thing. It used to be negative. I briefly mentioned this earlier, too. Really often, either at city council meetings or reading the Mountain View Voice, I'd see something about rent controlled apartments being demolished, for luxury high rises, a lower number of luxury high rises. Not only is it losing rent control, it's decreasing the total housing stock. It just feels like I was seeing it all the time early in my time in Mountain View. With SB 330, that has stopped. It used to constantly be like, well, our hands are tied. It's code compliance, so we can't turn it down. With SB 330, that's not the case anymore. If you're knocking down rent controlled apartments, you need to build new ones. New BMR, below market rate. That in itself is a huge positive thing. I think I've become a little bit more of a cynic. Sometimes it feels like public comment is something of a performative thing, rather than actually something that will sway anyone. There are some people that seem to just have their minds made up. A lot of times that especially with people ideologically opposed to the idea of rent control, or tenant protections and seeing like, oh, no, housing is an investment where you can make money rather than a human right, because people physiologically need shelter. I think I used to have something of a naive view, like if I just went and like, you know, shared a story and was like, Hey, here's how these things are being impacted or here's what's going on. A personal story or like an observational story. That people would listen. It feels I've sort of shifted more towards cynicism. Thinking that it probably doesn't have a huge impact. A little bit of Sisyphus rolling the boulder up the hill. You just got to keep going and there is the potential for huge impact if we're organized. Not every meeting, like, you can't have 100 people show up to comment, partially because it's just not every meeting they're dealing with specific things where it's worth doing that. Having a large turnout mobilizing people is something that's worthwhile to do. Even if taking the cynical view of, it's not really going to have an impact, it can at least get people more involved in the process and recognizing, oh, that's, this is what the people are doing at city council meetings. Then getting to know a little bit of the personalities involved and becoming more involved. When I first moved to Mountain View, I didn't really know about who was on council. I didn't know

how they were behaving, or what the different political viewpoints were of the different people. I've gotten more involved and seeing the way that people present their arguments sometimes is eye opening, in a way, again, to cynicism a little bit. Also makes me more aware of exactly why these policy decisions are made. How to think and strategize of, okay, if this is a person who's just never going to be receptive to this type of argument, or who doesn't actually seem to hold this as the value? How do we find a way to minimize their impact? Or find someone who will actually share the values that I think, well, I know many of us in the community share. I'm sure they're doing a good job of representing the values of other people in the community. In my view, there's a little bit of competing needs. I think about Maslow's hierarchy of needs as an important organizing principle. There are base basic needs, physiological safety shelter, clothing. There are food, there are basic needs that people need to have taken care of. Before we like, it's not even valuable to concern ourselves with some of the other ones, if those fundamental things aren't being reached. Maybe there's just an orthogonal view, or values in some ways. That's something that has changed a little bit through time that I've started recognizing that.

Michael Kahan 1:02:47

What do you think is the biggest accomplishment, or the most significant accomplishment of the Housing Justice movement in Mountain View, as you've been involved in it?

Tim McKenzie 1:03:04

Measure V. That was again, that was before I was, I was actually not involved other than as a citizen of Mountain View. A neighbor came and knocked on my door, and it's like, hey, you should vote for rent control. That was huge. I wasn't involved in the planning or organizing. I just had someone knock on my door, telling me about it. I was like, heck yeah, I'll vote for rent control in Mountain View. I know that must have taken a huge, huge amount of effort. Just to get to the point where we even got rent control. Since I've been involved, it feels like we're also really, we mentioned this earlier, that it feels stable and safe. Whereas as soon as we got rent control, the people that were appointed to actually implement it, were opposed to the idea of rent control and kind of seemed like they threw sand in the gears. We had to keep fighting for that. Prevent Measure D, being able to defeat that by a two to one margin. That was something I was involved in personally too. Going knocking on doors and talking to people. I've been less involved with Mountain View Housing Justice a little bit. Mountain View mobile home Alliance really spearheaded getting rent control extended to mobile homes. That was another big victory that only happened like in this past year, that it's officially been extended and is actually part of rent control. Which was a big fight and it felt like getting rent control itself is probably the biggest one. I was less directly involved in that. Since then, we've sort of had to fight to really keep it implemented. Keep it going and built up the way to protect tenants. It feels like we're at a place where that's the case. Then you know what the biggest victory is the next one. Community land trusts. That's a community opportunity to purchase. We're not there yet, that's where the next fight is. That's where we'll get our next biggest victory.

Michael Kahan 1:05:24

Awesome. What have been the disappointments? Are there goals that the movement has not reached or wasn't able to accomplish?

Tim McKenzie 1:05:37

I mean, definitely, the amount of mobile home rent control. Them not being included, was a huge disappointment. That was like, I guess you could say ambiguous. I don't think it was ever explicitly said one way or the other. City council had the power to interpret and say like, yes, mobile homes are included, but was really resistant to doing that for years. That was frustrating. Again, this was before my real realization and involvement, but that as soon as we voted for rent control, the body tasked with implementing it was stacked with people against the idea of rent control. It kind of like, was counter to the whole idea. The biggest disappointment is probably the RV ban. The narrow streets ordinance, that is directly displacing people who have lived here for years. They are neighbors that have been here and can't afford housing, because there isn't enough housing. Again, from policy decisions made by previous councils. That was one that was really disappointing. We were hoping that it was something that an ordinance that city council passed themselves, I think it was like four-three, it passed. We were hoping to do some advocacy, like commenting at council meetings, to sway them to not put it, not make it into an ordinance, not try to do this. Then they passed and we collected signatures that within one month or so how the threshold that was needed to put it on the ballot to voters. It was a nice effort that we did like we actually got the referendum, we put it to the voters. Then it was like, I think 57, 43 or something. The voters voted in favor of it. That was a disappointment. It's a direct displacement of our neighbors. That's one that, I mean, doesn't directly impact me. I have my spot that I've been in since 2015. I'm not directly impacted. That is a big disappointment. We spent a million dollars to put up signs all over the city. That's something that was frustrating. Now we're still fighting lawsuits going through of whether or not or when it's going to be enforced, and what things look like. I don't even know how exactly it's all going to play out. I think that there's a stay of enforcement until July 4 last time I checked because of an ongoing lawsuit. That seems like something, at least for now, that we have lost. Maybe it will go through the courts. I'm pretty sure it's illegal constitutionally in California to specifically make laws that are targeted towards vehicle residents. Nominally the law is about traffic safety. It's unclear exactly how things will go, but that is probably the biggest one.

Michael Kahan 1:09:07

How do you think the city of Mountain View has changed in the time that you've been here? Do you think housing is more or less fair? If you had to sum it up compared to when you first came to Mountain View?

Tim McKenzie 1:09:26

That is a really good question. You know what, I don't actually know. I don't know, I haven't had to move in many years. I don't actually know what the process is for moving in for like how people are moving. It might be a little bit tough for me to judge in that regard. I think it's also, cities around here are really porous, in terms of, moving between them. People shift around somewhat regularly. How

Mountain View compares to other places, I am not absolutely certain. At a policy level, the current city council is the most favorable I've ever seen for tenants. Now, it's only been a couple of councils that I've been around. Definitely, at least, the decision makers generally have a majority in favor of tenants, which is, which is nice and is the opposite from when I first moved in. It's tough for me to tell exactly. Since I haven't tried to move. I don't know exactly if that's what that looks like. One thing about Mountain View that is unique, I think this may tie in to an earlier question that you asked of why Mountain View particularly is somewhere with rent control, is the majority of people in Mountain View are renters. I think it's like maybe 60/40, or something like that renters to homeowners. At the population level, there are more renters. Having that representation idea is important. There's also the tension that renters tend to be a little bit more transient. The cities are porous, so if you're renting, you may move from Mountain View to Palo Alto, or Sunnyvale or something like that, depending on where your job is. There's a little bit less direct continuity through time compared with a homeowner who's been here for decades they know the intricacies of the exact personalities on city council. How to lobby for their own interests. I think that's a piece right there that impacts how things go on. There's a smaller number of homeowners compared with renters. Renters are a little bit more transient, so it's tougher to do sustained advocacy through time. Something as harmless and simple as putting period products in bathrooms took over a year of commenting. Bigger things that may cost more money may disrupt the status quo take a lot more sustained organizing and communication through time, which homeowners are more apt to do because of that continuity. Whereas the renters there, it's more transient, more moving around, you may be in Mountain View for a few years, then Palo Alto for a few years, then come back to Mountain View. If you're not actively staying involved and engaged, it can be tough to tie those threads together.

Michael Kahan 1:12:49

What do you think all of us can do? Or all of us as residents of Mountain View, what can we do to make the city a more inclusive community, do you think?

Tim McKenzie 1:13:04

Talk to your neighbors. Join a tenant coalition. Form a tenant coalition. You don't have to be a renter to be able to be supporting renters and tenants. Mountain View Housing Justice, there are homeowners in the group that actively are pushing for tenant protections. There are people who have been renters for many, many, many years that have recently bought homes. There's the ability even if one is a homeowner and has that continuity through time. Recognizing that positionality and then advocating for our neighbors, for the people who were only here for a few years or are here for a few years, then leave and then come back. People who are a little bit more firmly planted and rooted can go and advocate for the people who are more transient. People can comment at city council, get involved, go to a meeting and listen to what's happening. That's a good way to see what's going on. Although one issue that I've seen and felt is sometimes it can feel like a full time job just to be an engaged citizen. To know all the meetings that are going on, to read all the packets, to be able to understand and comment intelligently on it and show up through the meetings which go for a long time. It can be difficult. I think

especially for people who do have that time, for the people who are on council and making decisions. Keeping that in mind, remembering not just whose voices are here but who doesn't have the time to be here but needs to be spoken for. That's something that we can do as citizens. As an academic, there's the old joke, you can choose your own hours, as long as you choose all of them. My schedule is usually a little bit fungible, I can move things around if there are these long meetings, I can just rearrange other things in my week. Not everyone has that ability and even just saying it's being at a meeting and saying that, hey, what about all the people who don't have time to show up because this meeting is when they're picking up their kids from soccer practice or whatever. Recognizing the voices that have been marginalized or excluded, and centering those voices so that the people who have those concerns aren't completely ignored.

Michael Kahan 1:15:48

Terrific. Excuse me. Let me turn to Kamilah for a moment here and ask if she has questions that we haven't touched on.

Kamilah Arteaga 1:16:03

I don't really, I think that's most of them. I think maybe one thing I'm curious about is just more about how are there specific ways that certain organizations like, let's say, Mountain View Housing Justice versus, Democratic Socialists of America, are there some things that they do differently? That some do better? Are there certain things that you wish one did better than the other, just out of curiosity, like just how the dynamics of each organization works?

Tim McKenzie 1:16:36

That's, that is a great question. I think one thing, actually, this is something that I like, actually have multiple groups getting involved can bring forward several different perspectives. Sometimes in one group, we're having a conversation, and it's like, okay, hang on, while we think and feel this, but we also maybe think that this is more achievable, or like actually actionable. Having multiple groups that can then bring forward multiple threads and shift where the conversation is focused, being usually DSA we tend to be a little bit more towards the left compared with other organizations, so we will advocate for a stronger position and be able and push out a little bit more of like expanding the Overton window of what seems acceptable or reasonable in a conversation. Almost having that ability to do a point counterpoint from different organizations is really useful and helpful. Sometimes it just sort of naturally organically arises like when different groups are talking and commenting at the same place. There's just a natural point and counterpoint other times, it can be useful to sort of strategically think about which group is going to bring up which idea and how much to push on each of them. That's a way that I think is really important and useful for working together as different organizations. Knowing who's going to take which thread forward, like Mountain View Housing Justice is very focused on housing issues. DSA, here's kind of a more broad interest as a Big Tent organization. Sometimes finding things where there may not initially seem to be those connections and tying them together, which can be done a little bit more easily when there are several groups coming up.

Michael Kahan 1:18:40

Terrific, and thank you, Kamilah. Yeah, that's a great question. Are there other people you think we should talk to about these issues?

Tim McKenzie 1:18:51

Have you talked to Alex Brown from the Mountain View Mobilehome Alliance?

Michael Kahan 1:18:56

I know Alex, we haven't got him on our list yet. I agree he'd be he'd be a really interesting person to speak with.

Tim McKenzie 1:19:04

Alex attends like every council, well, I don't know about every one, but he attends a lot. He's really well informed and actively involved at the city level. Emily Ramos, she's on the rental housing committee. She is, I think, also in Mountain View YIMBY. I may be mistaken about that. She's in several of the like local progressive groups, but she's also on the rental housing committee. Has been fighting for tenant protection. In fact, it makes me feel more comfortable as a citizen knowing you know, I don't have to attend every Rental Housing Committee meeting to see exactly what they're doing because I know Emily is really fighting for us as tenants. Also she'll let us know when there are specific ones where it's important to come out and have a show force. I feel great as a citizen knowing that she's on the RHC fighting the good fight. She's definitely someone to talk to if you haven't.

Michael Kahan 1:20:11

Great, thank you. Are there questions that you think we should have asked or other topics you wanted to speak about that we haven't gotten to?

Tim McKenzie 1:20:25

I guess one brief mention. I am involved with the public safety, police reform advocacy a lot. One thing that I don't think has really ever been made clear by the city is that there is something of an official policy of displacement, of unhoused people. Similar to life moves, where it's shelter that is designed for you can only stay for a little bit, and we're going to connect you with housing. There's no housing here, so it's pushing you out. The police are, I learned this through MVPDS, a police outreach program that I did last year. Basically what the police do is anytime there is someone unhoused, they repeatedly go up to them and offer them housing services, like over a period of weeks, or however long it takes. Basically, they go up, and they keep talking to the person until the person will take the housing information that lets them find housing that's not nearby. That's like an official policy of displacement. It's housing related, but it's done through public safety through the police. There are a lot of ways that these things tie together that aren't immediately obvious and trying to find and uncover those links. Realize how, oh, public safety and housing are actually linked together. The official policy of the city is

not really clearly stated anywhere, at least being open about that. I would like to change that policy at least let's be open and clear about what we're actually doing, instead of couching it in flowery language to hide the true impacts of the policy.

Michael Kahan 1:22:26

Yeah, thank you. Before we end, can I just ask you a few demographic questions?

Tim McKenzie 1:22:33

Yeah.

Michael Kahan 1:22:34

How would you describe your racial or ethnic identity?

Tim McKenzie 1:22:40

I am White. As you may be able to see from the fact that the sun is brightly reflected.

Michael Kahan 1:22:48

How do you describe your gender identity?

Tim McKenzie 1:22:52

I'm a cis-man.

Michael Kahan 1:22:54

Great, would you mind telling us your age?

Tim McKenzie 1:22:57

I am 31. Or maybe I'm 30. Only one pandemic birthday counts, right?

Michael Kahan 1:23:05

Well, we'll put you down as early 30s. Tim, thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us. This is tremendously valuable. I just am very grateful for your participation and sharing your experiences with us today. I think Kamilah, you want to add something more?

Kamilah Arteaga 1:23:34

Yes, sorry. Really quick. I just wanted to know if, Tim you have any, records or materials or anything that you've kept on issues that you've worked on, like images or, posters, flyers?

Tim McKenzie 1:23:48

I'll poke around. I think I probably don't actually. I would recommend reaching out to maybe Ed Keating from Mountain View Housing Justice. I know at the at the rent control celebration that we had

just a month or two ago, there were like, some of the old fliers for the sneaky repeal Measure D, there are some of the flyers that were published on that. I think that ED is one of the people like one of the official roles in Mountain View Housing Justice. I think that if she doesn't have something, she may at least know where some of them are. I'll poke around, see if I can find anything, and if I do, I'll send an email.

Michael Kahan 1:24:35

Terrific. Excuse me. Terrific. Thank you and thank you, Kamilah. Yes, if you do have other thoughts or comments, feel free to share them with us. We will transcribe this and I hope we'll be able to share that transcript with you. You'll be able to just verify what's been said. As we mentioned, this interview will become part of the city's records and will be planted, deposited with the Mountain View History Center in the library. Thank you for helping us to document this really important period in the city's history of housing and housing sort of regulation. With that we've kind of reached our time. Thanks once again and have a great rest of your afternoon.

Tim McKenzie 1:25:29

Yeah, you too. Thanks a lot. I look forward to seeing it in a month.

Michael Kahan 1:25:34

Yes, please join us on July 26. We'd love to have you there.

Tim McKenzie 1:25:38

For sure. Farewell. Thanks a lot. Take care.

Michael Kahan 1:25:40

Bye bye.