

Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Orinda

Calendar	
Special City Council	7pm
Library Garden Room 22 Orinda Way Tuesday, May 22 Tuesday, May 29	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 24 Orinda Way Wednesday, June 6	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, May 22	
Public Safety	7pm
Library May Room 26 Orinda Way Thursday, June 14	
Park & Recreation	7pm
Community Center 500 St Mary's Road Wednesday, May 16	
Historic Landmarks	3pm
Gallery Room, Orinda Library 22 Orinda Way Tuesday, May 22	
Liaison	8:30am
Room 7, Community Center 26 Orinda Way Monday, June 4	
check online: Town of Orinda: http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us/ for: • all meeting notes • calendar updates	



Possession of Narcotics, 5/07/07 Officer pulled over vehicle near Gateway Blvd. and Highway 24, found crack pipe and some "rocks" inside vehicle, continued search of vehicle and found two containers of off-white powdery substance. Suspect spit out crack cocaine rock he was hiding in his mouth. Tests showed positive for cocaine. Suspect placed under arrest.

Trespass, 5/5/07 Anonymous caller reported party in a field at end of fire lane on Edgewood. Underage female Miramonte student had trespassed past a "No Trespassing" sign with a group of approximately 40 other students. Initially individual denied she consumed alcohol, upon further investigation and field sobriety test, admitted she had consumed beer and vodka. Released to parents custody.

Fight, 4/30/07 Victim, a student at Del Oro High School got into a verbal argument with three unknown white males in front of Fudge Alley off of Rheem Blvd. Three suspects battered victim then fled area. Although victim had a swollen left eye and swollen face, he refused medical attention.

Orinda's ballot Measure E

By Chris Lavin

This is the last in a three-part series by the Lamorinda Weekly focusing on Orinda's ballot Measure E, which comes to a vote on June 5. It calls for floating a series of bonds totaling \$58.6 million to fix the city's deteriorating roads, drainage and water pipes.

In this interview with Mayor Steve Glazer, we focus on those taxpayers who may be considering buying homes in Orinda, and will therefore be paying higher taxation amounts to pay the bond back, should it pass in the special election. The first two parts of the series, which focused first on long-time property owners and then on recent buyers, can be read at www.LamorindaWeekly.com.

Q: How will Measure E affect new home ownership?

Glazer: You have to look at what a new resident wants: They want a safe environment, strong schools and new roads. In that respect we are battling two out of three. Our road conditions will impact the attractiveness of our community and act as a detriment to the new residents, which has the affect of, eventually, influencing property values.

Q: Orinda is one of the wealthiest cities in the East Bay, so it seems kind of surprising that the roads are in such bad shape. Do you think the state of the roads has started to affect property values?

Glazer: Well, when you have a potential homeowner, and a starter house here now is \$1 million, arriving to see that house in a high-end car that is low to the ground, yes, I think it's an issue. People may look at homes on the Internet but no one goes out to buy a home without looking at it, and if the road is barely passable they are not going to consider it. People who can buy into Orinda are driving nice cars, that's just a fact, and potential buyers are going to be arriving in nice cars. I'm not so worried about the SUVs, but I'm thinking more of the Porches, high-performance cars that just don't need to be driving through potholes.

Q: Orinda has two new major housing developments in the making. Won't new homeowners there be expecting decent roads when they go to the grocery or the dry cleaners?

Glazer: Yes, I think they will expect that. And I think we can do that for them.

Q: Since new homeowners will be paying more for this measure, because their property valua-

tions will be greater than those of Orindans who have lived in the city for decades, how are you guaranteeing to them that roads will be kept up?

Glazer: First, Measure E is a long-term plan to fix our roads and keep them in better shape. I think, when it passes, it will take us through the next 20 years. But once we do get our roads up to good condition, it's a lot easier to get them there and keep them there. We have to remember that fixing a road that has been let go for 20 years is a lot more expensive, five times more expensive, than it is to keep it in good repair. And that's what we want to do. Get it fixed and then keep it repaired.

Q: There seems to have been some attention to the fact that most American cities have not put a lot of money into their infrastructure since the 1950s, and that Orinda is in good company with other cities across the nation. Do you agree with that?

Glazer: No, you cannot compare us to them. In the Bay Area, we're comparing our housing market to ... what? And Orinda has the worst, the worst! roads. Much worse than Moraga or Lafayette. What's happening elsewhere isn't really significant. We have to fix what we have to fix.

Q: Do you see a day when the people of Orinda will not be relying on roads so much, using more public transportation, and actually walking to their activities?

Glazer: In a city where probably 98 percent of the population needs to drive, not really. But we do have wonderful amenities to our town and we've worked hard to make it that way. But just think of the bicyclists. They need good roads more than cars do.



Photos by Tod Fierner



Michael Olson and Jason Keadjian

Changing the Shape of Orinda

...continued from page 1

Owner of the project since 1996, Orinda Gateway, LLC has jumped through numerous hoops to get the project off the ground. They got approvals from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (red-legged frog concerns) and finally the California Department of Fish and Game (Alameda Whip-snake concerns). In addition, there were all the usual approvals, a Preliminary Development Plan, Final Development Plans, and of course, Environmental Impact Reports (EIR).

Jason Keadjian, who grew up in Orinda and is now the Spokesperson for Orinda Gateway says, "We are really excited about the project, it opens up the entire west end of town allowing access to existing trails and providing additional recreational opportunities for Orindans." Indeed, 1,400 of the 1,600 acres will be protected open space, and five state of the art playfields will be constructed for baseball and soccer use, two with lighting and artificial turf. To serve the playfields, there will be approximately 300 parking spaces, rest-

rooms, water fountains, picnic tables and a playground. Although Orinda Gateway is designing and building the playfields, they will be owned and operated by the City of Orinda once complete, and meant for public use.

Project Manager Michael Olson of Brooks Street said, "We really listened to residents' concerns and kept the overall design reflective of the Orinda vernacular." The planned swim club for use by residents-only will be similar to the Orinda Country Club's design, but with a much lower profile. Landscape Architect Hart/Howerton has planned many whimsical, lush walkways throughout the project. Robert Hidey Architects Inc. is slated to design non-custom built homes. Designs will be subject to the Design Review process by the City, just like everyone else. Toward the south end of the project an Art and Garden Center will be built for public use, with much community input.

Prices for the large, upscale homes will be market driven. Lots sizes run from 9,000 square feet to 1/2 an acre. In addition to the home purchase price, buyers will have a monthly maintenance fee to

cover upkeep of common areas and the swim club.

Two of the main concerns of area residents are emergency vehicle access, and where new homeowners' children will attend school. Because of Highway 24 traffic, two emergency vehicle access roads will be constructed linking the project with Orinda proper. One will be on Brookside, the other on Edgewood Court off of Lost Valley. School children will attend Orinda schools, Miramonte, OIS, and either Wagner Ranch or Del Rey.

For now, that consistent hum you hear is the sound of earth movers, moving several million cubic yards of dirt, grading the property, all of course approved by the City, and the rotor blades of a pair of helicopters hired to pour new foundations for the four sets of PG & E towers that will be relocated below the crest of the hill. When you create a brand new neighborhood from scratch, power lines clearly mar the aesthetic.

Check out the Google Earth map of this area by going to www.lamorindaweekly.com and clicking on the Google Earth link.

Farmer's Market Opens with a *SNIP*!



Chuck Carpenter, President of the Board of Directors cut's the ribbon Photo by Tod Fierner

To the delight of shoppers and passers-by, the Orinda Farmer's Market officially re-opened for the 2007 season with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10:00am on May 12. The Farmer's Market will be open from 9am-1pm Saturdays through Nov. 20. Now in it's new location on Orinda Way featuring nearly 30 vendors each week, including favorites such as Hamada Farms, Sukhi's Indian food, Ana's Flowers and Steve's Bees, and live music from the likes of Bill Lombardo, Idyll Frets and Capricious Accordion this season appears poised to be the best yet.

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