

# Lamorinda Community,

# Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

# Moraga

Calendar	
City Council	7:30pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School 1010 Camino Pablo	
Wednesday, June 27	
Planning Comm.	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Monday, June 18	
Design Review	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Monday, June 25	
Fire Board	7pm
Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way	
Wednesday, June 20	
Park & Rec	7:30pm
Hacienda, Mosaic Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Tuesday, June 19	
Liaison	8:00am
Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way	
Friday, July 13	
check online:	
Town of Moraga: <a href="http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us">http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us</a>	
for:	
• all meeting notes	
• calendar updates	



**Underage Possession of Alcohol, 6/5/07** An officer drove through the parking lot of the 7 - 11 and saw three young men walking toward a dark colored SUV. One young man was carrying a large box of beer, and placed it in the back of the vehicle. He appeared to be under 21. When the officer asked for ID's, he noticed the driver's license of the person claiming to be 21, was fake. The alcohol was confiscated and citations were issued.

**Student Beats Up St. Mary's Public Safety Officer (PSO) 6/6/07** A PSO wouldn't let a student leave his dorm room, a fight ensued. The suspect student broke free and fled on foot. A backpack was later found on campus containing 13.5 grams of suspected marijuana an electronic scale and an interim California Drivers license in the name of the suspect.

**Mom Busts LSD Seller, 6/2/07** A Moraga Mom called police department about the sale of alleged LSD to her 20 year old son. A specific individual was named as the suspected supplier to the son at a party on Rimer Drive in January of this year. The suspected supplier is known to the police. Further investigation will be undertaken.

**Moraga Parks and Recreation Foundation presents:**  
**2007 Free Summer Concert Series**  
**Thursdays at the Moraga Commons Park 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**  
 Thursday, June 14  
**Rossmoor Big Band; Swing**  
 Thursday, June 21  
**Boothill; Country & Western**  
 Thursday, June 28  
**Dave Russell Band; Rock 'N Roll**  
 Wednesday, July 4  
**Independence Day Festivities Larry Lynch & the Mob**  
 Thursday, July 12  
**Motor Dude Zydeco; Cajun**  
 Thursday, July 19  
**Stone Soup; Rock 'N Roll**  
 Thursday, July 26  
**Mixed Nuts; Decades of Rock**  
 Thursday, August 2  
**littledog2; Rock 'N Roll**  
 Thursday, August 9  
**Juke Joint; Blues**  
 Thursday, August 16  
**Ventana; Latin**  
 Thursday, August 23  
**Celtic Heart; Irish**

## Design Board Studies Sign Ordinance

**By Steve Angelides**  
 Moraga's Design Review Board held a study session on the Town's sign ordinance last month. Town Planning Director Lori Salamak showed portions of an extensive lecture and slide presentation by a law professor on the legal aspects of sign ordinances. The main points of the presentation were that signs are important to a community, that their regulation should be content-neutral with objective standards which are easy to administer, that exceptions are risky, that the legibility of a sign off the premises is a useful criterion, that temporary signs should be limited and truly temporary, and that the objective of regulating signs is to achieve a proper balance.

The Board then heard public comments. Two merchants from the Rheem Center spoke. Dave Reynolds of Curves for Women spoke in favor of loosening the Town's restrictions on temporary signs and banners. George Quintero of the Rheem Valley Pet Shoppe spoke in favor of eliminating the requirement that neon "open" signs be six feet behind the window.

Community organizers Ellen Beans and Edy Schwartz reiterated Quinteros' concern about neon "open" signs. They said that during their visits with other merchants they had heard many similar complaints.

Schwartz said that in Lafayette banners and temporary signs are very useful in

communicating important events to the community, and she would like to see that occurring in Moraga. Schwartz added that large stores have large signs, "but if we don't do something for the little people they're going to go out of business." "We don't want just the national chains," Schwartz emphasized.

Former Mayor Mike Majchrzak addressed the Board as a private citizen, providing some history of the Town's sign ordinance, and some personal opinions. He said the sign approval process needs to be simplified, that there should be more banners, that neon "open" signs are not very important, and that we need more advertising, because "sterile is not semi-rural."

Resident Mary Williams spoke in favor of Moraga's current sign ordinance, stating that Moraga generally has been an attractive place to live and that "overall Moraga's sign ordinance is excellent."

The three Design Review Board members present at the meeting, Dick Socolich, Gloria Nedell, and Christine Kuckuk then all expressed their opinions that as much as possible sign approvals should be handled administratively, rather than going through the Design Review Board.

Planning Commissioner Allen Sayles echoed those views. "I really feel sorry for businesses," Sayles added. "I would never own a business in this town. If you can't properly sign it, why be here?" Sayles exclaimed.

## Hacienda Foundation Formed

**By Steve Angelides**  
 Margaret DePriester announced the formation of the Hacienda Foundation of Moraga, Inc. last month. DePriester, long-active in Moraga civic affairs, is serving as the new foundation's first president.

DePriester said the sole purpose of the newly-formed foundation is the maintenance and renovation of the Hacienda De Las Flores, an historic Spanish-style estate owned by the Town of Moraga. The Hacienda houses some of the Town offices and is rented out for weddings and other special events. However the Town lacks sufficient resources to properly maintain and renovate the Hacienda.

Attorney George Juarez donated the legal work for the formation of the Hacienda Foundation. According to Juarez, the foundation grew out of the previous Hacienda committee.

Charter level donations of \$1000 for individuals and

\$5000 for businesses are being accepted through the end of 2008. Charter donors will be permanently displayed on a plaque at the Hacienda.

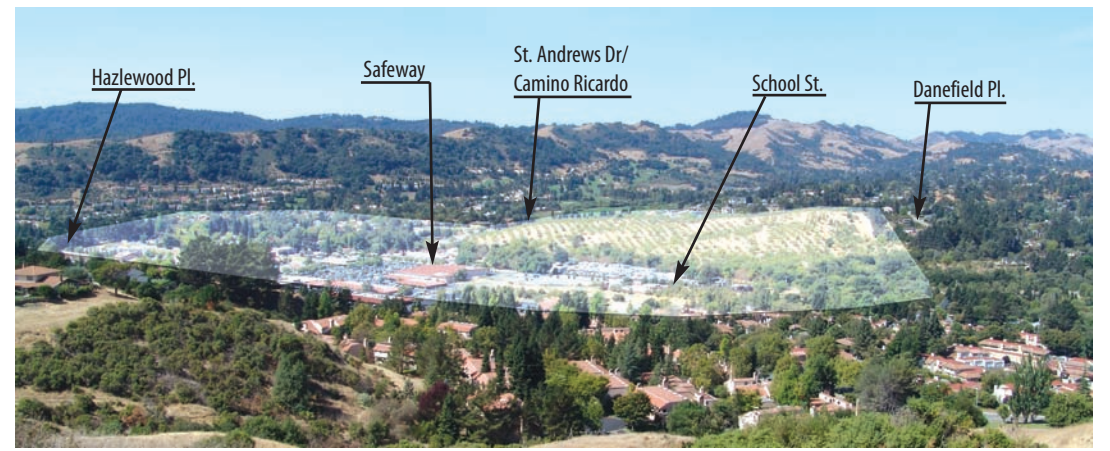
DePriester said the foundation is planning its inaugural event in October. She said the purpose of the event will be to invite people who do not know about the Hacienda to see it—and of course to make a contribution.

The Hacienda Foundation joins local philanthropic organizations the Moraga Park and Recreation Foundation, which raises funds to enhance local recreation programs, and the Moraga Education Foundation which raises funds to enhance local school programs.

Besides DePriester, the other officers and directors of the Hacienda Foundation are Judy Dinkle, Lonnie Treat, Ed Beatson, Jason Evans, John Haffner, Claire Roth, and Lily Wescott.

## Moraga Center EIR Will Study 720 New Dwelling Units

**By Steve Angelides**



Moraga Shopping Center from Glen Alpine St.

Photo by Andy Scheck

The Moraga Town Council has directed the Town's staff to include up to 720 new dwelling units in the Moraga Center Specific Plan project description. This sets the stage for an environmental impact report (EIR) on the project and alternatives to it, which must be completed before the specific plan can be adopted.

Only alternatives included in the EIR can be included in the specific plan. Thus the project description effectively sets the upper limit on development that could be included in the specific plan.

The Moraga Center Specific Plan process has been underway since 2002, when the Town's General Plan, which requires specific plans for both the Moraga and Rheem center areas, was adopted. The Moraga Center area is roughly bounded by Danefield Place and Crossbrook Court on the North, Hazlewood Place and Sanders Drive on the South, Moraga Road and Country Club Drive on the East, and Camino Ricardo and St. Andrews Drive on the West.

The Council gave its directions on a 3 to 2 "straw vote", with Councilmembers Trotter and Bird, and Mayor Metcalf, in the majority, while Vice Mayor Deschambault and Councilmember Chew dissented. The

main point of contention was how many new dwelling units to include in the project description.

The staff recommended up to 720 new dwelling units, based on a land use plan largely prepared by a planner retained by the Bruzzone family, the largest landowner in the specific plan area. The Council majority agreed with the staff recommendation, while also directing that alternatives of 566 units and 339 units be considered in the EIR. Deschambault preferred an upper limit of 339 units, while Chew was not prepared to give any directions to staff.

In addition to the new dwelling units, the project description will include 90,000 square feet of new retail space, 50,000 square feet of new office space, and a 30,000 square foot gymnasium and community center. The Council also directed the staff to add renovation of the existing Moraga Shopping Center to the project description.

Another point of contention, between Trotter and landowner Dave Bruzzone, was the location of the gym and community center facility. At Trotter's request, the Council majority designated the overflow parking area across from the Moraga Commons as "Alternative A" for that facility, and the site across from the Commons

where the Town marquee is located as "Alternative B". Bruzzone, who prefers the marquee site, called Trotter's designation "very pejorative."

Besides being an important step in a five year planning process, Planning Director Lori Salamack hopes the Council's directions will lead to the release of \$250,000 of road funds the Town needs to pay for repaving Camino Pablo this summer. The Contra Costa Transit Authority is holding those funds because of Moraga's lack of progress on affordable housing.

Salamack explained that at a density of 20 units per acre, the new dwelling units in the project description would automatically be considered affordable under state guidelines, regardless of their actual market price. Resident Lee Hayes, who works for a homebuilder, told the Council that "you're not going to have a semi-rural community when you go 20 units per acre. You're going to have an Emeryville."

The Town's staff and consultants will now finalize the project description, begin drafting the specific plan, and prepare for the EIR. The next public step in that process will be a scoping session for the EIR, which is tentatively scheduled for September 4, 2007 before the Town's Planning Commission.

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