

# Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

# Moraga

Calendar	
City Council	7:30pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School 1010 Camino Pablo	
Monday, July 23	
Planning Comm.	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Monday, July 16	
Design Review	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Monday, July 23	
Park & Rec	7:30pm
Hacienda, Mosaic Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Tuesday, July 17	
Liaison	8:00am
Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way	
Friday, July 13	
Chamber of Commerce	8am
Terzetto's Moraga Shopping Center	
Friday, July 27	

check online:  
Town of Moraga:  
<http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us>  
for:  
• all meeting notes  
• calendar updates



DUI, 7/04: A silver 2003 Honda Civic was the stopped on Moraga Road just north of St. Mary's Road for violating the minimum speed law after the vehicle was observed to impede the normal movement of traffic by remaining stationary for an excess of 90 seconds. Objective signs of alcohol intoxication were noted and the subject was taken into custody.

Felony offense-Domestic Dispute, 7/04: Following a verbal argument over male subject's sexual infidelities, the male became enraged and grabbed the female, subsequently throwing her to the concrete ground. The victim suffered minor injuries consisting of visible lacerations and bruising. The male was incarcerated.

Traffic Accident, 6/30: An elderly female driver was injured in a solo motor vehicle accident involving a pole in the Safeway parking lot. The 90 year old driver lost control when her foot slipped off the brake pedal and her vehicle continued moving in reverse until colliding with a metal hand rail. The woman declined medical attention but stated that she should no longer be driving.

## Council Removes Palos Colorados Funds from Capital Improvement Plan

By Steve Angelides

At its meeting on June 27, the Moraga Town Council removed Palos Colorados funds from the Town's capital improvement plan—except for money to help repair the dilapidated Moraga Library—and discussed the possibility of managing those funds as an endowment.

The developer of the Palos Colorados housing development, which is slated to be built in the hills near the Lafayette border, will be paying the Town a total of \$17 million due to the development's impact on the Town. \$9.5 million of that money is expected to flow into the Town's coffers within the next 12 to 15 months.

Town staff had proposed spending \$1.5 million of those funds on capital improvements over the next four years. Besides the library repair funds of \$196,000, the other items included \$565,000 to help narrow and beautify Moraga Rd., \$482,000 to remodel the Town's office building at 329 Rheem Blvd., \$148,000 to relocate the Town's corporation yard, \$75,000 to study the feasibility of a gymnasium and community center, and \$63,000 to help remodel the La Sala Building located next to the Hacienda.

Except for the library repairs, the Council decided

that the other projects will remain unfunded, at least until the Town comes up with a plan for managing the Palos Colorados funds. After hearing from the public, including several members of the Friends of the Moraga Library who spoke in favor of the library repairs, Councilmember Rochelle Bird set the tone for the Council's discussion.

"I have some very strong feelings regarding the financial future of this town," Bird began. "We have a unique opportunity with one time funds," Bird continued. "Let's not have happen what happened to us as a state," she warned. "In a prosperous time we ran up the credit cards and wound up with a loss." "We can look at these monies perhaps as an endowment and only spend the interest," Bird suggested.

Council members Linda Deschambault and Ken Chew spoke next and seemed to support the concept of setting the Palos Colorados funds aside. Earlier in its meeting, the Council had voted unanimously to place all of the Palos Colorados funds into a separate account rather than commingling them with the general fund. So far the Town has received an initial payment of \$250,000 in Palos Colorados funds, which will

be deposited into the new account.

As the remaining council members spoke it became clear that despite their own pet projects, they unanimously agreed that proper management of the Palos Colorados funds was paramount. Councilmember Dave Trotter, whose campaign platform included a gym, will have to wait for his feasibility study. "This is not the time for such a study," Trotter agreed.

At least for now, Mayor Mike Metcalf, who favors a complete study and design for narrowing and beautifying Moraga Rd., will have to settle for a limited \$20,000 traffic study that was previously budgeted. Metcalf expressed the hope that perhaps by the mid-year review in December the Town would have a plan for managing the Palos Colorados funds, and the Council majority might be willing to start spending some of those funds for studies.

Town Manager Phil Vince said that although he would love to have all of his staff in one building, based on the Council's discussion the Town would have to continue to rent out the upper floor of its office building at 329 Rheem Blvd. for a few more years, while earning interest on the Palos Colorados funds

## Design Board Reviews Content-Neutral Sign Ordinance

By Steve Angelides

The Moraga Design Review Board spent its June 25 meeting reviewing the first draft of a proposed content-neutral sign ordinance prepared by Planning Director Lori Salamack.

Salamack prepared the draft following a study session at the Board's previous meeting during which the Board heard a taped presentation by a law professor who said sign ordinances should be content-neutral to be enforceable.

The Town's current sign ordinance is not content-neutral. It has special provisions for reader boards and marquees, memorial markers, flags, barber poles, political signs, real estate signs, service clubs, service stations, special events, and time and temperature signs, among others.

Salamack's draft proposes to regulate signs depending on the use of the property where the sign is posted instead of the content of the sign. "Let's just say that will

be easier to enforce," Salamack explained to the Board. Asked how broken the Town's current ordinance is, Salamack would say only, "it's broken."

At the meeting the Board members and the three Town residents who attended and spoke suggested several significant changes to Salamack's draft.

The draft allows a permanent 6 square foot illuminated sign on residential property. It was suggested that only externally illuminated signs be permitted on residential property, and that 6 square feet was too large.

Acknowledging the wishes of the merchants who spoke at the study session for a neon "open" sign, the draft would allow a one square foot neon sign. It was suggested that "open" signs that small might not be readily available.

The draft limits temporary signs on non-residential property to 10% of the window area. It was suggested that Walnut Creek's limit of 15% might be more appropriate.

Acknowledging the merchants' wishes, the draft permits temporary "A frame" signs on non-residential property. It was suggested there be a limit on how far from the store front such signs could be placed, a limit on what percentage of the merchants in each shopping center could have such temporary signs at one time, and a limit on how close such signs could be to a scenic corridor.

In an effort to accommodate open house signs, the draft permits temporary self-supporting signs on Town sidewalks from noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays. However, after it was pointed out that most of Moraga lacks sidewalks, Salamack said that issue needs to be rethought.

Salamack said she will prepare a second draft incorporating the suggestions made at the meeting, and present it to the Board in August at the earliest.

You can contact reporter Steve Angelides at [steve@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:steve@lamorindaweekly.com)

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which later could be used to pay for the remodeling necessary to move the rest of the staff into the building. Vince said the capital improvement plan would be modified based on the Council's discussion and brought back to the Council for a final vote on July 11.

The details of the library repair remain to be worked out. The capital improvement plan prepared by the staff proposed spending a total of \$465,000 on that

project, consisting of the \$196,000 in Palos Colorados funds plus \$269,000 in asset replacement funds. The staff plan proposed spending \$365,000 of that money in fiscal year 07-08, and the remaining \$100,000 in fiscal 08-09. However, despite the consensus on the need for the library repairs, there were suggestions during the Council's discussion that even that project could be scaled down or slowed down.

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, July 12 Motor Dude Zydeco; Cajun	Thursday, August 9 Juke Joint; Blues
Thursday, July 19 Stone Soup; Rock 'N Roll	Thursday, August 16 Ventana; Latin
Thursday, July 26 Mixed Nuts; Decades of Rock	Thursday, August 23 Celtic Heart; Irish
Thursday, August 2 littledog2; Rock 'N Roll	

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