As MTSC Faces An Uncertain

Future, Members Find New Homes By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Tennis and Swim Club (MTSC) is up for sale, following a heartfelt but unsuccessful attempt by members to purchase the Club. What will become of the property is not yet clear. Located off Larch St., MTSC has been part of Moraga's recreation scene since 1977.

The property is zoned under the Moraga Open Space Ordinance (MOSO), which means that only four houses could be built on the land. The present commercial usage can be "grandfathered" even if the property is sold, or it could be turned into a non-profit or educational facility.

During the summer of 2007, two meetings were held by MTSC members to discuss the possibility of purchasing MTSC. After the second meeting, a committee reported on the price the member group believed it could offer for the Club. It didn't reach the ballpark of \$4M the owners want for the property, and the offer was not accepted.

The women's tennis team has found a new home at the Moraga Valley Pool. "It's a great match," says Rica Chudler, an ex-MTSC member, "we needed a friendly place and our teams are bringing the club the adult tennis players they needed. The A2 women's team is still a bit small, so new play-

ers are welcome!"

The member families of the once mighty Fighting Mackerels swim team have scattered among the different clubs of the area. "MTSC has been a valuable asset to the community for over 30 years as a swim and tennis club," says Tom Ward, who headed the member group. "The swim team has been the center of activity for many families during the summer, and a majority of families attending the meetings to consider purchasing the club had children on the team. To lose any team has a major impact on OMPA. I would like to ask other area clubs to make more memberships available to absorb both the MTSC swim and tennis team families that need a new home before next summer."

Some members said they would love to see the property become a public facility, with public tennis courts, a public pool and may be Heather Farms-type classes. Jay Ingram, Moraga Parks and Recreation Director, has heard of the property, but nothing precise has been discussed. Owner Linda Gong believes that "with issues about traffic on Larch and a previous petition by neighbors to limit the expansion of the Club, it is unlikely that the town would embark on the development of the property for public use."









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