

person that represents the best interests of all Moraga's citizens.

Her professional background, along with the experience of being President of the Homeowners Association at Moraga Country Club will prove to be a real asset for Moraga.

Our town has a financial crisis and we need leadership that will safe guard the towns future. We currently have an understaffed police department and many vacancies in our shopping centers. These are just some of the problems the next city council will face.

Some members of the current city council have divided our town and prefer to pursue their personal agendas as opposed to putting the interests of Moraga's citizens first.

I have been a resident of Moraga for 29 years and have never experienced this before. Lets return to the times when we could be proud and confident in our city government.

Please support me in electing Janice Kolbe to our city council.

Mark Solomon
Moraga

Editor:

I am writing to express how offended I am by the Bruzzone family's campaign tactics for Measure J. To imply that the measure is only supported by "extremists" from Berkeley is not only false, but denigrates all of us who want to see Moraga remain the beautiful town that it is.

In addition, to state that "developers" will sue if measure K passes is quite cynical- since the Bruzzone family is the developer they speak of. I have heard that the Bruzzones complain about how maligned they are by many Moraga residents. Is it any wonder? Their campaign is basically saying: If you pass Measure J and let us build hundreds of homes on the hills, we'll give you a Rec Center. If you pass measure K we will sue and you know you can't afford it. Where I come from, that's called blackmail.

Perhaps if the Bruzzones put their development efforts into the Specific Plan areas where Moragans want development, they would find themselves better-liked while making money at the same time. I hope all Moragans will reject their heavy-handed tactics by voting No on Measure J.

Mike Bernhardt
Moraga

Dear Editor:

After reading measures J and K in detail it appears that BOTH measures are essentially asking Moragans to sign a BLANK CHECK. In measure J the Bruzzone family is asking for money to be spent before any of the details of traffic amelioration and permitted building construction are approved. The traffic improvements required, particularly for their proposed new development area are not specified or costed in detail.

For measure K, while properties at risk from proposed environmental changes are listed, there is not even a map available to show the details to be affected because these details have to be developed by the proposers AFTER their measure would be approved.

For these reason we urge Moragans to vote against each of these measures so that each of the proposing groups can better define their proposals for our futures.

William Tyson
Moraga

Editor:

Give K the OK to preserve open space.

I support Measure K because we can't let Moraga lose hundreds of acres of open space to housing developments in the coming years. The beauty of our small town—the stunning hills and ridges with cattle grazing peacefully—are an irreplaceable asset. They bring peace and well-being to us every day and define what it means to live here.

Critics say there's no threat to open space and we should trust in the Town's regular planning process. They ignore the fact that even after 15 years of massive public opposition and over fifty public hearings, the Palos Colorados developer still ended up with an approved 123-lot subdivision. Public opposition is helpless to stop overdevelopment when the Town's laws allow it.

And now, despite five years of public opposition, our Planning Commission is about to approve the Rancho Laguna subdivision along Rheem Ridge. Additional subdivisions are planned for Rheem near the "painted rocks," Bollinger Canyon, and Indian Valley.

In 1986, Moraga voters seized the opportunity to protect Mulholland and Campolindo Ridges from proposed subdivisions by passing Moraga's first open space initiative. Now's the time to do it again for Rheem Ridge, Bollinger Canyon and Indian Valley by passing Measure K.

Teresa Onoda
Moraga

To the Editor:

On Moraga Way near the Orinda fire station, we look up and are shocked at the visible scarring on the hill from the new Gateway Valley development. Moragans must vote YES on MEASURE K to protect hillsides in our own town. Moraga passed MOSO in 1986 and prevented building on ridgelines threatened then. Measure K will protect the rest. It still allows new houses on open space lands, but limits their number and location. Measure K has Nothing to do with high density downtown development. That disinformation was even included in the voter pamphlet by developer interests.

Don't be intimidated by the litigation scares. Voters prevailed when opponents used the same tactics against MOSO 1986. Now we need to do it again. And beware of numerous other claims distorting Measure K's provisions—outright lies are being sent out in mailers and emails by the development interests sponsoring Measure J. Measure J is on the ballot to confuse voters so they'll vote no on both. Measure J is self-serving and, incredibly, imposes a freeze on the Town on developer fees, regulations, etc. for 25 YEARS! The Town Council and voters could not make Any changes. The promised \$7 million dollars for a new Town Recreation Center could be as many as 25 years away and only IF the Town approves their development projects. That "gift" rec. center also HAS to be built on their land with the Town to pay rent for that land at an as-yet undetermined rate.

MOSO 1986 helped save the safety, beauty and ambiance of our town twenty-two years ago. Moraga can continue that by passing 'K' now. If Measure K fails, Moraga's limited staff and resources will have to deal with a costly fight over each individual development currently planned. Pass Measure K to avoid that by creating a strong framework to protect Moraga's open space.

Steve and Karen Chin
Moraga

Dear Editor:

I don't know any Moraga citizens who want to substantially alter the Town's character and add thousands of new residences. Moraga is already a very, very slow growth Town. Although it sounds quite pastoral and appealing to "Save Our Small Town," Measure K goes too far. Turning Moraga into essentially a no growth town will place a financial strangle hold on the Town.

Fact #1: Without Measure K, it has taken nearly 20 years for the Palos Colorados neighborhood to receive approval to build 123 homes.

Fact #2: Without Measure K, the Town estimates the potential addition of 360

new homes. If Measure K passes, the Town estimates 46 homes could be built. Adding 360 homes in our town of 5,798 existing households is a 6% increase—and we don't know how many years it will actually take to build these homes. That's hardly an attack by "large scale developments" as the Friends of Moraga Open Space suggest.

Fact #3: Without Measure K, the Town's analysis estimates 360 new households will spend over \$5 million per year specifically in Moraga. Combined property tax, sales tax and other revenue would add \$470,000 of ANNUAL NET revenue (after the cost of incremental services used by the new residences) to the Town. If Measure K passes, the net revenue to the Town would be only \$60,167, a reduction of more than \$410,000 per year.

Our Town's current Open Space Policy, Planning Process and Design Guidelines already take years to navigate. It's hard to imagine how 6% growth over a multi-year period could "destroy Moraga's signature vistas and small-town character" as the Friends suggest.

The Town analysis states unequivocally, "[Measure K] would weaken retail and other business demand and thus weaken economic vitality of the Town." A vote for Measure K today means that fewer Moraga residents will be left holding the bag when the Town runs out of money down the road.

Eric Flett
Moraga

Dear Editor,

High Noon in Moraga.

Moraga is caught in a struggle over its future, but some folks are asking us to give up without a fight. The “no-no’s” want Moraga voters to reject both Measure K and Measure J for fear of lawsuits.

Measure K, sponsored by local residents, would preserve Moraga’s ridgelines and create permanent open space where today there are “study areas” at risk of development.

Measure J, sponsored by the Bruzzones’ development company, would lock in development rights and freeze development fees for 25 years so they can build 273 homes in those same study areas. They offer Moraga a payoff: \$4 million to build a recreation center – on their land so they can collect rent. And the Town doesn’t get the money unless the Bruzzones get to build their 273 homes. Since when do we back off from doing what is right because someone might sue us? Developers use lawsuits to gain leverage over cities that are trying to control suburban growth. Bruzzone already sued the Town once. Should we just roll over at the merest threat? Surrender to the developers?

Dan Smith
Moraga

Lafayette Council Candidates

To the Editor:

All Lafayette citizens who care about this wonderful city should consider re-electing Mike Anderson, Carl Anduri, and Carol Federighi to the Lafayette City Council. As a 47-year resident and an avid volunteer it has been my privilege to work closely with these three outstanding citizens on numerous occasions: the Advisory Committee for the Downtown Strategic Plan; the Lafayette Senior Services Commission; the Lafayette Liaison Committee; the Affordable Senior Housing project; and the Lafayette Community Needs Assessment Task Force. Each brings unique experience, special talents, and insightful perspectives to the City Council and the ability to represent the varied interests in our community.

We’ve seen many changes in Lafayette over the years and under the stewardship of these three incumbents Lafayette will continue to grow and succeed while still retaining its unique semi-rural small town ambiance. Growth is inevitable, but what is important is the consideration, experience, and guidance that these three leaders can and do bring to the City Council. They have also demonstrated great fiscal responsibility by adhering to a balanced budget.

To help assure Lafayette stays on the right track we should re-elect Mike Anderson, Carl Anduri and Carol Federighi.

Ruth D. McCahan
Lafayette

To the Editor:

THROW THE RASCAL(S) OUT !

Throw the rascals out! I agree. But which ones? Do we throw out Carol Federighi who has a demonstrated record of fiscal prudence and municipal leadership? Maybe Carl Anduri who has a long record as a Planning Commissioner and City Councilmember protecting Lafayette’s ridgelines and small town feel ? Or Mike Anderson, who has led the campaign to fix our roads and encourage a healthy downtown?

Or is it Gabriel Froymovich, a neophyte who rails against a proposal already rejected by the City Council, whose comments about downtown growth show a complete lack of understanding of basic land use principles and disregard of vested property rights and whose superficially attractive call for city belt-tightening is the rhetorical equivalent of jousting at windmills for the city that has

the lowest per capita municipal expenditure of any in Contra Costa County.

I applaud Gabriel’s interest in the community. But first, try to learn how government works and get your basic facts straight. Then maybe I’ll support you. In the meantime, don’t replace incumbency with ignorance.

Ivor Samson
Former Mayor
Lafayette

MOFD Fireboard, State and National Issues

Dear Editor:

As parents of a lesbian daughter who was finally able to be legally married to her partner of fourteen years, we feel compelled to speak out against Proposition 8. Proposition 8 would ban gays and lesbians from getting married - denying them the dignity and respect that marriage conveys to everyone else. We feel that all couples who choose to make a lifelong commitment to each other deserve to be allowed to do so under law. And we believe that our society and families can only benefit and be made more stable when such commitments are recognized and supported. We urge a NO vote on Proposition 8. It’s the fair thing to do.

Jeff and Barbara Beck
Orinda

Editor:

As we approach the coming election, I’d like to comment on an important race that may easily get insufficient attention among the many issues on the ballot. I refer to the race for Division 2 of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board.

I want to voice support for Fred Weil. Fred and I worked together as young lawyers in San Francisco 40 years ago. We both ended up moving to Moraga, worked together on Moraga incorporation, and then as Board members of the Moraga School District. Fred later served on the board of the Acalanes School District. After consolidation of the Orinda and Moraga fire districts, Fred was first appointed, and then elected, to the Fire District Board. He is now president of the Board seeking re-election.

Fred is not a politician (which I view as a good thing). He is sincerely interested in giving back to our community. He has excellent judgment, common sense, and the ability to analyze complex problems to find the correct solution. He is responsive to citizens, takes time to investigate before reaching conclusions, and never hesitates to make decisions. I am confident Fred will represent Moraga well and urge a vote for him.

Bob Merritt
Moraga

Dear Editor,

Congress and the White House have come to an agreement on the largest governmental bailout in the history of our country----\$700,000,000,000. For most of us this difficult number to get our minds around. if you had \$700,000,000,000, you could give away \$1000 a second for the next 21 years before you ran dry. ----Now that’s real money.

Last week, the CEO of Lehman Bros. admitted in a congressional hearing that he was doling out 23.2 million dollars to his cronies 5 days before the company collapsed. While investors were losing their life’s savings, executives of the company were raking in millions in “golden parachutes”.

That’s real chutzpah!

To assure us that this money will be spent wisely, the White House has changed its position from demanding a blank check with no accountability to agreeing to “strict Congressional oversight”. The abysmal lack of Congressional oversight during these last 8 years has left me uneasy about this agreement with the White House.

For openers, we should be sure the plan has been vetted by qualified economists, not the same politicians that have gotten us into this mess.

We must be certain that the Committee entrusted with this enormous responsibility of oversight is being fully staffed and fully funded. ---no excuses for not carrying out their mandate.

Rather than a Congressional Committee I would prefer a committee of financial experts from the private sector headed by a respected financial genius like Warren Buffet. Such a committee would be less likely to be corrupted by greed, and cronyism.

The agreement with the White House must be devoid of signing statements that exempt the White House from living up to the agreement.

It must guard against “stone walling” and have consequences for refusing to testify under oath. In recent months Karl Rove and Todd Palin have made a mockery out of our judicial system, thumbing their nose at subpoenas and getting away with it.

Finally the committee must have the political will to re-regulate and indict. No longer can we afford to turn a blind eye to flagrant violations of the law.

Forrest Cioppa
Moraga CA

Public Forum

JOIN IT

Earlier this year I took a careful look at Measure K. I decided to vote for Measure K for three reasons. First, Measure K will preserve key features of Moraga and further goals that I think most Moragans support today and will support in the years ahead. Second, Measure K will allow reasonable development on the parcels to which it applies. Third, Measure K neither bars nor dictates development elsewhere in Moraga.

Measure K is the voters’ chance to set clear ground rules that will protect the small-town qualities that Moragans value today and will value in the years to come. It is clear that most Moragans do not favor now, and will not favor in the future, development on ridgelines, new tracts of hundreds of homes at a time, or letting developers use leeway in existing development rules to tie up Town staff and the Council for years. We should address these clear priorities now, not put them off to another day. Voters have the experience and foresight to conclude that adopting Measure K is a much better course than counting on Councils of the future to take timely and clear action.

Measure K protects ridgelines and promotes other sound development principles, while allowing its fiercest opponent to reap millions of dollars (even by its own calculations). This is not “condemnation.” As for litigation threats, remember that Moraga has been there, done that, and has a Court of Appeal decision upholding MOSO 1986 to show for it.

Some opponents of Measure K are taking the “kitchen sink” approach in attacking Measure K. The voters who approved MOSO 1986 faced similar political tactics. Those voters, thankfully, stayed focused on the merits, and put on the books a set of much-needed rules that we now take for granted. But MOSO 1986, widely admired though it is today, gives only “Swiss cheese” protection to ridgelines around town, and no protection to other areas of concern. It is time to fill those holes.

To be clear, however, I support controls, not flat-out bars. Measure K’s rules, including its provision that authorizes some flexibility on a case-by-case basis, set controls, not bars. I would not support Measure K if I thought it were a “no-growth” initiative. I want Moraga to keep its small-town feel, but I do not want it to stagnate.

It also is important to note that Measure K does not, in letter or spirit, force adoption of the draft specific plan for the Moraga Center. That proposal has no link to Measure K, and will rise or fall on its own merits.

Measure K will secure the best of Moraga – its open hills and ridgelines, and its small-town character – while keeping the door open for careful, modest, growth. Measure K will not stop Moraga from taking the important steps necessary to provide more opportunities for residents, a bigger pool of customers for businesses, and a boost to Town revenues. Measure K gives voters the chance to create fair and clear rules that will preserve key features of life in Moraga, while providing fair opportunity and reward to those who wish to develop their land. This is why I am voting Yes on Measure K.

Tony Rodriguez
Moraga