

Lamorinda Community Calendar, Notes, News

Orinda

Calendar

City Council 7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way
Tuesday, March 3

A Special Joint Meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission will be held on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 5:00pm in the Orinda Library Garden Room, 26 Orinda Way.

Planning Comm. 7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way
Tuesday, February 24

Mayor's Com. Liaison 8:30am
Community Room at City Hall
22 Orinda Way
Monday, March 2

City of Orinda:
<http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us>
Chamber of Commerce:
<http://www.orindachamber.org>
• local businesses
• upcoming events



Bank Loiterer, 2/10/09 A 55-year-old white male entered the Bank of the West, but left precipitously after being addressed by a bank employee. The mystery fellow was followed from the bank and was seen changing his clothes before being contacted by Orinda police. A large kitchen knife and a pair of latex gloves were found in the vicinity. He had no explanation of his presence in the bank, but looking suspicious and lurking is not a crime.

Drunk in Public 2/5/09 Yes, it's actually illegal. Two men were noticed hanging out in front of Rite Aid, both displayed signs of intoxication – bloodshot eyes, odor of alcohol, slurred speech and unsteady gait. They were arrested.

Parking while stoned 2/5/09 A Livermore resident was contacted on Dalewood Drive, as a result of a suspicious vehicle incident. An officer contacted a woman sitting in the driver's seat with the engine running. According to the officer, she appeared confused and lost - a description that could be used for more than a couple drivers in town. However in her possession was a pipe commonly used to smoke drugs, at that point she admitted smoking crystal meth.

Vandalism 2/2/09 An unknown suspect(s) damaged the tires of a city vehicle and spray painted graffiti on city property. The suspects may have been a group of teenage skateboarders who had a confrontation with a city employee after he asked the youths to leave the park. Estimated damage \$1,000.



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Planning Task Force Presents Recommendations

By Andrea A. Firth
Orinda's City Council and Planning Commission held a joint meeting on February 3rd to hear and discuss the recommendations of the Planning Process Review Task Force. About 30 interested residents were in attendance as the Task Force's three subcommittees outlined their suggestions to streamline planning in three areas: process, residential, and downtown development. Council members Amy Worth and Tom McCormick have facilitated the generation of the Task Force's 51 recommendations, which are the result of hundreds of meetings over the course of a full calendar year including several public workshops and are compiled in an inch-thick report. The goal of the Process Subcommittee was to streamline the planning and review

process to address residents' feedback that it is confusing and takes too long. Ninety percent of applications to the Planning Department are for single-family residences. To make the process easier for the applicants to understand and manage, the Task Force created a 15-page, color-coded guide complete with definitions, flowcharts, recommended steps, and estimated timing. One of the most interesting changes presented regarding residential development was the proposal for a Neighbor Opt-In process. For some modifications, if the applicant can obtain the consent of the surrounding neighbors, he can bypass the need for a Planning Commission hearing. The Residential Subcommittee also proposed modifications to planning

rules related to setbacks, the floor area ratio (FAR) [used to achieve a balance of the size of the house to the parcel], structure height on sloped properties, and tree management. Clark Wallace and Bruce Burrows presented the recommendations of the Downtown Subcommittee. The core element of the downtown plan was the infusion of housing to bring in more shoppers and create a pedestrian-oriented atmosphere for seniors and others. The subcommittee did not suggest expanding the perimeter of the downtown areas outward but has proposed moving upward by 20 feet to allow building heights to reach 55 feet, about four stories, in limited areas. Wallace noted that the PG&E towers in the Village present an obstacle to taller buildings but



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that the relocation of the towers required further study and was the work of another task force. Resident Ann O'Connell-Nye questioned the Task Force's plans for the Orinda Theater expressing her concern that the Theater be kept intact. "The Task Force is totally committed to the movie theater. We want that theater to be there forever," responded Burrows. Bill Judge, a former Planning Commission Member and Orinda Mayor, complimented

the Task Force on their work. "What's been put forward is a great effort." However, he cautioned that the Task Force's expert members do not necessarily represent the community, and he encouraged the Task Force to hold additional public workshops. Judge was also concerned about the proposal to change the floor area ratio guideline for residential development. "In my view the FAR has worked well. ... continued on page 7

Orinda in Action



Photo Andrea A. Firth

Mayor Sue Severson meets with Orinda residents and staff to set the plans in motion for Orinda in Action—a day of community service to be held on Saturday, April 18th. Co-sponsored by the Orinda association and the City, community groups and individuals are encouraged to volunteer to lend a hand to help to clean-up and beautify Orinda. Volunteer and project proposal forms are available at the city website (<http://www.cityoforinda.org>).

Download stories from
<http://www.lamorindaweekly.com>
(a pdf reader is required to view the pages.)

Charles Hill/Honey Hill/Miner Roads Poised for Makeover

By Andrea A. Firth
The City of Orinda recently submitted an application to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for a \$690,000 pavement rehabilitation project for Charles Hill, Honey Hill, and Miner Roads from El Nido Ranch Road to Gardiner Court. If approved, the project will be funded through the federal economic stimulus bill. Orinda has a long list of high priority road rehabilitation projects, and the Charles Hill Road project was considered the best choice given the stringent criteria and time constraints associated with the federal funding. Qualified projects must have design complete in less than 30 days and be

ready to start construction within 90 days. The Charles Hill project was originally estimated to cost \$866,000, however, the City scaled back the project, which would have extended all the way to Tiger Tail Court, to fall within the Orinda's \$690,000 funding allocation. Under the federal stimulus package terms, jurisdictions that fail to meet the project criteria risk losing their funding allotments, and these monies may be redistributed to cities with projects that are shovel ready. The Orinda City Council strongly urged Staff to have projects ready to submit should further funding become available.



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