

Lamorinda Community

Calendar, Notes, News

Lafayette

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Monday, March 23	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, March 19 Thursday, April 2	
Design Review	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, March 24	
Senior Services	3:30pm
Community Center, Alder Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, March 26	
City of Lafayette: http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us Chamber of Commerce: http://www.lafayettechamber.org	



The Bike with the Missing Lock, 3/5/09 A clever thief managed to steal an unlocked bicycle from an apartment complex on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. Missing is a Triax mountain bike valued at \$350. There are no suspects or leads at this time.

The Empty Parking Spot, 3/6/09 The owner of a 1985 Dodge Ram parked her car in the parking lot of a Mt. Diablo Boulevard apartment complex. When she returned, she discovered the Ram had disappeared and left an empty parking spot behind. The owner said she was in possession of the only set of keys to the vehicle and had not given anyone permission to take it.

Car Thieves Like Pizza Too, 3/6/09 The alert friend of a recent auto theft victim called Lafayette Police when she saw two subjects driving said vehicle on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. She then observed the suspects pull the car into the Mountain Mike's parking lot and go inside. Police made contact with one of the suspects. She admitted to being a passenger in the stolen vehicle but insisted her friend "Bob" had been driving. "Bob" the driver was not located but the female suspect was arrested for possession of stolen property and probation violation. She was transported and booked at the Martinez Detention Facility.

Vandalized Volkswagen, 3/11/09 The owner of a Volkswagen returned to her vehicle on Lafayette Circle and discovered the rear window had been shattered by unknown means. The owner confirmed that nothing was stolen from the vehicle. Damage to the window is estimated at \$200.

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City Housing Element Processing Continues

By Cathy Tyson

Although it hasn't been finalized, last week the City Council discussed a draft of the revised Housing Element. After a presentation by Planning and Building Manager Niroop Srivatsa, and hearing public comment; they gave it a green light and had it sent to State Department of Housing and Community Development for review. Once the review is complete, the Planning Commission and City Council will hold public hearings before final adoption.

"Every five to eight years, the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) requires that cities and counties outline the housing needs in the community, the barriers or constraints to providing that housing, and actions proposed to address these concerns," said City Manager Steven Falk in a written statement. "The State HCD also allocates, through local Councils of Government, each locality's 'fair share housing needs' by income category that the jurisdiction is to consider in the development of its

Housing Element."

Lafayette is obligated to provide the opportunity for a total of 361 units of very low income, low income and moderate income households to accommodate Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) established by the HCD. California already requires that new downtown developments have 15 percent of the units designated as affordable housing.

The City must "show the state that we have sufficient land available to foster the development of affordable housing," said Srivatsa in her presentation. She also noted that the city has no requirement to actually build homes or reserve space for housing and that the state just wants to make sure there are no hurdles or barriers in place.

What would be the repercussions if the housing element was not submitted? "Funds could be withheld by state and outside housing groups could sue," said Srivatsa. "There is an obligation as part of the Lafayette General Plan to have the

Housing Element."

It's no surprise, even with currently slightly deflated housing prices, Lamorinda teachers, firemen and police find it very difficult to live in the area. "The need for affordable housing is so large - no matter how many units are built, it will never be enough," said Diana Elrod, a housing consultant.

While demonstrating the potential for lower income units is required by staff, there is a "not in my backyard" concern that some residents share. "The vast majority of homes in Lafayette are single family residences," said David Bruzzone. "There are better ways to provide affordable housing, like in-law units." Mayor Don Tatzin replied that city already recognizes in-law units as potential low income housing.

On a lighter note, regular City Council meeting attendee Guy Atwood said, "if the economy keeps going the way its going we may all be living in affordable housing."

Positive Lafayette Bike Park Stakeholders Meeting

By Cathy Tyson



Photo provided by Rachael Lopes

"Give me a shovel, I'm ready," said Nicco DeLuca. He was just one of a standing room only crowd of mostly youthful bike enthusiasts who are fired up about having a bike park in Lafayette.

A presentation by Nat Lopes, of Hilride Progression Development Group, a firm that specializes in bike park design hired by the City of Lafayette, kicked off the first official Stakeholder Meeting with an exciting presentation that energized the already energetic attendees.

"The illegal creek jumps were very popular and a common problem we've seen. It's great to see that the city is being progressive and environmentally sensitive," said Lopes. Indeed there was damage to

the Las Trampas Creek riparian area caused by unauthorized BMX and mountain bikers. Parks maintenance staff has repeatedly removed these sites, but diligent bike jumpers keep building more. It's the bike version of "Whack-a-mole."

Located on the south end of the Community Park, the approximately one acre site is an ideal location for the new park that will feature gravity fed jumps for beginning, intermediate and advanced level riders. The 500 foot elevation change, hose and spigot at the bottom, along with an existing storm drain, bathrooms, garbage cans, plus the perfect spot for spectators in a shady eucalyptus grove, are essential elements of a successful park.

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Lafayette Circle Power Lines Undergrounded

By Cathy Tyson

Drivers around Lafayette Circle, be advised that P G & E will be tearing up the street to underground utility wires. "We want residents to know this will not increase their electric bill," said P G & E spokesperson Tamar Sarkissian. She added that the city will not be footing the bill. The City of Lafayette currently receives P G & E infrastructure credits, called Rule 20A funds for the purpose of undergrounding significant overhead facilities, a recent staff report noted. Sarkissian was quick to point out that funds are like frequent flier miles - only to be used in exchange for projects - a rebate or refund to customers is not allowed. The entire cost of the project is expected to be paid with Rule 20 A Funds.

Utility crews will be working

one section at a time during daytime hours, there will be no nighttime or weekend work. The contractor will notify businesses in advance. "Although there will be some traffic control, the street will not be blocked off completely," said Sarkissian.

Construction is slated to begin in early April, and should be complete by summer, according to Sarkissian. Matt Luttrupp, Associate Engineer with the City of Lafayette noted that part of the parameters of the job included that there will be no construction during the Art & Wine festival scheduled for September 19 and 20.



Judy Carney is named Citizen of the Year for her dedicated volunteerism at Burton Valley Elementary, serving for many years on two school boards, chairing the Reservoir Run, and as a founding member of the Lafayette Community Foundation, along with more civic participation activities too numerous to name here. The award will be officially bestowed on March 20, 2009 at the Lafayette Park Hotel. Photo provided



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