

Published May 27th, 2009

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Re: Native Plants vs. Lawns

[REDACTED] A gardener can easily conserve water, reduce energy-use, save money and still have a lovely garden. Native plants ugly? I love my manzanitas, ceonothus and wildflowers (dominated by easy California poppies), but EBMUD and the California Native Plant Society (go to their Native Here Nursery) can suggest a wealth of other choices (including summer bloomers like penstemons and fuchsias). Once you establish such a garden, you will discover it not only makes gardening easier, but also will provide the satisfaction of conserving and recycling resources without thinking.

[REDACTED] Hiring a landscaper costs no more for a drought-tolerant garden than for any other style of gardening and saves you money in the long run - because your lawn uses more fertilizer, water and energy than any other area in your garden. A power mower is a gasoline guzzler and smog emitter -- and imagine your neighborhood with the sound of birds singing instead of high-decibel noise! If you plant for our Mediterranean climate, pests (and hence pesticides) and fertilizer will also be minimized.

[REDACTED] But you don't have to hire anyone and you don't have to totally get rid of your lawn. You do need at least a basic plan, however, like: place large shrubs behind smaller plants, sun lovers together etc. You can begin by shrinking the edges of your lawn and frame the front yard with borders or shrubs for a pleasing effect.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Cinda MacKinnon (Environmental Scientist)

[REDACTED] Orinda

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] P.S. More environmental facts: Fertilizers and pesticides require a large amount of energy to produce and transport - thus burn fossil fuels and add to global warming. Pesticides linger in the soil and end up in the creeks. EBMUD reports that the main contaminants of our Lamorinda creeks - which flow to two drinking water reservoirs - are from residential use of pesticides and fertilizers.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Editor:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] When citizens of Lafayette decided to consider incorporating in 1968, full details were communicated to its residents, of what the town would be, functions its government would assume - and, by absence of what it wouldn't be responsible for, left all other desired activity to volunteers. Essentially, government would accommodate Public Safety, Planning and Public Works. Appropriate citizen

"commissions" would be established to serve as unpaid supporting resources for paid city staff's functions. The key to all this was that voters authorized "what" our city was to be - and, "how" it would be governed. Only rarely have these benchmarks been violated. Now however, a critical "outsider intrusion" on our "2nd P" is in progress - i.e., a "Downtown Strategic Plan" conceived by a 500,000 consulting firm...in effect, is moving in on Lafayette's outstandingly capable Planning Commission's "turf." This letter doesn't expound full details of the "Draft Plan" - only to note - in several areas, it totally contradicts Lafayette's very essence...its "semi-rural physical setting," "urbanizing" high rise structures the length of downtown Mt. Diablo Blvd, downtown concentrations of "affordable housing" (here comes Section 8), downtown creek and park developments, a new through street between Mt. Diablo Blvd and Rt 24. In short, making us a small-scale Walnut Creek. Most troubling is the "cultural slant" of DSP - it reflects all the social spin of an earlier attempt by the County Supervisors, to impose its "Shaping Our Future" (SOF) version of the UN Agenda 21 "Smart Growth" concept. This, a scheme which would have given the BOS full control of land use in all 19 county jurisdictions. Fortunately, when citizens fully understood "transit villages", eliminating single family dwellings in core areas - and, other social engineering schemes, the \$750K venture was abandoned. But - only because the public got "wired in." And, so it should be re DSP - the public needs to be provided full details of "the how and who" of DSP's authorization, its "funding OK," why it would potentially displace a very recent update of Lafayette's General Plan (by a very capable Planning Commission). And, most critically important - failure to put to a 2/3s vote, any acceptance and/or implementation of a Plan, allowing city bureaucracy to radically alter Lafayette's "founding base."

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□ Donald Lively

□ Lafayette

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□ Dear Editor,

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□ "Kudos to the Lafayette Juniors!" On Saturday the Juniors had their 10th Annual Lafayette Kitchen Tour. My cottage was one of the homes on the tour and I would like to express my thanks to this group of dedicated hard working women for a job well done. There was not a stone left unturned as they prepared my cottage and garden for the Kitchen Tour and luncheon in the back garden. They left me at ease when you think that 600 people will be walking through your home and when the tour was complete everything was immaculate both inside my cottage and the garden. If you are approached to have your home on the tour I would encourage you to get involved with this dedicated first class group of women. Thanks again to the Juniors for a job well done!

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□ Jim Peacock

□ Lafayette

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Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

