

Orinda

Lamorinda Community

Orinda

Calendar

City Council 7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way
Tuesday, June 2

Planning Comm. 7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way
Tuesday, June 9

Public Safety Comm. 7pm
Community Room at City Hall
22 Orinda Way
Thursday, June 11

Mayor's Com. Liaison 8:30am
Community Room at City Hall
22 Orinda Way
Monday, June 1

City of Orinda:
<http://www.cityoforinda.org>
Chamber of Commerce:
<http://www.orindachamber.org>
• local businesses
• upcoming events



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Theater Square Changes a Done Deal

By Andrea A. Firth

A change is underway, and the empty storefronts that have plagued the rear section of Theater Square may be no longer. "The changes before us are reasonably balanced and forward thinking," stated Steve Glazer as he and his fellow Orinda City Council members voted unanimously to re-zone parts of the ground floor of Theater Square and amend the City's agreement with the owner, GLL Properties. These changes will broaden the types of businesses that can lease space on the first floor of Theater Square beyond retail outlets and restaurants and allow banks and medical, dental and professional offices to occupy space in the back of the Square.

"We want the opportunity to lease the [vacant ground floor area in Theater Square] and the new agreement and the amendment to the zoning designation is going to make that happen," stated Chris Quiett, the representative from GLL Properties, in his comments to the City Council. Quiett acknowledged that reaching the agreement took almost two years, but he was satisfied with the outcome. "Everyone

seems to be pushing in the same direction," he added.

Everyone included the new owners of the Orinda Theater, James Sheehan and Tom Peterson, who were also on hand to encourage and support the Council's decisions. The preservation and commercial viability of the Orinda Theater, which the City identifies as an important focal point for the community, has been a key element of the discussion during the City's negotiations with the Theater Square owners. Sheehan and Peterson recently entered into a 15-year lease agreement with GLL Properties. Laura Abrams, a leader of the Lamorinda Film and Entertainment Foundation—a group of Orinda residents committed to the survival of theater, also expressed her organization's support of the Council's decision. "I think the language of the agreement supports and protects the long-term viability of the theater," stated Abrams, adding that commercial success for the new operators and sustainability of the theater are contingent upon controlling the rent and increasing attendance.

Orinda Theater Picket Line

By A. Firth

Over the past two weeks, some patrons of the Orinda Theater have found that after getting in line to purchase movie tickets, they then have had to cross the line—that is the picket line. Union projectionists have been picketing outside the Orinda Theater during evening show times on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, and they will be there "for as long as it takes" according to Jason Mottley, the Business Agent for Local 169 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees. According to Mottley, two members of Local 169, a projectionist/technician who had worked for at the theater for 13 years and a projectionist/theater manager who had worked at the theater for 4 years, were given a one-day notice regarding the theater's ownership change and termination of their employment.

Mottley described a preliminary offer from James Sheehan, who took ownership of the Orinda Theater with partner Tom Peterson on May 7th, of one eight-hour shift a week as not a viable employment option and insufficient for the union workers to maintain quality operations at the theater. Per Mottley, the two projectionists had been working 30 to 35 hours per week before being let go.

Sheehan, who has worked with union projectionists at other theaters, indicated that he and his partner are willing to negotiate with the projectionists, but that the contract will require new terms similar to union contracts that projectionists have with independently-operated theaters in Berkeley and Albany. Mottley indicated that there had been no direct communication between the parties over the past two weeks, and he was unable to comment on the proposal.



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Contraband in pants, 5/20/09 Unknown male suspect entered Longs drugstore and removed unnamed property valued at \$40. The suspect was seen placing merchandise into his trousers, then left the store without paying and fled to a newer white Mazda. Alleged thief can afford a nice car?

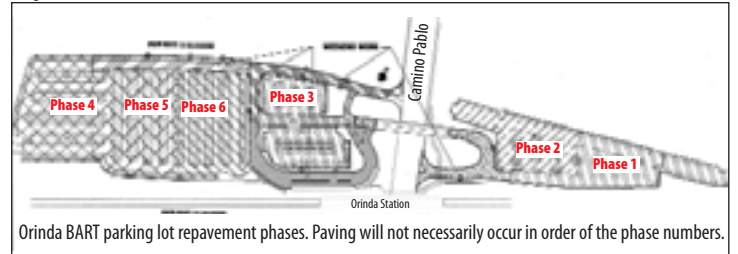
D.U.I. 5/18/09 An Orinda resident was speeding and making unsafe lane changes in town, then preceded onto Highway 24 where his unsafe lane changes continued. When he was pulled over at eastbound Highway 24 and St. Stephens Road, the officer noticed a strong odor of alcohol. A field sobriety check was administered, resulting in .17% - which is more than double the legal limit. This fellow, who was old enough to have teenage drivers, should have known better.

Falling down drunk, 5/17/09 A cop saw a man stumbling into traffic on Moraga Way, and watched him fall face first into the bushes at El Camino Moraga. He was contacted by the officer while remaining bush-bound. The 49-year-old white male Orinda resident said he had been drinking at a friend's house in Lafayette. Perhaps it was his horizontal position, the "overwhelming" odor of alcohol, or maybe his slurred speech, that led the officer to give this fellow a blood alcohol test that resulted in a staggering .32% - four times the legal limit.

Theft at Longs, 5/15/09 An unknown suspect walked into Longs via the front door and proceeded to the employee-only break room. He rifled through two purses that were left on the floor, stealing an undisclosed amount of cash, then walked back out the front door. The suspect was wearing baggy jeans and a white t-shirt - that narrows it down.

Orinda BART Parking Lot Repaving Starts in June

By Andrea A. Firth



Orinda BART parking lot repaving phases. Paving will not necessarily occur in order of the phase numbers.
Map courtesy of San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)

Commuters who use the Orinda Bay Area Regional Transit (BART) parking lots may want to think about walking, biking, or finding a ride to the station this summer. Starting in early June, the parking lots of the Orinda BART station will be repaved and re-stripped. The total number of available parking spaces will be reduced by an average of 235 spaces a day for up to twelve weeks until the project is completed.

"There will be an impact on parking, but it is less significant at this time of year because BART rid-

ership is lower in June and July as compared to other times of year," says Linton Johnson, Chief Spokesman for BART. Still, Linton encourages parkers to consider using alternate transportation to get to the Orinda station or using another station if they have to drive.

The Orinda BART repaving project will be completed in six phases lasting for one to two weeks each. Monthly parkers will be relocated to other reserved parking areas during the project. The order that the paving phases will be completed is yet to be determined.

Crest View Drive Residents Ask Council to Reconsider and Repave—Now Please

By Andrea A. Firth



Photo provided

Reclassify, reprioritize, and repave our road was the mantra of the forty-plus Crest View Drive residents who attended last Tuesday's Orinda City Council meeting. As a few wielded signs for their cause, Jerry Loeper, a 14-year resident of the city and a former Orinda Planning Commission member, spoke on behalf of the neighborhood requesting the Council to allocate emergency repair funds to fix some of Crest View Drive's most problematic potholes and to reclassify the residential street as a collector street. Designation as a collector street would put Crest View Drive higher on the list of Orinda roads that are repaved annually through the city's pavement

management program or possibly make it eligible for repaving and repair through additional Federal Stimulus Package funding should those monies become available.

Crest View Drive, a 1.2 mile long cul de sac (possibly the longest residential cul de sac in Contra Costa County), which has not been repaved in over twenty years (or possibly twice as long as that according to some Crest View residents) provides a classic example of the significant infrastructure problems that face the city. Drivers from the 125 single-family homes located on Crest View Drive and it's four secondary cul de sacs (Crest View Terrace, Hilldale Court, Culver Court, and Crest View Court) dodge potholes and suffer bone-jarring jolts each day as they travel the street to and from their homes according to one resident. "We are not asking for special treatment," added the resident as he addressed the Council. "We understand that you have to apply funds fairly. We just ask you to look at the road, what it does, and the role it plays in our community."

Having recently taken a drive up the steep incline of Crest View Drive, Council Member Amy Worth sympathized with the residents regarding the dismal state of their street surface, but a solution to the Crest View Drive problem was not forthcoming. "The pot of money [that we have to fix our

roads] is only so big," stated Mayor Sue Severson. With an annual budget of just over one million dollars for street repavement and an emergency repair fund of \$200,000 a year, there is a very limited supply of funding to address a significant amount of need.

City Manager Janet Keeter explained that the reclassification of Crest View Drive from a residential street to a collector had recently been reviewed by the Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission—a group of residents appointed by the Council to evaluate the allocation of infrastructure funds and advise on prioritization—which determined that the residential road did not meet the criteria to be designated as a collector despite an average daily traffic count of over 1,000 trips per day. There seems little opportunity for Crest View Drive to be repaired in the near future without reclassification, and the cost to repave Crest View Drive from end to end is estimated to be \$400,000. The residents remained upbeat and committed to their cause and expressed their past and continued support of bond measures to address Orinda's infrastructure needs. Because the comments from the Crest View residents were part of the public comment session and not a scheduled meeting agenda item, the City Council made no formal response.

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