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State of the Town

By Sophie Braccini



Dave Trotter mingles with the community after his presentation Photo Andy Scheck

delayed beyond the first semester of 2010. With the Specific Plan Trotter's objective #3 should also be adopted; the housing element, a plan that will define higher density housing in the down town, and will permit the town to satisfy its State obligation to plan for different types of housing needs.

Other development projects moved forward in 2009. Of particular importance is the final approval of the Palos Colorados project, which will build 123 homes, after 20 years in the planning phase. \$17 millions in impact fees for the town are associated with this project.

Goal #4 had to do with a balanced budget and Trotter congratulated staff on being able to curtail spending and to have released a surplus for the 2008/2009 budget period, as well as approving a balanced budget for 2009/2010 with a \$450,000 projected excess.

However, the funding of the infrastructure maintenance stays below the needed levels and to remedy this situation Trotter was pleased to recall that goal #5 had been achieved, the establishment of a Revenue Enhancement Committee that worked over six months in 2009 and presented its report to Council at the end of November. "Implementing the recommendations of the Committee will be one of the major tasks of the coming year," added Trotter. Among the proposals made by that committee, suggestions pertained to the business community and what needs to be done to revive Moraga's business life. It was Trotter's 6th objective to enhance the commercial centers; his success in this area is more arguable, although he highlighted the passage of a measure waiving certain fees for businesses in transition.

There's no argument as far as objective #7 is concerned. It had been Trotter's intention to restore civility on the Council. Those who went to the meetings throughout the year witnessed very courteous and cooperative deliberations.

2009 brought a few unanticipated elements to the forefront. Among them was the move of Town staff to the Hacienda de las Flores, which was very badly received by the community. Trotter was congratulated by resident Ellen Beans on the Council's quick action in bringing this topic to the agenda. The result was a change in the initial decision and instructions given to staff to vacate the Hacienda as quickly as possible.

Trotter concluded his presentation by saying that he enjoyed his year as a mayor and will continue to serve as a Council member in 2010. In Moraga, the Mayor has the same voting power as the other members of the Council, so Trotter shared the credits of the year's successes with his fellow council members and staff. Trotter would not confirm if he will run for an additional 4 years when his current term ends.

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