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Letters to the Editor

... continued from page A11

Dear Editor:

I urge Lafayette residents to vote for Traci Reilly for Lafayette City Council. There are two seats open on the five-member council. Traci would be a great addition to the Council, bringing her experience, fresh perspective, and commitment to fiscal restraint. She has a deep and broad understanding of city issues and is connected to the pulse of Lafayette residents. Traci's background includes leadership positions in the elementary and middle schools and in philanthropy. She has been Chair of Lafayette's Crime Prevention Commission and helped champion the No Solicitors Ordinance, which was adopted in 2009.

People are generally pleased with the quality of life in Lafayette. However, this past year, the city has been considering major agenda items that could immensely affect the Lafayette we love. The Charter City/Property Tax Transfer proposal and the Downtown Specific Plan both represent controversial issues. The city has deferred consideration of the Charter City proposal until after the election, and the Downtown Specific Plan continues to work its way through public hearings. Given these important issues, rather than re-electing both incumbents, Lafayette residents would greatly benefit from casting one of their two votes for Traci. She wants to see more public outreach and education on the implications of complex proposals. She understands the views of many homeowners who feel frustrated by the process or feel their voices are not being heard.

Traci is an outstanding candidate. In low-profile races, incumbents have a distinct advantage over challengers, who are not as well known. I urge residents to learn more about Traci and where she stands on issues facing Lafayette by visiting her website at www.tracireilly.com. You can also view her impressive list of endorsers, which includes leading homeowner advocates, school and community leaders, as well as former Police Chief Mike Fisher, former Mayor and Councilman Ivor Samson, and former Assemblywoman Lynne Leach. Traci is the right candidate for Lafayette City Council.

Linda Murphy
Lafayette

Dear Editor:

This year's election presents Lafayette residents with the opportunity to elect an outstanding candidate to our City Council. Traci Reilly is a bright, articulate, and knowledgeable candidate who has much to offer to our city. At age 43, Traci is younger than the current council members, but has a wealth of experience. Her background includes leadership positions in public service and in the school and volunteer community, including PTA Executive Board positions at Lafayette and Stanley, and President of Lafayette Juniors. Traci has been Chair of Lafayette's Crime Prevention Commission since 2008 and helped champion the No Solicitors Ordinance, which was adopted in 2009. Traci is committed to having the Lafayette City Council and city staff serve its residents well. She wants transparency in city government and wants the city to do a better job of informing its residents of important proposals that it considers. People who know or have met Traci are impressed by her understanding of the complexities of the city government.

Traci has earned the endorsements of leading homeowner advocates such as Guy Atwood, Jim Cunha, George Burt, Joe Garrity, Eliot Hudson, Linda Murphy, Marie Parti, Maeve Pessis, Alida Smith, and David Van Etten. She is endorsed by leaders in the school community, including Diane Camporeale, Michelle Chan, Julie Donlan, Astrida Lalor, Francie Low, Ellen Seiler, Pam Severson, and Christine Wang, as well as current and past Lafayette Juniors leaders such as Marci Dublin, Fran Miller, Amy Parlett, and Roslyn Stenzel. She also has the backing of her fellow Crime Prevention Commissioners - Larry Belusa, Rita Charles, Kim Tejada, Tom Titmus, and John Worden - as well as former Police Chief Mike Fisher, former Mayor and Councilman Ivor Samson, and former Assemblywoman Lynne Leach. I encourage voters to elect Traci Reilly to the Lafayette City Council.

Isy Milosevich
Lafayette

Dear Editor,

As a long-time resident of Lafayette who is frustrated by the conditions of our roads, I am thrilled that Traci Reilly is running for Lafayette City Council. Traci understands that fixing our roads is a priority for residents. She also is committed to reducing city expenditures and considering all finance committee recommendations before asking homeowners and property owners to levy additional taxes on ourselves to pay for road repair.

Last year, the street on which I live was repaved. But because our street was a low priority street on the city's list of roads needing repairs, six of us homeowners had to pay 50% of the cost of repaving. This represented a large financial burden.

Especially given the current economy, homeowners and property owners will benefit from having Traci Reilly on the City Council. In order to fund road repairs, she plans to look first to the city internally to find more efficiencies. Traci also supports repayment of the \$6 million loan from the City to the Redevelopment Agency as soon as feasible, and that it be used to repair our roads and drains. Traci will also work to restore the \$400,000 the

City took from road funding when it received a like amount from the new Waste Management fees, which resulted in no increased funding for roads from such fees. Traci understands the burden that additional taxes would impose upon Lafayette residents and businesses.

Traci Reilly has my vote.

Sincerely,
Rachel Browne
Lafayette

Editor:

We urge our fellow citizens to vote for our neighbor Don Tatzin for re-election to the Lafayette City Council in the November election. For the past eight years that we've lived in Lafayette, we've come to know Don as a person who works hard to preserve the best features of our community, improve those that can use upgrading, and make sure the city is managed in a fiscally responsible manner.

We both grew up in neighboring communities and always thought of Lafayette as a place we would like to live some day. After we moved here in 2002 and got to know the city better, we knew we had made the right decision. We love the residential neighborhoods, the restaurants and other downtown businesses, the reservoir, and especially the new library.

Most people probably don't know how much time the city councilors put in on our behalf. We often see Don out in his backyard playing Frisbee with his border collies with one hand and turning pages in his 100-page City Council reading package in the other. Given his long history of serving the Lafayette community, we believe Don has the depth of knowledge and problem-solving ability to help the city make good decisions for all of our benefit.

Sincerely,
Brian and Teri Fournier
Lafayette

Other

Editor:

I wrote a short opinion favoring Proposition 19. The first tax I've ever been in favor of. By the end of the week, I received an anonymous letter in the mail. It was 18 large words of potty-mouthed name calling. Something like the most obnoxious kid in the fifth grade would say. There wasn't an intelligent word in it. I don't know if they're mad because I'm against the enormous tax free profits in the drug trade and they are a dealer, or if they are blaming me because their child became a drug addict. Children of people like this are prone to addiction.

Several friends and a neighbor smoked themselves to death with tobacco. It's legal and heavily taxed. Same with alcohol. Cannabis should be in the same category. It's nowhere near as addictive as tobacco.

People are always brawling after drinking too much alcohol. I never hear that about Cannabis users.

A long time ago a young man told me he used heroin because it was cheaper than weed.

Cowardly, nasty letters or not, I'm voting yes on Proposition 19.

Bruce R. Peterson
Lafayette

Editor:

Orinda's Future Hinges on 2 Nights - Oct. 13 & 18

Like most of us who live here, I truly love Orinda for so many reasons. That is why I'm protective of our city and what happens to it. I'm sure you are, too. Therefore, it is essential that every resident attends the Public Workshop about the Downtown Plan! Please mark your calendars for Monday, October 18, 7-9 p.m. at Fellowship Hall, Orinda Community Church.

The meeting is being listed as a Downtown Revitalization Workshop. It is more about major changes in Orinda's General Plan, ordinances, and zoning. This should be an opportunity for you to be heard.

The Downtown Plan is proposing a jump from the current 35 foot height limit up to 55' - 70' (depending on the pitch of the roof). Can you imagine the 18 foot high buildings on Moraga Way (across from Peets and Lupetti's) razed from existence and more than tripled in height? Where will our human scale downtown go, along with our view of the hills?

Can Orinda be beautified/updated? Sure.

Do we want traffic congestion and years of construction to result in a faux, contrived city in its place? No thanks. Santana Row wouldn't work here. Are we supporting local businesses and the Orinda Theatre? We should be. Big box stores plus Crate & Barrel and the Gap have been suggested. Orinda is unique.

Should there be downtown housing? O.K. but not high condos and offices with underground parking everywhere.

Do we want our City Council and city officials to listen to residents and have a vote by citizens on the direction of our City? Five people on a City Council should not decide for 17,000+ residents who pay the property tax.

So please be there that one night at least!! In addition, Candidates' night for Orinda City Council will be on Wednesday, October 13, 7-9 p.m., at the Library Auditorium. This is the most important election in years.

Your attendance on these two nights about our Orinda could determine its future. See you there!

Ann O'C.-Nye
Orinda

Public Forum JOIN IT

Measure O Will Help Fund Improvements To Our Streets and Roads

Voters will have an opportunity on November 2nd to approve a measure that will provide additional annual funding for improvements to local transportation. Measure O proposes a Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) of \$10 for every motor vehicle in Contra Costa County. The fees can be used only for street and road maintenance and improvements, transit to help relieve traffic congestion, and projects for the benefit of bicycles and pedestrians. Funds generated by the VRF will add considerably to the Return to Source (RTS) funds generated by Measure J, the half-cent sales tax which voters approved in 2004 to fund transportation projects and programs for 25 years. It is on these funds that cities and towns rely for basic maintenance of local streets and roads. For the three Lamorinda cities, Measure O will generate about \$435,000 new funds for street and road maintenance and improvements and for bike and pedestrian projects. For Moraga, this means an additional \$108,000 added to \$258,000 annual RTS funding generated under Measure J—more than a 40% increase. Additionally, Measure O will help fund the Lamorinda School Bus program, which is largely funded by Measure J and is suffering due to diminished county-wide sales tax revenue.

Measure O is designed to put more transportation funds under local control. None of the VRF can be taken away by the State. Every dollar will be under control of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA). Spending by cities and towns must conform to a clearly defined expenditure program, and spending will be subject to regular overview by the Authority, just like Measure J spending. Most im-

portant, allocation of funds will be under control of the CCTA regional committees. For the Southwest region (SWAT)—which includes Lamorinda—SWAT has decided that 85% of funds will be spent on street and road maintenance and improvements, 10% on transit programs (namely, the Lamorinda School Bus Program), and 5% on bike and pedestrian improvements (such as crosswalks and sidewalks). This allocation reflects current Lamorinda needs. After five years, the expenditure program can be reconsidered by SWAT to reflect needs at that time.

Why should you vote for this fee on your motor vehicles? Every vehicle using our roads contributes to wear and tear. Vehicle miles driven seem always to increase, yet our ability to maintain our roads continues to fall further and further behind as revenues fail to cover rising costs. The Return to Source funds we receive from Measure J can't possibly fund what's needed to arrest further deterioration, let alone make improvements. We desperately need additional revenues sources, and Measure O is one new source. Good roads are an important element of a wholesome community. It's in all our interests to maintain them. Please vote for Measure O on November 2nd.

For more information on Measure O, visit www.VoteYesOnMeasureO.com

Mike Metcalf
Moraga

(Mike Metcalf is a Moraga Town Council member. He is a commissioner at Contra Costa Transportation Authority, the agency which is sponsoring Measure O. He represents Moraga on the Southwest Area Transportation Committee (SWAT) and on the board of the Lamorinda School Bus Transportation Agency.)