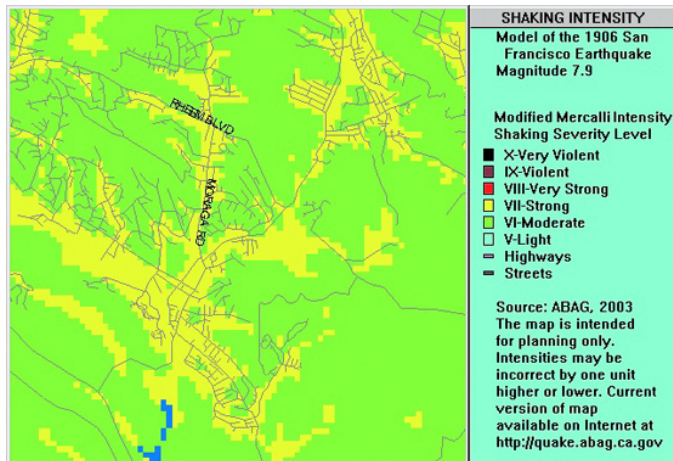


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## Moraga's New Goal: Emergency Preparedness

By Sophie Braccini



Graphic provided

suggested to the Moraga Town Council. In response, MOFD Fire Chief Randy Bradley stated he believed that the MOFD should become more directly involved in disaster planning in both Moraga and Orinda and that he intended to present a plan for the MOFD to do so at an MOFD Board meeting in the near future." Chief Bradley could not be reached in time to comment.

The other residents who came on February 9th are all involved in disaster recovery at some level. They were Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members and instructors, or involved with Moraga Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness committee (MNEP). "We are on our own," said CERT instructor Bruce Berman, "we need to focus on preparing our community for disaster." CERT's Gordon Nathan indicated that the town has a lot of motivated volunteers. "We are bringing information to all of the neighborhoods," added MNEP's Garry Borelli, "but we always get the same question from residents: Where do we go from there? What is the Town's plan?"

Borelli was echoed by Canyon resident Jonathan Goodwin who came to share his experience with Moraga (Canyon is also served by MOFD). "The Town should prepare for emergencies on small, medium and large scales," said Goodwin, "In a large scale event (such as a strong earthquake when the soils are saturated and damage is widespread) the capabilities of any agency will be dwarfed by the demands encountered. The EOC will require personnel to run in shifts for days. In addition to inter-agency collaborative planning, owing to the paucity of available professional resources, preparedness should include pre-planned citizen involvement in such a way as to complement agency operations." He recommended inviting people from the Bay Area that have lived through emergency situation to share their input with the town. "You already have good police and fire services and you have a corps of citizen volunteers. What's missing are the policies and standards which connect them."

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The only item that really attracted a sizeable crowd at the Town of Moraga's goal prioritization session on February 9 was goal # 17: the creation of an Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Residents came to lobby for two objectives - the creation and filing of a practical Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), and Town engagement in a comprehensive process involving the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD), the Police Department, Town staff, and the public, to define adequate responses to different levels of risks.

The Police Department currently has a multi-volume plan that was deemed unusable by all. A subcommittee of the Town Council was formed a few weeks ago, composed of Howard Harpham and Dave Trotter, and is meeting with Chief of Police Bob Priebe. They are considering using an EOP that was developed by the City of Danville, and is under study in Lafayette.

Moraga resident Dick Olsen brought up the issue of emergency preparedness during the first study session on Town goals. "I did so in my capacity as a Moraga citizen and not in my capacity as a (MOFD) Director," said Olsen, "At the MOFD Board of Director's January 19th meeting, I reported to that Board on what I had