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Lark Ridge Estate, Alamo

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Lafayette Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, September 12, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission

Tuesday, September 6, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review

Monday, September 12, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center
in the Arts & Science Discovery
Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
City of Lafayette:
www.ci.lafayette.ca.us
Chamber of Commerce:
www.lafayettechamber.org



Police Report

Dominoes, 8/8/11
An auto chain reaction at Moraga Road and St. Mary's Road happened when car #1 was rear-ended by car #2. The force of the impact drove both cars into car #3. Damages were minor and there were no injuries, but car #2's driver was charged with driving at an unsafe speed.

Wheels in Motion, 8/10/11
An unknown thief stole not one but two bicycles from a Lafayette resident's porch. The white bike was valued at \$1,000; the green bike was valued at \$500.

An Apple a Day and More, 8/12/11
Somebody broke into a house via the front door glass panel and stole a \$2400 MacBook, a \$599 I-Pad, an I-Pad case and a \$199 Wii game.

Zoning Concerns Complicate Potential Development

By Cathy Tyson



Corner of Deer Hill Rd. and Pleasant Hill Rd. Photo Cathy Tyson

Although a city-initiated zoning change has been discussed for years now, actual re-zoning of five properties on eastern Deer Hill Road has never been formally adopted. As reported on April 13, 2011, after

months of well attended meetings, the City Council directed staff to down-zone the properties. Until now however, staff had been busy with other projects, but is currently moving forward to officially change the zoning designations. The attorney representing the landowner sees this as more than just coincidence.

"The City's sole reason for proposing the down-zoning is to ensure the denial of the Dettmer/O'Brien application," said attorney for Christmas tree lot owner, the Anna Maria Dettmer Trust and the O'Brien Land Company (Dettmer/O'Brien) in a letter to the Lafayette's Planning Services Division.

Attorney David Bowie also represents Dettmer/O'Brien, he spoke up at a Planning Commission meeting about prior actions: "There were hear-

ings - but it was a popularity contest. I didn't hear any analysis or see a study that would support re-zoning. Why are we being singled out?"

Located at the corner of Deer Hill Road and Pleasant Hill Road, the Christmas tree lot is diagonally across from Acalanes High School. Since 1976 it's been zoned APO - Administrative Professional Office - up to 35 units per acre; the City proposes to change that to Low Density Residential District 5 - one dwelling per five acres. The fallout of the proposed zoning change would reduce the potential density for the roughly 22 acre parcel from 770 units to four.

The Dettmer family has owned that parcel along with two others on Deer Hill Road for over fifty years.

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Biggest Real Estate Deal in Lafayette History

By Cathy Tyson



After purchasing what they describe as "tired" Lafayette Highland apartments in 2005, Bascom Northwest Ventures, along with its partner Capri Urban Capital, invested \$5.4 million dollars upgrading the property. Everything from the leasing office to the fitness center

and especially the 150 apartments on Carol Lane got the once over: new granite countertops, new cabinets, a washer/dryer in every unit, along with new roofs, HVAC and seismic upgrades.

They purchased the property for \$29.4 million and after extensive upgrades sold it to a publicly traded REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust), BRE Properties, for \$48.75 million dollars. That works out to \$325,000 per unit - a record high for the East Bay. Managing Member of Bascom Northwest Ventures Brian Wirtz said, "The deal was driven by the Lafayette apartment market and good schools in the area."

Not only will Lafayette benefit with freshly updated apartments, but there will also be property tax revenue coming to the City. Administrative Services Director Tracy Robinson estimates that, "the addi-



Photos Cathy Tyson

tional property tax that accrues to the City annually will be approximately \$10,400 since we get about 6% of the 1% property tax. In addition, there is a property transfer tax of \$0.55 per \$1000 of the sale price,

which should bring in another \$26,800 (one-time)." This is due to the change in value of the property from the previous assessment of \$31,383,000 to the current sale price of \$48,750,000.

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