

# Homeowner's Group Holds Annual Meeting

By Cathy Tyson

The annual meeting of the Lafayette Homeowners Council couldn't have been more neighborly. With gracious thanks to recently retired board members and very brief business to attend to, the meeting ran like clockwork. President Marie Blits welcomed everyone and spelled out the group's mission – "to advocate for homeowner interests" throughout Lafayette and noted that the all volunteer organization spends hundreds of hours in "rather endless" City Council, Planning Commission and subcommittee meetings.

Representatives from virtually every neighbor homeowner association from Happy Valley to Silver Dell came to get the latest updates on major issues in Lafayette. Mayor Carl Anduri had a factual presentation on Measure G – the road repair campaign. Planning Commissioner Patty Curtain-Tinley along with Planning and Building Services Manager

Niroop Srivatsa talked about the Downtown Specific Plan and gave an overview of the process to date and next steps: the release of the revised Downtown Specific Plan in October or November of this year, Planning Commission hearings in November and December, City Council hearings and Plan adoption expected to take place in January of 2012.

Finally as plates of homemade cookies circled the room, Council Member Carol Federighi and Transportation Planner Leah Greenblatt took the floor to discuss the proposed pedestrian and bicycle right of way. The recently completed feasibility study, funded by a grant from CalTrans, demonstrated that a walk and bike-way is indeed feasible along the one and a half mile EBMUD right of way from Risa Road to Brown Avenue. Further grants and more research is needed to move forward on the proposed project.

# BART Solar Project at the Lafayette Station

By Cathy Tyson

Looking to garner public input, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Director Gail Murray and Frank Schultz, Manager of BART's Energy Division, made a presentation on the benefits of a potential solar canopy above the eastern section of the Lafayette BART parking lot recently at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. This is just a preliminary step in the process – approval by the BART Board of Directors will be required before going forward. If approved, construction would start in 2012.

"We want to diversify our power supply," said Schultz. With the lowest climate change emissions per passenger of large urban transit systems in the nation, BART is looking for a reliable and renewable clean energy source that supports their sustainability goals.

The Lafayette station was chosen after BART performed a comprehensive study of locations. Originally Orinda was considered, but those plans were partially scrapped after discussions with the City. BART agreed to put plans on hold at that station while Orinda wrestles with its General Plan – they compromised on a smaller installation on the parking section nearest the station.

The Northern California Power Agency, a joint-powers agency with BART and other local government members, looked for an experienced operator of energy projects and after review, decided on LightBeam En-

ergy to construct and manage the project. LightBeam plans, develops and operates renewable power generation facilities, "We put generation where the load is," said Light Beam President Jim Lavelle.

He went on to explain that California has made renewable power more attractive and BART is responding to those incentives. The long term cost is expected to be about the same as the conventional supply. If approved, the Lafayette solar panel array is expected to produce 750 kilowatts of energy – that would take care of the entire energy needs of the Lafayette station and then some.

LightBeam is financing the entire project; Lowell describes his firm as a "new age utility company" – that is getting more and more pervasive as demand continues to grow.

The benefit to BART parkers, aside from supporting renewable energy, is a shady spot to park and significantly better night time lighting. The shades will be slightly angled to maximize solar absorption and stand approximately nine feet tall.

In addition, drivers should be aware that travel by BART is eleven times cleaner than driving alone in your car.

Residents in attendance voiced concerns about loss of parking spaces – and aesthetics. One woman called it "unattractive – it looks like a cheap carport." The project's next step is Design Review; perhaps they can make it more attractive.



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Knows Moraga Real Estate

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8 LOUISE CT	1056 LARCH AVE	2135 ASCOT DR #27	3628 BICKERSTAFF
1203 RIMER DR	1090 LARCH AVE	2135 ASCOT DR #26	67 LA CRESTA
1218 RIMER DR	6 LARCH LN	2087 ASCOT DR #224	895 STONEGATE CIR
1224 RIMER DR	1843 JOSEPH DR	2087 ASCOT DR #124	31 COLORADO
1236 RIMER DR	9 FLUETI DR	2083 ASCOT DR	210 CARMEL
133 SHUEY DR	679 MORAGA RD	2091 ASCOT DR	529 OAKSHIRE PL
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149 WALFORD DR	1072 COUNTRY CLUB	1416 CAMINO PERAL	1018 RIVER ROCK LN
108 WALFORD DR	1080 COUNTRY CLUB	1475 CAMINO PERAL	1919 YGNACIO VLY RD
4 SPARROW CT	398 BIRCHWOOD DR	1515 A CAMINO PERAL	309 CORTE GABRIEL
11 KETELSEN	268 BIRCHWOOD DR	236 VALLEY GLEN	3545 BOYER CIRCLE
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