



# Moraga Civic News

## Public Meetings

### Town Council

Wednesday, October 26, 7:00 pm  
 Wednesday, November 9, 7:00 pm  
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,  
 1010 Camino Pablo

### Planning Commission

Monday, November 7, 7:30 pm  
 Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

### Design Review

Monday, November 14, 7:00 pm  
 Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

### School Board Meeting

#### Moraga School District

Tuesday, November 8, 7:30 pm  
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium  
 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
 www.moraga.k12.ca.us  
 See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

#### Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us

#### Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

#### Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



## Police Report

**No no driving, 10/07/11** All it took was a failure to use a turn signal on Moraga Road near School Street. The 43-year-old driver told the officer that his driver's license was suspended for three or four DUI's. Turns out he was telling the truth, so he was arrested for suspended license for prior DUI and violation of probation. The car was towed away.

**Party busted, 10/07/11** Approximately 150 party-goers were celebrating something on Corte Gabriel at 11:30 p.m. The female homeowner was issued a warning notice that she had to sign and was counseled about the repercussions of having another party. Guests were cooperative and decided it was a good time to call it a night.

**Parking and pot mid-street, 10/09/11** It wasn't even 9:00 p.m. when cops checked on a silver BMW 328i parked in the middle of Corliss Drive near Lynwood with the engine running and flashers on. Hmmm, the 16-year-old driver thought she was parked at the curb. Contraband bonanza in the car – over ten grams of marijuana, one bottle that was mostly full of Vodka and one closed bottle of wine. Driver and her two girlfriends were cited for multiple offenses – driving on a restricted teen driver's license, possession of pot, open container, and being under 21 in possession of alcohol in a car. Parents were called to pick up the party girls, and the car was re-parked correctly by the surely cranky registered owner.

**Burglary 10/08/11** Personal electronic items disappeared from the inside of a Sandringham Drive South home. Value of items is approximately \$1100. No leads at this time. The same home had been burgled in July while the homeowner was away for the weekend.

**Domestic Dispute, 10/10/11** Three family members were fighting at a Woodford Drive home. Police were called when the yelling started. Cops talked to the argue-ees who said they will resolve the issue without causing a disturbance. No details on the nature of the brouhaha were given, it was a family matter. No evidence of a physical confrontation.

**D.U.I., 10/07/11** Cops pulled over a BMW on Moraga Way after it was observed driving erratically and going 58 mph in a 35 mph zone. The 33-year-old driver had red, watery eyes, spoke with slow slurred speech and smelled like alcohol. Officers figured he was three for three and gave him a field sobriety test – which he flunked.

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## Rancho Laguna Park Layout Nearly Decided

*Town Council will take up the issue involving kids, dogs and spatial separation tonight*

By Cathy Tyson



Matt Gruber takes note of suggestions at a recent Rancho Laguna Park meeting. Photo C. Tyson

Approximately forty people crowded into the Mosaic room of the Hacienda de las Flores for a workshop to discuss and plan the future layout of Rancho Laguna Park recently. In a process that has dragged on for years, the Parks and Recreation Commission was looking to formulate a recommendation to the Town Council which will meet on October 26 to give a final decision on the matter.

Jay Ingram, Parks and Recreation Director, reports that the Commission will recommend to the Town Council

a two phased approach for spatial separation at Rancho Laguna Park, "Phase one: complete the south side playground renovation, including fencing, as well as fence the north and east sides along the existing pathway extending as far as possible toward the amphitheater to accommodate off-leash dog activity during all open hours for the park." He added that Phase two will improve drainage on the existing turf area.

Although some residents encouraged the Commission to not spend

approximately \$7,000 on a study, consultants and facilitators of the workshop – Mark Slichter and Matt Gruber of Callendar Associates – were retained to do just that. The landscape architects gathered input from residents who weren't shy about sharing their opinions in response to two questions: What do you like or value about the park, and, what could be improved? Attendees were divided into two groups to answer both questions. At times the wish list discussion came perilously close to veering off track, but well-behaved, neighborly residents with a variety of opinions were quite civil.

Surprisingly, a large portion of attendees found common ground, agreeing that it would be best to have the tot lot and the youth playground both located near the restrooms. One resident called the Park "a Norman Rockwell painting," very family oriented. Four large pages were filled with resident suggestions of what they like about the park, noting everything from its rustic nature to the level walking area and of course, as a great place to socialize with your dog. The current rules state that there can be no off-leash dogs in the park from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekends.

At issue is finding an optimal way

for the park to address the majority of needs of town residents, which includes dog owners and non-dog owners. Is there room for improvement in the soggy two acre grass field and layout of play areas along with a possible fence to separate dogs from people?

For some of the residents in attendance Rancho Laguna Park, located at the south end of town, has been working reasonably well for the last thirty years, and if it's not broken, don't fix it. Others, clearly the minority in attendance, were concerned about off-leash dogs. Tina Chambers, mom of two, dog owner and active Boy Scout leader was, "very much an advocate of spatial separation," calling the current situation, "unsafe for my dog and my kids."

Bob Reynolds, a long time resident, pointed out that the Town has limited resources and the semi-paved path on Mulholland Ridge, off of Donald Drive, is available all day, every day for off-leash dogs.

Garnering applause for her comments, Jan Gruen suggested, "I think everybody can learn to share the Park." It will be up to the Town Council to decide the matter and allocate funding at the October 26 meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium.

## Financing 331 Rheem

*After deciding not sell open space immediately, the Town looks for other ways to pay off its loan*

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Town Council recently decided to postpone the sale of a portion of the Town-owned property located at the corner of Rheem Boulevard and Saint Mary's Road. That sale was part of a package deal, designed by former Town Manager Mike Segrest and approved by the Council, to redeem the purchase of 331 Rheem – the property that became the town's corporation yard. Staff must now find other ways to finance a promissory note for \$450,000 that is coming due on March 10, 2012.

In her staff report, Planning Director Shawna Brekke-Read listed three options the Council could consider to pay off the note. "These include using one-time developer fees (i.e., Palos Colorados funds that amount to \$2 million at this time), continuing the \$450,000 note with interest (the note's owner has indicated interest in doing so), or developing a payment plan using the operating budget," read the report.

During its October 12 meeting, Town Manager Jill Keimach was

asked by the Council to come back with more detailed options. "Interest rates have never been so low," commented Council Member Dave Trotter, "a fixed loan can get a rate as low as 3% at this time."

A second property was also supposed to be sold to finance the purchase of 331 Rheem – a vacant lot on Devin Drive that the Town took off the market when it failed to attract a buyer.

The Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, and many residents expressed concerns about building along the popular and scenic Lafayette-Moraga Trail. Brekke-Read's staff report detailed all of the hurdles that the Town, as the property owner, would have to jump in order to get a tentative map for developing the property.

The Council decided to table the issue indefinitely on two cues – the land couldn't be sold quickly enough

to meet the March payment deadline, and the cost of the process, estimated at over \$100,000, was too high. However, the Council reserved the right to sell the land at a later date.

"There are a number of options we could consider and will be bringing back to the Council before March," confirmed Keimach as she began to work on a comprehensive financial plan with town's new Administrative Services Director, Stephanie Hom. "One time developer fees could be used if it creates park land; a longer-term payment plan with the note holder could be negotiated using General Fund or operating dollars over several years; the Town could pay off the note with surplus dollars at the end of the year over the next several years; or the Town could extend the note with interest. These and potentially new options will be evaluated and developed for Town Council consideration," stated Keimach.

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