



# Moraga Civic News

## Public Meetings

### Town Council

Wednesday, December 28, 7:00pm  
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,  
1010 Camino Pablo

### Planning Commission

Tuesday, January 3, 7:00 pm  
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

### Design Review

Tuesday, December 27, 7:00 pm  
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

### School Board Meeting

#### Moraga School District

Tuesday, January 10, 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

Tis the season, 12/10/11 For violating the "Person Responsible for a Loud or Unruly Party" ordinance. It was after 10:00 p.m. and officers could hear the boisterous racket of approximately forty unwanted party-goers at a Paseo Bernal residence from thirty feet away. Alerted by a neighbor's complaint, the party was definitely over after they issued a warning of a violation of the Moraga Municipal Code.

Major litter, 12/11/11 Cops noticed a large projection TV abandoned on an Ascot Drive curb. Oddly enough no one was in the vicinity to claim the trash TV. Moraga Public Services was advised of the semi-early Christmas gift to the sidewalk.

Missing a bike? 12/12/11 Moraga Public Works employees' found an apparently abandoned bike at 1425 St. Mary's Road. The Giant – that's the brand, not the size, MTX250 bicycle had no identification and was booked into Moraga PD evidence. Visit the police department if it's yours.

School vandalism, 12/09/11 Sometime between Friday and Sunday some pesky unknown suspects pulled up several live plants from three wooden planter boxes next to classrooms at Los Perales Elementary School. Not surprisingly, the plants died. Estimated value about \$50.

Burglary, 12/12/11 A Via Granada homeowner contacted police to report that someone entered his home and stole an undetermined amount of jewelry and a handgun by forcing open the front door.

Asleep at the wheel, 12/15/11 Perhaps it was the late hour – nearly 1:30 a.m. – when cops responded to a report of a person asleep in a running vehicle that was parked in the middle of Sea Pines Road. The driver told cops she fell asleep while getting her mail. Paramedics came and took a peak, determining she was not under the influence and escorted her home. A request for a re-evaluation form was submitted by police to the DMV.

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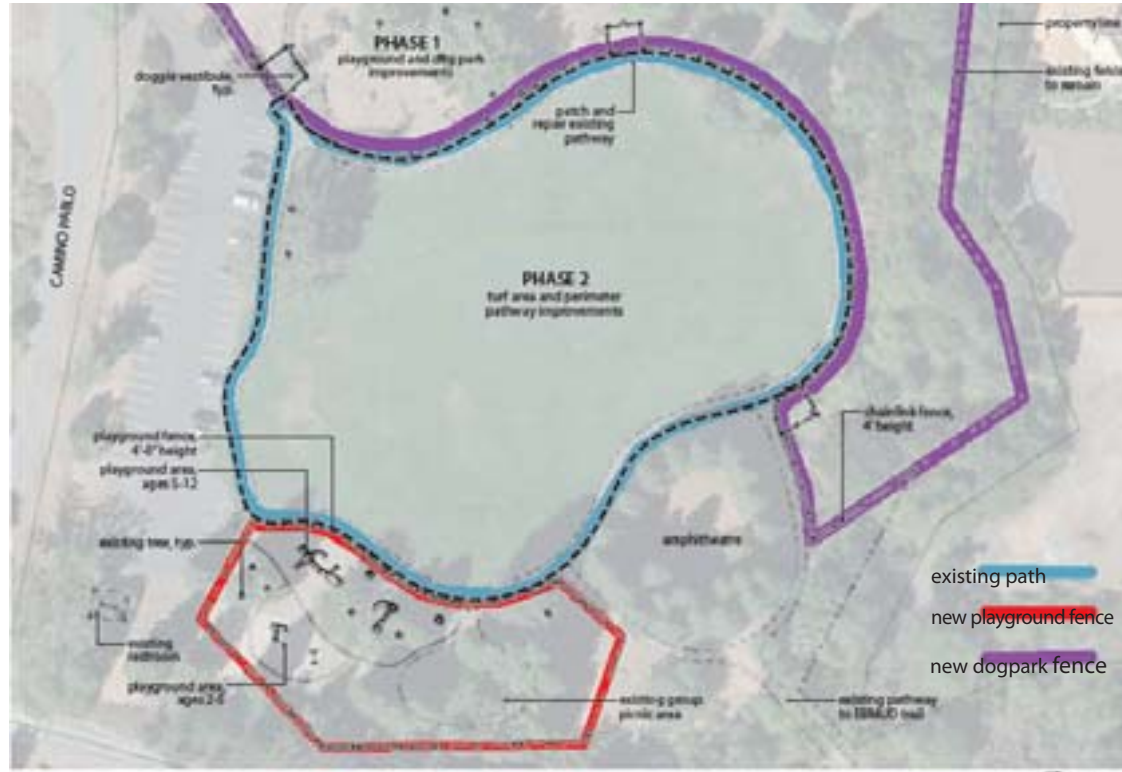
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# December Decision Resolves Dog Park Debate

By Sophie Braccini



Rancho Laguna Park Improvements  
Moraga, California  
October 21, 2011  
Park and Recreation Commission Recommended Conceptual Design  
Courtesy Staff Report

The Town of Moraga's outgoing mayor, Karen Mendonca, can claim that the long-running debate involving off-leash dogs at Rancho Laguna Park was finally resolved during her tenure, as the issue went to a vote of the Town Council prior to the annual passing of the gavel.

After 32 months of intense discussions and a few dramatic turns of event, on December 14 the Council decided on a 3-2 vote to adopt the Park and Recreation Commission's recommendation to

implement a spatial separation between off-leash dogs and the rest of the parks' users. Council Member Dave Trotter and then-Vice Mayor Mike Metcalf cast the dissenting votes.

The partition approved by the Council will create a 1.1 acre dedicated dog park along one side and the back of the municipal property, a woody area that has no grass at this time. The timing of the implementation of the new park configuration will depend on finding an adequate funding source.

The organization Lamorinda Dogs was not happy with the decision. "We are the main users of the park," said Lamorinda Dogs member Chris Gerding, who added that the group estimates the park gets 57,000 visits by dog owners per year. "Your first priority should be to construct a tot lot and not to incur additional expense by changing the configuration of the park," Gerding stated. Lamorinda Dogs also presented the Council with a petition signed by 111 people supporting the view that the space at Rancho Laguna should remain open.


Off-leash supporters were hopeful when the Council's debate began with Trotter's statement that he would support not changing the park. "I am fiscally conservative and would be happy with a Phase 1 that would just create and fence a tot lot according to AB 1144 (California Playground Regulations Update)," Trotter said, "let's not cut the park, but let's make it safe for small children."

But Trotter was the only Council member opposed to modifying the park. "I have no problem cutting the park in half," said Metcalf. He explained that his priorities were to separate kids from dogs, that the park should provide multi-use for Moraga residents, and that he had no interest in turning the park into a sports field. "This is a place for informal play and general enjoyment," he said. Metcalf supported an option that would have included some of the existing turf area on which dogs could run.

Mendonca, along with Council Members Howard Harpham and Ken Chew, supported the Parks and Recreation Commission's plan. "We have different constituencies with different needs and they have to share a scarce resource," said Mendonca, "we want to provide access to everybody all through the day." Under the new plan, dog owners would be able to let their dogs run off-leash in the dedicated area all day long.

Bill Cosden, of Lamorinda Dogs, later commented, "It's surreal," he said, "the system (off-leash hours at Rancho Laguna) worked for decades – it has enriched the life of countless people. I can't justify why they are spending the money to fix something that is not broken. I hope we can fight this decision."

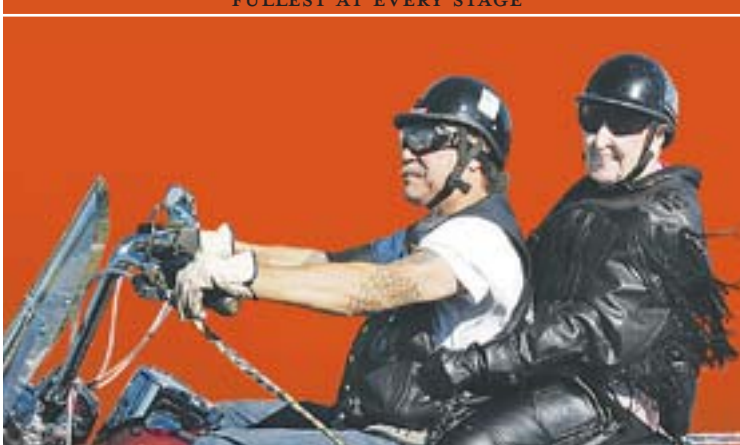
After the meeting, Jay Ingram discussed the implementation of the plan. His cost estimate is \$143,300 to \$155,300 for a first phase that would see the construction of a new kids' playground and a fence separating the north side of the park from the lawn. If the Town wants to clear the brush, sod for turf and create a new path, it would have to spend another \$29,075. "We have money left from the WW fund measure," said Ingram, "we have to submit a plan by March 31 to the East Bay Regional Park District. Our objective is to bring a contract for Council's approval in February."




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