



Moraga Civic News

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, March 28, 7:00pm
Wednesday, April 11, 7:00pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Tuesday, April 2, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

Design Review

Monday, April 9, 7:00 pm
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District
Tuesday, April 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
Phone: (925) 888-7022

Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



Police Report

St. Patrick's Day stolen car, 3/17
The unluck of the Irish on Camino Ricardo. A silver Prius was parked in front of the owner's home and was last seen around midnight. Car owner had unwisely left the car keys inside the vehicle. Nothing was seen or heard at the time of the theft.

Car burgled, 3/17/12 Just down the street from the missing Prius, another Camino Ricardo homeowner reported that his wallet, checkbook and gift cards, worth over \$600 were missing from his Acura MDX. Owner believes his car was locked, although there was no damage to the car to indicate a break in. At about the same time officers responded to a report of a suspicious subject attempting to gain entry into other neighborhood cars. Although they looked, they were couldn't find him or her.

Domestic assault, 3/17/12 A call came in that a husband had allegedly assaulted his wife after an argument. He was arrested for domestic violence and was taken to the Martinez Detention Facility for booking.

False alarm, 3/16/12 Cops responded to a residential alarm on Claudia Court in the middle of the afternoon. They checked and found that all the doors and windows were secure, with no attempted forced entry. Was it the wind?

Child abuse? 3/16/12 A 17-year-old reported that a parent had injured her during an argument. Cops spoke with the young lady who was then placed under the care of Child Protective Services. The suspect was contacted and arrested for assault, but an investigation is on-going.

Laptop vanishes, 3/14/12 A student who was studying in the Saint Mary's College library stepped away from her \$1,500 Apple MacBook Pro for all of ten minutes at 5:20 in the afternoon. While the erstwhile co-ed was able to provide a description and serial number, odds of it being return are micro-soft.

Correction, issue

date 3/14/12, Since our first issue should have read: Mike Metcalf, Dave Trotter and Ken Chew remain on the Town Council. Our apologies to Council Member Chew for not including him.

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School Districts and Local Governments Differ over Community Clean Water Initiative

By Sophie Braccini

For the Town of Moraga it was a no-brainer: vote in favor of Contra Costa County's 2012 Community Clean Water Initiative because if it passes it will help offset some of the unfunded mandate the municipality has to keep any trash from reaching the reservoirs. But for Moraga's other heavyweight in this election, the Moraga School District (MSD), voting against the measure made more sense—according to Superintendent Bruce Burns, school district funds are “to educate children, not to pay another State agency.”

Similarly, the Orinda City Council voted to support the measure, while the Orinda Union School District (OUSD) and the Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD) were both opposed.

The Community Clean Water Initiative, a property-owner mail vote with an April 6 ballot deadline, has generated a lot of controversy. Concerns include the fact that voting is not run by the County Election Division; there is no rebuttal statement included in the literature residents received; the use of

the money to be collected is not described in detail; and no oversight committee is assigned to control the use of funds. “Some of the things that the School Board noted is that there was no explanation in the ballot of how the money would be spent,” said Burns.

Moraga's Mayor Mike Metcalf didn't find anything questionable about the measure or the process. “This is normal for an assessment,” he said, “it is exactly like the lighting assessment that passed in Moraga last year. People are asked to contribute different amounts depending on the impact they have on water run-off.”

John Sherbert, Moraga Staff Engineer, explained that additional funding is needed to protect local water quality and keep trash and other pollutants away from waterways, as well as to meet increasingly-stringent Federal and State requirements. The Town's former Engineer, Jill Mercurio, evaluated the cost to Moraga of meeting the unfunded mandate at \$250,000.

“Whether the initiative passes or not, we will have to abide by the law

and pay for improvements,” said Sherbert, “the initiative would partially off-set this mandate since all the fees paid in Moraga, about \$169,000, would come back to the Town. If the measure does not pass, the Town will still have to meet clean water requirements and can be fined up to \$10,000 a day if found non-compliant,” he explained.

The Moraga Town Council voted unanimously in favor of the measure. “If the Initiative does not pass, the money will have to come from the General Fund,” commented Metcalf later, “that's where the money for police and parks comes from.”

Orinda's City Council also threw its unanimous support to the Initiative, with Vice Mayor Amy Worth noting that 100% of the fees paid by Orinda property owners would return to Orinda.

Paralleling the MSD, the boards of the OUSD and AUHSD also decided to vote no. “I understand that it brings revenue into the cities,” said AUHSD Business Services Associate Superintendent Chris Learned, “and

the Board said that they were in support of clean water. But the whole process was concerning to them.”

Don Freitas, Program Manager for the Contra Costa Clean Water Program, confirmed that the vote will pass or fail at the County level, not by jurisdiction. “Each property is assessed a tax according to its impact on the water shed, i.e. its size,” he said, “and the number of votes is according to the number of properties, not the amount paid.”

For example, AUHSD has five votes because it owns five different properties. AUHSD would be required to pay \$16,000 a year for 10 years, while MSD's share is calculated at about \$6,400 a year; the Town of Moraga would pay about \$1,100 a year. The average owner of a single family home in Lamorinda would see about \$22 a year added to the property tax bill.

According to the County, property owners should have received their ballots the week of February 21 and have until April 6th at 5 p.m. to cast their votes.

Improving Pedestrian Safety at Dangerous Moraga Crosswalks

By Sophie Braccini



Proposed crosswalk

Graphic provided

There are two crossings along Moraga Road where, according to some pedestrians, you take your life in your hands when you cross the road. One is at Corliss and serves as a transition between a sidewalk and a pedestrian trail; the other is at Woodford, across from Campolindo High School (Campo) that is most heavily used by students coming

and going from school when traffic is at its peak.

There's never been an accident reported at the Woodford crossing, but according to Moraga Chief of Police Robert Priebe there have been some close calls.

Town Manager Jill Keimach and her team have been conducting community workshops to inform residents

and gather feedback. On March 15 she presented a final version of a plan to improve pedestrian safety before the Town Council makes its final decision on the evening of March 28.

About 20 residents showed up at the community workshop held on March 15 at the Hacienda de las Flores. It was not the first time the Town reached out to residents regarding pedestrian crossing improvements, but as proposals from Town transportation consultants Fehr and Peers changed, further discussion seemed like a good idea.

The main issue at Corliss is a hill that impedes the view for northbound traffic. The major improvements there will consist of an overhead flashing beacon above the crosswalk and an advanced warning signal placed at the top of the crest, both activated by pedestrians before crossing.

Most of the residents who came to the meeting were interested in the Woodford crossing. This is where students going to Campo, either coming from the Woodford neighborhood, the bus stop, or from their own cars parked on the street, have to cross to reach their destination. As the students try to traverse, a long line of cars winds its way toward the student drop-off area, while others attempt quick post-drop-off exits from the school's driveway.

“The traffic engineers have proposed two solutions,” said Keimach,

“One that would leave the crosswalk where it is and just make it more visible, and a second that would move the crosswalk south, before Woodford if you're driving toward Lafayette.” She indicated that this second option was thought by Fehr and Peers to maximize pedestrian security and would be the one recommended by staff for the Council's approval.

“I'd like to make a comment,” said Omid Boozarpour, a Campo sophomore and the only high school student present at the meeting, “I live on Woodford and cross there many times a day. I'd rather not cross at this second location, there is no sidewalk along the south side of Woodford and visibility is very limited. People making a right turn there will not see pedestrians; it's dangerous.”

“We are adding a corner curb extension at the southeast corner of that street to tighten the turning radius and slow traffic,” responded Keimach.

As the discussion progressed, the public succeeded in having a proposed raised median island on Moraga Road removed from the plan, as residents felt it would create more problems for morning traffic. Other safety features include pedestrian-activated LED flashing signs.

The March 28 meeting of the Town Council will include a public comment period during which people can share their thoughts with the Council before the final decision is made.

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