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Lafayette

Civic News

Public Meetings**City Council**

Tuesday, May 29, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission

Monday, June 4, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review

Tuesday, May 29, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center
in the Arts & Science Discovery
Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings**Acalanes Union High School District**

Wednesday, June 6, 7:30 pm
Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Thursday, June 21, 7:00 pm
Regular Board Meeting
LAFSD Office
3477 School Street, Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

www.ci.lafayette.ca.us
Phone: (925) 284-1968

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org

Police Report

Dear Readers: We are experiencing difficulty obtaining detailed crime reports from the Lafayette police departments, which is staffed by the Contra Costa County Sheriff. Please bear with us as we try to determine how to best serve the public given the limited information that is being made available to us.

please...



...thanks!

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community.

Send a letter to the editor:

letters@lamorinda
weekly.com

Appeal Overruled for Las Huertas House

By Cathy Tyson

A majority of Planning Commissioners were not able to agree with the appeal of neighbors regarding a proposed home on Las Huertas Road who had hoped to send the project back to the Design Review Committee (DRC) to further reduce its size. Back in March, after roughly two years of design changes with the DRC, the Malinovsky family home was ultimately approved after significant adjustments in size and mass. The final version is well under the city height limit of 35 feet and has more than minimum setbacks from the street.

Planning Commissioners had

asked for more information about the relative size and mass of homes in the immediate neighborhood in March, before making a final decision. City staff had time to examine Contra Costa County Assessors Records and verify front yard setbacks, coming to the conclusion there is "a variety of development in the neighborhood," said Assistant Planner Michael Cass at the May 7 Planning Commission meeting.

Across the street neighbor, Isabelle Ord argued that the proposed project was just not compatible with the neighborhood. "We are concerned that although there have been a lot of

changes, they are not material changes. This will be one of the tallest homes and have the smallest setback in the neighborhood." Her father Ed Ord focused on privacy, adding "it will tower over our house."

Commissioner Tom Chastain cast his vote based on the suitability of the proposed home in the neighborhood context. "My sense is there's no real consistency in the neighborhood – there are different styles throughout." He voted to deny the appeal and uphold the original Design Review Committee approval.

A majority of Commissioners

agreed. "We don't have an ordinance that says thou shalt not see your neighbor's house," noted Commissioner Will Lovitt – a sentiment that has come up many times over the years.

Vlad Malinovsky had reached out for input from surrounding neighbors early on in the process and received some constructive feedback. "We feel that the Ords are exceeding the norm of how most of us view our homes in relationship to our neighborhood," said Malinovsky. "They seem to feel more entitled to the space of their neighbor's properties than the rest of us do in a neighborhood sense."

Environmental Report on "Terraces" Project Available

By Cathy Tyson

It certainly can't compete with the latest paperback novel, but for curious readers the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Terraces of Lafayette project is now available to the public.

The lengthy non-fiction report assesses the potential environmental consequences of approving the controversial 315-unit multi-family project at the corner of Deer Hill Road and Pleasant Hill Road, officially known as the Terraces of Lafayette.

It takes a village to complete a report this extensive. The Planning Center was the lead consultant with six project team members, along with subconsultants for biological resources, historic resources, geology and soils, and traffic and transportation.

They were tasked with analyzing and looking at feasible mitigation

measures and possible alternatives that would reduce or avoid substantial impacts. The 14 proposed two- and three-story buildings clustered on the 22-acre parcel, locally known as the Christmas Tree Lot, obviously will impact the site in a number of ways: visually, air quality, noise, traffic and more.

With seven chapters from a Report Summary to Environmental Evaluation and appendices covering an array of topics from conceptual site plans to a preliminary stormwater control plan, there is something for everyone. For example, the Transportation and Traffic section is 122 pages long; readers should be advised that although the margins are wide, it will take a while to get through the entire report.

In order to quantify and compare possible options, EIR authors ana-

lyzed three alternatives: the no project alternative, the mitigated project alternative, and the office development alternative. Rather like Goldilocks and the three bowls of porridge, it will be up to the Planning Commission to determine which one is just right.

Looking forward, the Final Environmental Impact Report is scheduled to be released in September. When asked about next steps the City's Special Projects Manager, Ann Merideth, said, "Since the project application is a Land Use Permit and Hillside Development Permit, the Planning Commission is the decision-making body. The Commission will consider the project application this fall after the environmental review process is completed. The City Council would consider the EIR and project application if there were an appeal of the Commission's decisions."

As always, the public is invited to read over the document and offer comments. The Draft EIR can be found on the city's website at www.ci.lafayette.ca.us, or read it over at the City of Lafayette Offices, 3675 Mount Diablo Boulevard, Suite 210 or at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo. A CD is also available, call (925) 284-1969 to request it. The official public review period runs through 5 p.m. on June 28. Those with comments can send them to: Ann Merideth, City of Lafayette, 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 210, Lafayette, California 94549, or save a tree and send via e-mail to: amerideth@ci.lafayette.ca.us. To take a more colorful look at the proposed project, visit the developer's website for detailed architectural and landscape plans at www.terracesoflafayette.com.



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