



Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, July 3, 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, June 26, at 7:00 pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Historical Landmark Committee

Tuesday, June 26, 3:00 pm
Gallery Room, Library
26 Orinda Way

School Board Meeting

Orinda Union School District
Monday, June 25, 6:00 pm
OUSD Office
8 Altarinda Road, Orinda
www.orindaschools.org
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Orinda:

www.cityoforinda.org
Phone (925) 253-4200

Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org



Police Report

... will be back next time.

Find Your Shangri la!

Details at www.TheHATTERSLEYS.com



Peter & Darlene Hattersley



DRE# r00445794, DRE# 01181995



Open Sunday, June 24th, 1-4

www.MonteVistaRidge.com



Open By Appointment

www.88Sunnyside.com

925.360.9588

925.708.9515

©2012 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Office Is Owned And Operated by NRT LLC. DRE License # 01908304

East Bay Sales Tax Increases – Ill Wind or Candles in the Darkness?

By Laurie Snyder

June 5, 2012. An exhausting Primary Election Day on which the Orinda City Council heard from staff about ongoing budget problems during a 5:30 p.m. workshop, and then at a meeting that ran from 7 to 11 p.m., from residents unhappy with the Planning Commission's handling of its Lavenida Lane subdivision review – and from residents for and against a potential sales tax hike.

On June 6, Council members awoke to the news that voters across Contra Costa County passed a parcel, parks, and sales taxes. Those successes, despite very low voter turnout, may turn out to be small candles which guide Orinda toward an eventual exit from its own fiscal grotto.

Crocket and Port Costa squeaked out the two-thirds needed to pass a parks and recreation tax. Hercules, San Pablo, and Pittsburg each asked for half-cent sales tax increases that would end quickly, and were all rewarded by voters with their confidence.

In San Pablo and Pittsburg, the half-cent taxes will decrease after five years to a quarter-cent, and then sunset completely after another five years.

At the Council meeting, resident

Richard Colman described the City's potential tax hike as "an attack on senior citizens with limited incomes" and urged the Council to reconsider, saying any increase in the sales tax would backfire by driving Orinda's business customers elsewhere. He suggested that the Council try instead for a parcel or property tax and pointed to page 33 of the City's recent Voter Survey, which appears to show residents' support for these options.

Alex Evans, chair of the City's Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Committee (CIOC), advised Council members that they would need to decide on both the amount and duration of the tax hike. "We think a half-cent is more prudent at this time," he said, noting that a 20-year sunset is typical for roads measures, but may be too long to be palatable for Orinda residents.

Carol Penskar, chair of the City's Finance Advisory Committee, took issue with comments by other residents regarding the revenues likely to be generated. "Six hundred thousand dollars is a lot more than it seems," she said. Penskar also recalled her surprise when reviewing Orinda's commercial property tax figures, terming Orinda's take from commercial sources "pitiful." She advocated

for the City to develop a plan for the downtown to reverse this trend.

In deliberating the potential sales tax increase, each Council member came down in favor of adding a sunset clause with the majority feeling that three to five years would be too short. Council Member Dean Orr indicated that he would not oppose a sunset clause, expressing his wish to see a term of roughly 15 years, while Victoria Smith felt 15 years would be too long for residents and suggested a sunset of 10 years.

Council Member Sue Severson reminded residents that delaying only makes things worse, drawing the conclusion that one dollar spent today would cost the City five if spent down the road. "I think we need to have a long enough time to see progress," she said, explaining that the City should factor in the time it takes to plan, solicit bidders, execute, and then evaluate projects. Stating a preference for 15 to 20 years, she wants to see a minimum 10-year sunset.

Noting that Measure J has a sunset of 20 years, Vice Mayor Worth advised her colleagues that the period for this proposed sales tax measure would not need to be as long. Mayor Steve Glazer suggested that Council members could begin with a sales tax

with sunset before moving on to a parcel or property tax.

The Council approved placement of the proposed sales tax increase on the November ballot. Staff will bring a revised plan with a specific sunset back to the Council no later than July 19.

How Much Does It Cost?

November contested consolidated elections historically cost the City of Orinda between \$30,000 to \$35,000.

The cost to the City for statements on election materials describing each candidate is typically \$400 per candidate for 250 words – but doubles when candidate descriptions are increased to 400 words or carry over to a second page.

Candidates vying for office pay the City to print and distribute these statements by providing deposits at the time they file their nomination papers.

Source: Orinda City Council Meeting, June 5, Staff Report for Agenda Item G-4.

Still in Flux, FY 2013 Budget Inches Closer to Balanced Picture

By Laurie Snyder

The City of Orinda's current fiscal year budget (FY 2013) remained a moving target as staff and City Council members continued to whittle down a nearly quarter million dollar deficit in yet another budget workshop – this time prior to the regularly scheduled Council meeting on June 5.

The latest projections still reflect one percent declines in property taxes of \$182,773 and in lieu of vehicle license fees of \$73,642, along with estimated losses of \$9,000 and \$45,000 due to pending property tax appeals

and flat planning and permit revenues.

With an improved picture from Comcast and PG&E, however, the estimated Franchise Fee and Property Transfer Tax decline will likely now only be \$22,395. This dip is due to Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority fees coming in at only 0.04 percent of what was originally anticipated in initial budget projections.

With the "To Solve" pared down to \$124,626, staff recommended the following changes for the Council's consideration:

... continued on next page

CONGRATULATIONS
Owner/Architect James Phillip Wright
Orinda Welcomes You
& Applauds Your GREEN Refurbishment of Historic
OLD YELLOW HOUSE

As the LISTING AGENT who worked thru red tape and finally got the job done, I'd like to extend thanks to the Nelson Family for its confidence in my efforts to deliver another rewarding outcome for their family and all who appreciate preservation.

DAVID PIERCE
Broker/Realtor
Vice President - Fine Homes
DRE: 0094887
925 | 254 | 5984
www.DavidPierce.net
David.Pierce@pruca.com

THINKING ABOUT SELLING YOUR HOME? CALL DAVID TODAY FOR YOUR CONFIDENTIAL, NO-OBLIGATION MARKET ANALYSIS.

Proudly Serving Lamorinda Since 1987

5% DAY
nourishing relationships
growing communities

WHOLE FOODS MARKET
3502 Mt. Diablo Blvd. 925 - 284 5305

SHOP ON
June 21, 2012
5% of sales will benefit
Orinda Community Foundation

The Orinda Community Foundation enhances the quality of life in Orinda by encouraging philanthropy, building partnerships, and providing financial assistance to support community activities, beautification and the arts.

techmommy®

"A High-tech Brain with the Patience of a Mother"

Fast Expert Computer Help from techmommy!

- Troubleshoot any PC problem.
- Help in plain English, not tech talk.
- Virus and spyware removal, system clean-up.
- Learn all of the software on your computer.
- Master e-mail, web searches, filing, attachments.
- Pre-purchase help for computers and electronics.
- Program iPod, cell phone, Blackberry, camera, GPS.
- Set-up and configure new computer, peripherals.
- Hardware upgrades, home network repairs.
- Learn the latest software back-up techniques.
- Personal training in your home, at your pace.

925-377-7711
www.techmommy.com
Serving the Bay Area's Technology Needs Since 1985

"Over the years techmommy has been our computer savior and guru, untangling our hardware and software problems with remarkable ease. Thank goodness for techmommy. We would be lost without her!"
- Dan & Colleen, Moraga