



Moraga Civic News

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, Jan. 9, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, Jan. 7, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd.

Design Review

Monday, Jan. 14, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd.

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District
Tuesday, Jan. 8, 7:30 p.m.
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

Carport storage break-in, 12/10/12 An Ascot Drive resident wasn't sure of the time or date, as much as a week earlier when an unknown subject broke into the storage unit located in the carport. No ideas on a possible suspect. Estimated loss \$1,200.

Shed break-in, 12/10/12 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School staff reported a burglary to a custodial storage shed on the northeast corner of the property. Forcible entry was made using a pry tool of some sort. Maintenance equipment valued at \$2,500 was taken. Who would steal a used lawnmower?

Counterfeit cash, 12/09/12 An adult male attempted to pass a counterfeit \$100 bill to buy \$6 worth of items at Moraga Hardware. Smart clerk checked the bill and determined it wasn't real - returning it to the would-be shopper. Fellow left the area in a large SUV, clerk was able to write down the car's California license plate number. Police checked DMV records and found that the license was not on file.

Bike theft, 12/06/12 An Ascot Drive resident left a locked bike underneath the stairs of the apartment complex. Sometime between 12/06 and 12/08 the bike disappeared. Estimated loss \$200.

Cat fight, 12/07/12 Two female Ascot Drive roommates had a dispute over a mutual love interest. One of the girls lashed out at the other, punching her in the face. Roommate confessed to the battery and apologized for losing control of her emotions. Roommate agreed with the cop's suggestion to spend the night somewhere else. The victim declined to press charges.

D.U.I., 12/05/12 A white Chrysler was pulled over in front of 7-11 around 11 p.m. for numerous vehicle code violations. As usual, field sobriety tests were performed, and the driver flunked. Officers escorted the subject into the Moraga P.D. booking room where he became physically combative and fought with cops. Now in addition to D.U.I. charges comes obstructing police duties and assaulting a police officer. Way to make a bad situation worse. Finally, the fellow's car was towed away.

Lamorinda Weekly also received a report of a gasoline theft Dec. 12. Two Donald Drive homeowners were shocked to find that the extra car they park on their property adjacent to their house was out of gas, when it was just filled up the day before. Apparently sometime during the night an unknown suspect siphoned out an entire tank of gas.



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Council Bids Farewell to Mendonca and Harpham

Elects Dave Trotter and Ken Chew as mayor and vice mayor, respectively

By Sophie Braccini



Council members Roger Wykle, Mike Metcalf and Phil Arth are sworn in. Photo Andy Schreck

Moraga Town Council members Karen Mendonca and Howard Harpham participated in their last council meeting Dec. 12. Mendonca lost her seat in the last election and Harpham opted not to run for a second term. Lamorinda's only all-male council unanimously elected Dave Trotter as mayor for 2013 and Ken Chew as vice mayor.

During their last council meeting Mendonca and Harpham were praised by the people who worked with them.

Contra Costa County Supervisor Candace Andersen praised her good friend Mendonca as a woman of integrity and character who is always well prepared. Town Manager Jill Keimach thanked Mendonca for having had the strength to

make tough decisions. Resident Ellen Beans, of Moraga Citizens Network, praised her enthusiasm, her accessibility and her support of events such as the California Independent Film Festival.

Beans described Harpham as the heart of the team that worked on the Revenue Enhancement Committee task force, where he manifested his conviction of the council's moral obligation to inform residents about the reality of situations. Many speakers pointed to Harpham as the moral compass of the council. His wit, vast culture, intellectual honesty and deep voice will be missed.

Mike Metcalf, who won re-election, and new council members Roger Wykle and Phil Arth were sworn in. The reconstituted council then turned its attention to the election of the mayor and vice mayor. In a slightly cautious tone, Keimach indicated that the tradition had been to rotate the mayor's position according to who received the highest number of votes in the general election. Last year there was there a break from that tradition, but this time around it was upheld as a unanimous vote by the council sent Trotter to the mayor's seat and installed Ken Chew as vice mayor.

Read more about Mayor Trotter and his goals for the town in our first issue of 2013, which will be delivered Jan. 2.

New Moraga Road Development Inches Forward

By Sophie Braccini

Developer Signature Properties received support from the Moraga Planning Commission on Dec. 3 for its latest design of 18 single-family, high-density homes at 489 Moraga Road—the land across from Rheem Shopping Center that once featured a bowling alley.

Under the plan, three single-family residences would face the busy thoroughfare, while 15 more homes would be staggered across the property. The proposed two-story homes would be built along a U-shaped road, offering two access points to the development. Each home would have a two-car garage and range in size from 1,900 to 2,700 square feet. There

would be 12 visitor parking spots.

The developer felt that the Town has been sending mixed messages about this project, first asking for more density, then for less. "We encourage higher density housing options here," said Planning Director Shawna Brekke-Read. But Signature Properties, with 20-plus years experience in development in the Bay Area, said that higher density options such as condominiums would not sell in Moraga.

"We want a project that would be economically sound," agreed commission chair Stacia Levenfeld.

The commissioners indicated that 2,700 square feet was probably exces-

sive for the location. Because the project is located along a scenic corridor, they discussed at length ways to shield views of driveways where it is likely that people will leave their cars; as garages tend to be used, at least partially, for storage. They also emphasized the need for pedestrian sidewalks and visitor parking in the development because parking is not allowed on Moraga Road.

Some traffic-related concerns remain unresolved. The entrance to the development would be located a few yards north of the shopping center's main entrance. There are two types of traffic issues: ingress and egress of the property, and pedestrian crossing. Re-

garding the latter issue, Signature Homes' John Bayless suggested that the solution was not to add a pedestrian crossing at the site, which would mean adding a median landing for safety and could have a big impact on the flow of traffic on Moraga Road, but rather to allow residents of the development to cross the street only at the existing crosswalks to the north and south.

The commission decided to wait for a traffic study before making recommendations on design and rules for access to and from the development. It is likely that this will come with the final design the developer will submit for approval in the coming months.

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—Marian Nichols, Moraga