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Proposed Subdivision in Happy Valley

By Cathy Tyson

A rare vacant parcel in Happy Valley is in the preliminary stages of being subdivided into five lots for generous single-family homes while retaining the existing open hillside easement. On the very edge of Lafayette city limits, bordering Orinda, is the 19.2 acre parcel on Happy Valley Road near Sundown Terrace owned by Robin and Chris Leamy.

Back in 2008 there was a settlement agreement entered into that divided the property into three lots, aptly named A, B and C. The Leamys are asking for approval of a subdivision on the 13.7-acre lot B.

The Design Review Commission took a look at the proposed subdivision earlier this month, and made a motion to recommend approval, however it was concerned about a few issues including tree removal, privacy from the existing neighbors and more.

While it looks like the subdivision will be approved, a final decision is expected at the Feb. 19 Planning Commission meeting; all of the proposed homes will need to go through the Design Review process. In the preliminary conceptual version prepared to make a determination for the subdivision, Alan Page of the Talon Design Group prepared rough footprints to give an idea of the proposed homes. He used a range of home sizes from 4,000 to 6,000 square feet with traditional architecture. Page has in mind homes similar to the style that he designed for Branagh Development at Hidden Oaks.

Currently there are story poles with orange webbing on the site. Attorney David Bowie came before the Planning Commission Jan. 22 to review the history of the proposed subdivision that dates back to the 1970s starting with a scenic conservation easement along with access improvements a decade later. He joked that his now silver hair was brown when this process started.

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