



Moraga Civic News

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, Aug. 28, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, Sept. 11, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Sept. 3, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

Design Review

Monday, Sept. 9, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

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

Maybe it was a skunk? 8/18/13 An anonymous caller reported the odor of marijuana coming from a nearby residence on Miramonte Drive at about 10 p.m. Upon arrival at the location, cops did not detect any untoward smells.

Toilet papered front yard, 8/18/13 A police officer responded to a Donald Drive residence on a report of a group of juveniles that tee-peed a house at 1 a.m. Upon arrival, officers confirmed that the house was indeed tee-peed. No suspects at this time.

Loud party, 8/18/13 Police were dispatched to a Country Club Drive residence at 2:30 a.m. to check on a report of a loud party and music. The resident was advised of the town's noise ordinance and was issued a warning notice. Party people stated they were staying the night and not going to drive home.

Vandalism, 8/17/13 A Wandel Drive couple was out of their home for a period of time; when they returned they found their rear exterior garage door forced open, causing damage to the door frame. A variety of items were moved around in the house and back yard – but nothing was missing. The unknown suspect neglected to wipe his or her feet – leaving a single set of shoe prints on the property. No suspects or leads at this time.

Suspicious circumstances, 8/15/13 A suspicious subject was in the back yard of a house on School Street; he ran away after being spotted. The unknown subject was last seen running westbound on Moraga Way. He must have been quick or perhaps had an invisibility cloak in his back pocket, because Moraga police conducted an extensive search but weren't able to find him.

Grand theft, 8/15/13 A Donald Drive resident let a new friend stay at her house while she went to get pizza. When she returned home, her "friend" was gone and he had taken over \$3,000 worth of her stuff. She tried to reach him on the phone – to no avail, and unfortunately didn't know where he lived or his last name. That was one expensive pizza.



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Town Council to Discuss Ridgeline and Hillside Development

By Sophie Braccini

Mayor Dave Trotter said recently, "The approval of the Rancho Laguna development by the council last year made it clear that our regulations protecting ridgeline and hillside development need to be strengthened." The Moraga Town Council is expected to decide Sept. 11 whether or not the town and its residents should pursue a dialogue regarding the potential modification of ordinances and guidelines pertaining to development on slopes and ridgelines. If the Town Council votes to proceed, the planning commission will open what is likely to be a very long series of meetings at which residents will have ample opportunity to voice their opinions.

The Rancho Laguna development, which Trotter opposed, includes a lot that requires major grading of a minor ridgeline, which can be seen from some of Moraga's

trails. When Trotter became mayor at the beginning of the year, he established a review of the regulations as one of the town's goals for 2013.

The planning commission was asked to take a first look in late July. "We'd like you to provide initial feedback and comments for the Town Council," Shawna Brekke-Read, planning director, told commissioners as she introduced the subject.

Conservation versus development – the veterans of years of local land use wars came to the July meeting prepared for a new battle.

"Moraga will be initiating yet another round of unwarranted changes to our current very significant and regulated town laws and policies affecting development on our hillsides and ridgelines," commented Moraga property owner David Bruzzone. "These actions, though appearing benign and innocuous to most Mora-

gans, are in fact very aggressive and belligerent actions that seek to implement policies from the failed voter initiative MOSO 2008. These changes will expand the scope and will seek to impose selected and targeted modifications to our laws that will take away what few remaining property rights still exist for these targeted parcels."

Suzanne Jones spoke on behalf of Preserve Lamorinda Open Space. "One of our major concerns is that a slope average can be taken over an arbitrarily large area; the problem with that is that a slope of any steepness can be developed provided that there is flatter land also included in the area to drive the overall average down... this has become a major loophole that has allowed development on steep slopes in excess of 20 percent," she said. She sees as a second issue an inconsistency between

the MOSO restriction on development of high-risk land and the guidelines that open the possibility of allowing massive grading to mediate the risk.

The different tools that the planning commission could discuss include overlay districts that do not change the original zoning but add a layer of regulation. Brekke-Read said that the General Plan mentions the possibility of creating a hillside zoning overlay, a high risk zoning overlay, and a moderate risk overlay. The commission could also review MOSO guidelines that have been amended before.

The recommended priorities the planning commission will forward to the Town Council include reviews of the town's unprotected ridgelines and how slopes are calculated, and the uniform application of definitions and rules.

Kevin Mooney: Orinda's Loss is Moraga's Gain

By Sophie Braccini



Officer Kevin Mooney
Photo Sophie Braccini

Traditionally, Moraga's new police officers are sworn in during Town Council meetings. To welcome officer Kevin Mooney to his team, Chief of Police Robert Priebe wanted to do something a little different so he arranged an event at the Hacienda de las Flores and invited Mooney's family to join members of the police department and local officials to witness the town's newest police officer take the oath to serve.

Priebe is delighted with the new hire; he has known Mooney for a long time. Until recently, Mooney served in Orinda. "We are very

lucky to have been able to hire an officer with incredible talent, who has an outstanding reputation in the county and lives in town," said the chief.

"Everything came together at the right time," explained Mooney. "I had reached retirement age as deputy sheriff with the county sheriff's office and Chief Priebe told me about the opening. It is a rare opportunity; small departments are hard to get into."

For his part, Mooney is happy to join Moraga's police department. "I like the opportunity to investigate things. County patrol as a deputy

sheriff is much different, because you take the initial report and you push that paper to somebody else. You may never go to court and never know what happened. Here you can investigate a case fully and that's what I like to do as an officer."

Another aspect he particularly likes is crime prevention. "I live in Moraga, I've been involved with the schools and the community for quite a while and I have a vested interest in keeping things safe here," he said. Mooney was involved in the chase of a suspect who had been burglarizing cars in Moraga and was finally caught. ... continued on page A11

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