

Civic News Moraga

Making a Local Treasure More Visible

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The foundation's recommendations to the Town Council included continuing weekend wedding rentals, which are a significant source of revenue, and the promotion of the Pavilion as venue for cultural events.

In recent years Moraga town staff vacated two areas on the Hacienda property: the second floor, which once housed town offices, and some land along Moraga Road that was the town's corporation yard but is unused at this time.

Foundation board members believe that a marketing study of potential uses of the second floor should be conducted before any renovation work begins. "The cost of the renovation will be significant," said Woehleke; in addition to being ADA non-compliant, the second floor has out-dated restroom facilities and many fixtures, such as windows, need to be replaced.

The foundation recommended that certain projects be conducted to improve the revenue stream coming from the Hacienda. "We would like to replace the existing fountain patio at the main Hacienda building with a larger, hardscape patio area to accommodate larger groups and events outdoors," said Woehleke. "We would also like to improve and enlarge the Pavilion's bar and kitchen functionality."

One of Woehleke's main points was the necessity of creating additional parking spaces at the former corporation yard in combination with establishing greater visibility from Moraga Road. The Hacienda has an entrance on Moraga Road but it is not for public use - visitors must enter the property from Donald Drive. The seclusion of the venue is part of its charm, but it is a challenge as well.

Bob Reynolds, a retail profes-

sional and former foundation board member, said that lack of visibility is a big handicap for the Hacienda. "We have too many 'best kept secrets,'" added resident Edy Schwartz, who lamented the small size of the A-frame sign directing customers to new the Hacienda Café. "People want to preserve the historic feel of the Hacienda, but they are also dreaming about bigger possibilities," she said.

Mayor David Trotter asked town staff to look into possibilities for improving signage directing the public to the Hacienda.

The Town Council recommended the preparation of a complete facility assessment so that all of the work that needs to be done can be planned and budgeted over time.

"They (the foundation) are a private entity and we can't give them directions," noted Councilmember Michael Metcalf. "I suggest that you keep doing what you are doing and come up with ideas, and be open and receptive," he told foundation board members. "Don't ask us what you should do, work in cooperation with the Parks and Recreation Department and Commission and come to us with proposals."

The Moraga Hacienda de las Flores Foundation is seeking volunteer candidates for the Board of Directors. Board members have interests in one or more of:

- Planning through execution of Hacienda renovation/enhancement projects.
- Organizing community events to celebrate the Hacienda and increase awareness.
- Raising funds for Hacienda projects.

Please visit haciendafoundation.org/index.php and use the Contact Us tab to express interest in learning more.

Livable Moraga Road Project

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Recalling the public outcry a few years ago when a suggestion was made to narrow Moraga Road to two lanes, Mayor David Trotter warned staff against revisiting that idea. "(It's) a non-starter. I would not support it under any circumstance."

Staff also proposed the creation of a Town Advisory Committee to provide input on materials and topics to be reviewed at the public workshops and liaise with town decision-making bodies. Staff suggested that the committee be formed by one representative of each formal commission and committee in town, but the Town Council struggled for a while with the necessity to expand participation to other interest groups such as the Hacienda Foundation, Campolindo High School, the Chamber of Commerce, and Saint Mary's Col-

lege, among others. Councilmember Michael Metcalf's suggestion that "a nucleus of motivated people can get a lot done" gained momentum, and the Town Council decided to keep the committee small, adding one member from the Youth Involvement Committee and agreeing to invite special interest groups when needed. "We could talk to the same people we always talk to," pleaded Jill Keimach, town manager, "but the purpose is to get young people and different perspectives on this committee. It's not only drivers, but kids who ride their bikes to the yogurt shop."

The project's website is still under construction, but residents will soon be able to find information and updates at www.moraga.ca.us/livable-moragaroad.

Community Service

Senior Symposium a Stellar Success

Submitted by Dick Holt



Lafayette Community Foundation board members Dick Holt and Don Jenkins introduce Senior Rides director Elaine Welch at the recent Senior Symposium. Photo Matt Shriner

Nearly 200 people attended the 5th Annual Senior Symposium hosted by the Lafayette Community Foundation in cooperation with the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church, and co-chaired by LCF board members Don Jenkins and Dick Holt. This

year's theme, "Aging by Design," provided updates on transportation options as well as the development and progress of the Lamorinda Village Project. For more information and how to be notified of future events, visit www.lafayettecf.org.

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