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## **Bollinger Valley Development at a Standstill**

*By Sophie Braccini*

The proposed development of 126 luxury single-family homes in the Bollinger Valley area has generated a large number of comments from residents of Moraga and Lafayette. And some potentially outdated studies are the focus of new attention.

Seven hundred written comments were received by the town's planning department when the Draft Environmental Impact Report was released at the beginning of the year. On Sept. 25 the Town Council approved consultant contracts, for an amount not to exceed \$185,000, in order for the town to respond to the comments, some of which indicated that additional studies may be required. Shawna Brekke-Read, Moraga's planning director, said that the property owner, the Bruzzone family, would have to pay for any extra studies that are deemed necessary to move the project forward but had not yet signed an agreement to do so.

"These (studies) include biological surveys, visual analysis, geologic/geotechnical studies, and traffic analyses," wrote Brekke-Read in her staff report. "The Town had initially recommended some of these studies to the applicant, including, for example visual simulations. In other cases, the applicant had provided its own studies, including, for example, biological surveys."

The study work for the EIR started in 2006 and comments suggested that certain data elements need to be updated, such as traffic counts. "Staff and consultants have determined that additional analyses and studies are required to respond to comments on the draft EIR," she said.

Commenting after the meeting, Brekke-Read said that the project could not move forward unless these studies are done. "So far the property owners have challenged the necessity to conduct the additional work, but we are continuing our discussion with them," she said.

At the same meeting, the Town Council decided to give a go ahead to the process of a complete revision of the slope and ridgeline development in town, a process that the Bruzzone family has opposed. If local rules are modified, it may also have an impact on what can be done in Bollinger Valley and the property owners might decide to wait until decisions are made - they have not responded to questions regarding their intent in that matter.

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[back](#)

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