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Early Harvest on Lamorinda Hills

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Parkmon Vineyards owner Dave Parker and his daughter, Ali, pick grapes while wife, and co-owner Shari Simon looks on from the distance. Photo Cathy Dausman

After picking, the grapes get pressed and prepared for fermentation. Parkmon Vineyards (Parker supplies the label's first syllable; his wife, co-owner Shari Simon makes up its second half) expects to put up about 1,100 bottles of wine this year, said assistant winemaker Scott Clifton. Parkmon is one of approximately 18 vineyards in the Lamorinda area,

all of which are racing against the clock while the harvest comes in two weeks ahead of schedule.

"They picked two vineyards in Orinda yesterday," Parker said.

Their east by southeast hillside is sheltered from wind and fog by nearby Mulholland Ridge. The couple grows the Rhone varietals viognier, grenache, syrah, and mourvedre, as well as zinfandel, all of which thrive in clay soil and warm weather.

The white wine grapes as well as pinot noir and merlot were harvested by early September, with the focus now turning to cabernet, sangiovese, and syrah. With help from Clifton, Rodrigo Loera Garcia, and daughter Ali, Parker expected to finish picking that morning's round of grapes "in about three hours."

With the art of gardening completed, the science of winemaking begins.

Civic News Lafayette

Kids on Track



Photo Cathy Tyson

Students at Lafayette Elementary School can now run to their hearts' delight on their newly completed track. The PTA decided to use some of their reserve funds to pay

for the 1,100 foot long paved path that was installed over the summer. "The kids and teachers are really loving it," said PTA President Valerie Keely. C. Tyson

Complete Design Change Requested for Terraces Project

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The structures would be sustainably built and organized to reduce visibility, with extensive landscaping that incor-

porates more than 700 trees around the perimeter of 14 two- and three-story buildings.

Unfortunately the project explanation and scale model wasn't enough to persuade Design Review commissioners. As the meeting wrapped up, they embraced the goal of providing concerns, questions and comments to the applicant. They made plain their issues for the largest proposed development in Lafayette's history: "This overall approach is rather pedestrian, predictable and ordinary," said commissioner Ken Hertel noting that it could be found in Modesto or Dublin. "Seas of carports to me don't rise to the occasion," for the site that is a gateway to the city.

Commissioner Tom Chastain called current plans a "non-starter" adding, "I cannot think of any project where we have allowed this degree of grading."

This is the applicant's first time seeking design feedback; project manager Dave Baker expressed willingness to hear and incorporate comments, saying he was "glad to work" on alternative plans with a different layout.

Look for alternative design plans at the next Design Review meeting to hear this matter Oct. 28 in the Community Hall of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center.



Conceptual context map

Provided

Civic News Fire Departments

Lamorinda Fire News Briefs

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A major obstacle that needs to be worked out prior to the detachment is the determination of the actual amount of Lafayette's portion of the unfunded pension liability in ConFire's retirement plan, which is managed by the Contra Costa County Employees' Retirement Association. ConFire Chief Daryl Louder suggested that Bartel Associates, a San Mateo retirement plan consulting firm, be contacted to do an audit of the city's retirement obligations, including the unfunded

pension liability and other post-employment benefits. "And we also need to find out Lafayette's percentage of the pension plan assets," said task force member Jim Cunha.

As the complexity of the unanswered questions escalated throughout the evening, it became more and more evident just how accurate Reilly's earlier observation was.

The questions will resume at the next task force meeting, Oct. 29.