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Donald Drive Home Appeal Continued

By Sophie Braccini

Noting that some technical questions remain unanswered, the Moraga Town Council decided to continue the hearing of an appeal challenging the approval of the design of a new home on a steep hill off Donald Drive to Jan. 22.

The futuristic green home proposed for the lot at 1800 Donald Drive by Orinda architect James Wright has been on the drawing board for more than two years. Since the start, Wright worked with town staff to understand the rules and make sure that no grading per-

mit or variance would be required.

Wright designed a home that conforms to the topography of the hill, rather than excavating a flat building pad. The architect believes the amount of grading is zero, since foundations are not counted in the amount of dirt moved. The Town Council did not adopt staff and planning commission's recommendation to approve the design, but instead argued that the excavation could be much larger than is anticipated by the architect and required an evaluation of the dirt that will have to be moved, other than the

foundation itself, to place the building on site. If that amount were to be higher than 50 cubic yards, a grading permit would be required.

The second item that concerned the Town Council was whether the driveway that sits above the house and is supported by posts would require a variance for approval. Staff's position is that the driveway is integral to the house and does not need a variance; some of the council members declared they need legal certainty. The Town Council's questions should be answered at its Jan. 22 meeting.

Café Hacienda to Stay for Now

By Sophie Braccini

Volunteers from the Hacienda Foundation of Moraga and the Moraga Park Foundation demonstrated their desire to be included in the discussion of Cafe Hacienda's future by waiting at a Town Council meeting until midnight on Nov. 13 for their chance to support the cafe but also request a discussion of the potential impli-

cations for the Hacienda de las Flores if it were to become the permanent location of a restaurant.

"The Hacienda is our sandbox," said Steve Woehleke, Hacienda Foundation president. The statement expressed the feeling of ownership that the volunteers, who have invested hours of expertise in the public facility, de-

rive from their work. Park Foundation members expressed the same sentiment.

Both groups met to discuss their concerns that the mission of the Hacienda as a public facility for events and classes could be altered by the cafe's use of the kitchen and dance room during the week. ... continued on page A11

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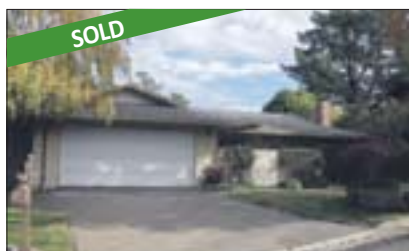
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5 Westover Court, Orinda



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