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## Sign Ordinance: Community Input Still Needed

By Sophie Braccini

The Moraga Planning Commission conducted a study session with the community March 17 regarding the town's sign ordinance. The Chamber of Commerce was present, as well as diverse business owners who want to be able to increase their visibility within the boundary of the rules. By law, the town cannot regulate signs by content but only by zoning district, type and temporality. More public input is needed. Additional study sessions are tentatively scheduled for April 14 and April 23. The April 14 study session would be a joint meeting with the Design Review Board and the Planning Commission. The April 23 study session would be with the Town Council. "Our intent is to bring the sign ordinance back to the Planning Commission for hearing in May," said Ella Samonsky, associate planner. Check the town's website for additional information, moraga.ca.us.

## New Cross Graces the Hill



Photo from Saint Mary's College video footage

A new redwood cross was installed March 19 on the hill above Saint Mary's College to replace the previous one that fell right before Christmas. The new cross is the same size as its predecessor and is the third since 1940. Brother Christopher Donnelly says that the new cross was made from the heart of a Eureka redwood tree and should last longer than the previous fir cross. *S. Braccini*

## Town Council Shuts Down Café Hacienda

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"That was the basis for the committee's recommendation to close the café at the end of the month," said Claire Roth, former president of the Hacienda Foundation.

Somers agreed to leave, but then she bumped into one regulatory hurdle after another, including new ADA compliance regulations that went into effect Jan. 1 and needing to re-apply

for a fire district permit that had expired after six months.

During the Town Council meeting March 19 Ingram explained that the hardwood floors have to be refinished so the Hacienda will be ready for the events season that is a big revenue source for his department. "I do not see how Gayle could be operating a restaurant as the work is done."

The Town Council ruled to close Café Hacienda on March 31. "Maybe some local churches could house you while your construction is completed," suggested Councilmember David Trotter. Somers confirmed that she is seeking another temporary space so she can keep her team employed.

**More Moraga Civic News on Page A8**

### Michelle Branchaud Simi, MD Medicare Provider



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# Real Estate...Simplified!

**1061 Orchard Rd, Orinda**

**NEW LISTING**



This is a 1937 charmer with a guest house! It features 2 BR and 1 1/2 BA in the main home on a 1/4 acre with lots of fruit trees and a view of Mt. Diablo. Easy walk to downtown and BART, great commute location as well. Cute little kitchen and original hardwood floors. Quaint little guest studio is nicely updated. **Offered at \$850,000 by Tina Van Arsdale 925-640-2355.**  
CalBRE#01259271

**653 Augusta Drive, Moraga**

**NEW LISTING**



Perfect Location! MCC "Gem" with all the Club Amenities and then some! 3+bd/Bonus Room 2.5 bath, formal dining, hardwood floors, 2 enclosed patios, breakfast nook and vaulted ceilings. All just steps away from fun in the sun--golf, tennis, & swim. The largest end unit lot in Club! A Must See! **Offered at \$775,000 by Monica Clarke 925.297.7289.**  
CalBRE#01221955

**50 Ascot Place, Moraga**

**NEW LISTING**



Living on top of the world. This level-in condo behaves like a single-family home with 2 BR, 2 BA and a den. It also has vaulted ceilings and remodeled kitchen and views from most every room. Fantastic indoor/outdoor entertaining in a prime Cul-da-sac location. Steps from the Mulholland Ridge trail. **Offered at \$550,000 by Larry Jacobs 925.788.1362 and Kress Hauri 925.899.5739.**  
CalBRE#01495118/01465617

**2740 Ptamigan, Rossmore**

**NEW LISTING**



This sought-after Kentfield condo with two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a den has tons of extra living space. Most of the balcony has been seamlessly enclosed while a small open balcony remains. The spacious living room has serene views from almost every window. **Offered at \$448,000 by Elizabeth Haslam 925.899.5097 and Ann Cantrell 925.639.7970.**  
CalBRE#01494942/01058289

**1523 Ashwood Drive, Martinez**

**NEW LISTING**



A lovely townhouse in Martinez with 2 master suites and 2.5 BA in 1317 sf. This home is nicely updated throughout with dual pane windows, HVAC, laminate floors, beautiful kitchen and baths. It has a large living/dining area, private back patio and greenbelt view. Also includes 2 covered carports and lots of storage. **Offered at \$330,000 by Tina Van Arsdale 925-640-2355.**  
CalBRE#01259271

**114 Lance Court, Martinez**

**PENDING**



This Wisteria home is on a small court of newer homes built in 2000. It is a spacious 3 BR 2 BA home with over 2100sq ft. Its large kitchen opens to the breakfast and family rooms. The dining room and living room are perfect for adult gatherings. The sunny backyard is just right for both kids and a garden. **Call Adam Hamalian for price 925.708.5630.**  
CalBRE#01917597

### TIP OF THE WEEK

Real estate cycles run 7 – 12 years. The last peak for Contra Costa County was in July 2007 and the valley followed in 2009. We saw a recovery last year and prices here have increased dramatically. They could peak again this year, or sometime within the next 5 years, but we don't know if they will. They could also drop to another low as soon as 2016.

If you're timing the market, this could be the best time to sell! Springtime is usually the best selling season. Our inventory is still less than demand, interest rates are still attractive, and we are still getting multiple offers on most listings, so why wait?

Call us with any questions you have about the local market. We are happy to help you determine what course of action is best for you!

### Meet our Featured Agents ...



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