



Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Wednesday, July 1, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, June 24, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Historical Landmark Committee

Tuesday, June 24, 3 p.m.
Gallery Room, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Orinda:

www.cityoforinda.org
Phone (925) 253-4200

Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org

School Board Meeting

Orinda Union School District

Monday, June 23, 6 p.m.
OUSD Office, Vintage Building
25 Orinda Way, Suite 200
www.orindaschools.org
See also AUHSD meeting page A2



Orinda Police Department Incident summary report, May 25 to June 7

Alarms	54
Assault	
80 block Ivy Dr	
911 Calls	7
Auto Burglary	
10 block Paintbrush Ln	
Theatre Square	
Wagner Ranch Elementary	
Residential Burglary	
Orinda View Rd/Happy Valley	
20 block Knickerbocker Ln	
40 block Oakwood Rd	
Disturbance	
Miramonte HS	
Orinda Wy/Camino Sobrante	
100 block Spring Rd	
DUI	
Moraga Wy/Glorietta Bl	
Safeway	
Hit & Run	
Sandhill Rd/Sandhill Ct	
10 block El Camino Moraga	
Loud Party	
Stein Wy/Knickerbocker Ln	
80 block Donald Dr	
30 block Canyon View Dr	
10 block Williams Ct	
Missing Adult	
10 block Altarinda Rd	
10 block Oak View Terrace	
Petty Theft	
10 block Bates Bl	
10 block Camino del Cielo	
Promiscuous Shooting	
100 block Crest View Dr	
Public Nuisance	
Wagner Ranch Elementary	
Lomas Cantadas/Grizzly Peak	
Reckless Driving	
Moraga Wy/Brookside Rd	
Camino Pablo/Santa Maria Wy	
Glorietta Bl/Moraga Wy	
San Pablo Dam Rd/Bear Creek	
200 block Overhill Rd	
Camino Pablo/Bear Cr Rd	
Camino Pablo/Manzanita Dr	
Camino Pablo/Brookwood Rd	
Camino Pablo/Orinda Wy	
Suspicious:	
Person	9
Circumstance	9
Vehicle	21
Suicide	
Wilder Fields	
Traffic Stops	127
Vandalism	
Starbucks	
100 block Fiesta Cr	
Vehicle Theft	
20 block North Ln	
Warrant	
100 block Moraga Wy	

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All Who Love Orinda Urged to Attend Housing Element Workshop

By Laurie Snyder

“It’s all about the public process,” says Christina Ratcliffe of the city’s upcoming Housing Element Planning Workshop. A senior planner with the City of Orinda, Ratcliffe is hoping residents, business owners, church members, teachers, and others who care about the community will turn out in droves to learn more about a vital part of the city’s General Plan, share their views on housing needs, and tell city leaders what to do about those needs. “We want to get as many different folks in Orinda who are here and enjoy Orinda and love it to tell us what types of housing they want to see, what direction they want the community to go.”

Slated to begin at 6 p.m. on June 26 in the Orinda Library Auditorium, the workshop will be the first of several opportunities to weigh in, and will include a presentation by representatives from Pacific Municipal

Consultants, the firm helping to guide Orinda through the state-required process in which California communities must address their projected housing needs. PMC consultants will explain what the housing element is, what is required of the city by the state, and the scope of the Environmental Impact Report required for the element’s fifth cycle.

Attendees will then move to breakout tables at which PMC and city staff will answer questions and take suggestions. “People can go around and visit at their own pace so that everybody can get all the information and give us input,” explains Ratcliffe. Comment cards and an email address will be provided for residents who feel awkward about speaking up in public. “We want to encourage people to participate in any way that’s comfortable for them to do so.”

As for the Environmental Impact

Report, she explains that it’s part of the California Environmental Quality Act – more commonly referred to as CEQA. In addition to being required, it’s a good thing. “The main idea behind it is let’s evaluate everything so we know what we’re getting into. I think that’s a very responsible thing to do.” The city will look at and evaluate the possible impacts of the element to the fullest extent possible, and then make an informed decision about how best to proceed.

Acknowledging that many find general plan minutiae about as exciting as watching paint dry, Ratcliffe turns serious. “It’s not just housing. It helps shape the community, the form of the community, the dynamic of the community. It’s also a legal requirement. Making a certified housing element makes us eligible to apply for grants.”

A second, follow-up workshop will be held at a later date, as will pub-

lic hearings as the element and EIR work their way through their respective drafting and review processes. “We were given very clear direction by the council to reach out,” adds Ratcliffe. “We want everyone to feel that they are part of the community and that they are being heard.”

So tell your neighbors, and get there early. The city is planning for an overflow crowd with sound piped out to latecomers seated in the Library Gallery. For details, call or email Ratcliffe: (925) 253-4213 or cratcliffe@cityoforinda.org.

Orinda Housing Element Workshop

When: Thursday, June 26 at 6 p.m.
Where: Orinda Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way

Quick, In and Out – and Silent

Home invasion robberies a rarity, not the rule in Orinda

By Laurie Snyder

Despite a recent incident on La Espiral Road during which a pair of mask-clad miscreants allegedly broke into a home post-midnight and pistol-whipped two residents, robberies in America’s Second Friendliest City have historically been non-violent crimes of opportunity rather than face-offs between terrified townspeople and fearless felons. The average offender, says Police Chief Mark Nagel, is one who prefers “quick, in and out, and silent” encounters.

In one recent case, a resident “got home from work at 4:30 or 5 and found a smashed window.” The bad guy was long gone, and neighbors hadn’t seen or heard anything. “It’s frustrating on our part because we’re looking for leads, but there aren’t any.”

An equally vexing problem is that Lamorindans can also sometimes be their own worst enemies. Wrapped in a cocoon of complacency borne from decades of historically low crime rates, locals tempt fate by leaving windows wide open while taking walks with their dogs, “hiding” precious family heirlooms in the oh-so-obvious spots used by everyone since God was a boy, and inviting smash-and-dash pilfering by leaving cell phones and other goodies on car seats while heading off for runs at the Res.

In the case of the atypical La Espiral incident, the college students renting the home had left the front door of the house unlocked before going to bed. Imagine how that scenario might have played out, says Nagel, if a simple flick of a wrist had dead-bolted the door. “The robbers would have had to make a lot of noise. It would have given the victims some time to prepare – to call 911 – to escape. All of that was taken away.”

In his message this month, Nagel is asking residents to fine tune their personal safety by creating “layers of security.” Install kick proof doors. Get a dog that barks. Install a safe and bolt it to the floor. Make sure your exterior security cameras are in good working order. And then lock your doors and windows. “When you let down one critical aspect – the actual locked door – it kind of defeats all of the other systems that are in play.”

And, keep visual and written records of valuables – for investigation and insurance purposes. “If someone just submits ‘gold chain,’ it doesn’t really help very much. Take pictures of it all so that, when it’s pawned, we can identify it.” One way to do this, suggests Nagel, is to use your smart phone to take photographs, labeling those shots with the items’ serial numbers.

The La Espiral investigation has been made more challenging because the victims had not, as of press time, furnished serial numbers to help police track stolen items. “Officers are exploring the possibility that the suspects may have been acquainted with the home or residents,” says Contra Costa County Sheriff’s Department spokesman Jimmy Lee. Orinda’s investigative unit has already developed

leads in the case because the perpetrators appear to have been specifically looking for something the victims had in their possession. “This was not random,” adds Nagel. “It was targeted and specific.”

From Nixle to Nextdoor – Staying Safe by Staying Connected

Orinda Police Chief Mark Nagel recently announced another way for Orindans to stay informed about public safety issues – by signing up for and staying active with the online neighborhood networking site, Nextdoor (<https://nextdoor.com>).

“Orinda has 38 neighborhoods or groups on Nextdoor totaling over 3,600 people. By being on that network, I can immediately notify 3,600 people of a message or advisement.” Orindans on Nextdoor will also be able to reply back to police department messages as well, but needn’t worry about privacy. “They can reply to what I send, but I won’t hear or see the chats from group to group or neighbor to neighbor,” says Nagel. “The Orinda PD is a neighbor, if you will. If somebody sends me a private message asking about field weapon permits, no one else will see that. It goes right to the Orinda PD.”

Early on in his tenure, Nagel launched an email tipline, and also helped the city make better use of the Nixle alert system used by the Town of Moraga. “I’m trying to cover every aspect of communication. I do hope if any kind of suspect information develops that residents or business owners reach out – whether it be Nextdoor, or the tipline or a phone call.”

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