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Letters to the Editor

Editor:

My family and I would like to thank the neighbors at and near 44 Rheem Boulevard for their assistance to my daughter and her three friends whose vehicle was severely damaged by a hit and run driver. The driver straddling the double-yellow line caused my daughter to take evasive action to avoid a head-on but the other driver still smashed into the rear of her vehicle destroying the tires, axle and puncturing the gas tank.

Three or four households responded immediately including one gentleman who attempted to catch the other driver on foot as the car sped away. They offered greatly appreciated assistance until the police and fire arrived. Thanks again and if anyone knows of a white car with recent front end damage and a missing wing mirror I am sure the Orinda Police Department would be interested.

Colin Busby
San Leandro

Editor:

Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa is quoted in a Lamorinda Weekly news article (July 2) about Orinda's Housing Element, a plan to bring low-income housing to Orinda. In the Weekly's article, Tutu mentions "forgiveness and reconciliation ... "

The Weekly's article covered a turbulent meeting in Orinda on June 26. At the meeting, audience members screamed and shouted at a consultant hired to assist Orinda with the planning of a Housing Element scheduled for the years 2015-2023.

The Weekly's article might have included a quotation by another famous person, an American, who said that a governmental entity "has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance."

That writer who talked about "swarms of officers" could have been speaking about Orinda's 2013-2023 Housing Element, which is being imposed on Orinda by a Sacramento bureaucracy called The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). If Orinda does not comply with HCD's requirements to build low-income housing, HCD has the power to cut off money for Orinda's road-repair program.

Some, perhaps many, Orindans are upset about the planned Housing Element because it is being imposed without a vote of Orindans.

The Housing Element is not the first case of something being imposed on Orinda without voter approval. On July 18-19, 2013, two Bay Area regional governmental agencies, MTC (the Metropolitan Transportation Commission) and ABAG (the Association of Bay Area Governments), voted, at a joint meeting in Oakland, to adopt Plan Bay Area, a scheme to reduce the use of motor vehicles and attract people to high-rise, high-density (often called stack-and-pack) housing. The directors of MTC and ABAG are not elected directly by voters.

While rude behavior at a public meeting is unacceptable, plans by unelected bureaucrats to impose housing and transportation rules on Orinda or anywhere else are also unacceptable.

And who was that famous American who complained about "a multitude of new offices ... to harass our people?" He was Thomas Jefferson. His words can be found in the Declaration of Independence.

Richard Colman
Orinda

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