

Civic News Moraga

Meet the Candidates: Chew, Onoda, Trotter

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“We attracted some very good sales tax generators, like TJ Maxx, Orchard and Home Goods,” he says.

Onoda says that the community is educated and sophisticated and that the shopping and dining scene should reflect the population. She is looking forward to fostering the creation of a more friendly public space. “As an artist I see things that others do not,” she says.

Open Space Preservation

Trotter and Onoda favor strengthening the rules that regulate ridgeline and hillside development in Moraga to ensure consistency in the way development decisions are made. Chew says that there is a town council subcommittee currently working on possible language and suggestions to clarify and improve on the protection of open space and ridge lines, and development on slopes. “I look forward to receiving these recommendations,” he says.

Recreation and the Rheem Theatre

Onoda believes that the Palos Colorados money should primarily go to recreation. “We have to look at the entire population and decide what makes most sense,” she says. With the Rheem Theatre now for sale, she thinks that the building can remain a theater or become something else.

Trotter believes, and has advocated for years, that the town needs a community gym. He notes that the Hacienda de las Flores is destined to become a community center, after some improvements. He believes that the Rheem Theatre is one of the defining and vibrant symbols of Moraga and local government has a legitimate role to play in its preservation.

Chew would rather look at existing facilities rather than constructing new ones, and save developer fees for existing asset replacement and maintenance. As far as the Rheem Theatre is concerned, he believes the town should continue to support the theater and ensure that a long term solution is found.

Teresa Onoda is a recognized painter who often uses Moraga’s beautiful landscape as her inspiration. She was an art teacher before moving to town with her family in 1989; her children were ages 4 and 6 at the time. Onoda launched the Preserve Lamorinda Open Space Art Show in 1990 to support the ultimately successful battle against a golf course that was planned for the Palos Colorados development. She was appointed to the Moraga Planning Commission a year and a half ago. If elected, Onoda would be the only woman on the Town Council and she believes that her presence would make that elected body more representative of the town’s population.

David Trotter is an attorney and partner at Bowles & Verna LLP, a law firm in Walnut Creek. His practice includes civil litigation, land use planning, environmental and real estate law. He served on the Moraga Planning Commission for more than six years in the ‘90s. He and his wife raised four children in Moraga.

Ken Chew is a native of Malaysia and came to the United States as a student. He holds a degree in civil and environmental engineering. Chew works for the California Department of Transportation in Oakland, where he is in charge of project management control. He and his wife raised two sons in Moraga. Prior to running for Town Council he served on the Moraga Planning Commission.

Candidates Night

Learn more about the candidates at the Moraga Citizens Network’s Candidates Night, starting at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 1 at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School St. in Moraga. A video of the debate will be available the next day on our website, www.lamorindaweekly.com.

Civic News Orinda

The Hills Are Alive – With the Sound of Paving

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City leaders constantly battle “a dynamic where it just plain costs more to keep the roads up.” Even if Orinda did have better soil, its roads would still deteriorate from heavy equipment use and simple aging. “Asphalt loses its elasticity over time.”

But with a daunting 92 miles of roads to maintain on a budget that remains elfin despite voters passing measures L and J, repairs simply cannot be made everywhere by the city overnight. “It’s the poorest rich city in the Bay Area. Per capita, the sales tax revenue that reaches city hall is very small,” says Fay. Most of that revenue is produced when residents buy cars – unlike the City of Walnut Creek, which has Macy’s and Target. Putting it further into perspective, Orinda’s budget is roughly \$10 million per year – the same amount generated by the average Indian casino for the city in which it operates.

“So we’re doing triage, and we’re starting with the most heav-

ily traveled roads first to deliver the most benefit for the most people as quickly as possible. We will do all of the worst segments of all of the residential roads with worst defined as a Pavement Condition Index of 25 or less. A single street could have a PCI of 10 in one area and 45 in another. We will do the 10, but not the 45. That will have to wait for additional funding.”

Orinda residents are likely to feel blessed by this round’s sound of street music. The city’s public works department has been experimenting with a new technique on certain roads – digging down as deep as two feet, churning up material, and introducing hard concrete before repaving. “So now you’ve got a road that’s got a really solid base with a new top over it.”

Read part one of this series, published Sept. 10, in our online archive at www.lamorindaweekly.com.

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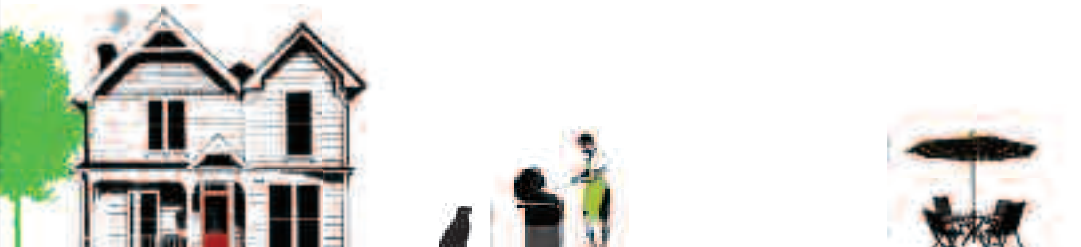
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