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Published January 28th, 2015

## Letters to the Editor

Editor:

The supporters of a revitalized downtown overlook the many side effects and collateral damage that would be involved in demolishing and rebuilding Orinda Village, and also overlook the drawbacks of a "revitalized" Village. How would Orinda obtain a revitalized downtown? Property would have to be acquired over time from the many owners. While that is happening, existing businesses would close and new businesses would not open. Our local, friendly, family-owned businesses would be forced to close. There would be years of construction noise, dust, and interference with traffic flow to the remaining businesses. What would the end result be? Instead of family-owned businesses paying affordable rents and charging affordable prices, we would end up with more expensive chain stores. We would have more traffic on the only street through the village, and parking problems, which already exist in the downtown around the Orinda theater. Parking meters would be in our future. Look at "revitalized" Lafayette. The costs of the new construction, including underground parking, will be enormous. The developer will have to charge high rents to make a profit. Only chain or specialty high end stores charging us high prices will be able to afford those rents. It is ironic for the pro-development forces to point to the empty Phairs building, when it was their efforts that helped scuttle the proposed Montessori school, which the community desired. And before we add more housing, let's first wait and see the effect of all of the recently-constructed housing on our quality of life - on parking, traffic, schools and shopping. I prefer the current village, which serves the community and which will evolve slowly. There is easy access to our community park. I can conveniently park my car when I need to pick up a prescription at Rite Aid, eat lunch at Geppetto's, or obtain take out from the Szechwan Chinese Restaurant. We can always drive the short distance to Lafayette or Walnut Creek for an expensive meal or a high end retail product. Let's not destroy Orinda's village character in the guise of revitalizing it.

Nick Waranoff  
Orinda

Editor:

In his letter of 1-14-15, Tom Trowbridge said: "Housing has been well established as an appropriate use of real estate in villages for centuries." Tom overlooks or ignores that this "establishment" was formed in medieval times. We now have the wonderful freedom of automobiles. Orinda does not need or want low income or high density housing. Housing prices should be set by supply and demand, left to the individual discretion of the individual owners of that land. All proposed or finished high density housing in Orinda does not have adequate parking for the residents to park their cars. This is not an accident. Central "planners" want people out of their cars so they are dependent on public transportation. Mr. Towbridge is resistant to change as well as progress. The freedom of the automobile is the future and is imperative of a free people. If you fly over the U.S. you will see this country is empty. We do not need to huddle together like medieval peasants. Democrats are seeking to impose this on us simply so they can control us.

Henry R. Pinney  
Orinda

Editor:

As a long-time resident of Orinda, I totally understand why the City of Lafayette supports the plan to replace Orinda's Honey Hill Fire Station with a new station on El Nido Ranch Road at Lorinda Lane in Lafayette. The county closed their station in NW Lafayette nearly three years ago. Since then, the

residents of that area have depended on our Honey Hill Fire Station to provide emergency services. If the new (very expensive) station is built, response times to NW Lafayette will be reduced by several minutes - at no cost to Lafayette residents. It's a great deal - for Lafayette!

However, the real "costs" will be borne by the taxpayers of the MOFD (especially parts of North Orinda) who will have their already sub-standard response times increased by two minutes. The MOFD Board hopes to save money on operations with this plan, but what is the real cost? What is the value of a life lost while waiting for help to arrive or the value of a house that burns down because MOFD couldn't get there within its own 6-minute response time goal?

I understand why Lafayette would support this move. What I don't understand is why any resident of the MOFD would do the same. I, personally, have no desire to fund a station that will be located in Lafayette and will primarily benefit Lafayette at the expense of the residents of Orinda and Moraga. For more information visit the following web site: [www.savehoneyhillfirestation.com](http://www.savehoneyhillfirestation.com)

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