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Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines.

email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Letters to the Editor

Editor:

The Moraga Town Council had the opportunity at their January meeting to do what was right. All property owners should have been appalled and incensed by the impending adoption by the Moraga Town Council, of the first reading of the historical preservation ordinance. The ordinance proposed the town to declare a building or natural feature, of historical significance, without the owner's agreement. It gave the City veto power over property owners on and about their own properties. This included any building over 50 years old, or not, if so designated, our house or any structure on it, for instance and maybe yours. Private property rights of exclusive use of one's property are guaranteed in the 5th Amendment of the Constitution. A designation of historical significance should not be forced on any property owner. Property taken through regulation is much the same as property taken through physical seizure, similar to eminent domain, except there would be no just compensation. The ordinance would increase cost to the property owner to meet ADA's strict rebuilding requirements and could subject them to fines and criminal penalties.

The ordinance affects everyone with a house originally built 50 years ago, not just commercial buildings or barns. So, you could need an exemption to remodel your ranch house or other building on your property, if it has been so designated, historically significant.

Take note now, and do something. Write or call the city before they do more to take away your rights. Before a final decision is made on nominations for historical significant buildings and properties, a public hearing will be held. Before more of your personal, private property rights are taken, speak up before or at a hearing to voice your opposition to removing the text that would not require a property owner's consent. Contact

the Town Clerk for dissemination to the Mayor and Town Council Members (5) at town-clerk@moraga.ca.us.

Patrick and Dawn Eames
Moraga

Editor:

January 28's Lamorinda Weekly contained a long article about a for-profit company's recent establishment of a casual carpool system in Moraga and Orinda, for which participants must pay money to the company. The article exuded great enthusiasm for the commercial enterprise. But that commercial enterprise is not the only alternative to BART.

The article neglected to mention that for over 20 years, established casual carpool spots have existed in both Orinda (near the Orinda Theater) and Moraga (by the bus stop on Moraga Way across from Viader, near the Wells Fargo bank, where there is plenty of free parking). And they are free, except that in Moraga, at least, riders are generally willing to share the cost of the bridge toll. They run themselves, and no one has to pay a service charge to some company. In the evening, the County Connection bus goes straight from the Orinda BART station to the Moraga casual carpool spot.

The article quotes a partner as saying that the company might sometime add a pickup spot in Moraga. But one has long existed. It also quotes the partner as saying that some enamored patrons (apparently unaware of the other options) have suggested the company should charge more than it now does. I have no doubt the company intends to do just that in the future, especially if it squeezes out the current free casual carpool options.

If it is not already too late, I urge drivers and riders to connect in Orinda or, between around 6:30

and 7:15, in Moraga. (The hours are shorter in Moraga because of the relatively fewer users; with more users the hours might expand.) The system requires no payment to a for-profit company or any of the procedures the company imposes (apps, signups, etc.) in order to collect its money.

Try it; you'll like it.

Blair Hoffman
Moraga

Editor:

The Moraga Women's Society is a non-profit organization which raises money from outside sources for the betterment of our community. Since 1967 we have primarily supported Moraga elementary and Campolindo High School programs, the Moraga Library, Moraga Parks and Recreation plus many other local organizations. The Moraga Women's Society would like to thank The Holy Trinity Cultural Center for making their facility available for our use over the years thereby helping us accomplish our goals. Monthly meetings, fundraising and social events can take place locally in a convenient, pleasant environment. Ron Mucovich and his staff are always congenial, cooperative and responsive to our needs. This facility is an asset to our community and we are very thankful for its existence and use.

The members of the Moraga Women's Society

Dear Editor:

It was good to hear Council member Dave Trotter address the unsubstantiated traffic survey at the Appeal hearing of the Moraga Center Town Homes. As he told Ellen Clark, the Planning Manager, of his concerns, it is one that the residents of Moraga have addressed over and over at the Design Review Board and

Planning Commission meetings.

The town has not run its own traffic report. It is normal process for a town to do so, to not appear biased. In Moraga if a development adds 20 or more cars to rush hour, then it must report the findings to Orinda and Lafayette. In Ellen Clark's Staff Report dated July 21, 2014 to the Planning Commission entitled: "Long-Range Development: Projections and Impacts". The 'Growth Management Element' of the General Plan, adopted as a requirement of Contra Costa Measures C and J, specifies a series of performance standards and levels of service with which new development must comply (or mitigate to achieve compliance). It also specifies requirements for regional transportation planning review and coordination to ensure that needed transportation improvements are constructed as new development occurs. For example, any project expected to generate more than 10 peak hour trips must be referred to the neighboring jurisdictions of Lafayette and Orinda."

City Ventures (CV) claims that it will increase only 19 cars to the morning commute and 9 in the evening - with 90 parking spaces and potentially more cars. This is a commuting neighborhood to the City and BART, and kids are driven to school, the traffic impact on Moraga Way and Road will far exceed 19. We need a revised and substantiated traffic survey with integrity as Mr. Trotter suggests.

We hope the town does not allow CV to use 20 feet of Moraga Way and 6 feet of Country Club Drive easements (for free), because it's project is too big for the lot (so CV can make more money). We need the ability to expand the roads with all of the development planned. CV violates numerous clauses of Moraga's Plans.

Margaret Gee
Moraga

Orinda

Having the Strength to Be Kind and Loving

... continued from page A7

One such man who draws great strength from MLK's ideals is the Rev. Hubert Ivery, the pastor at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Orinda. Currently also chairing the Commission on Christian Unity & Interreligious Concerns for United Methodists of The California-Nevada Annual Conference, Ivery has been ministering to others for more than 30 years. At an Orinda City Council meeting in August of 2013, which followed some of the most heated council meetings in recent memory, he and his fellow members of the clergy inspired many Orindans to pause and reflect. "The notion of a healthy community is grounded in the ideals and values of human worth, integrity, principles of harmony, mutually affirming, responsible and just relationships as a basis of morality."

Compassion, justice and grace "can be applied to social entities such as cities and communities, as well as individuals."

Born in Clayton, Alabama, Ivery began his spiritual journey as a Baptist. "In my early years, I remember my dad not being at home. I know that he was, like many people from the Deep South, someone who went north because he wanted so badly to leave the part of the country where there was sharecropping and a lot of racism." Although his father never finished school, he worked hard - often holding two to three jobs, enabling him to purchase property and provide for his wife and sons. "I think his efforts are heroic," Ivery says quietly.

"My mom, I remember her working in the fields. I always felt that she cared very deeply for us." His mother

went back to school later in life, finishing high school and obtaining certification to provide care for people in private duty residential settings and care centers. "She became very independent during a time when most women were working in the home. I applaud her for wanting to be independent and wanting to better herself."

When he was roughly 5 years old, his family moved to Florida, just as Miami's schools were starting to integrate. By third grade, he was living with his brother at their grandparents' farm in Alabama. "My maternal grandfather wasn't much of a church goer, but he also worked really hard. Some of my favorite memories are watching him tinker with fix-it things. But I was most deeply impacted by grandmother. She loved us - had a sense of hope and faith in us, and tried

to help us develop our own sense of morality and responsibility." They are also both heroes in his eyes.

The Ivery brothers remained there for two years before returning to Miami to finish elementary, junior high and high school. An athlete, Ivery earned a basketball scholarship to Texas Southern University in Houston. It was while studying engineering technology and electronics that he "heard the call."

After completing seminary in Atlanta, he returned to Houston in 1982 for his first assignment - at a church in one of Houston's poorest sections of town. Increasingly interested in congregants' mental as well as spiritual well-being - and in ethics and community building - Ivery sought further training at the Interdenominational Theological Center at Boston

University's (BU) School of Theology - an institution rich in spiritual and intellectual tradition, and the very same place where MLK trained in ethics and philosophy en route to his 1955 Ph.D. in systematic theology (www.bu.edu/).

One can feel the Boston-MLK influence in Ivery's own writing, including in this passage on St. Mark's website: "We live in an imperfect world, but a world that has the potential to be kinder and more just. The hope and vision of the spiritual person is for such a world. The spiritually mature person engages in works of support, comfort, encouragement and advocacy for those who are the victims of tragic circumstances or injustice." Being a spiritual person, observes Ivery, means acting thoughtfully and responsibly in the world.



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