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Implementation of the Moraga Center Specific Plan

By Sophie Braccini

The current town zoning for some of the proposed development locations in the center of Moraga as part of the Moraga Center Specific Plan often don't match the zoning approved within the plan itself. On Feb. 25 the Moraga Town Council accepted a \$150,000 grant from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority to facilitate good housekeeping and implement the Moraga Center Specific Plan appropriately to comply with state housing requirements. Council directed staff to create a steering committee that will work with the selected consultant to draft the implementation rules. "The Moraga Center plan that was adopted a few years ago is a policy document providing policy level guidance for land use," explained Planning Director Ellen Clark. "What is missing are the more detailed zoning standards that would actually implement the vision of the Specific Plan. That's what the grant will allow us to do." With the grant came a list of recommended consultants. The town chose Opticos Design, a company Clark presented as a leader in form-based zoning, meaning that its focus is on what the physical outcome of the zoning is going to be. Clark expects that the process will allow for the definition of specific development standards in a very concrete way. "We will also look at more detailed standards for land use, circulation and streetscape standards," she added. "We hope to engage the community as well in that discussion."

Clark recommended that a steering committee be formed to guide the process. The committee will include two members of the town council, two members of the planning commission, one representative of the design review board, as well as three individuals whose business or property could be impacted by the implementation of the MCSP. She also anticipates public workshops during this process.

Councilmember Teresa Onoda indicated her interest in being a part of that committee and added that, as a visual person, she would add a lot to it. The council unanimously approved staff's proposal.

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