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Letters to the Editor

Editor:

The 1986 Moraga Open Space Ordinance (MOSO) is cherished and considered sacrosanct by most Moragans as a needed protection for Moraga's open space. The Moraga Town Council (MTC) is now considering amending and weakening one of MOSO's existing provisions.

At the MTC meeting on March 25, a request by Adventure Day Camp (ADC) was considered for: 1) a permit fee waiver and 2) a zoning ordinance text amendment for "Conditional Uses" within the Moraga Open Space District (MOSO) (Municipal Code 8.52.110(B)). This requested language change to MOSO is a prerequisite in order for ADC to proceed with its permit process to establish a for-profit recreation business, to be located in a quiet residential neighborhood at the former Moraga Tennis and Swim Club, at a planned activity level that is well beyond any previous recreational activities that have occurred at that location during the last quarter century. Moreover, according to the staff report, such a text amendment could apply to ALL MOSO-zoned land and, potentially, to all zoned non-MOSO open space as well. One neighbor, my spouse, and I gave public comment on this topic and asked that the Council deny these two requests.

During Council deliberations, it seemed that all members of the Moraga Town Council were open to seriously considering approval of the requested text amendment to MOSO. Such council action will put Moraga's open space provisions-provisions that most Moragans have come to enjoy and respect-at risk. Such text amendments should be vigorously opposed. Fortunately, the Council had insufficient information to come to an immediate decision and will need to reconsider this request at a future council meeting, probably in April or May.

Please review the meeting audio recording on this topic (between 1:41:50 and 2:56:50) at: http://www.moraga.ca.us/council/meetings/2015/032515/TC-32515_LARGE%20recorder.MP3

I encourage those residents who value Moraga's open space to write to all five council members and tell them that you do not want MOSO's provisions weakened in any way. All concerned citizens should also attend the council meeting when this item returns to Council and express their concerns during public comment.

Clay Serrahn
Moraga

Editor:

Your report on the Design Review Meeting for the Lenox project behind Trader Joe's in Lafayette seemed to suggest that the review of this project has been taking an excessive amount of time. In the first meeting, the developer presented an eight-unit very large project that pushed the boundaries of the lot. The development would have ruined a number properties adjacent and ruined the neighborhood as well. He was asked to reduce the impact. The second presentation was not much different than the first, eight very large units. It was tweaked a bit and parking was improved a bit, but essentially nothing changed.

At the last presentation, the eight units suddenly morphed to 11, with the original eight units not very different in size from the first presentation. Parking changed, but the building would still go property line to property line. Looking up at this project from any of the surrounding areas (except Trader Joe's, where it would visually be blocked from Mt. Diablo) it would look like an Ocean Liner went aground here.

The developer needs to consider the effect this development will have on the neighborhood, especially the individual neighbors on Bickerstaff, the parking and the traffic. This project needs to be smaller and less intrusive. I understand the developer would like to maximize his profit, but certainly, not at the expense of the neighborhood.

Leonard Dorin
Lafayette

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