



Moraga

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, June 24, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, July 8, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, July 6, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

Design Review

Tuesday, June 22, 7 p.m.
Tuesday, June 8 canceled
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us
Phone: (925) 888-7022

Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org
Moraga Citizens' Network:
www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



Moraga Police Department

Watermelon bombing, 6/01/15 Some creative fruit-loving vandals tossed approximately six medium size watermelons onto a parked car and front yard on Willow Springs Lane. Although there was a fair amount of watermelon debris, no damages to the vehicle or house occurred. The homeowner had no idea who, or why someone would do this.

Fake letter from the IRS 6/02/15 A School Street resident came to the police department to report a suspicious letter she received from what she believes is the Internal Revenue Service. The letter said it appeared that someone may have submitted a fraudulent tax return, which would allow them to receive a refund check. The letter also requested extensive personal information and an affidavit. Legit or not legit, that is the question.

Child endangerment 6/05/15 Incident was all about a child custody order violation. The reporting person, a man, was scheduled to pick up his son at school, but his ex-girlfriend, the child's mother, picked up their kid prior to the dad's arrival. Police checked records and found that the mom had an outstanding felony vandalism warrant in San Francisco. Cops went to the ex-girlfriend's home, where she refused to open the door, so police had to force entry. She then fought with officers while they attempted to take her into custody. The child was released to the dad, and the ex-girlfriend was charged with felony child endangerment, resisting arrest, and the outstanding felony warrant. She was taken to the county jail.

DUI 6/06/15 A 23-year-old driver was pulled over at Rheem Boulevard near Center Street at almost 2:30 a.m. for speeding. Cops noticed objective signs of alcohol intoxication. When the driver flunked field sobriety tests, he was arrested for DUI.

Teenager vomiting 6/06/15 Cops responded to an alleged rugby party on Country Club Drive, and found a 16-year-old who appeared to be intoxicated, sitting on the sidewalk and vomiting. She was picked up by her mother. While cops were waiting for the mom to arrive, approximately 50 juvenile party goers "disbursed" from the residence. The kids that didn't take off were picked up by their parents or sober friends. The parent who was hosting the party was issued a Town of Moraga Warning Notice for a loud or unruly party.

Teen driving trouble, 6/06/15 Shortly after the party broke up, a

Referendum Petition Launched to Halt Downtown Development

By Sophie Braccini

The same residents who appealed the planning commission's approval of the City Ventures proposed development on Moraga Way have now launched a signature campaign to put on the ballot a referendum to protest the adoption of this project's zoning. The group has until June 26 to collect signatures from a little over 1,000 voters. If they succeed in gathering enough signatures, the council will have to decide whether to annul the zoning decision, or put the question to a public vote.

For Dick Olsen, Scott Bowhay and Denise Coane, the proposed 36-unit attached single family residential subdivision along Moraga Way, next to the fire station, is in contradiction with the town's semi-rural character, and, Olsen says, goes against what residents did 40 years ago when the town was incorporated to stop over-developing.

"The three of us met with legal counsel to draft this petition," explains Olsen. The Moraga three then trained others who have started to circulate around town to collect signa-

tures from registered voters. "We have about 50 people who have volunteered to help," explains Bowhay. "All of the people who will be collecting signatures are volunteers."

The signature gatherers are advised to avoid the shopping center, a private property, but to seek large gatherings, such as swim meets, to engage fellow residents. They might also put tables in highly visible locations so people can stop and sign. The script the volunteers are given is rather simple, presenting the proposed project as a massive, high density, multi-story housing complex that could set a precedent in changing the character of the town. It is also the first parcel of the Moraga Center Specific Plan (MCSP) to be developed on an arterial.

What the group wants is to revert to the General Plan zoning of "suburban office" for this parcel. "We would like to see on this site office buildings similar to the ones that have been built on the adjacent parcels," says Olsen. "They have deep setbacks and do not block the views on the scenic corridor." He adds that this

kind of development would have minimal impact on traffic.

City Ventures Director of Development Charity Wagner said that it was a shame that there are people who don't see the benefits of revitalizing the town center. "The 36 homes that were approved by the Town Council represent the minimum density allowed by law," said Wagner. "These homes will help to revitalize the downtown by turning a vacant dirt lot into a neighborhood of new homes. As part of that revitalization, construction of these homes will provide \$100,000 to local schools, \$350,000 to town parks, and \$155,000 to help improve traffic and transportation."

Town staff is ambivalent to the referendum. Town Manager Jill Keimach stated that a referendum is part of the democratic process, giving voice and another options to voters. "I am supportive of that process," she says, talking about referendums in general. "I am not sure, however, that a referendum against zoning, that state law requires to be consistent

with specific and general plans, will assist those who don't want the City Ventures project."

The zoning the council approved is the lowest possible to still be consistent with the MCSP – 12 units per acre when the specific plan allows 12 to 20 units per acre. Planning Director Ellen Clark added that the town is required by law to align the zoning with the Specific Plan that was adopted and declared compliant with the General Plan in 2010. "Repealing the zoning amendment, which would restore the previous suburban office zoning, could put the town in a difficult position from a legal standpoint," she said.

The Moraga group said they studied the work of the Martinez Friends of Pine Meadow that recently collected signatures to stop the city of Martinez from rezoning a park from permanent open space/recreational to residential. At this time, the Martinez Friends have collected enough signatures and the Martinez council has decided that the zoning change will be a ballot question in the November 2016 general election.

A Community Center, a Restaurant, a Wine Cellar ...

Moraga residents discuss the future Hacienda

By Sophie Braccini

Architectural firm Gould Evans led two meetings June 2 and 8 involving approximately 70 Moraga residents to get the pulse of the community on its vision for the town-owned Hacienda de las Flores. The process led to proposals including a conference center, a wine cave, an art center and even a cannabis store. But two concepts gained the most momentum: a café or restaurant that could include catering, and a community center able to host 150 to 200 people. Participants at the June 8 meeting wanted to be sure there would be a community vote to ratify decisions made if the status of the Hacienda was changed to a public-private partnership.

Based on the feedback received, Gould Evans will propose two concepts to the Town Council on July 8. The concept chosen will be developed during the following three months with more public input.

Gould Evans Principal Bob Baum had participants list facts, goals, and concepts for the Hacienda.

The groups came up with facts about the Hacienda easily. Some were negative, such as the lack of parking, the lack of visibility of the property, the risk of flooding, existing delayed maintenance, and the non-compliance with ADA requirements. But others were positive, such as the historic significance, the beauty of the location, the presence of trails, and the positive welcome residents gave to the Hacienda Café when it was opened there. There were also some neutral facts that needed to be considered, such as the size of the property and the close proximity to neighbors and related noise regulations.

16-year-old was contacted by police nearby. The driver initially denied having consumed any alcohol, but revised her statement before submitting to a breathalyzer which showed a 0.03 blood alcohol level. The subject surrendered her three-day-old driver's license, and will likely be getting a one-year suspension. While 0.03 is under the legal limit of 0.08, the driver was under 21 and, in theory, shouldn't have been drinking at all.

Other incidents that occurred in Moraga between June 2-9:

Traffic Incident – Moraga Road

Littering – Lucas Drive

Residential Burglary – Sullivan Drive

Domestic Dispute – Donald Drive

Loud Party – Ascot Drive, Paseo Bernal

Loud Noise – Saint Mary's College

Annoying Email - Rheem Boulevard

Identity Theft – Brandt Drive

False Alarm – Corte Amigos, Natalie Drive

Dispute with Oakland Mechanic

– Donald Drive

Most participants noted that there is not a place to gather and relax, have a glass of wine and catch up with friends in Moraga, and that the Hacienda could serve this purpose. Many also expressed frustration that it is not open on weekends. Participants at the second meeting expressed a desire to keep the Hacienda's new services focused on local residents.

As for goals, Lauren Maccoll Maass, Gould Evans' associate vice president and project manager for the Hacienda, asked each participant to write three goals for the renovation on a note card. The cards were passed to the right and participants were asked to circle which goal resonated most with them. The most popular goals listed included balancing income and development, and

creating a destination venue – a highly visible year-round multi-functional center that would encourage broad community usage for all ages,

and provide a restaurant or a café, while respecting neighbors and enhancing the Hacienda's historic character. ... continued on page A11



Graig Crossley chooses his preference for the Hacienda. Photo Sophie Braccini

Current Listings in Lafayette & Moraga!



18 Springhill Lane, Lafayette

6 bedroom, 4.5 bathroom, 4070± sq. ft. home on .69± acres.
Offered at \$2,695,000 | Call us for us more details!



131 Devin Drive, Moraga

3 bedroom, 2 bathroom, 1449± sq. ft. home on .28± acres.
Offered at \$869,000 | Call us for us more details!



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