

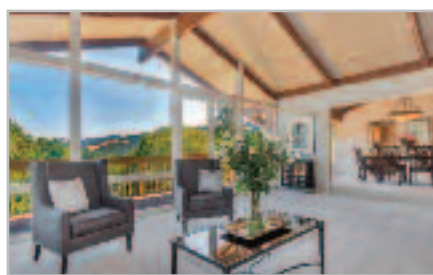


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Letters to the Editor

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

Editor:

I have ridden the new bike lane in Orinda, on San Pablo Dam Road, going north under Hwy 24. I believe it is a death trap. Cyclist are encouraged to ride between two lanes that turn right onto the Hwy 24 on ramp, feeding them into a meat grinder formed between the two right turning cars, without even a curb to escape to. I will be surprised if a month will go by without a serious injury. I have been cycling for over 20 years and this is the most dangerous bike lane I've ever seen or heard of. A bike ride by any of your readers in this lane will make the danger plainly clear. Be careful. Experienced cyclist will continue to take the middle of the middle lane, where I've never had much trouble from vehicles, because it is self evident to drivers that this is the proper place to ride. It will be the inexperienced or young rider that will be in the most danger by trusting the illusion of safety on the painted bike lane. I would hope some responsible person has the bike lane ground off before the inevitable fatality occurs.

William Cooper
Moraga

Editor:

I have been involved with the New Rheem Theatre since inception and being the benefactor. So when I heard the theatre was closing I was sad and had a bittersweet feeling that you feel when you watch a movie ending. So I called the town manager, Jill Keimach, to find what I can do to help out. She informed me that a couple years ago she told Derek Zemrak we are tearing the theatre down, and Jill went on to ask if I had any ideas. My response was that while I wasn't privy to what happened a couple of years ago, there needs to be a call to action on what the community should do, such as signing a petition and having a 3 to 5 year plan in Saving The New Rheem Theatre, and having an angel investor. As I gave her ideas all I can think of is how unfortunate the town management feels about Independent Film Theatres. If this is the end, it's the end, however I will support the theatre and Derek Zemrak.

Jonathan I Winchell
Lafayette

Editor:

To borrow from Virgil's Trojan Horse caution in the Aeneid: Beware of Developers Bearing Gifts!

Advocates of the Moraga Town Center Homes project have been touting the Development Impact Fees the developer of that proposed project would be required to pay to the Town of Moraga and other local government agencies by mischaracterizing those fees as "gifts." Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Rather, the one-time fees are legally required compensation for the additional burdens -- increased demands for services and requirements for infrastructure improvements -- the proposed project would impose on the resources of the agencies to which the fees would be paid.

Half of the fees would be paid to EBMUD for water system improvements -- in a time of severe drought. The estimated \$100,625 to be paid to our local schools would not come close to paying for the additional infrastructure needed to serve the children likely to live in that proposed project. An estimated \$340,000 for local parks would be required because the miniscule "Pocket Park" proposed as part of the project would definitely not meet the recreational needs of the project's residents. A \$167,000 Transportation Mitigation Fee would do next-to-nothing to address the horrific commute hours traffic into and out of Moraga.

What about the future property tax revenue the proposed project would generate? As the former Chair of the Town's Revenue Enhancement Committee, I'm acutely aware that the Town receives only a paltry portion of the local property tax dollar -- 5 cents out of every \$1.00 that is collected as part of the basic tax rate. As a result, it is very unlikely that the project would provide sufficient property tax revenues to pay for the services its residents would require from our Town each and every year in the future. What would be the net economic benefit to the Town and other local government agencies if the proposed project were approved? The honest answer: There wouldn't be any! Claims to the contrary are nothing more than a modern Trojan Horse.

Dick Olsen
Moraga

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