



Moraga

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, Aug. 26, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, Aug. 3, 7 p.m.
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

Design Review

Monday, Aug. 10, 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

Stolen car 7/13/15 A car was stolen from in front of a home on Brookline Street sometime during the night. Nothing was seen or heard, but police searched the surrounding area and located the car, which had been ransacked. The car was released to its owner, and sadly no evidence was found.

Car stolen 7/13/15 An Ascot Drive resident contacted police to let them know her red Saturn had vanished. It was entered into the state stolen car database. Investigation is on-going.

Auto burglary 7/14/15 Sometime during the night or early morning, an unknown suspect entered a locked vehicle on Miramonte Drive and removed property. A neighbor heard a car alarm going off, but nothing was seen. No suspects or leads.

Auto burglary 7/14/15 Just down the street on Miramonte Drive cops responded to a report of a car burglary. Sounds oddly similar: An unknown suspect forced entry into a locked car and removed property. Again no suspects or leads.

Big auto burglary 7/14/15 Looks like the third time's the charm for thieves. Also on Miramonte Drive, but this time an unlocked car with unspecified property removed that was valued at over \$1,900. The car was processed for fingerprints, which were submitted to evidence. No suspects or leads.

Yet another car burglary 7/14/15 But wait, there's more. Thieves were on a roll and continued down Miramonte Drive, entering an unlocked car and removing property worth approximately \$40. The theme of nothing seen or heard, along with no suspects or leads, continues.

Auto burglary 7/15/15 Back for more on the next day? Someone entered a silver 2004 Toyota Prius and rifled through the car. The vehicle was parked in the owner's parking stall and the owner thought it was locked, but no signs of forced entry.

Petty theft from a car 7/14/15 - 7/16/15 A Scofield Drive resident wasn't exactly sure when it happened, but narrowed it down; an unknown suspect entered her unlocked car parked on the street and removed property valued at over \$800. Nothing seen or heard.

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Gary Bernie & Ken Ryerson

Third Approved Moraga Project to Break Ground by Year's End

By Sophie Braccini

The Via Moraga project received final approval at the July 20 Planning Commission meeting. Signatures Homes should break ground before the end of the year to construct 17 new single-family homes along Moraga Road, across from the Rheem Shopping Center. The Planning Commission held the last public meeting on this project and approved its Precise Development Plan. The developer still needs a grading permit and other documents from the county, which should be obtained in the fall.

The approval marks the end of a long process for this parcel that used to house Moraga's bowling alley. The almost two acres of flat land next to 5A-Rent-A-Space has sat vacant for more than 15 years, amidst rumors of projects from a boutique hotel to condominiums. The approved Signature Homes project started in 2011, with the developer conducting study ses-

sions before submitting an application, taking planning commissioners on field trips to see similar projects around the East Bay, and refining its concept many times to accommodate demands.

For a few weeks, Signature Homes has been flying red flags on the site, signaling the future arrival of 17 two-story single-family homes between 2,388 and 2,990 square feet, on lots of about 2,500 square feet.

This kind of in-fill development is not typical on a parcel not originally zoned for housing and completely surrounded by commercial activities, from 5A, to a veterinary hospital and of course the shopping center, but it was noted that condominiums and multi-family units that fall in roughly the same category are located up the hill on Rheem Boulevard and along Moraga Road. It was also argued when the project was authorized that

there were more than enough commercial and retail facilities in Moraga, as demonstrated by a still-high vacancy rate.

The final project will have a single entrance on Moraga Road to minimize the impact on the scenic corridor, something Commissioner Christine Kuckuk argued forcefully about. Only two homes will face the arterial, while the third lot facing Moraga Road will be landscaped. The project includes a pocket park in the back of the lot.

The Planning Commission includes new commissioners who have not followed the years of negotiations, and who had questions regarding the size of the homes and how the developer planned to facilitate residents crossing over Moraga Road, a recurrent question surrounding this project.

It was confirmed at the hearing that the developer will construct a

pedestrian path, with an island in the middle of Moraga Road, and that flashing beacons will signal to vehicles that someone is crossing the road. The details of the road project will be defined with the Public Works Department.

Commissioner Steve Woehleke said he always had a problem with this project, but since the Town Council approved it after an appeal was filed, he would support it. All present commissioners approved the project, except Suzanne D'Arcy, who abstained.

Via Moraga is the third development that will begin construction in town this year. With the 27 homes of Rancho Laguna II, and 26 homes on Camino Ricardo, that will be a total of 70 new homes being constructed—more than Moraga has seen in the last 10 years.

Making Moraga Pedestrian and Bike Friendly

By Sophie Braccini

The new committee appointed to recommend revisions to the Moraga Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan met for the first time July 21. Consultant Niko Letunic, who will lead the process, was introduced to the group and presented a summary of the current conditions for non-drivers in Moraga. This fall, intensive public outreach will be conducted so residents can contribute ideas and express concerns in the process. The Moraga Town Council is anticipated to make a final decision in less than a year on a 10-year plan that will aim to make Moraga more pedestrian and bike friendly.

"The town was mostly laid out in the '60s and '70s with a very car-centric view of transportation," said Planning Director Ellen Clark, who led the July 21 discussion. Bike enthusiast Lance Larson, a resident-committee member, suggested that this plan could be an opportunity to change Moraga into a bicycle-friendly town.

"It will make (Moraga) a very desirable place for families to move," he said.

In order to get there, however, much will need to be done.

In addition to Letunic, members of the committee, four residents, a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Planning Commission and the Design Review Board, discussed what they thought was needed.

Bill Carman of Parks and Recreation said he had been working on the interconnectivity of the trails in town. "Everyone in town lives less than 1,000 feet away from a trail," he said, "but the accesses are often blocked either by construction or fences." Andy Schreck, a resident-committee member, asked that requirements for pedestrian and bicycle circulation be included when new developments are approved. Schreck also noted that the street lighting was often adequate in Moraga, but that there were a few

dark spots that could be discouraging to pedestrians. Rebecca Goodman, a resident-committee member, noted that schools could play their part in allowing bicycle safety training, and Larson added that the high schools lacked ways to secure bikes onsite.

Letunic said other elements of the plan could include programs and activities that promote using different modes of transportation. He said very few residents walk or bike to work in Moraga, which has heavy bike passage-through especially on weekends, and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is inconsistent, since there are many sidewalks and bikeway gaps. He showed a map of the 11 accidents that took place over the last five years, resulting in either pedestrians or bicyclists being injured, mostly along Moraga Road, St. Mary's Road and Canyon.

Letunic emphasized the importance of getting as many people as possible to provide feedback about

what they see as problem areas. In September, residents will be able to access an interactive map that will be available on the town website to pinpoint areas and spots that they believe need improvements. Letunic will also conduct an online survey that month and a public workshop in the fall, and BikeEastBay, a local nonprofit that supports the Moraga project, will organize a group bike ride to brainstorm a bikeway network. After residents' opinions are analyzed, a plan will be established that will take cost and funding sources into consideration.

The Moraga Road portion located between Donald and Corliss is not included in this study. The stretch has been proposed for a traffic lane reduction: three driving and one turning lane, and the council asked for a larger outreach on this precise topic. A mail-in survey to all residents is scheduled to go out in the fall, with a decision on Moraga Road profile before the end of the year.

Massive car burglaries 7/21/15 Over a dozen thefts from cars occurred during the night – in every case the cars were left unlocked either in the driveway or parked on the street. Police advise residents that these are crimes of opportunity, and by removing valuables, car owners can show thieves there is nothing to steal. Moraga Police encourage anyone who notices suspicious activity call Dispatch at (925) 284-5010. For those that have some information about the thefts, please call the Moraga Police Department at (925) 888-7055.

Other crimes that occurred in Moraga between July 14 and July 21:

- False Alarms** – Sullivan Drive, Camino Pablo, Calle La Montana
- Traffic Incidents** – School Street, Moraga Road, Rheem Boulevard
- Loud Parties** – St. Mary's road, Donald Drive, Claudia Court
- Attempted Shoplifting** – Moraga Road
- Identity Theft** – Brookfield Drive, Rheem Boulevard
- Bench Warrant** – Moraga Road
- Petty Theft** – Calle La Montana
- Battery** – Thorndale Place

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Fax: 510-742-9600



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