

Moraga

Creek Culverts: The Weakest Links of the Moraga Storm Drain System

... continued from page A1



Rheem shopping center culvert for Laguna Creek



Images provided

The creeks that run in daylight have enough capacity, provided that the neighbors do their cleanup work, but it is not the case for creek segments running in culverts. Dan Schaaf, who presented the report to the town, said that out of the 35 culverts analyzed, 17 are undersized. Out of the 17 needing improvements, five are a high priority, including those under St. Andrews Drive, Camino Pablo, Woodford Drive, and the Hacienda de las Flores property.

“An alternative to the replacement of existing undersized systems is day-lighting,” said Schaaf. “This will involve replacing buried networks with vegetated earthen channels, with cross culverts or bridges at roadway crossings. This alternative would discourage unwise development encroachment, improve access and safety, enhance water quality, reduce sediment, and increase aesthetics compared to traditional pipe replacement projects.”

The cost of improving the undersized culverts represents about half of the high-priority \$8.9 million of work estimated by the consultant.

A large chunk of the needed improvements also includes pipes that collect neighborhood runoff to creeks, and that do have enough capacity to handle a 10-year storm. Located throughout town, they are sometimes quite small, but create difficult bottlenecks, with risks of flooding.

Schaaf touched on the issue of future housing developments that will increase the amount of impervious surfaces, leading to more runoff, which will impact the entire drainage system. He recommended the town ask their fair share from developers to finance increases in drainage capacity, and that it include guidelines requiring either retention basins or pervious pavement. The

plan also recommended \$240,000 of annual drainage system maintenance.

Schaaf noted that over half of the costs of the high and moderate priority projects (\$20 million) are located on parcels at least partially private. He recommended that the town begin investigating property ownership and existing easements to further evaluate rights and responsibilities.

The council members approved the plan, but there are little funds at this time to address the issues, including the high priority ones. The first order of business will be determining ownership of pipes and culverts.

Lafayette

Franklin Lane Construction

... continued from page A2

Only the small flat section of Franklin is being subdivided; the balance of the land will be untouched.

At this point, there is no building application before the city to build homes on the newly formed lots, but according to Dave Bruzzone, some homes will be built on the freshly formed lots eventually. There is one existing home on the first lot at Happy Valley Road.

According to a Feb. 6, 2012 staff report from applicant and owner Milton Bruzzone & Happy Valley, LLC, “The General Plan designation for the subject area is Low Density Single Family Residential, which allows a density of up to two dwelling units per acre.”

One of the conditions of approval required by the city engineer to subdivide the land was to improve the drainage system in the area, which

has historically affected homes during the rainy season, said Senior Planner Greg Wolff.

The drainage system will direct run-off into storm drains. Since existing storm drain pipes are old and not up to current standards, upgrades are being made that tie in with the pipes along Happy Valley Road, according to Wolff. These drainage improvements will be paid for by the developer and will serve the immediate neighborhood.

Making the proposed subdivision even smaller, for now, is the condition of approval that no building permit for a single-family home shall be issued for Lot D near St. Francis Drive until the identified slide on the remainder parcel is repaired to the satisfaction of the project geotechnical engineer and the city engineer.

Moraga

Hacienda Transformation

... continued from page A5

The main Hacienda building would be completely renovated, fully ADA compliant, with a 150- to 200-person capacity structure for weddings or other events. The Hacienda would also have small rooms for lodging in the main building, and Gould Evans also looked at adding small one-bedroom casitas along the Devin Drive side (the south side of the property), for short-term stay.

Gould Evans managers have started to talk to hotel professionals about what would be needed to make the project profitable for an investor. It appeared that the number of units should be doubled, from the initial 20 to 40. “We looked at making the detached building (the casitas), two stories,” said a Gould Evans architect. It might also be necessary to add more construction up the hill, so the project is economically viable while the main building is preserved.

A restaurant would be part of the plan. La Sala would be removed, replaced by a large plaza. The proposed plan would expand the existing wine cave that’s carved in the hill, and create a meeting room there.

Moraga Juniors members asked if a teen or pre-teen center had been envisioned. Maass responded that a new pavilion meeting room could serve as a senior meeting place in the morning and teen center in the afternoon.

The members of the LWGA showed a great interest in the project. “There are a lot of us who are grape growers who do not process our grapes at home, and there is no adequate crush pad locally. We have to take it to Sebastopol,” said LWGA president Leslie Ward. She added that there also was no local facility for storing the wine produced and that a central place where people

could come to taste wine, see the caves and enjoy the beautiful scenery would be very unique, and would make Moraga the center of the local wine growing production. Council member Mike Metcalf concurred and added that there are countless examples of successful facilities in Napa, the Russian River Valley and Livermore areas that combine hospitality and accommodations with wine making, such as Michel-Schlumberger in Healdsburg.

“We would need someone professional to handle this wine operation,” advised wine grower Joao Magalhaes. “We could form a special purpose company with all the stakeholders together: a construction company, operators, the college, and others who would bring their expertise, all getting benefits for what they bring.”

Members of the assembly questioned the financing of the project, knowing that the town would never have the means to invest or even manage such a project, and that it is unlikely that residents would want to pitch in. “We are looking at models such as the Presidio,” said Maass, explaining that in such a public-private partnership, the public entity grants usage of the public asset for a number of years in exchange for the renovation of the property they own, but can’t update.

In early September Gould Evans plans to reach out to hotel operators, restaurateurs, Saint Mary’s College and other developers. Operators will be invited to visit the Hacienda and participate in a think-tank. “From it could come requests for proposals and a move to the next level, discussing with the town,” added Maass. More public meetings are also scheduled in the coming months.



Timing is everything!

Call Alexander for a free market analysis.

- Knowledgeable and experienced professional
- Outstanding quality
- Unparalleled Service
- Superior Marketing Locally, Nationally and Globally

43 Moraga Way, Suite 203 Orinda
(925) 254-7600 Office
Alex@AGrealty1.com



Search MLS at www.AlexGailas.com

HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING Installation, Service & Repair

www.ca HVAC.com
(877) 482-2496
HVAC-4-U
Moraga: 925-276-0282
Castroville: 831-921-9111

YOUR COMFORT SPECIALIST

925-689-7017

COMING SOON IN ROSSMOOR! CALL FOR DETAILS!



One-of-a-kind, unobstructed golf course views from this 2 BR/2BA condo
Prime, upstairs end unit with peaceful privacy

Mary Beth MacLennan (925) 324-6246 | Tony Conte (925) 708-1396

INTRODUCING OUR PREFERRED LENDING PROVIDER:



Jim Black
Producing Branch Manager
NMLS #633511/1850
Jim.Black@apmortgage.com
(925) 285-4898



8 Camino Encinas, Suite 100
Orinda 94563
(925) 258-4088
www.bhhsdrysdale.com
A member of the franchise system of BHH Affiliates, LLC.

