

**EXPERIENCE MATTERS**



**Linda Di Sano Ehrich, Realtor**  
 93 Moraga Way • Orinda, CA 94563  
 925.698.1452  
 Linda@LindaEhrich.com  
 www.LindaEhrich.com  
 DRE# 01330298



**Sign up for Winter/Spring Classes and Activities**  
**Resolve to recreate locally!**



**MORAGA PARKS & RECREATION**  
 925-888-7045 • www.moragarec.com

# Rainy Season Preview

## Work still needed along Moraga creeks

By Sophie Braccini



Moraga Creek still cluttered as flow picks up as of Dec. 22

Photos Sophie Braccini

The first winter rains have started to soak the Bay Area and already a few incidents served as a wake-up call to residents to be prepared. The town of Moraga recently sent letters to all property owners residing next to creeks to remind them to clean up their sides of the creeks. But there is still work to be done – and deferring the maintenance has consequences outside of the property line.

“(When the rain started pouring) the Rheem Shopping Center was

flooded next to Starbucks. The problem was that the inlets were clogged with leaves that fell all at once,” said Moraga Public Works Director Edric Kwan. “We contacted the property owner, and once that was taken care of, the water drained normally.”

Cleaning up is part of a property owner’s responsibility to avoid flooding, but sometimes simply clearing debris is not enough. Linda Gilson in the Sanders Drive neighborhood had a sudden problem when water from

her neighbor’s driveway started running down into her front garden, flowing through her own driveway where there is no curb. The water overwhelmed her drainage system. “My daughter rushed to OSH and bought 12 sand bags,” she said. “We put them along our driveway entrance and fixed the problem; it was like having an instant wall blocking the flow.”

Kwan adds that the town has provided three cubic yards of self-serve sand and bags behind Fire Station 41 at 1280 Moraga Way (see related story on page A1, which notes where other sand and bags are available in Lamorinda). “People should get only what they anticipate they will need,” he said. The recommendation is to fill bags approximately one-half full for stacking. Kwan also indicates that there are now better tools available to project possible floods. “We can measure a soil’s saturation level, and we have better projection for duration and intensity of coming rains.” He and his team will keep monitoring conditions through the winter; at this time the soil is not yet saturated.

In a recent “About Town” newsletter, staff noted that the creeks

and drainage channels are susceptible to flooding with the potential to cause property damage. Walking on the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail between Country Club Drive and Canyon, along the Moraga Creek, it is clear that some property owners have not done their due diligence: debris, branches and tree trunks are still piling in the middle of the river bed, and are accumulating under the Canyon bridge. Kwan said that he did not know off hand who was re-

sponsible for cleaning up that portion of the creek, but that the owners of all properties adjacent to town creeks have been reminded of their responsibility to maintain their sections of creeks to prevent flooding.

The town also informed the residents that certain areas are designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as 100-year flood zones. Visit FEMA’s website for flood zone designations at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal>.



More debris under the Canyon bridge

# Increased Safety For All

## Top recommendations to make Moraga pedestrian and bike friendly

By Sophie Braccini

A town where bicyclists and pedestrians can safely travel is the goal of the Moraga Citizens Advisory Committee. The passionate group of town residents, which discussed a map of improvements and paths at its last December meeting, has been working with consultant Niko Letunic of Eisen/Letunic, and plans to present a walk-bike plan to the public in February.

Letunic listed the results of two surveys that were proposed to the residents regarding the state of the streets. “Not surprisingly, the roads that are of most concern are the big ones,” said Letunic. He noted that the most often cited issue was the lack of continuity of sidewalks and bike lanes: “People cited gaps, obstacles, parts that are broken up, inadequate shoulders for bikes.” One of the residents’ major concerns is driver behavior, “specifically speeding and distracted driving,” he reported. Other issues frequently noted included pedestrian and bicyclist conflicts on the trails, difficulty of crossing some roads, and bicycle parking. “The biggest one was the need for an adequate, continuous facility (for both pedestrians and bicyclists) along Moraga Road,” said Letunic.

The consultant compiled all of the comments and proposed options for feedback from the committee. “In terms of walking, we propose filling up sidewalk gaps to create continuity, improving crosswalks at key locations, making them safer and more visible,” he said. He added that possibly the most important aspect would be to enforce the traffic laws. “That would be a policy recommendation the town council would have to decide on,” said Letunic.

On the bicycle side, Letunic said the most important item would be to create a town-wide continuous network of bikeways. “Depending on the available rights of way, it could be bike lanes, sharrows (an arrow on a paved street showing that bicycles can use that road), or just bike routes with signage,” he said. He added that at street light crossings, bike lanes

could be painted to avoid confusion, and he recommended the addition of bike parking on public land.

Letunic asked the committee members, all volunteer Moraga residents, for their opinions and suggestions regarding the proposed plan. The residents highlighted the importance of the school zones both for pedestrians and bicyclists, and they also noted that serious bikers would rather have a safe bike lane on St. Mary’s Road, rather than have to use

the trail where conflicts happen with other users. They indicated that School Street could be a safe alternative travel path, although the connection with the shopping center and the path going toward Orinda needed a lot of improvement. They also noted that the Rheem Shopping Center and Rheem Boulevard needed connectivity enhancements. The volunteers suggested additions to the proposed bike network, such as upper Corliss to reach Los Perales or Ascot Drive,

where a lot of parked cars can make it unsafe to bike.

The committee members unanimously agreed that enforcement should have a higher priority; they concurred that speed and distracted driving was recurrent and dangerous. They noted that the message needs to be positive and should get buy-in by proposing increased safety for all.

A public workshop is scheduled on Feb. 4 where residents will help prioritize the pedestrian and bicycle

improvements that will be included in the walk-bike plan. On Feb. 24 the town council is scheduled to discuss that list of priority improvements based on public input.

The consultant also introduced the way-finding plan proposed for the town. It proposes different signs for pedestrians, bicyclists and cars. A survey is available on the town’s website at <http://www.moraga.ca.us/open-townhall>.

