



Independent, locally owned and operated!

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Published January 13, 2016

Letters to the Editor

Editor:

In January, the City of Lafayette will post notices for a public meeting on the Olympic Blvd/ Reliez Station Road corridor improvement, which include a rest-on-green traffic signal light on Reliez Station.

This rest-on-green traffic signal is essential for the safety of our neighborhood, families, friends, guests, and through traffic. We have seen the increase in traffic flow turn this intersection from scary to dangerous. The corridor improvements will increase traffic flow even more, which means fewer traffic gaps, which will threaten the safety of drivers and pedestrians. Drivers now have one half the CalTrans recommended time to avoid an accident at this intersection.

A rest-on-green signal means that through traffic stops only when a car or pedestrian is present at the intersection - unlike the Condit traffic light. As you drive through our neighborhood, make a mental note of how often you see a car or pedestrian on the side roads and you will get an idea of how infrequently you would have to stop. Or, try crossing in the crosswalk at the top of Reliez Station and see if you feel safe - imagine doing this with a stroller, young child, or a disability. Traffic will continue to increase with new construction along St. Mary's Road and Moraga to our south. Expanding programs at St. Mary's College, including night programs, create dangerous conditions at all times of day. We hope that our neighbors to the south understand that a rest-on-green signal may slightly inconvenience them, but will greatly enhance the safety for all of us. We would expect that, presented with a similarly dangerous intersection in any neighborhood, residents would advocate strenuously for a safe solution.

It is the obligation of our city to provide all drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists with a safe means to access and use local streets. We should all be able to support this thoroughly studied and reasonable solution for an important traffic problem that affects us all.

Please attend the upcoming City meeting with an open mind about this plan to move traffic safely through our neighborhood.

Signed by 76 Reliez Station Neighbors
Lafayette

Editor:

At Moraga's annual goal-setting meeting on Jan. 21, let us try to spend more time on long-term priorities than on short-term goals that generate more excitement. Goals come and go with single-issue emotions, while long-term priorities sometimes drop off the radar screen. I believe the primary long-term challenge Moraga faces is traffic. The narrow arteries that connect us to the outside world are often clogged, and those people who would consider moving here in the future could find the commute unbearable. Good schools can do only so much. Recently I talked to a young woman who moved to Moraga a year ago. Her husband has found the commute traffic so bad that they are looking at homes in Oakland. I know, just one couple, but we will let this become a trend at our peril.

While we cannot simply ignore fifth-amendment property rights, and achieving what Mayor Metcalf has described as "balance" and "compromise" is going to be very difficult, I believe that we should officially acknowledge Moraga's unique and fundamental problem. How can we negotiate with the State of California and ABAG on population requirements if we don't try to make this case? There are those who say that we should increase the number of customers in Moraga in order to revitalize and expand local business, but I believe that our business base should be determined by our population, not the other way around.

Unfortunately, we are burdened with an excessive amount of retail space that was developed years ago for a population three times what we now have. A few years ago we rejected a proposal to add

a large building at the Rheem center for, of all things, Blockbuster. This led to a "compromise" building that is now home to Starbucks and yet another vacancy. No new space was needed. Blockbuster moved into existing space before its predictable demise and Starbucks could have occupied one of the many other vacancies in town. Many Moragans probably are not aware that the Moraga Center Specific Plan calls for 90,000 square feet of new retail space, along with housing to provide customers and still more cars.

Another long-term priority for Moraga is maintaining our infrastructure to avoid the costly trap of deferred maintenance. This is a simpler problem than population and traffic because we understand it and know how to solve it; all it takes is money. Mayor Metcalf says we will need a new revenue measure this year to address our storm drains, which age and deteriorate out of sight, meaning out of mind. As with our streets, the longer we wait the more it will cost to fix the storm drains.

Dale Walwark
Moraga

A Letter to the Community:

My children and I would like to extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to all of you who supported us during our bereavement at the sudden loss of my husband and my children's father, Scott Rickman. We have been blessed beyond words by all of the thoughts, prayers, cards, meals, generous donations, endless phone calls, kind words and messages of condolence and sympathy that we have received from you - our relatives, friends, my employer - the Berg Family, Wilson Family and Moraga Royale Assisted Living residents and families, Rheem Elementary Principal Ms. Frank, staff and Rheem families, Creative Playhouse Preschool, Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, Moraga Rotary Club, and the whole Moraga Community. Your prayers, words of encouragement and visits have helped strengthen us during our time of bereavement. Your presence at the funeral services of my dear husband meant a lot to us and we say thanks to all of you for being there for us. Sometimes we often wonder why God allows us to go through such a devastating situation, but during these times, we get to know who our family and friends are, indeed. Our family will forever cherish your kindness.

Once again, please accept our wholehearted thanks and appreciation for being there to help console us during our great loss. We will always treasure your expressions of sympathy during this most difficult time. May God continue to bless, guide, and protect all of us.

Loto Rickman
Moraga

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA