



Moraga

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.
 Wednesday, March 9, 7 p.m.
 Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Planning Commission

Monday, March 7, 7 p.m.
 Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, March 14, 7 p.m.
 Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

School Board Meeting

Moraga School District
 Tuesday, March 8, 7 p.m.
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium
 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
 www.moraga.k12.ca.us
 See also AUHSD meeting page A2

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

Lost tab – not the soda 2/2/16 The registration sticker was there when originally stuck on the license plate in March, 2015, but the Canning Court car owner noticed it was missing on Feb. 2. Not sure if sticky fingers unstuck it, or it fell off. The owner just wanted documentation.

Suspicious solicitor 2/5/16 A bald gentleman in his 30s or 40s approached a Rheem Shopping Center business owner and aggressively solicited \$50 – stating that he needed the money for car repair. When the owner declined, the suspect helpfully suggested removing the money from the cash register. Stalwart storeowner was aware that this shake-down had occurred to other storeowners in the center in December. Police were notified after the fact. Apparently the solicitor took “no” for an answer.

Loud party 2/6/16 Cops received an anonymous tip about a loud party on North Sandringham Drive. Approaching officers could hear robust music coming from the backyard. When asked, the homeowner denied having any music and became increasingly hostile and aggressive. Cops gave homeowner a stern warning or next time, a citation would be written.

Three amigos plus booze 2/7/16 Officers came to a Camino Ricardo cul-de-sac at almost 1 a.m. and found three male juveniles in and around a car parked in the road. The trio had been consuming alcohol and a bottle of liquor was in plain view of the vehicle. Being sensitive sniffers, the police also noticed the odor of non-burnt marijuana coming from the inside of the car. Not surprisingly, some pot, a glass pipe, and a second liquor bottle was also found in the car. One of the 17-year-olds was cited for California penal code violation 25662 B and P, also known as “minor in possession” – all three subjects were released to parents. Could be an infraction or misdemeanor with possible license suspension for a year – time to lawyer up, since those under the age of 21 are not allowed to buy, possess or consume alcohol.

Scaled Down Plans and Phased Approach for the Hacienda de las Flores

By Sophie Braccini



Gould Evans' new plan for the Hacienda

The conceptual remodeling plans for the Hacienda de las Flores, which were sized down from a cost of \$24 million to \$6.3 million by architect Gould Evans and shown at the Feb. 10 Moraga Town Council meeting, were well received by the council members and the public, but the economic study that went with it was sent back to the drawing board.

The first of three proposed phases of the project no longer included the 20 casitas, the wine cave and crush center, or the community pool and spa. The new

plaza entrance was also thinned out. What was left for the first phase was a restaurant and large indoor banquet center on the ground floor and five bedrooms upstairs, including a large suite – enough amenities to generate an estimated income of over \$2 million a year.

With phase one of the plan, the public would continue to have access to meeting rooms on the ground floor of the Hacienda and to the new restaurant, unless it is rented for a big event. The architect added that if all goes well with the first phase of the project, the

next phases would include the creation of a wine cave and crush facility, as well as an improved community center where the Pavilion is located, possibly with the reconstruction of the original pool and the addition of a spa. A consensus is forming that could lead to a Request For Proposal to implement the plan before the end of the year.

The part of the report that was unanimously criticized was the economic study conducted by PKF Consulting. Mayor Mike Metcalf noted that the town paid

little for the study and should expect little in return.

Gould Evans noted that the scope of the study, which stated that the five- or six-bedroom facility would only have a 25 percent occupancy rate, was limited to the viability of a hotel in Moraga. “Saint Mary’s College alone, with visiting families and guests, would fill more than this,” said Metcalf. The mayor asked the architect why it painted such a pessimistic picture of the economic potential of the Hacienda at a time when investors will be sought to partner with the town in developing the property.

Several people, including resident Edy Schwartz and Wendy Scheck, the president of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, added that PKF should have studied the Hacienda in the context of greater Lamorinda, not Moraga specifically. Scheck offered to organize a local think tank to conduct a more meaningful economic study of a remodeled Hacienda.

The proposed change of access to the Hacienda was also scrutinized. While all agreed that a new access had to be designed, preferably from the Moraga Road side, they also noted that the slope and low visibility of the current asphalt thoroughway that comes from Moraga Road to the Hacienda does not offer safe access.

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Giant Wakes Up From Its Slumber

Palos Colorados development returns to the forefront of discussions

By Sophie Braccini

Seven years ago the Town of Moraga approved the amended Precise Development Plan for the Palos Colorados Project, a 460-acre development located north of the Lafayette border, just off Moraga Road. In March the town plans to approve the final map and possibly the grading permit for the proposed 123-home development. If both are approved, the town will receive over \$2 million this year.

Debi Chung from Richfield Real Estate Corporation, the developer, expressed her contentment to be back in Moraga after so many years. Richfield’s agreement with the town had to be modified as the town process for issuance of a grading permit had changed since the agreement had been signed. In order to comply with the new process, Richfield will pay the town a deposit of \$2.5 million – most of which will apply toward the second installment of its development fee – following the Town Council approval of the final map. The sum is not refundable unless the town rejects the grading permit.

The approval of the final map and the grading permit will be handled by staff with no public debate. “There is no discretion on the part of the Town to deny the map,” confirmed Ellen Clark, the town planning director. “Public Works is the lead on processing all of the final map requirements, because it’s very much a technical process at this

point. The town engineer will (also) issue the authorization for the grading permit, ministerially, once all of the requirements have been met, (and) Richfield has secured all of the outside regulatory agency permits.”

The agreement with Richfield includes a total payment of \$14.5 million in four installments to the town

of Moraga to compensate for the loss of recreational requirements due to the replacement of a golf course with open space. The first \$3.5 million has already been paid, and the second \$3.5 million – less the deposit mentioned above – is due within 120 days of the issuance of the grading permit. The final installments will be paid on

a pro-rata basis at the time of issuance of each building permit and each certificate of occupancy for the Palos Colorados Project.

At the developer’s request, the final map approval has been delayed to March 9. The applicant has not provided a date for when it would request issuance of the grading permit.

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