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## Save Lafayette Files Another Suit to Stop Deer Hill Development

*By Cathy Tyson*

Calling the city's approval of the Homes at Deer Hill "quite unfair," the grassroots group Save Lafayette is trying again to stop the development.

On March 11, Save Lafayette served a Petition for Peremptory Writ of Mandate on the City. The president of the group, Michael Griffith, says he firmly believes that voters should have a say in development, and in his opinion, the city's actions are in violation of health and safety laws. The Writ alleges that the action of the city council to deny a "citywide ballot in regard to The Homes at Deer Hill was arbitrary and an abuse of discretion, and contrary to the Council's duties under Elections Code #9241 and California Constitution."

Representatives from Save Lafayette gathered over 2,000 signatures on a petition to vote on the controversial project. According to Griffiths, petition signers wanted a chance to vote on whether the "development's purported benefits outweighed the significant impacts of traffic congestion, air quality and violation of the City's Hillside and Open Space ordinances."

Those petitions were presented to the city council in late December, but City Attorney Mala Subramanian found the effort to be legally unsound and rejected the argument and the petition because it would create an inconsistency between the city's zoning ordinance and the General Plan.

The story was reported in the Dec. 30, issue of the Lamorinda Weekly "Citizen Group Legal Challenge to Deer Hill Project Invalid." (<http://lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0922/Citizen-Group-Legal-Challenge-to-Deer-Hill-Project-Found-In>)

Subramanian said she agrees with City Manager Steven Falk's comment, "The City disagrees and will vigorously defend its position."

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