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Palos Colorados Finally Gets Green Light

By Sophie Braccini

It was a monumental moment when the Moraga City Council approved the final map of the Palos Colorados development.



Over 20 years of negotiations ended in a 15 minute-legislative process, opening the door to the construction of 123 homes on 460 acres at the border with Lafayette, located east of Moraga Road and south of Sky Hy Drive.

Vice mayor Dave Trotter seemed to be the one most impressed on the council with what was happening on this night of March 23. "It's the end of a very long process. Twenty-three years ago I started working on this as a planning commissioner," Trotter said. "It's an historic moment in the history of the town."

Images provided

Almost immediately, trucks and construction material congregated at a staging area along Moraga Road, where major work will start soon.

That night's decision awarded Bigbury Company the development rights as well as approving the agreements satisfying all the conditions of the project, including an open space easement, and the creation of public trails, many of them dedicated to the East Bay Regional Park District. The final map reflects these agreements, including a trail link to cross Moraga Road and continue to the Lafayette Reservoir.

Lori Sucgang, Moraga's town engineer, confirmed that the developer had completed all the requirements.

Cecilia Marquee, who owns 28 acres next to Palos Colorados, asked if the proposed trails were not assumed to cross her property to connect to the Moraga-Lafayette trail. The answer was that the map was compliant with previously approved configuration.

The single-family lots range in size from 12,000 square feet to about one acre. During the Precise Development Plan approval process in 2009 the town accepted the plans of 123 semi-custom homes with a maximum size of 5,500 square foot on the larger lots.

The homes should also reach 90 points in the "Built-It-Green" notation system, a good score. This standard addresses aspects such as water use, energy use and type of material used in construction.

The Design Review Board approved the home plans in 2009; the property developer could now start to build with no need for more public approval.

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