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## Moraga Center Homes Plan Grilled by Commission

*By Sophie Braccini*

Nothing is simple and quick with the Moraga Center Homes development project.

A year and a half ago the Conceptual Development Plan for the contentious construction program was approved, then challenged by a referendum that was canceled on legal ground. Now the planning commissioners are asking for more time to study the documents related to the General Development Plan, as many of the commissioners are new and are asking critical questions.

Commissioner Kymberleigh Korpus was the first to barrage staff with pointed questions regarding the rules that should have been applied to the development. The project is set in an area of the Moraga Center Specific Plan that was defined as residential-commercial. Korpus made the point that since the town council rezoned the lot as residential, it should be the rules applicable to residential areas and not mixed-use that should be applied to the Moraga Center Homes.

Korpus challenged the assumption that what was approved up until now was untouchable, and said that in fact, the commission had the right to decide whether this project should go forward.

"We can have additional restriction regarding whatever was decided earlier," she said.

Other fundamental questions were raised about surrendering, at no cost to the property owner, of the town's 84-foot wide right-of-way extending across a portion of the site. This right-of-way is a remnant of a county's right-of-way to build a freeway through Moraga, a project that was abandoned in the 1970s. As a counterpart to the surrendering, the developer has included in the project a 10,000 square foot pocket park that remains owned by the HOA but is opened to the public.

Residents in attendance also asked for the commission to give more time to residents to study the documents attached to the application.

After two hours of presentations and discussions, the planning commissioners decided unanimously on June 6 to continue the discussion regarding the Moraga Center Homes to June 20. They asked that the town attorney be present at the meeting to answer some of their questions.

City Ventures started the study process for developing the site located near Station 41 at 1284 Moraga Way and facing the Moraga Country Club across Country Club Drive four years ago. Thirty-six units are proposed for the vacant three-acre lot. The project consists of attached townhomes along Moraga Way, and duplexes along Country Club Drive. The townhomes are two- and three-stories high. The site is part of the Moraga Center Specific Plan adopted six years ago.

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