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## Letters to the Editor

### Traffic Concerns at Happy Valley School

Dear Editor,  
The traffic on Happy Valley Road near the school is an accident waiting to happen. The one side of the street restricted waiting should be revisited, as this has added to the overcrowded congested car, bicycle, pedestrian and dog-walking situation.

It would be helpful to have an article highlighting the seriousness of this issue. The Lafayette authorities should install a competent guard directing traffic at Happy Valley School during school hours to prevent a child from being killed or seriously injured. Bicycle safety is an issue that needs to be addressed. Young people typically lack judgment and take risks. Kids on bikes sharing the road with trucks, SUV's, cars, pedestrians is a potentially tragic situation. Happy Valley School is on a two-lane street that has a typically active traffic situation with a student body of 500-plus students. I hope that this can be addressed before a tragic accident.

Marlene Cowan  
Lafayette

### A Poem: Blind Curves

I am blank as the bank of earth receding from my vision. Small rocks and branches survive the light traffic, and sudden bicycles slowly climb in the opposing direction, with the random car accelerating around them at the first brief, straight opportunity.

I coast, on the merits of gravity and some taps on the gas, from a vista of rolling hills, scattered ranch houses, and the reservoir down in late summer, through overhanging trees, some dying from the drought, listening to triumphant rock and roll,

secure in my knowledge of the drive, confident the way ahead is clear past each bend, as it has always been, on a well-engineered road that can handle the infrequent winter storm, and all I have to do is speed through one more curve to get to the flats.

David Walter Robertson  
Orinda

### \$15 Minimum Wage is de facto Racism

Dear Editor,  
The unemployment rate for black youth is more than 30 percent, double the rate of not only other youth groups, but of ANY other group. These youngsters need learner jobs to build work skills and lives not involving chronic unemployment — or prison.

Nationally, food service businesses provide most of those jobs at \$9-\$10 per hour. If these youngsters' skills do not warrant even these pay rates, how does \$15 make them more employable?

Nationally, the food service industry labor cost is 30 percent of total costs. Net income averages 3 percent of revenues. Fifteen dollars an hour (50 percent over the \$10 average), raises labor costs to 45 percent and total costs to more than 112 percent of total revenue. Raising prices may well prompt customers, the ONLY source of sales-revenues, to say "Fuggetaboutit." The enterprise will then reduce job numbers, eliminate a service, somehow make the fewer employees more efficient, automate repetitive tasks, or close down. What will NOT happen is that these unemployed kids will get a job.

Laws requiring actions that predictably cause "disparate adverse impacts" on these vulnerable teens seem to equate to flat-out de facto government-ordered racism. How? Long-standing federal labor laws clearly state, "disparate impact holds that employment practices may be considered discriminatory if they have a disproportionate 'adverse impact' on ... a protected class." Making it so much harder to enter the job market "adversely impacts" these "protected class" young people.

Arrogantly pronouncing a law "good" without considering the predictably negative ramifications makes for self-congratulatory conversation but is truly socially irresponsible. It is tragic that those who force such action do not themselves suffer the consequences, as these kids do; and as their potential employers do.

The Congressional Business Office (CBO) warns 500,000 jobs will be lost if Federal minimum wage rises to \$10 per hour.

So, how, exactly, does \$15 per hour add jobs?

Joe Moran  
Orinda

### City Ventures Violates Town's Plans

The approval of City Ventures' Moraga Center Townhomes by the town council (3-2) on Aug. 24 was based on misinformation. Lack of due diligence was shocking. I have heard the word "lawlessness."

At a July Planning Commission meeting, commissioner Kymberleigh Korpus listed numerous concerns with the process and violation of plans, codes and character. Two other commissioners voted no.

The planning department refused to answer Ms. Korpus' questions. The town council chose not to address them.

Although Dave Trotter expressed concerns for "legality," he voted with City Ventures. Teresa Onoda and Roger Wykle voted

no. It appears the council based their decisions upon misinformation. The town attorney said there was only one option — to vote for the appeal, for City Ventures, yet in the meeting report, it listed several options!

A resident presented a clause from the Moraga Center Specific Plan EIR. It requires one story houses and at least one 50-foot corridor along the scenic corridor. This has three stories, 10-foot building separations and 25-foot corridors with duplex/triplexes at the end of each corridor. The town always claimed MCTH lies within this EIR, and no specific EIR was needed. When asked about the EIR conditions, the town attorney apparently debunked it, mumbling something about a recent document.

The town chose not to continue the discussion for a later date. Why the rush, when the plans and character are at stake?

The town did not make modifications that would eliminate the fire department's opposition. The fire department voted against it and requested less units.

The project did not meet requirements for the town to vacate the offer of dedication for the easement.

The town planner explains these massive buildings are new and being "introduced" to Moraga. They have never been in Moraga because they violate the plans, codes and semi-rural character.

Previously, the council admitted it violates building separations, setting a precedence for other developers to violate our plans.

One council member ran because of watching residents' frustration with City Ventures. Now Korpus is running because of this project's questionable process.

Write and take action Moraga residents!

Margaret Gee  
Moraga

### Will Roundabout Really Help?

Dear Editor,  
I am sure that the roundabout will "address congestion and delays," but I fail to under-

stand how this will occur when there are plans to put a stoplight at the top of Reliez Station Road. I can only imagine the delays this will cause in both directions and cannot understand who thought this one up.

Judie Howard  
Moraga

### Smith Has Credentials for MOFD Board

Dear Editor,  
Victoria Smith, who will retire from the Orinda City Council in December, has made a significant contribution to Orinda over many years as a volunteer and elected official.

And she is not stopping there. She has announced her candidacy for Moraga Orinda Fire District Director for District 5.

Victoria is well qualified to serve on the MOFD board given her 12 years of experience in maintaining Orinda's fiscal health. Throughout her tenure, which included the Great Recession, the city created balanced budgets and produced cumulative operating surpluses that strengthened reserves and funded critical capital improvement projects.

MOFD needs the experienced fiscal oversight that Victoria Smith offers. I'm with her.

Bob Burt  
Orinda

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[www.mariaeberle.com](http://www.mariaeberle.com)  
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