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Town Council Decries Out-of-Towners Using Commons Park

By Sophie Braccini



The Commons' Master Plan of Existing Conditions. The red line indicate the disk golf course. Image provided

The approval of the master plan for the Moraga Commons Park was pushed back to the new year, and a new town council.

The issue that stopped the council from adopting the plan that had been long prepared was the disc golf course. Most council members got the feeling from reports they were

given that the course is used by "over the hill" people they do not care to recreate in Moraga. They were also told that these players have infringed on the town integrated pest management (no-pesticide) policy, and some even called them "squatters" of town property, and could entail liabilities for the town.

Metcalf recommended that the next council that will be sworn in in January deal with this issue and make a final decision regarding the park's master plan.

Rarely the topic of out-of-towners using town facility was talked about so directly. Disc golfers were called squatters from over

the hills that had no vested rights in the park. Jeanette Fritzky, chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission, said that they had used pesticides on the court, although adding that there was no proof of it. She also indicated that a petition to support the current use of the course was signed by over 60 people with only two from Moraga. The mayor recalled past incidents where disc-golfers had addressed the council in ways that were close to arrogance.

The council also wondered what the liability of the town is if it supports this activity on its grounds and an accident happens. It was clear that the desire was to disassociate from an activity that could be a source of nuisance — includ-

ing foul language as noted by councilmember Onoda, and that is perceived as not used by the residents of Moraga.

The disc golf course was the only issue that stopped the council from approving the park master plan that parks and recreation director Jay Ingram has worked on for months with consultants. Several stakeholders were contacted and community meetings were conducted to shape the plan. Most other items met with the approval of the council, such as the improvements of access and bathrooms, the adding of two new bocce ball courts, or the addition of a community garden in the Back 40.

(See story on disc golf, page A1)

HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING
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