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Art & Garden Center rises in Wilder

By Sora O'Doherty



The Art and Garden Center groundbreaking in June 2017

Photos Sora O'Doherty

It has been a long time coming, but the Art and Garden Center at Wilder is taking shape and will open to the public this year. The Center is a 6,600-square-foot building that features a 3,150-square-foot room that can accommodate many different uses. Accordion walls enable this space to be subdivided into three separate studios, and the building also features an additional, separate studio to maximize programming potential. The building wraps around a small amphitheater area, which serves as an outdoor gathering space. Behind the building will be a garden area and one of the five sports fields that make up the Wilder field complex. The overall facility offers tremendous flexibility for uses by Orinda's parks and recreation department.

The history of the project goes back more than a decade. In 2003 the Orinda City Council subcommittee approved Wilder's development agreement. In 2004, the developer worked



The Art and Garden Center at Wilder as of Jan. 5.

with the Sierra Club, Save Open Space, and Golden Gate Audubon Society to resolve key community concerns and reserved a location at the south end of the valley for an Art and Garden Center. In March 2005, the City Council approved the Second Amended and Restated Development Agreement, which included the terms for a 6,000 square foot Art and Garden Center.

Construction on the Wilder project began in July 2006, but the economic recession of 2008-11 presented many challenges. In 2011, Wilder and the city of Orinda entered discussions to considered relocation of the Art and Garden Center to the Community Playfields to increase recreational use and synergy. Ground was broken in June of 2017 and it is anticipated that the center will be open to the public by this summer, some 15 years from the beginning of the development agreement.

A Thank You to Friends New and Old.

The past seventeen years our community has entrusted the team at Village Associates with the complexities of buying and selling their homes, for which we are deeply grateful. Helping old and new neighbors and friends is our personal pride, and has led us to become one of Lamorinda's most trusted real estate firms. Thank you for your support and commitment.

Best wishes to our families, friends, and neighbors for a happy, healthy, and safe 2018.



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Not Pictured: Ann Sharf and Jeff Snell

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