



Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, Feb. 26, 7:30 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Planning Commission

Monday, March 5, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, Feb. 26, 7 p.m.
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Arts & Science Discovery Center,
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District
Wednesday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m.
AUHSD Board Room
1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m.
Regular Board Meeting
District Office Board Room
3477 School St., Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us


Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

www.ci.lafayette.ca.us
Phone: (925) 284-1968

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org

 Due to a change in reporting by the Lafayette Police Department, we were unable to get complete information before press time.

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City council to appeal planning commission decision on crosses property

By Pippa Fisher



Carol Reef, left, and Lynn MacMichael, right, brought poster boards to the Feb. 12 council meeting to illustrate the many people who value the crosses memorial. Photo Pippa Fisher

The fate of the land that is home to the Lafayette crosses is once again on the table as the result of a request for appeal brought by a city council mem-

ber. The roughly 5-acre land in question lies opposite the BART station on Deerhill Road and includes two parcels – one vacant

and one with two houses. On Jan. 16 the Planning Commission granted the landowner, Charles Clark, permission to reconfigure the property lines to result in one residence on each parcel. Clark, whose now-deceased mother Louise Clark started the crosses memorial as an anti-war protest with Jeff Heaton in 2006, wants the adjustment in order to make the properties easier to sell.

But now, as a result of a request for appeal brought by City Council Member Ivor Samson the matter will have to go before the city council in March.

Members of the city council were prohibited from discussing the merits of the case at the Feb. 12 city council meeting in order to preserve the applicant's due process rights. The city's appeal process under municipal code allows a city council member to re-

quest an appeal "if the decision is of such importance that it should be reviewed by the council."

Samson, while constrained within limited parameters, explained his view of that importance by saying that the property is located in the heart of the city and contains the crosses which are seen by thousands of people every day, both from the freeway and from BART. He said that it has been a site of public interest for more than 10 years and that as such any decision regarding use of land is by definition a decision of importance that should be decided by the city council.

Public speakers did not shy away from more detailed discussions of their concerns, however, pointing to damage to the environment and wildlife, loss of access for the public and potential for development. ... continued on page A9

Safety measures to stay in place on Reliez Valley Road

By Pippa Fisher



The new stop sign at Fairholm Road is one of five measures that will become permanent, in an attempt to deter speeders. Photo Pippa Fisher

Lafayette is making permanent the safety improvements along Reliez Valley Road.

And it does seem that wheels are spinning a little more freely there these days, but is that as a result of a seasonal reduction, as many of the corridor's residents suggest, or has it been helped by safety precautions implemented in November?

The problems along Reliez Valley Road are twofold: severe congestion during the morning commute hours and drivers traveling at unsafe speeds at other times.

To address the issue of speeding, the city implemented five temporary measures: the painting of "30" on the road at locations where a speed limit sign has been posted, a "No right turn" sign at the island at the intersection of Pleasant Hill Road and Reliez Valley Road, two additional stop signs – one at Fairholm Road and the other at My Road – and a marked crosswalk at Green Valley Road.

Police Chief Eric Christensen gave his report at the city council's Feb. 12 meeting and recommended making all measures permanent.

Christensen said that the four-week speed enforcement campaign by his officers that accompanied these measures had proved successful in helping to change driver behaviors and he noted that another such campaign would start again soon.

In response to questions about the possibility of speed bumps,

Christensen said he was not keen to use them on an arterial, 30 mile per hour road, saying that cars hitting the bumps at such speeds can be dangerous. He is however, supportive of installing a speed feedback sign capable of recording speeds to help with their surveys.

Members of the public who spoke were generally in favor of the new measures but several urged the council not to forget the matter of congestion. Several speakers made the point that there are always less cars on the road at this time of year and that traffic will build up again, so data is needed for the whole year.

As the council voted unanimously to make the safety measures permanent and add a speed feedback sign on a temporary basis, Mayor Don Tatzin stressed the importance of continuing to work at the county level to be supportive of Reliez Valley Residents for Reduced Traffic's requests for turn restriction signs on Taylor Boulevard. A meeting is scheduled this week between city staff, RVRRT and Supervisor Federal Glover to discuss turn restriction signs in the area that lies beyond Lafayette's jurisdiction, which residents say are needed at peak commute hours to prevent apps such as Waze from directing traffic through their neighborhood.

Reliez Valley Road resident Kristen Altbaum pointed out that neighbors have received a letter from the Contra Costa County Fire

Protection District stating that during a high wind event, the combination of high traffic congestion from commuters and potential evacuee traffic could make response to the area very difficult for fire resources.

The letter continues, "The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District is supportive of all solutions that would improve the quality of life for the residents along Reliez Valley Road. We do not feel that doing nothing is a viable solution."

Given that, Altbaum says that RVRRT looks forward to immediate action being taken by Glover

"to protect this high fire danger corridor, as it is listed on Cal Fire's Hazard Severity Zone Map, from the onslaught of out-of-area commuters and approve limited access signs from 7-8:30 (a.m.) Monday through Friday, as is already standard in many neighborhoods within the county who have protected themselves against significant Waze traffic," she says.

"We also hope and expect Lafayette city would advocate for this outcome on our behalf," adds Altbaum.

Reliez Valley Road resident Roger Chelemedos says it is unconscionable that Waze, Google and

other traffic mapping apps would continue to direct traffic down a narrow and windy road, "which could result in first responders being unable to provide urgent medical care to residents along the Reliez Valley Road corridor, resulting in a loss of life, or cause a situation where residents would not be able to evacuate their homes in the event of a firestorm, as recently occurred in Santa Rosa, Napa and Sonoma."

Christensen says he is happy with the changes he has seen regarding safety and reduced speeding. Now residents say it is time to focus on traffic mitigation.



KURT PIPER GROUP

925.818.8000

Kurt@KurtPiperGroup.com

KurtPiperGroup.com

License # 01130308

Kurt Piper has consistently been one of Lamorinda's top producing and trusted real estate brokers since 1997. Kurt is proud to have established a successful business based on repeat clients, referrals, and generational family relationships.

In addition to supporting Lafayette Partners In Education, Kurt has given back to the community through his golf tournament - Day on The Green which donated proceeds to Las Trampas Inc., Xenophon therapeutic horseback riding and the construction of the Lafayette Reservoir Playground. Kurt has served as a Board member at the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. He currently volunteers as an assistant football coach at Acalanes High School where he coaches the varsity wide receivers.

Growing up in Orinda and

residing in Lafayette for over 20 years, Kurt credits our great schools for his life successes which include graduating from CAL and earning the rank of Eagle Scout. Kurt's daughter Chloe is a 5th grader at Lafayette Elementary School and his son Nick attended Acalanes High School. Kurt and his family are members of Moraga County Club. Visit his website at www.kurtpipergroup.com

Supporting The Lafayette Public Schools

