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Letters to the Editor

Take An Honest Look At Measure L

Time to counter False Information! First-ever public tours of Deer Hill were held Sunday. YES and undecided folks came, NO on L leadership did not. Tour addressed widespread misinformation:

1. FACT: Proposed 44 (2,000-3,000sf) homes sit below, not above, ridgeline and, after excavation, are not visible from Deer Hill. Dirt-hauling trucks will not impact traffic as soil stays on site as in-fill. All trees remain, 800 more will be planted. Mt. Diablo views from Deer Hill stay unobstructed, and 11 of 22 acres are open space/trails/parklands.
 2. FACT: Current zoning has not changed, it remains Professional/Administration allowing 35 units/acre (770 units!). If YES fails, developer could proceed with 315 affordable apartments ... 15 2-3 story buildings, parking for 569 cars!! State-mandated housing requirements make denying affordable housing extraordinarily difficult.
 3. FACT: Bentley Lafayette (opened 1997) sports fields sit almost on Hwy 24, as do Diablo Valley Montessori on Deer Hill (est. 1965), Wilder fields alongside Caldecott, and Orinda Exit sports fields. None has reported health crises for children over decades.
 4. FACT: Partial a.m. traffic mitigation is 78-car parking lot across from Acalanes HS for student dropoff with entrance on Deer Hill...avoids current backup on Pleasant Hill Road where dropoff is on edge of road; also accommodates AHS event overflow. First-ever sidewalks to Springhill will enhance student safety.
 5. FACT: NO on L flyer stating Springhill is full and children must be driven to Burton Valley isn't factual. Superintendent Zinn confirms Springhill is not full, students would not necessarily be re-directed to Burton, could be any district school.
 6. FACT: City staff and Park & Rec have looked at alternative sports field sites proposed by NO folks. Mayor Tatzin says no evidence has been provided that demonstrate alternative field sites meet criteria.
- Time for truth-telling! Don't be swayed by angry voices on NextDoor floating false information or promoting endless lawsuits costly to Lafayette. Please join community leaders like Anne Grodin, Don Jenkins, Teresa Geringer, Steve Cortese, Kathy Merchant, Rick and Janet Cronk, Ron Nahas, Tyler and Cory Higgins, four Councilmembers (Tatzin, Anderson, Burks, Mitchell) and others, vote YES on L!

Carol T. Singer
Lafayette
Prospect for Future Development

While I am Mayor of Lafayette, I am writing as an individual.

I am asked: "If Measure L passes, what would prohibit the spread of higher density development along Deer Hill Road close to the proposed Homes at Deer Hill project?"

The General Plan designation and the zoning distinguish the site of the Measure L project from other vacant land along Deer Hill Road. When the Apartment Project was proposed, the General Plan and zoning designations were both APO which allow up to 35 housing units per acre. In contrast, the General Plan designations for the land north of Deer Hill and East of Brown Avenue is for single family residential of up to 0.1, 2 and 6 units per acre. The zoning is 1/4, 1/2 and 10 acre lots, which is consistent with the General Plan designations. One small parcel located at the intersection of Pleasant Hill and Deer Hill Roads has General Plan and zoning designations of APO and that is being changed.

The Housing Accountability Act gives the City a strong basis for denial if an application like the apartments is submitted for the parcels north of Deer Hill. The Act says a jurisdiction can deny project if:

"The housing development project ... is inconsistent with both the jurisdiction's zoning ordinance and general plan land use designation as specified in any element of the general plan as it existed on the date the application was deemed complete, and the jurisdiction has adopted a revised housing element in accordance with Section 65588 that is in substantial compliance with this article..."

A project like the Apartment project would be inconsistent with both Lafayette's zoning and General Plan land use designations. Furthermore, Lafayette has a state approved Housing Element. Denial could be straightforward.

If one is worried about the prospect of the Apartment project being revived and possibly built, the safest thing to do is to vote Yes on Measure L as that will commit the land to the Homes project and change the zoning to 1/2 acre lots.

Don Tatzin
Lafayette

Reject Regional Measure 3

Lamorindans should vote No on Regional Measure 3. Stop the \$3 toll bridge hike.

RM3 is unfair to the East Bay, which would subsidize Silicon Valley and the Peninsula. Santa Clara County pays a mere two percent of bridge tolls, yet San Jose alone would receive 14 percent of capital improvement funds. San Mateo County pays just eight percent of bridge tolls, yet \$325 million is devoted to a Caltrain tunnel.

RM3 gives an obscure government agency, Bay Area Toll Authority/Metropolitan Transportation Commission

(MTC), the power to increase tolls without another vote of the people.

Bridge tolls once were used exclusively for reasonable bridge capital and maintenance expenses. But MTC has wasted billions of our toll dollars.

First, MTC insisted on an impractical, unproven design for the new Bay Bridge eastern span, a project that bloated 400 percent over budget, opened many years behind schedule and has safety flaws. We pay higher tolls to bail out their \$13 billion boondoggle.

Second, MTC diverted \$179 million of bridge tolls to move their headquarters from Oakland to a Taj Mahal in downtown San Francisco. Our tolls bought plush digs for wily bureaucrats.

Third, MTC diverted \$146 million of bridge tolls to build the ridiculous BART Oakland Airport Connector, which chugs at 28 mph and costs \$12 round trip, yet still operates at a deficit.

Fourth, MTC diverts \$100s of millions of toll dollars to lavish ferry boat subsidies. One route subsidizes \$100 for each passenger ticket. If MTC handed commuters \$80 taxi vouchers, we'd save money.

A powerful lobby, dominated by construction contractors and labor unions, controls MTC. They profit from our squandered toll dollars. These forces have spent nearly \$2 million so far to persuade voters to support RM3 because it significantly expands their slush fund. Their propaganda omits the key fact that RM3 is a toll increase, bilking the East Bay to aid Silicon Valley. It's telling that the photo on the RM3 campaign homepage is of an empty Silicon Valley freeway, with the bay and its toll bridges not in sight.

Vote No on RM3.

Jason A. Bezis
Lafayette

Support for Paul Graves

I'm writing as a Lafayette resident to urge you to vote for Paul Graves for Contra Costa County District Attorney. I've been Paul's colleague in the District Attorney's Office for his entire 22 year career in the District Attorney's Office. It is vital that we elect a District Attorney who appreciates the importance of helping victims of crime and keeping public safety a priority.

Paul is a Senior Deputy District Attorney in our County who has given his entire career to the protection of the people of Contra Costa County. In the 22 years Paul has spent as a prosecutor here, he has prosecuted cases in nearly every criminal division and in nearly every community in the county. He has been involved in prosecuting some of the toughest cases, from homicides to sexual assaults, to gang violence.

Paul also has extensive management experience within the District Attorney's office, having led and supervised various internal prosecuting units including the homicide team. He currently serves as the Senior Deputy District Attorney in charge of Family Violence. In that role, Paul directly oversees the Sexual Assault Unit including Human Trafficking, the Domestic Violence Unit, and the Elder Abuse Unit.

Paul is endorsed by every single Law Enforcement agency in Contra Costa County as well as the Deputy District Attorneys' Association, Firefighters, and the East Bay Times. Victim Advocate Marc Klaas is also supporting Paul in recognition of Paul's dedication to victims as well as countless others in our Criminal Justice System who trust Paul to do the right thing for the right reasons time and time again.

Here is Paul's website: www.PaulGravesforDA.com

Please spread the word to vote for Paul Graves for District Attorney on June 5th, 2018.

Sincerely,

Steven Bolen
Lafayette

Lafayette Sports Field at Deer Hill - YES!

More sports fields are needed in Lafayette and the proposed Deer Hill site is the best chance of adding recreational field space in Lafayette. The City Council and Parks Commission have evaluated over 100 sites in Lafayette, with barely a handful meeting the community needs, while most owners are unwilling to engage in discussions about creating this public amenity. Deer Hill is one of those sites, and the owner has worked with Lafayette to develop this much needed public space.

The Deer Hill project amenities would be incremental to the City's recreational space, and the first North of Hwy 24. The city uses developer fees to acquiring new Recreational space and develop existing space. We all know the cost of land in Lafayette, and the opportunity for the City to own this 11 Acres of developed Recreational space is a great opportunity, that may not be available again. Many Lafayette parents are forced to drive their children to practices out of town (Wilder or Walnut Creek), or even across town (Community Park, Buckeye Fields or Burton Valley school). These are the same families who would use Deer Hill - driving less, not new traffic. The Sports Field traffic (16%) is the lowest element of the traffic at the Homes at Deer Hill. The Peak mid-week 68 Trips for the Sports Field is a marginal piece of the Total Traffic in the area (8K - 30K) for the same time frame.

Many alternative sites have been repeatedly suggested, reviewed, and deemed unfeasible over the years for various reasons - Ecological, Terrain/Topography, Active/Passive, Land owner, Acquisition cost, etc...This includes adding to the Community Center Park and using School property. If there is no Homes at Deer Hill, would the Lafayette School Board offer the White Pony school site to the City at a similar proposal as Deer Hill?

The Homes at Deer Hill is the best option for the site, and people of Lafayette. Gladly welcome 44 new families to Lafayette, and 11 acres of City owned park space.

Joe Dougherty
Lafayette

Measure L

The Yes on Lafayette Measure L campaign claims there would be no significant risk to children using the play area and sport field at Deer Hill from the adjacent Hwy24/Pleasant Hill Rd/Deer Hill Rd traffic corridor, citing an April 2018 report made for the developer. It was criticized on May 19 by an epidemiologist with international credentials, Devra Davis, MPH PhD.

The areas where we and the consultant agree:

- No measurements were done on-site, only simulations were used

- No ultrafine particulates were included

- Our regional regulatory agency BAAQMD was never consulted

If BAAQMD had been consulted, they would have been directed to the 'Planning Healthy Places' website and found that the play area proposed is one of the 'communities and places throughout the region that are estimated to have elevated levels of fine particulates and/or toxic air contaminants.'

The BAAQMD recommends against placing sensitive uses (children) in busy traffic corridors; our California SB 352, Education Code 17213, restricts public school districts from placing new facilities (includes "playgrounds and athletic fields" under Ed. Code 17609(f)) within 500 feet of busy traffic corridors. The Deer Hill play area is 160 feet from PHR, the sport field 50 feet from Deer Hill Road and 200 feet from PHR, both are about 400 feet from the freeway onramp.

Dr. Davis told the Lafayette City Council on May 19: "Proximity to high traffic areas has been demonstrated in human epidemiologic studies to be associated with a host of serious health problems... Toxic exposures that take place to the young brain can have permanent effects on intelligence, behavior, and chronic illness..."

Dr. Davis concluded by stating:

"The idea that you would put a field for children to play in an area where the adjacent residences are required to have filters for the air inside the house, and warnings to residents of exposure to particulate matter if the windows are opened, is one of the most foolish instances of urban planning I have ever encountered."

The City should not spend \$3M for this site without comprehensive analysis, and voters should vote NO on this project as presented.

Susan Candell
Lafayette

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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