

# And then there were five (planning commissioners)

By Pippa Fisher



Anna Radonich Photos provided



Kristina Sturm

The latest appointment to Lafayette's Planning Commission is Anna Radonich, an environmental planner, bringing the total commissioners back up to five.

Radonich was appointed to the commission in a unanimous vote by the Lafayette City Council at its May 29 meeting. The 31-year resident of Lafayette works for Stantec Consulting Services and has 15 years of experience in environmental remediation, land use planning and the California Environmental Quality Act. Additionally, Radonich, who has coordinated regulatory reviews and compliance strategies for land use and local development projects in both the public and private sectors, has been active with various Burton Valley and Stanley Middle School events and served on a bench rehabilitation project for the East Bay Regional Park District. Her term ends June 2019.

Just a couple of weeks earlier, Kristina Sturm was appointed at

the May 14 city council meeting. An eight-year Lafayette resident, Sturm is an architectural designer and has previously served on the city's Circulation Committee. An architectural graduate of the University of Texas, Sturm has a history of working in design, architecture and project management.

The commission is charged with the development of Lafayette's general plan, implementation of the city's zoning ordinance and review of development applications.

The appointments are being made in the wake of a mass resignation of five commissioners following the adoption of strict conflict of interest policies in March. Gregory Mason, a senior structural plans examiner, was the first appointee following the resignations, as reported in Lamorinda Weekly's May 2 edition.

Radonich, Sturm and Mason join Vice Chair Gary Huisingh and Commissioner Steven Bliss on the Planning Commission.

# Lafayette School District has new top educator

By Pippa Fisher



Richard Whitmore Photo provided

The Lafayette School District governing board announced the appointment of Richard Whitmore to the position of Superintendent of Education. He will take over from outgoing Superintendent Rachel Zinn who is retiring after 12 years of service to LAFSD and 38 years as an educator.

The announcement was made May 30 following a thorough search conducted by the school board in what was described by

the board as a "community effort," with input from many who shared ideas, opinions and priorities for the district and its leadership during the search process.

"The board conducted a very thorough search, and based on the leadership characteristics identified, Richard rose to the top of an impressive field of candidates," LAFSD Board President Teresa Gerring said. "Richard brings a passion for providing the highest quality education for all students and extensive experience in instruction, policy, finance and advocacy necessary to lead the district at this critical juncture. As a bonus, he is a longtime resident of Lafayette, and active volunteer in our schools."

Whitmore is a Lafayette resident and has been actively involved in the Lafayette education community for over 20 years.

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# Did polling irregularities occur?

By Pippa Fisher

Vice Mayor Cam Burks is concerned that multiple voters in Lafayette were victims of voter suppression during the June 5 election and is calling for the county registrar to formally investigate.

Several Lafayette precincts ran out of paper ballots before the polls close. Burks says that while some voters who arrived before 8 p.m. chose to wait in long lines to vote on the only available machine; others who had pressing schedules could not wait and were unable to cast votes. "I understand that approximately at least 20 voters left one of the affected precincts without voting. Regardless of how this happened, the result is that voter suppression likely occurred and that is not acceptable."

Burks stressed that he makes these comments not in any way related to Measure L and the outcome of that particular decision. "I make them in the context of repre-

senting and supporting the people of Lafayette to be able to exercise their clear right to freely vote.

"Even one resident - let alone multiple residents - not having the ability to cast a vote because of a breakdown in the county registrar's potential mismanagement of this election, is totally unacceptable to me," said Burks. "I want answers and I want those responsible to be held accountable."

When contacted about irregularities, Lafayette City Clerk Joanne Robbins confirmed that the city had learned with regret that some polling places ran out of ballots prior to closing. Assistant Registrar of Voters for Contra Costa County Scott Konopasek did not return Lamorinda Weekly's calls about the matter. Burks would like to see the issue placed on the council agenda for future discussion.

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