

Letters to the Editor

Severson for AUHSD governing board

As a current member on the Orinda Union School Board, I know that school board trustees must have the ability to listen to all viewpoints, to work together collaboratively, and to always keep in mind the best interests of the students. Chris Severson embodies these qualities and deserves your vote in November for Governing Board Member of the Acalanes Union High School District.

Chris has been a strong advocate for public education for many years. He has the benefit of experience — Chris served for four years with me on the board of the Orinda Union School District from 2010-2014. As a fellow trustee, Chris always acted with the utmost integrity and always kept the focus on what's best for students. Chris was instrumental in helping lead the district during the last financial crisis and, as a result, the district was able to weather that storm with minimal impact on students in the classroom. Moreover, as an emergency room physician, Chris knows how important health and wellness are to student success, and intends to bring a focus on those issues with him to his role as trustee.

Chris will also bring a balanced perspective to the school board. The high school district is composed of schools in four communities: Orinda, Moraga, Lafayette, and Walnut Creek. Chris has children who attend or have attended Miramonte, Acalanes, and Campolindo high schools.

Chris is committed to maintaining and improving upon the excellent education our high schools provide. I urge you to vote for Chris Severson for Governing Board Member for the Acalanes Union High School District.

Julie Rossiter
Board Member
Orinda Union School District
Orinda

Samson and Candell for Council

I attended Candidates Night and solidified my support for Ivor Samson (Incumbent, Attorney) and Susan Candell (Circulation Commissioner, Engineer). Samson and Candell are willing to do independent research, ask direct questions and hold staff accountable when necessary. They'll work to solidify the partnership between the City and the schools. The Lafayette School District is running a serious structural deficit and it would be beneficial to taxpayers and students if the City and the District started sharing expenses when possible.

Ivor Samson has worked hard since his appointment to the City Council in 2016. Ivor Samson and Vice Mayor Cam Burks (an Ivor Samson supporter) successfully implemented safety and traffic calming measures on Reliez Valley Road. Samson worked with his colleagues to pass the new Conflict of Interest policy and Burks and Mark Mitchell joined Samson in this important vote. Given pending and potential litigation before Lafayette we need a tested legal mind on Council to ensure our legal interests are protected.

Susan Candell worked closely with Ivor Samson and Cam Burks on the Reliez Valley Road traffic issues. Susan has been a dedicated community volunteer in the areas of traffic and safety, including safe routes to school, the Downtown Specific Plan and development and zoning impacts. An engineer by trade, Susan has the ability to read, understand and explain complex technical documents like Environmental Impact Reports. The passage of AB2923, and the related loss of

local control over development decisions make Susan's analytical skills more important than ever.

Lafayette voters recently rejected Measures L and C - votes of no confidence in the status quo. City Manager Steve Falk recognized this disconnect and recently resigned. The next Council will select Falk's replacement and that Council should be comprised of individuals with relevant municipal experience and knowledge. Who do you think will represent YOUR voice when hiring the next City Manager?

The candidates are all nice people who care about Lafayette; I applaud them all for running because I know it's not easy. However, I'm looking for relevant municipal experience and expertise. I'm voting for Ivor Samson and Susan Candell!

Jean Follmer
Lafayette
Lafayette School District Governing Board Member, Elect

Getting the facts straight on Baker

I am deeply disappointed with the misrepresentations I have seen about Catharine's outstanding record from the Bauer-Kahan campaign. Many mailers and recent letters to local newspapers have made misleading statements. For example, a recent letter to the editor stated that Catharine voted against Cap and Trade. Fact: Catharine voted for this measure and Governor Brown publicly commended her for it. Mailers claim that Catharine has voted against critical environmental legislation. Fact: Catharine Voted for 100% renewable energy, authored legislation to protect our coasts from more offshore drilling, and authored legislation to protect Californian's clean air rules. Mailers claim Catharine isn't who she says she is. Fact: Catharine is the ONLY candidate in this race to receive bipartisan endorsements from local elected officials in every single city and county she represents. If you want the truth about Catharine, look no further than her record and what she's accomplished. Don't believe the misrepresentations. I served for over a decade as an American diplomat with the U.S. State Department; working extensively with members of the U.S. House and Senate, and elected leaders from nations around the world. I have never come across a politician that has more integrity, is more pragmatic and has stronger principles, than Catharine Baker. She is the type of leader that we desperately need in Sacramento. Catharine has and will continue to serve us profoundly well and deserves to be reelected.

Cameron Burks
Vice Mayor, Lafayette

Trotter and McCluer for Council

To preserve our hills and open spaces, Moragans should support Dave Trotter and Mike McCluer for Town Council.

As a councilmember since 2006, Dave Trotter has been an effective leader on open space protection. He led the successful multi-year effort to strengthen the rules protecting hills and ridgelines. He's unafraid to stand up for his principles, as when he cast the lone "no" vote against the Bellavista project now being built on Rheem Boulevard. Moraga needs Dave's leadership again as the Council decides two major proposed developments in Bollinger Canyon and Indian Valley. Dave follows through on campaign commitments and has extensive knowledge of Town governance. We need him for one more term.

Current Planning Commissioner Mike McCluer has made open space protection a central

campaign principle. He showed he means it two weeks ago when the 126-house Bollinger Canyon development came before the Commission. McCluer spoke convincingly of the need to uphold Moraga's protections for hills, ridgelines and semi-rural character and he voted against the project, a recommendation that will go to the Council for a final decision. Mike also has a finance background, a useful skill set to add to the Council.

I cannot recommend Steve Woehleke for two reasons. First, as a Planning Commissioner, he opposed a fundamental premise of Moraga's Open Space Ordinance limiting housing densities on landslide areas. Woehleke pushed for higher densities on unstable land by allowing massive remedial grading (like we've seen at Bellavista). The intent of MOSO is to protect hillsides and ridgelines, not grade them away. Second, the commission deliberations Commissioner Woehleke chaired were rambling and unfocused. They were among the least effective meetings I've observed as an environmental consultant who has spent decades attending hearings at the local and regional level. Hardly the stuff of better decision making.

Please support Trotter and McCluer to protect open space.
Malcolm J. Sproul
Moraga

Dave Smith for Lafayette City Council

We are so fortunate to have 5 wonderful candidates running for the two seats available on Lafayette City Council. Over the years I've been very impressed and grateful to the men and women who have so unselfishly given their time to serve on council and the numerous committees that have helped keep Lafayette a great place to live. I am writing to encourage citizens to vote for Dave Smith for City Council because I believe it would be wonderful to have a fresh new voice in Lafayette. Dave may not have experience in our local politics but his wide range of experience in his jobs makes him an ideal candidate. The younger residents of our city need someone who understands their needs because he lives them too. I have seen firsthand, while sitting on a city commission, what the younger members can bring to the table. I've been so impressed with their enthusiasm, energy, and fresh ideas and know Dave shares these same attributes. Most of them have young families and busy, working lives, just like Dave, but are willing to share their time and talents for the good of the city.

For too long, the northeastern region of Lafayette, where 25% of homeowners live, has not been represented by anyone on City Council. Until we recently became very vocal about the terrible traffic in our area and how it is negatively impacting our lives, there did not seem to be much concern for our area because it isn't in the downtown. Dave understands our frustration because he lives here and has had the frequently unpleasant experience of having to get kids to or from other parts of Lafayette during morning and afternoon rush periods, or to get to his own meetings. He opposes the current plan to build 315 apartments at the corner of Deer Hill and Pleasant Hill Roads for several reasons, included creating even more traffic there, and for many environmental and public health concerns among other things. As a Councilmember he would keep an open mind on this issue as additional information is presented.

My hope is that Dave's candidacy will encourage more younger citizens to get involved with our city, to make their voices heard and to vote. Dave has some good, fresh ideas that could

help reduce traffic congestion, encourage sustainable growth in the correct areas of our city, and enhance our quality of life. His skill in building coalitions and working collaboratively to solve problems is needed now more than ever. I hope you'll vote for Dave Smith.

Linda Staaf
Lafayette

Former mayors for positive change

We are nine former mayors of Lafayette, and we are dismayed by the negative campaign rhetoric used by two of the five Lafayette City Council candidates. In contrast, Teresa Gerringer, Karen Maggio and Dave Smith are conducting positive campaigns.

Negative campaigns are infrequent in Lafayette's 50-year history. In the past we have had civil discourse and issue discussions during campaigns. When disagreements arose, they were issue-oriented and without personal attacks.

We are upset by the exaggerations, misstatements, and half-truths at candidates' night and in campaign material and campaign ads. Most especially, we are dismayed by the rhetoric against our volunteer commissioners and our City Manager, Steve Falk, who is one of the most respected city managers in California. Lafayette is run on a balanced budget, with ample reserves and no pension debt. Few cities can boast these facts. After 28 years of exemplary service, no one, especially Steve, should be treated with such disrespect.

The attacks on the Planning Commissioners and the City Manager are an attack on us, and the voters who elected us. We, as Mayors and council members, made the policies carried out by the City Manager and commissioners. We are proud of our decisions and are honored by the service that so many have given. Lafayette's meetings adhere to the state "sunshine" laws for open meetings, and we discipline those who have run afoul of these laws.

The city works with all our citizens to get their input.

We need council members who can forge agreements with each other and with neighboring jurisdictions. Traffic is a regional issue and we must elect council members who are collaborative in nature, not confrontational, to work cooperatively with the nearby cities whose drivers impact our roads.

We support Teresa Gerringer, whose 19 years of service on the school board, and Karen Maggio, whose years of service on the planning commission, are positive, proactive hard-working volunteers. Also, they both helped to build our new library. Their years of dedication to Lafayette distinguish them.

Lafayette needs them on the City Council.

Sincerely,
Don Tatzin, Mayor 1986-87, 1991-92, 1996-97, 2001-02, 2008-09, 2013-14, 2017-18
Mike Anderson, Mayor 2007-08, 2012-13, 2016-17
Brandt Andersson, Mayor 2009-10, 2014-15
Carol Federighi, Mayor 2002-03, 2006-07, 2011-12
Carl Anduri, Mayor 2004-05, 2010-11
Erling Horn, Mayor 1998-99, 2003-04
Anne Grodin, Mayor 1993-94, 1997-98
Judy Garvens, Mayor 1995-96
Bob Fisher, Mayor 1970-71, 1974-75

Candell and Samson for Council

I know we're all overwhelmed with campaign "news", but I feel strongly about the importance of thoughtfully choosing candidates

... continued from Page 11

in the upcoming City Council race in Lafayette. Personally, I'm concerned about the rampant growth occurring in Lafayette and how it has changed our City so dramatically over the past several years. We've lost the small, charming town feel that we used to have. The congestion, lack of parking and massive new development occurring throughout the City is affecting all of us in a negative way. And we, as citizens, don't seem to have a say in what is happening.

There are two candidates that I am supporting who are committed to working hard on these issues and represent what I feel needs to be done moving forward. These two candidates are Susan Candell and Ivor Samson. They are the only two candidates that rejected Measure L, and the only two to endorse our strict Conflict of Interest ordinance. They have worked tirelessly to make sure we have an open and transparent government, and will work with the citizens of Lafayette to represent what we want for our City. They are in favor of preserving open space and looking at how development affects our schools, quality of education, and the health and safety of our citizens.

It is the responsibility of each of us to take the time to learn the facts about each of the candidates and make a well-informed decision. I urge you to look at Susan and Ivor. I feel they are our only hope right now in preventing more massive development that cannot be supported by the size and infrastructure of our City. Please join me in supporting Susan Candell and Ivor Samson.

Dana Vannelli
Lafayette

Yet Another Bank to "Revitalize" Orinda?

Ms. Jenkins, Orinda City Council candidate, blames the current Council for voting "down" a new retail/restaurant project at 25A Orinda Way, which in her view would have brought "new services and amenities" to Orinda's downtown.

Inaccurate. The facts: After obtaining approval in 2016 for a building at 25A consisting of nearly 14,000 square feet of retail including a restaurant on the first floor, and obtaining several extensions of time to build, the landowner — one who had limited development experience under his belt — sought a change: Turning close to 50 percent of the retail/restaurant space into services — i.e., a workout studio and a bank branch.

Both the City Council and Planning Commission approved the workout studio and denied the bank (but approved an ATM).

Their reasoning: Focus on enhancing retail.

The workout studio would be good for retail, bringing in more foot traffic. The bank, in contrast, with limited daily hours — closed on weekends — would not attract as much continuous foot traffic — hurting retail.

The Council vote on the bank was 4-1. Councilperson Phillips (running for re-election and praised by candidate Jenkins for her vote) backed the bank.

Orinda has eight banks. This ninth bank — part of an otherwise fully approved retail/restaurant project — was not the key to revitalize downtown.

Hanging their hopes for downtown renewal on a ninth bank indicates that Jenkins and Phillips are not in step with realistic, seasoned views of revitalizing a downtown.

We need steps to encourage experienced retail professionals to invest in Orinda. Encourage improved restaurants and more retail. Not more banks.

Dave Anderson
Orinda

... continued on Page A14