

Letters to the Editor

Candell and Samson for City Council

Our family lives in Burton Valley and we have two children who are enrolled in local schools. We are writing in support of Susan Candell and Ivor Samson for Lafayette City Council.

Ivor's professional experience on the City Council and as an attorney are invaluable in protecting the city against current and pending litigation. Susan brings outstanding analytical and processing skills as a professional engineer.

Further, Susan's experience on the Circulation Commission is much needed as our city faces increasing traffic and congestion issues. Burton Valley in particular will be impacted as plans for Moraga's Bollinger Valley project move forward. It has been proposed that seven traffic lights be installed throughout Burton Valley in order to support the increased traffic from the 126 homes to be built for Bollinger Valley. Traffic patterns will increase and push through traffic to smaller streets where our families walk better to and bike. Lafayette's Circulation Commission voted on 36 objections/concerns with the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and voted not to support the certification of the report or approval of the project until these concerns were addressed. As an engineer, Susan sent in a separate objection based on the fact that Moraga didn't perform an HRA (Health Risk Assessment) to sensitive receptors within 1000 feet of the project. Susan also identified cancer risks for Acalanes students and faculty in the EIR for the Deer Hill homes project.

As many of the candidates are making similar statements regarding their positions on Measure C, the Deer Hill homes project, the conflict of interest (COI) ordinance and more, it's important to examine their past actions and statements. Candidates Teresa Gerringer and Karen Maggio supported both measures; candidates Ivor Samson and Susan Candell opposed both; candidate David Smith said at the debate on September 20 that he did not reside in the City at the time of the Measure C vote.

In addition, Ivor and Susan are the only candidates who have come out in strong support of the new COI policy. Lafayette must maintain a fair, legal and ethical process for approving development projects.

Laura and Randy Levandowski
Lafayette

Seeking collaboration

I'm voting for Teresa Gerringer and Dave Smith for Lafayette City Council for a simple reason: I'm tired of antagonistic politics and am looking for people who combine a genuine desire to serve with an attitude of collaboration. My email inbox has been filling with outrage, and I don't want that to be a louder voice than those of us who believe there is a better approach.

I worked closely with Teresa on the renewal campaign for a school bond measure. She was smart, dedicated and constructive, a pleasure to interact with. I came to trust her judgment and values.

Dave Smith I don't know as well, but in our interactions, he comes across with exactly the attitude I'd hope for. We need balanced, open-minded people overseeing decisions made for Lafayette.

Using Lafayette Measure L as some kind of litmus test is giving power to arguments not based in reality. Traffic is a problem, but the main issue is that when the travel time on 680/24 gets bad enough, mapping software routes people through Lafayette. It's that simple. A few more cars originating from within Lafayette may influence when the tipping point is reached, but the outcome (the equilibrium state) is identical. Nor is air pollution the problem. Change is. Some want it, others don't. And, wanting

it or not, some change is inevitable.

My goal is a different and better future than we'll get by just saying no to everything.

Larry Zulch
Lafayette

A vote for Gerringer and Maggio

I am supporting Teresa Gerringer for Lafayette City Council. Before Election Season started, I didn't know much or had heard of most of the candidates, but after attending the Homeowner's Council's Candidates Forum, I was very impressed with Teresa's experience, knowledge, and her attitude to work together to solve the problems that Lafayette faces.

With the lawsuits hitting Lafayette regarding housing and development, and with traffic such a hot topic issue, we need elected members who can collaborate and can work with others locally and regionally to find solutions. Change in Lafayette is coming, even Susan Candell had mentioned, and we can either embrace it on our terms, or we refuse and are forced or sued into solutions that we don't like.

I love Teresa's experience with 19 years on the Lafayette School Board, and having been a community leader fundraising for our amazing library. I find it important that she is advocating for the students and parents, which help make our community so special. She is incredibly resourceful and hard-working and gets things done!

Our second pick is Karen Maggio. She has been on the Lafayette Planning Commission for 10 years so she is very familiar with how the city operates, and she helped to draft the city's General Plan which led to our wonderful downtown and our state-of-the-art library. Karen also is a former Sustainable Lafayette board member and is a leader in managing sustainable communities at Mills College and the SF Presidio. With the recent international report release on fighting the climate crisis, we need an experienced leader like Karen to help our city advance its green goals while building a safe and healthy community for all!
Nancy Hu
Lafayette

Fay, Kosla and Worth for City Council on Nov. 6

On Nov. 6, Orindans will vote to fill three open seats on Orinda's City Council. Three candidates in particular, Dennis Fay and Nick Kosla, along with incumbent Amy Worth, represent Orindans BEST prospect for momentum in the process of Downtown renewal.

Fay, Kosla and Worth each offer a wealth of experience on issues pertaining to Orinda's Downtown. Dennis Fay, a former chair of the Citizens' Infrastructure and Oversight Committee (CIOC) was instrumental in the development of Orinda's program to repair its roads. Nick Kosla's experience as Chair of the Orinda Planning Commission will be invaluable in future Council discussions about land use and business development in Orinda's Downtown. Amy Worth is currently serving as Mayor in her 4th term on Orinda's City Council and has a proven voting record on thoughtful Downtown revitalization, including the input of two independent consulting firms (The Urban Land Institute and Main Street America) to provide options for downtown renewal, and most recently, the green lighting of the Master Streetscape Plan.

The addition of these three highly qualified and forward-thinking candidates to Orinda's City Council is exactly what we need to move forward with downtown. We offer our endorsement and urge others to vote for Dennis Fay, Nick Kosla and Amy Worth for Orinda City Council on Nov. 6. What's Up Downtown Orinda Steering Committee

Ali Drasin, Darien Destino, Ari Hatton, Kirsten Larsen, Trudi

Loscotoff, Laura McDowell, Hillary Murphy, Laura Pavlovich and Emily Stoddard

Kosla for Council

I am voting for Nick Kosla for Orinda City Council because Nick knows what Orinda is and what Orinda needs.

I am fortunate to be able to raise my children in the same community I grew up in. I met Nick Kosla back in the early '90s when we both attended Miramonte High School. I returned to Orinda nine years ago and reunited with Nick when he sat on the Planning Commission for Orinda. Since then, I have gotten to know Nick and his family very well. Nick is actively engaged in our community and our school, Wagner Ranch Elementary. I have spent hours talking to him about the future of Orinda and how we want to preserve Orinda's small town charm but see some progress in updating our downtown while preserving our schools and providing our families with a safe community. Nick understands Orinda and the challenges we face. Nick is passionate about our schools and our community, and his family is actively engaged in caring for our little town. I believe he has the right mindset and skills to help implement positive change where our downtown needs it while wanting to protect Orinda from turning into the high rise and chain restaurant communities we see around us.
Amy Stuffmann
Orinda

Vote For Candell and Samson for City Council

Lafayette's City Council Election has generated a lively debate in our community, and it's important to understand why. A critical issue is whether or not newly elected Council members will try to weaken or reverse the conflict of interest (COI) policy that was adopted on March 26, 2018.

The new policy prohibits commissioners on the Planning Commission (PC) and Design Review Commission (DRC) from working for, or designing projects for, builders/developers in Lafayette. Lafayette residents may be surprised to learn that this unethical financial relationship had existed between some commissioners and developers for years. To stop this practice, it wasn't enough for commissioners to recuse, because their firms or family would present the project to the PC or DRC on their behalf. Recusal is an important tool under most circumstances, but in the absence of a strong COI policy, it became a shell game.

Passage of the stronger COI policy ushered in dramatic changes during the past year, as witnessed with the resignations of 2 DRC commissioners and 5 PC commissioners. Since then, those vacancies have been filled with highly qualified commissioners, without conflicts, who are doing an outstanding job.

The policy change was a giant step for open-governance, transparency and democracy. Our community is now in a stronger position to protect public and environmental interests.

Ivor Samson and Susan Candell are the only candidates who voiced strong support for the new COI policy at the candidates' night, hosted by the Lafayette Homeowners Council. Samson spearheaded the policy change and Candell advocated for its passage. A vote for Candell and Samson is a vote for more transparency, ethical governance, and democracy.
MaryJo Cass
Lafayette

Teresa Gerringer for Lafayette City Council

Please join me in supporting and voting for Teresa Gerringer for Lafayette City Council. Teresa has been an active member of the Lafayette community since mov-

ing here in 1996 and has served on the Lafayette School Board for the past 19 years. I had the privilege of serving with her on the school board from 2008-2014. She is a thoughtful, caring, engaged board member committed to hearing all sides of an issue, evaluating proposed solutions carefully and thoughtfully, and implementing policies and actions in a pragmatic, move forward manner. Teresa evaluated budget issues carefully and worked hard to limit class size and protect valuable programs for our students despite the severe underfunding of suburban school districts by the state. She values communication with the community and has worked hard to keep all of Lafayette up-to-date with the issues, concerns and successes of the Lafayette School District. I know she will bring the same spirit to the Lafayette City Council.

Art Kapoor
Lafayette

Bring civility back with Gerringer

Like all communities, Lafayette has had its share of growing pains. With visionary leadership, City Council, city staff and a collaborative citizenry have brought us amenities like the Library and Learning Center, Lafayette Park Hotel, and Veterans Memorial. But change always brings angst. Over the decades, Lafayette's engaged citizens have a long tradition of vigorous but always respectful debate about the town's future. In the past year, this collegial spirit of tolerance of diverse perspectives has been drowned out less by policy debates than personal attacks on city staff, neighbors with whom we disagree, and most shockingly by two city council candidates disparaging their fellow candidates at Candidates Night and in campaign literature. In response, for the first time that I can recall, nine past mayors have signed a joint letter to Lafayette citizens expressing their concern over this degraded dialogue and have endorsed Teresa Gerringer and Karen Maggio for City Council.

I, too, believe Teresa Gerringer is the stand-out candidate for City Council. At this moment of transition, Lafayette needs tested, collaborative, visionary and above-all positive leadership to navigate the next decade. It's a privilege to endorse her candidacy. Teresa's contributions to Lafayette span over 20 years, with highlights including co-chairing the Library Community Campaign and serving on the founding board, 19 years on the Lafayette School Board, founding member of the Community Foundation, Chamber of Commerce Advisor, and VP Contra Costa School Boards Association. As School Board President, she successfully guided challenging financial negotiations with the state, brought resolution to often passionate debates over complex issues, and always led with humor and grace in sometimes tense situations. She has received numerous state and local recognition awards for distinguished service. Importantly, she has always astutely avoided any conflicts of interest.

It's time to take stock not only of how to manage the town's growth, but how to bring civility back to community conversations. Teresa represents the leadership qualities to do both. Think positive, vote Teresa!
Kathy Merchant
Lafayette/Orinda

Gerringer for Council

I am writing today to express my enthusiastic endorsement of Teresa Gerringer for Lafayette City Council. Teresa has served our community for over 20 years. She has proven her leadership through collaboration and hard work on the Lafayette School Board, the Lafayette Community Foundation Board, and as co-chair of the Lafayette Library Community Cam-

... continued from Page 12

paign. I have been fortunate to work with Teresa for the past several years in my capacity as Stanley Middle School PTA President and RAPPORT (Lafayette School District's parent clubs' committee) Chair. What has impressed me time and again is Teresa's unwavering dedication to her current constituents, the students and children of Lafayette. I have no doubt that she will continue to display that dedication to the citizens of Lafayette if elected to the City Council.

Sincerely,
Kelly Daggs
Lafayette

Eve Phillips won't improve downtown Orinda

First-term city council member Eve Phillips has consistently refused to revisit the core land use rules that have left our downtown in a state of deterioration, disuse, and dereliction. She was the sole vote against even starting a conversation on downtown, instead hoping that the approval of a few new businesses in our dilapidated buildings might somehow revitalize downtown. Perhaps these outlier positions is why she lists no endorsements from any current or past city councilmembers, who otherwise endorse Dennis Fay, Nick Kosla and Amy Worth. Ms. Phillips is out of step with Orindans and won't offer the leadership we need to bring downtown back.

Sandi Balonick
Orinda

Chris Severson for Acalanes Union School Board of Governors

Editor:

I support Chris Severson and here is what I know of Chris:

1. Chris brings immediate passion for this job because of the five children that he and Pam are raising. He is invested. He understands better than most, the worries and concerns of parents.

2. Experience in school administration is already a no brainer for Chris. He has served as the President of the Orinda Union School Board. He knows what to do for the protection of children, for their learning and advancement academically, and for the support of the administration, staff and faculty of a school district.

3. Professionally, Chris determined early in his life to study and become an Emergency Room Physician. I envision that all who have received professional care of Chris in such an intense environment, have found a caring, level headed, professionally passionate fellow. When I commented earlier that Chris is all about the protection of others—children in particular—I would argue that he has that characteristic in his soul.

4. Chris does not give up. Besides life's lessons that Chris has learned as a father, husband, and doctor, Chris is a marathon runner! Until one participates in a marathon, no one knows what it is like to find themselves at mile 21 and realize that the next three are uphill. Chris has qualified for the Boston Marathon a handful of times. He faces mile 21 in a marathon and no, he does not laugh at it, but he continues; steady, focused, and on it! He brings that quality to his life. He will bring that quality to the Board.

5. Chris is a lifelong resident. He has spent his youth observing his parents and their serve. His parents have been leaders of major business firms, of large religious groups, of school districts, and of city councils. It could be argued here, that Chris has service in his blood.

Like me, please consider voting for Chris Severson for the Governing Board of the Acalanes Union High School District.

Bob Packer