

Letters to the editor

Orinda and MCE

Would you like to have a choice in electricity providers other than PG&E? Local control over your electricity provider? Better options for renewable energy? Thirteen other Contra Costa cities including Lafayette, Moraga, Walnut Creek, Concord, Danville, El Cerrito, and unincorporated Contra Costa County offer MCE (originally Marin Clean Energy) as a second energy choice to residents and businesses. But Orinda has not yet given us access to choose energy providers.

MCE offers cleaner electricity than PG&E for slightly less cost. Adding MCE as an alternative electricity provider also includes the no-cost choice for each household or business to opt-out of MCE and continue to use PG&E with no change to existing rates.

Ask the city council to put MCE on the agenda for discussion. Call, write, or come to the next Orinda City Council Meeting, Tuesday, April 9 at 7:00 pm at the Orinda Library Auditorium. Write to the city council members c/o the City Clerk, Sheri Smith at ssmith@cityoforinda.org.

For more information about MCE go to: www.mcecleanenergy.org

Jim Ulrick
Orinda

North Orinda Fuel Break

I'm confused about [the March 20] front page article about the North Orinda Fuel Break. Your reporter, Nick Marnell, quotes Lucy Talbot as stating: "While a (fuel) break is a place to start, I have grave concerns that far too little is being done by our elected officials to address the very real threat of a fire danger to our Community." However, he precedes her opinion with his comment that as a candidate last November for the MOFD Board she had no firefighting background and therefore lost to a career firefighter.

Is Marnell implying that the fact that she was not a career firefighter disqualifies her opinion? If so, why did he include it in his article? He does not go on to agree or disagree; add confirming or contrary opinions. What's his point?

I happen to agree with her. Although I am another non-firefighter, I am someone who has been studying MOFD for a decade and have been actively keeping up on events. I have been concerned that possibly we are devoting resources on fighting fires (closing the barn door after the horse has left) that could be better utilized for prevention.

MOFD's current \$28 million budget includes \$623,000 for fire prevention but \$598,000 of that is for administrators and inspectors while only \$25,000 is for "exterior removal hazard." And

their ten year forecast only increases that \$25,000 by three percent a year while revenues are increasing at over \$1 million a year.

\$25,000 a year is not appropriate for the number one priority in CalFire's just released Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Report; fuel reduction projects.

It is great that we are getting the state to fund the Fuel Break this year, but what happens when 30-40 mph winds blow embers across the break? There goes North Orinda? Unless there is a major fuel reduction effort, especially in Orinda (and don't expect 7,000 individual homeowners to act in unison without serious incentives; which is another item on the CalFire priority list), we could be the next Paradise. Will the State fund those incentives or should we plan for those ourselves?

Steve Cohn
Orinda

Terraces of Lafayette

I feel compelled to respond to several false and misleading statements contained in Save Lafayette's ad in the March 20, 2019 edition of the Lamorinda Weekly.

Save Lafayette falsely alleges that O'Brien Homes would not "negotiate a compromise" with the community.

The truth is that O'Brien willingly accepted a compromise offer proposed by the city to build 44 single-family homes and provide the city with numerous community amenities (including a sports field, dog park, parking lot, and playground) instead of 315 apartments, but city residents voted down the compromise in the June 2018 election. As we stated during the Measure L campaign, we have the legal right to resume processing the apartments application, and, as we said we would, we did so after the election results became known.

According to Save Lafayette, O'Brien and its land use attorney are "retaliating" against Lafayette with "bullying and intimidation".

The truth is that O'Brien has worked with the city for eight years on this property, and we are doing nothing more than what we previously stated: resuming the apartments application after the voters rejected the Measure L compromise.

According to Save Lafayette, O'Brien has demanded that Susan Candell recuse herself from any involvement in the Terraces of Lafayette 315-apartment pro-

ject "despite, or because of, Lafayette voters' clear support for her leadership."

The truth is that it has been shown that Ms. Candell has frequently expressed bias against the project, and we exercised our due process rights by requesting her recusal, which she did. Our request had only to do with protecting our constitutional rights, not election results.

According to Save Lafayette, O'Brien "now demands (Ms. Candell's) silence even as a private citizen" even though she did recuse herself.

The truth is that an elected official who recuses him/herself cannot negate their publicly expressed position and resume their role as a private citizen as if they were not elected.

According to Save Lafayette, O'Brien "demands that the City accept only an 'addendum' to the 2012 (sic) EIR, thereby avoiding public review and input."

The truth is that an addendum is the legally-required document to follow a certified EIR when the project has not changed.

Dennis O'Brien
O'Brien Homes

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters must be factually accurate and be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

The Moraga Barber Shop



Photo Vera Kochan

From left: Joan Bruzzone, Clark Wallace, and owner Elroy Motta

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Steady customer Clark Wallace from Orinda has been coming to the barber shop since 1965. "I helped broker all of Moraga with my dad."

Moraga Center owner, Joan Bruzzone said, "My husband and I worked with Clark and his father to purchase this area. There's still so much history in Moraga."

Motta, a Danville resident, began his journey as a hairdresser at the age of 24. He joked, "I got too slow and couldn't outrun the husbands, so I got into carpet cleaning instead." In 1992, he answered an ad in a newspaper for a barber's job in Moraga, "and here I am!"

Motta has loyal customers coming from all areas of the East Bay, such as Oakland, Danville, Concord and Pleasant Hill. Many more work in the area and stop in on their lunch breaks.

While most of the male clientele made self-deprecating comments about bald spots and receding hairlines, it was clear that they were steady customers. Jay Daniel of Moraga says, "I moved into the area in '98. I get on my bike and I ride here and do my shopping." Moraga resident Tony Rago says he's been coming to the shop since he was in first grade. "I keep coming back for the friendliness and the good haircuts." And Gil Lopez of Orinda has been a customer for 10 years: "I love the way Maria cuts my hair." Female clients are also welcome.

Customers are not the only

ones who have put in a lot of years with Moraga Barber Shop. The employees are longtimers, too. Bill McIntosh has been with Motta for 18 years, commuting all the way from Tracy. He states, "If it wasn't worth it, I wouldn't do it. It's a great shop with great customers." Hair stylist, Nancy Taylor, who has been with the shop for 9 years, says, "I like all the people who come here and it's a fun group to work with."

Motta hurt his back a few years ago and doesn't cut hair anymore, but he does take appointment only requests from some of his longtime customers.

When asked if there were any odd haircut requests, McIntosh volunteered, "We had some pretty wild Mohawks, and just last week there was a request for a mullet, because the kid lost a bet that Gonzaga would beat Saint Mary's in basketball."

There is a bit of a mystery at the barber shop. Motta has an extensive collection of airplane photos and models on the premises. "One day, about a year ago, when I came in the morning to open the shop there was a package left at the door. Inside was a model of a red bi-plane." He laments, "To this day I have no idea who made it or who left it there. If anyone knows, please contact me."

The Moraga Barber Shop is open Mondays from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Tuesdays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The shop is closed on Sundays. Info: (925) 247-1101

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