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Moraga Center Specific Plan's first Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting held

By Vera Kochan



Members of Moraga Center Specific Plan Citizens Advisory Committee Photo Vera Kochan

committee were 32 stakeholders from the town - civic leaders, to business owners, to average citizens - who were chosen to represent their fellow residents of Moraga in deciding how best to revitalize the community.

Each committee member was asked what their hopes were for the town's future. The most common reply was "balance between new commerce and new residences." Other concerns were for traffic congestion that comes with more housing; keeping the small town feel while encouraging growth; and increasing town-gown relations.

The committee's process, stated Early, is to make the rules and present them to the property owner. The committee cannot designate where a building or business will go.

As an attorney, Korpus instructed the members of the importance in adhering to the principles of the Brown Act. The Brown Act is an act of the California State Legislature, authored by Assemblymember Ralph M. Brown in 1953 that guarantees the public's right to attend and participate in meetings of local legislative bodies. It was designed to avoid decision-making in secret. For public officials to hold private meetings is against the law and any eventual discussions of more than half of the committee are illegal and could see fines levied and possible jail time.

Many committee members had various questions regarding the Brown Act's regulations and accidentally or unconsciously violating it. Once the meeting was adjourned the Brown Act and its implications were the topics of discussion on the way to the parking lot.

The advisory committee will tackle land use issues regarding commercial and residential development as they pertain to zoning codes. Special opportunities for the MCSP could involve a small hotel or bed and breakfast, a multigenerational community center/gymnasium and a Moraga Ranch with Lafayette-Moraga Trails.

Two additional CAC meetings are scheduled for Sept. 4 and Sept. 19 which the public is also welcome to attend.

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