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MORAGA

See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
Town of Moraga:
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Moraga Citizens' Network:
www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

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



Members of Moraga Center Specific Plan Citizens Advisory Committee

Photo Vera Kochan

By Vera Kochan

Nearly two decades after the Moraga Center Specific Plan was just a footnote attached to the 2002 adoption of the Moraga General Plan, the first of three Citizens Advisory Committee Meetings was held July 8 at the Saint Mary's College Soda Center.

Originally scheduled to take place in La Sala at the Hacienda de las Flores, the meeting was moved in order to provide more elbow room for the 35-member advisory committee and the public.

Taking the helm of the introductory meeting was Moraga Planning Director Derek Farmer serving as

project manager. Also present was Town Manager Cynthia Battenberg along with outside consultants David Early and Carey Stone from Placeworks, a community design firm. Moraga Mayor Roger Wykle and Vice Mayor Kymberleigh Korpus served as committee chair and vice-chair respectively. Making up the rest of the advisory 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.

League of California Cities – a brief history lesson

By Vera Kochan

The town council designated Moraga Mayor Roger Wykle as its voting delegate and Vice Mayor Kymberleigh Korpus

as an alternate to the League of California Cities annual Long Beach meeting in October. While the town's sitting mayor and vice mayor have typically been delegated

throughout the years, it was made unanimously official during the June 26 town council meeting.

The LCC was founded in 1898 with the intent to "advocate for the common interests of California's cities."

It all began when the Alameda (population 17,000) town council requested their city clerk, Ben Lamborn, to write a letter to the more than 100 cities in the state inquiring about their experiences with a new mechanical device called a road roller.

When Lamborn's query letter took up only the top half of the page, he decided "to make it look better" by adding additional questions such as: Name of city? Population? When incorporated? Officials?

Haven A. Mason, the city clerk of Santa Clara (population 3,200), was a community activist and newspaper publisher who had recently read about the National Municipal League, founded in 1894 by a citizens group tired of corruption in government. Mason saw unique possibilities through Lamborn's letter and rode the Southern Pacific Railroad to meet with Lamborn about taking multi-city cooperation a step further.

Mason and Lamborn saw the advantages of organizing city officials to consolidate

experiences with more than just road equipment. Their vision was to create a veritable how-to manual of suggestions regarding things like record keeping, tax assessing, coping with the recent phenomenon of electricity and other new scientific inventions.

Santa Clara's mayor, De-los Druffel, liked the idea and sent letters to all of the other California mayors. When the question of where the meetings could be held arose, San Francisco's wealthy mayor, James D. Phelan, advanced \$3,000 of his own money, if the meetings were to take place in his city. Phelan's plans to run for the U.S. Senate helped to open his wallet toward the new venture.

Enthusiastic replies from almost half the cities in the state brought the first League of California Municipalities to a meeting at Pioneer Hall on Fourth Street in San Francisco, on Dec. 14, 1898. Phelan's opening address suggested, "We should come together once each year to formulate our needs and relate our experiences for the benefit of all."

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COMPASS



Town Council

Wednesday, July 24, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, July 31, 7 p.m. Special Meeting
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room,
335 Rheem Blvd.

Planning Commission

Monday, Aug. 5, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Park and Recreation Commission

Tuesday, Aug. 20, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Moraga School District Board Meetings

TBD
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium, 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
www.moraga.k12.ca.us
See also AUHSD meeting page A2