

Saranap area provides input for Envision Contra Costa 2040

By John T. Miller

The ambitious undertaking of Envision Contra Costa 2040 – the county's plan to address land use, transportation, housing, climate change, environmental justice, and other important issues over the next 20 years – is underway, with the county completing the last of 17 community meetings earlier this month at the Lafayette Veterans Memorial Building.

Representatives of the Contra Costa Planning Department, with Supervisor Candace Andersen chairing, met with about 25 residents of the Saranap and Parkmead unincorporated areas for input on putting together a new general plan and zoning code for the county.

Andersen said, "The plan is a road map to where the county is going in the next 20 years. This is the legacy we're leaving behind by creating a better future for the next generation."

Will Nelson, a senior planner with the county who spoke at the meeting, said both the general plan and the zoning code are in need of updating. The current general plan was adopted in 1991, while the zoning code has not been comprehensively

overhauled in over 70 years. "The current general plan was mostly written in the '80s," he said. "Much has changed since then."

Barry Miller, an urban planning consultant retained by the county, also addressed the group, saying, "The general plan is a constitution for development and conservation, providing consistent direction for the future." He added that the plan should balance growth, conservation, and quality of life while also documenting baseline environmental conditions.

After the introduction by the speakers, participants discussed their Saranap and Parkmead neighborhoods, brainstorming what they liked about them, and also what they saw as challenges and issues for the future.

Likes included the quiet ambiance and small town neighborhood feel, proximity to BART and trails, good public schools, extended family living close by and many other perks.

Some of the challenges and issues of concern included a fear of too much development, not enough open space and parks, a lack of viable public transportation, and safety issues for pedestrians and bicycles – especially students on their way to

and from schools – due to narrow streets, too many parked cars and a lack of sidewalks.

Residents stressed preserving the community feeling by encouraging small businesses and accommodating an aging population.

From Bethel Island and Discovery Bay in the east to Rodeo and Richmond in the west, the county conducted community meetings of residents from their diverse and wide-ranging unincorporated areas. The county also hosted open houses and gathered a wealth of information about citizens' concerns and needs.

Envision Contra Costa 2040 is a two-year process, with public meetings and documents developed in 2019, a public review process in the first half of 2020, and formal hearings in late 2020. County residents can use the interactive website at envisioncontracosta2040.org for dialogue, input and more information.

The next meeting, focusing on implementing the County's Climate Action Plan, will be held by the Committee on Sustainability at 5 p.m. Aug. 26 at the Department of Conservation and Development, 30 Muir Road, Martinez.

National Night Out coming to local communities Aug. 6

This year National Night Out takes place across the country on Aug. 6. And first responders in Lamorinda hope for a strong participation right here in this community.

The event is an annual community-building campaign that promotes first responder-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. National Night Out provides an opportunity to bring police officers, fire-

fighters, local officials and neighbors together under positive circumstances.

Neighborhoods are encouraged to host block parties of any type – simple or more elaborate – with the goal of getting to know first responders and build community among neighbors. Residents schedule a visit by local police who hope to use the event to share crime prevention tips, emergency preparedness tips and to encourage residents to sign up

for the emergency warning system.

Last year the police visited four such parties.

Residents wishing to schedule a first responder visit should fill out a request by going to <https://tinyurl.com/yxcg22vq>

To sign up for the Contra Costa County community warning system residents should go to www.cococws.us – P. Fisher

Letters to the editor

Cameras most helpful when turned on

On Monday evening of July 1st, there were two criminals who were breaking into cars by Stanley Middle School. Our cameras were turned off but another neighbor also was broken into and had their cameras working.

The suspects fled the scene but left the stolen iPad in the "on" position. I followed the iPad into Oakland (by Coliseum) and tracked the suspects to a liquor store. I managed to follow the iPad outside the store to a nearby residence. I immediately went to the Lafayette Police Station and reported the stolen iPad and location to Officer MacDonald and the detectives.

There is actually more to apprehending suspects than I realized. You have to have burden of proof to search and show the car in the area of the crime. As the detective worked on the case, in front of me, they found out the suspects stole the license plate of the same exact car and that the car they were driving

(Blue Highlander) was in fact stolen. As the police approached the location of the iPad, the iPad was turned off and the suspects got away.

Within 24 hours, the suspects totaled the car in an accident and fled the scene. Much of the non-valuable stolen property was recovered in the car by Officer MacDonald. It is a reminder to everyone to stay vigilant and safe. Make sure cars are locked and investing in a camera system really helps the police do their job.

Butch Haze
Lafayette

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A cut above at RnR Barber and Salon

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As I do this, I also educate them on how to prep their skin and how to treat it after a shave and how to shave with the grain, across the grain and against the grain to get a baby smooth feel without the irritation."

Orinda resident Eric Menke, who gets his hair cut once a month, discovered RnR pretty much by accident. "I was walking down the street and I stuck my head in and I was grabbed by the atmosphere, the décor and the vibe," Menke said. "There are sculptures, boxing photos and a racing motorcycle in the shop. Some barbershops, you walk in, sit down and walk out. I found Robin to be a very special man with a very special business. He looked at the way my hair has grown out and the pattern of its growth and then dis-

cussed with me about what he thought would be good for me and then asked what I thought would be good. It was all very thoughtful and extremely professional. It's amazing the way that they have operated and grown through word of mouth and people just walking by."

Robin is available for any type of requests: "Once I had a 14-year-old girl who had 12 inch spikes in her hair and she had me shave her head between the spikes with a straight razor to get the punk rock look."

With a belief in paying forward for all the people that have helped him in his career, Robin says they are starting an apprentice barbers program to provide on-the-job training. "They can come in and get the hours they need so that they can take pass the State Licensing exam without going to barber college."

Along with running RnR with Roya, Robin – who was a competitive amateur boxer – is looking to open up a boxing studio for men, women and children of all ages: "People have taken to calling me the Barber Boxer. It's my hope to be able to create the official training center for Northern California Golden Gloves. We're just looking to get the right property here in Lafayette."

Roya speaks for Robin and herself when she sums up their lives in Lafayette: "It's a family community that we love. Everybody looks out for each other and everyone cares. It's a home."

RnR is open seven days a week, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Appointments can be made on their website rnrbarbers.com or by phone at (925) 385-0491.

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