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Moraga Road second right-turn lane pilot program continues to end of year



Photo Pippa Fisher

Pedestrians now have to cross at three places with the closure of the crossing by the Plaza, as part of the traffic pilot program.

By Pippa Fisher

The two-lane right-turn from Moraga Road onto Mt. Diablo Boulevard pilot program is set to continue through the end of the year. Such was the unanimous decision of the Transportation and Circulation Commission Oct. 7. The pilot's future will be reassessed at that time.

The city council approved the project in May 2018, but although slated to begin at the end of July 2018 and last 90 days, delays receiving necessary tracking system equipment and complications arising from that delay resulted in changes not being implemented until mid-November. A new controller was installed in mid-December. The project involved allowing a second right-hand turn from the center lane and of necessity closing the crosswalk to pedestrians with a barricade on the east side of the junction by the Plaza.

The commissioners heard a detailed report on the project from Transportation Planner Justin Horng. He explained that traffic had big sea-

sonal variations but that it appeared overall throughput did increase as a result.

Engineering and Public Works Director Mike Moran said that feedback received on the pilot was largely negative, noting that children walking to and from the school as well as older individuals from senior housing on Moraga Boulevard all use the east side of Moraga Road and do not appreciate now having to make three crossings where it could be one. He noted that the throughput is less than optimal because the middle lane is shared with others going straight or turning left, so unless the driver is at the front of the lane, they could be stuck waiting anyway.

Moran also pointed out that closing the crosswalk goes against General Plan goals and Downtown Specific Plan Objectives of encouraging a pedestrian-oriented downtown. Because of this, staff recommended ending the pilot study and restoring the pre-study crossing.

However, the two members of the public who spoke at the meeting were both in favor of continuing the two

right-hand turn lanes and keeping the crosswalk closed, citing the danger to pedestrians of crossing there.

"The trellis is in the way," said Lafayette resident Cheryl MacDonald. "If you can't make eye contact with the driver, they can't see you."

Lafayette resident Adele Connor, who has previously shared her vision for improving traffic on Moraga Road with city leaders, said that this pilot study jumped the gun and that in or-

der for it to be successful it would have to be implemented in conjunction with several other measures further back along Moraga Road during shared commute hours.

All commissioners agreed to give the study more time and to allow for consistent traffic reporting through all months of the year, until the end of December when they will bring the issue back for further discussion.

Witches got rhythm



Local witches brush up their broom dance on the Plaza Oct. 5. Photo Pippa Fisher

Halloween got off to an early start this month with a coven of witches expressing their spooky style as they rocked the broom dance on the Plaza Oct. 5 before heading out for a walk through town.

Organized by Susan Chritton, the annual stroll this year included stops

at Postino, Pizza Antica, Zoonies, Lafayette Beauty, and Amphora for treats before heading back to Sideboard. All proceeds this year benefited Planned Parenthood.

It was a BYOB (bring your own broom) event.

- P. Fisher

Mayor recognizes 75 years of THT's contribution to community



Photo Pippa Fisher

Town Hall Theatre staff and board receive a proclamation in honor of their 75th anniversary at the Sept. 23 city council meeting.

Town Hall Theatre received a proclamation recognizing its 75th anniversary at the Sept. 23 city council meeting.

Mayor Mike Anderson thanked the staff and board members in attendance for all the theater has done for the community through the years.

Artistic Director Susan Evans' enthusiasm was evi-

dent as she explained that since 1944 Town Hall has been providing theater for the community. "We are so excited to be celebrating our 75th anniversary which, in theater terms, is like 10,000 years," she said.

The theater will be holding a masquerade gala celebration Oct. 26 (see related story on Page B5). - P. Fisher

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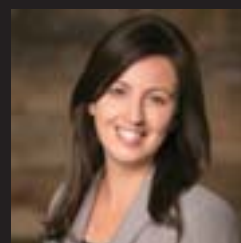
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<p>Lafayette Public Meetings</p>	<p>City Council Monday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p>
	<p>Planning Commission Monday, Oct. 21, 7 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p>
<p>School Board Meetings Acalanes Union High School District Wednesday, Oct. 16, 7 p.m. AUHSD Board Room 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette www.acalanes.k12.ca.us</p>	<p>Design Review Monday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Arts & Science Discovery Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.</p>
	<p>Lafayette School District Wednesday, Oct. 16, 7 p.m. Regular Board Meeting Stanley M.S. Library 3477 School St., Lafayette www.lafsd.k12.ca.us</p>