

Beyond Aero bike shop opens in Orinda



Photo Sora O'Doherty

By Sora O'Doherty

A new bicycle shop has opened in Orinda at 85 Orinda Way, formerly the home of Tally Home, which closed. Andres Douzoglou had been operating his shop,

Beyond Aero, in Berkeley for a little over five years. The shop, located off San Pablo Avenue near Gilman, had a loyal clientele who came not only from Berkeley but from all over the Bay Area, particularly from Oakland.

Douzoglou, who lives in Orinda with his wife and 6-month-old daughter, decided that his business would easily transfer to Orinda, eliminating his commute. When he was bicycling past and noticed the closing sign on Tally Home, he knew he'd found his spot.

He's been open a little under a month and, while the shop may not be quite as fully set up as he would like, his business is running smoothly. Douzoglou sells quite a different type of bicycle from the two existing bicycle shops in Lamorinda, Hank & Frank and Sharp Bicycles in Lafayette. While those shops cater to a more general type of audience, Douzoglou sells bicycles with a very narrow focus, intended largely for triathletes. He also sells road bikes for racing and gravel bikes for on- and off-road experiences. The bike brands he sells are: Pinarello, OPEN, 3T, Factor, Scott, and Parlee. Although he sells bikes for racing, he notes that you don't have to race to have fun on a road bike.

Douzoglou grew up in Venezuela, attended high school in Washington DC, and moved to the Bay Area after

graduating from Arizona State with double degrees in communication and political science. "Two degrees for the price of one," he jokes, but claims he doesn't use either. In Arizona he approached a local bike store owner and asked if he could manage the store, to learn the business. It turned out that a bike store was just what he wanted.

A cyclist and a triathlete, Douzoglou believes that in the Bay Area no other bike shop can cater to triathletes as well as his shop. But the sport has declined a little, so he is building more gravel bikes. "I like building nice bikes," he says, and he's big into bike fitting. At Beyond Aero, they want to find the right bike for each customer, taking into account what the person wants the bike for, as well as their size and body morphology. All that knowledge is what Beyond Aero excels at. "I'm a bad salesperson," Douzoglou admits. If he believes that a customer will be happier with the bike they have than the one they are looking at, he'll tell them so. "I don't want to put people on bikes that are clearly the wrong bikes for them," he says. "I care about people

getting the right bikes and I care about my image, my reputation. The last thing I want is for people to look at a bike and say, 'Whoa, where'd you get that thing,'" he says. Instead, he wants them to say, "Wow, where'd you get that great bike?" His reputation is on the line with each bike he sells.

Beyond Aero is a destination bike shop, and Douzoglou has set his hours at Monday through Friday, from 2 to 7 p.m. However, he intends to start opening on Saturday for a few hours in response to customer demand.

Douzoglou is delighted with the new location. He likes the quiet tree-lined street, with parking both in front and behind. "At some point," he muses, "I'll probably have some group rides that will probably leave from here." He is also happy about being next to Geppetto's Café. "Coffee and cycling go hand in hand," he believes. "This place seemed like a natural fit that checked all the boxes for us."

Beyond Aero can be reached at (925) 257-7035 (voice or text) and (415)545-8445 (voice only).

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Changes at Rheem Shopping Center



Squeeze Juice Bar

Photo Jenn Freedman

In September, Squeeze Juice Bar opened in the former location of Little Hearty Noodle next to CVS. The bar features smoothies, shakes, fresh pressed juices, and soft-serve ice cream; organic boba teas and snacks are being added to the menu soon. The environment is colorful and kid-friendly ... kids can even draw on the walls with markers! Squeeze is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m., and Sunday from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Also in September, Moraga Produce closed. No news on the new tenant yet.

In October, after a nine-month hiatus, New Delhi Bistro returned to the center in the same location. Owner Roos Pal decided to return to the original name and expand the offering to include both the Baagan vegan menu (which has been available since last fall) and the full previous Indian menu to increase their reach to more customers and also provide the only Indian food available in Moraga. New Delhi Bistro is open daily, Monday through Saturdays from 10 a.m. until 8:30 p.m. and Sundays from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m.

On the horizon, a new upscale consignment shop is expected to open in the shopping center before the end of the year.

Rheem Shopping Center has made a few physical changes as well. Specifically, look for new landscaping and string lights in front of China Moon, Lamorinda Pizza, Tangelo, and Noodle Theory, with new outdoor furniture coming soon.

By Jenn Freedman

The fall season has brought a handful of changes to Moraga's Rheem Shopping Center.

City leaders weigh in on controversial car wash plans

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For the immediate neighbors the concern about noise from the washers, blowers, buzzers, and cars idling just feet away from their border is only part of it. They are concerned too about pollution from idling cars, intrusive brighter lights and declining property values as a result.

Jon Williams made the point that it is not just the neighbors who will be impacted. He expressed concern about the additional traffic the car wash could bring to an already congested corridor, and for the safety of pedestrians in the area, noting that Acalanes High School students already jaywalk over to the existing retail shop to buy snacks.

Attorney David Bowie, representing the applicant/owner of the gas station Vanita Bindal, gave a 10-minute presentation during which he spoke of the need that this business fills in the area. He said the car wash is a "green" option, using filters and recycled water. He pointed to Bindal's willingness to comply with all conditions and extra mitigations aimed to address noise concerns, and said that by objective standards the noise would be well below permissible levels.

Claiming that the project is compatible with the city's

general plan, Bowie pointed out to the council that it is obligated to a legal standard. "It seems to me that this is a completely lawful use, that objectively all the information indicates is entirely appropriate for this site."

Bowie pointed to the applicant's more than 35 year-history as a good citizen – a major contributor of sales tax, with no history of accidents or confrontations – and the challenges of running such a business without an additional revenue stream. He said that the project would provide a necessary service. "If you deny this particular station you may end up having no station in that location," he warned.

However, plenty of Springhill residents, already frustrated with some of the worst traffic in the city, disagreed. Many were concerned about safety for vehicular traffic and pedestrians. Several cited concerns with particulate matter from idling cars. One Martinez resident who herself lives next to a car wash, said the sound wall next to her home doesn't block anything and that the lights are "like the noonday sun."

Of the 31 speakers during public comment, five spoke in favor of the car wash, including a couple who distribute fuel to the gas station. They spoke of Bindal's well-run operation and noted the eco-

logical value of car washes. They pointed to the already-existing, bigger impact of the idling cars dropping off students at Acalanes High School each day.

The council had concerns. Mayor Mike Anderson asked to see specific turning radius plans, as he questioned the amount of space available. Vice Mayor Susan Candell requested an assessment of the increase of ambient lighting from current, and more information on the decibel specifications. Other questions concerned clarification on parking allowances and use, and on the hours of operation. Council Member Teresa Gerring asked staff to look into putting in a crosswalk. Council Member Steven Bliss voiced concerns over proposed traffic circulation. The council also asked to see cross section showing elevations on the southern edge to get a better idea of impact.

Council Member Cam Burks made it apparent he was ready to vote on the issue right there and said that these questions should have been answered by the applicant and the applicant's attorney. "They should have been ready to go tonight," he said, but he deferred to the mayor saying, "I'm just expressing my displeasure in the bureaucratic process."

This matter will be continued on Nov. 18.



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