

Letters to the editor

Response regarding school closures

As a 19-year-old college student who's returned to Lamorinda due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I feel compelled to respond to Dave Cummins' recent letter to the editor and to note that his views don't express those of young people like myself.

First off: children are not "bulletproof." The very usage of the word "bulletproof" in the context of schools strikes me as alarmingly tone-deaf. Mr. Cummins ignores the fact that many children and members of their family are, in fact, vulnerable to experiencing complications from COVID-19. Children can contract the virus just like anyone else, and can still transit coronavirus asymptotically. Keeping schools open doesn't just affect children, it also puts faculty members and staff at risk. When I was asked to leave my college campus, I did so willingly because I knew that I was protecting my older professors from a disease that, yes, was more likely to be lethal to them than to me.

My life wasn't ruined by finishing the school year at home, and it's an exaggeration to say that shelter-in-place is costing teenagers their "future." We're experiencing many real disappointments and losses, but sending us back to school is not an acceptable solution. If we had stayed in school, COVID-19 would have spread far more rapidly — and it would have disproportionately impacted low-income communities and vulnerable members of our population. We cannot prioritize our individual interests and leave other Americans behind.

I won't feel fully safe returning to school until the response to COVID-19 includes rigorous testing and contact-tracing processes that effectively track the spread of the virus and isolate anyone who may have been infected.

During a time when we should be coming together, it's disappointing to see residents show disregard for others. I believe that every human life has value and is worth protecting — no matter what — and that while economic

downturns are not permanent, the loss of a life is just about the most permanent thing there is. I plan on continuing to "follow the science and save lives," and I'll stay wary of armchair epidemiologists who show little concern for public health. I hope that the rest of the Lamorinda community does the same.

Lauren Rodriguez
Moraga

Orinda is Wasting Money on a Downtown Precise Plan

Orinda does not need a Downtown Precise Plan ("DPP"), which would amend the General Plan and existing zoning regarding downtown. As a preliminary matter, it is important to understand that the unstated purpose is to increase density and increase height limits downtown. It is not about preserving Orinda's downtown's village character.

A DPP is not needed for building new housing in Orinda. The ULI study explained how 240 new housing units could be built within the current General Plan and zoning rules. Moreover, under the state's Density Bonus Law, the effect of any increase in density or height limits will be multiplied as a matter of law.

A DPP will not facilitate retail development. Street retail has become something of a dinosaur. To the extent it survives, it will not be in an environment like Orinda, which lacks the kind of trade area retail needs. Orinda does not have the traffic or parking capacity to serve retail in any meaningful way.

Redevelopment pursuant to a DPP would involve evicting our locally owned businesses. People would lose their work and their livelihood — people who have served our community for years. Most recently, pursuant to a GoFundMe campaign, they have provided meals at cost to local hospitals. It is no secret that OrindaVision has its eyes on parts of downtown where these existing businesses are located. We should protect those people, not redevelop them out of existence.

Finally, a DPP is an extravagant Orinda cannot af-

ford. The City has budgeted \$740,000, but also is making use full time of one senior planning department employee, and is using part of the time of another full time employee, plus an intern. Their work includes preparation of a three-dimensional model of downtown. The total actual cost is over \$1 million.

Orinda is facing a budget shortfall of \$1 million. Even though the City Manager has made this shortfall public, Orinda's Downtown Development Subcommittee, comprised of council members Inga Miller and Nick Kosla, told the planning department to proceed "full speed ahead." Orinda's limited funds are better spent on other priorities, including fire prevention and fuel reduction, roads, storm drains, and other infrastructure.

For these reasons, Orinda should not be proceeding with a DPP, and certainly not at this time. The DPP is a Trojan Horse.

Nick Waranoff
Orinda

MOFD meeting coverage

I was stunned to read the story "covering" the recent MOFD meeting and see no mention of the fact that it had the biggest citizen participation in what may be a generation! There is a huge grassroots move afoot in Orinda to address our high risk of wildfires—there are 18 groups that either already are Firewise certified or working on it. We have raised the alarm about the prior indifference of the Orinda City Council (which now is definitely paying attention) and the MOFD firefighter-driven tendency to ignore prevention in favor of hiring more (you guessed it!) firefighters who are only of use when the fire breaks out. We actually made the difference in the decision not to hire more firefighters this time around. (And, we'll be back, as we're pretty sure the firefighter union won't give up.)

I have no idea why the reporter didn't report on this aspect, but I want your readers to know that we're in this for the long haul, and that everyone in the community

will benefit from the energy and initiatives from this growing Firewise movement. Perhaps you should write about that?

Hatti Hamlin
Orinda

Orinda's Priorities

In a recent survey on a new sales tax two facts came out: 1) 55% of those surveyed said their top priority for spending tax dollars was for Wildfire Prevention. 2) 2/3 of those who did not flat-out reject a new tax (as 25% historically do, regardless of need) believed that private roads should be brought into the public road network and storm drains transporting water from public roads across private property should be maintained by the City.

At the recent MOFD Board meeting the call for spending money on more firefighters was rejected by the Board. This followed a (historic?) show of participation by citizens both writing letters and attending the meeting. These included both Mayor Gee and Council Member Fay whose attendance at the meeting was a first for two Orinda officials to attend a MOFD meeting.

Unfortunately, only half the task was completed. While money was not allocated to more firefighters there was no discussion of allocating any more funds for fire prevention.

The MOFD draft budget projects a \$2.3 million deficit for next year. However, this budget includes \$2 million in employee retirement benefit contributions in excess of what the pension plan is owed and reflects a parcel tax which is \$2 million less than what the voters agreed to.

And the City of Orinda continues to be focused on downtown development. While a pleasant downtown would be nice, the City needs to reprioritize on the basics first: Wildfire prevention and the provision of basic infra-

structure to all of its residents including paved access to their homes and the orderly transport of storm water from public property.

Most of Orinda has been deemed as an extreme fire risk area. The problem is a combination of geography, weather and excess vegetation. We cannot do much about the first two but we can start removing some of the massive fuel load we have allowed to build up over the years.

MOFD and the City of Orinda need to get together to provide funding and other assistance to property owners to reduce this fuel load as quickly as possible. They cannot just fiddle as Orinda burns.

Steve Cohn
Orinda

Disappointed

I was disappointed to read the article by Nick Marnell about the recent MOFD meeting.

After sitting in front of my computer for more than 4 hours watching and listening to at least 10 of my neighbors eloquently speak about the importance of fire mitigation in Orinda and Moraga, there was not a word about it in his article. I'm not sure how he could have missed those comments and the more than 20 letters written by citizens fearful of wildfire in Lamorinda that were read into the record. Either the author took an hour-long dinner break and missed the unprecedented turnout and citizen participation or he and you decided the interests of the citizens were not important.

We depend on the Lamorinda Weekly for accurate reporting on local news and events. I suggest you find someone else to do a feature on the grassroots Firewise Neighborhood movement that is occurring here as a way to make up for the insult.

Dan Detzner
Orinda

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence — we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters must be factually accurate and be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O. Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Public Safety

Emergency response:

Emergency: 24 Hours 911
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours
925-284-5010

Nixle: Text your zip code to 888777 or go to www.nixle.com

Lafayette Police Department:

3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
925-283-3680
Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt
925-299-3221

Police Department Tip Line
94549Tip@gmail.com

Police Department Traffic Issues
94549Traffic@gmail.com

Moraga Police Department:

329 Rheem Blvd., 925-888-7055
Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049

Orinda Police Department:

22 Orinda Way 925-254-6820
Chief of Police, David M. Cook
925-254-6820
Orindatip@cityoforinda.org

Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report

May 3 - May 16	
Alarms	28
911 Calls (includes hang-ups)	15
Traffic	21
Suspicious Circumstances	13
Suspicious Subject	21
Suspicious Vehicle	18
Service to Citizen	44
Patrol Req./Security Check	53
Public/School Assembly Check	43
Supplemental Report	26
Vacation House Check	3
Welfare Check	18
Ordinance Violation	26
Vehicle violations	
Auto Burglary	
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)	
4100 Block Happy Valley Rd.	
4000 Block Valente Dr.	
3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3300 Block Springhill Rd.	
Hit And Run Misdemeanor	
4000 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.	
3400 Block Springhill Rd.	
Petty Theft From Vehicle	
1200 Block Sunset Ln	
Reckless Driving	
Oak Hill Rd./Eb Sr 24	
Reliez Valley Rd./Pleasant Hill Rd.	
1200 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.	
Reliez Valley Rd./Silver Dell Rd.	



Pleasant Hill Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Stolen Vehicle Recovery
Bollinger Canyon/St. Joseph
Tc - Property Damage
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Pleasant Hill Rd./Olympic Blvd.
Vehicle Theft
3100 Block Camino Colorados
800 Block Solana Dr.
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3700 Block Highland Rd.

Other criminal activity

Battery Sexual
3300 Block Deer Hill Rd.

Brandishing Weapon
1300 Block Reliez Valley Rd.

Burglary
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Fraud False Pretenses
1300 Block Summit Rd.

Identity Theft
3700 Block Sundale Rd.
1000 Block 2Nd St.

Panhandling
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Petty Theft
10 Block Dollis Park Rd.
1200 Block Monticello Rd.
1100 Block Glen Rd.

Police Department
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3200 Block Sweet Dr.
4100 Block Happy Valley Rd.
1000 Block Carol Ln.
3700 Block Mosswood Dr.
3600 Block Mosswood Dr.

Petty Theft Bicycle
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Residential Burglary
700 Block Moraga Rd.
10 Block Via Magnalena

Robbery Strongarm
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Shoplift
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)

Warrant Service
700 Block St Marys Rd.

Nuisance to the Community

Disturbance-domestic
1000 Block Via Roble
10 Block Arbor Way
100 Block Greenbank Dr.
100 Block Lafayette Cir.

Fireworks
Foye Dr./Little Ln.

Loud Music
3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3600 Block Happy Valley Rd.

Loud Noise
3300 Block Moraga Blvd.
3300 Block Springhill Rd.
San Reliez Ct./Springhill Rd.
Silverwood Dr./Cabernet Ct.

Loud Party
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Sweet Dr./Woodview Dr.
3200 Block Hillview Ln.

Public Nuisance
Glenside Dr./Los Palos Dr.

Reliez Creek/Pleasant Hill Rd.
Vandalism

900 Block Moraga Rd.
3700 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)

3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
200 Block Lafayette Cir.
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
1100 Block Laurel Dr.
1000 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.

Other

K9 Outside Assist Request
400 Block Fernwood Dr., Mor

1600 Block Pleasant Hill Rd.
5500 Block Circle Dr., Eso
60 Block Davis Rd., Ori
2800 Block Mitchell Dr., Wcr
100 Block Ivy Dr., Ori
50 Block Marigold Ct., Dan

Trespass
3200 Block Mt. Diablo Ct.
900 Block Moraga Rd.

Unwanted Guest
3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
3500 Block Deer Hill Rd.
3300 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
900 Block 4Th St.
10 Block Eleven

Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report

May 5 - May 17

Alarms 10

911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 9

Traffic 32

Suspicious Circumstances 4

Suspicious Subject 4

Suspicious Vehicle 4

Service to Citizen 65

Patrol Req./Security Check 30

Supplemental Report 8

Vacation House Check 0

Welfare Check 1

Vehicle violations

Accident Property
600 Block Moraga Rd.

Excessive Speed
Moraga Rd./Commons Park (2)

700 Block Plot
Canyon Rd./Sanders Dr.
Paseo Linares
Moraga Rd./Corliss Dr. (2)

Moraga Rd. North of Rheem Blvd.
Camino Pablo/Hodges
Country Club Dr./School St.

Reckless Driving
Valle Vista Staging Area
Moraga Rd./Rheem Blvd.

Tc - Property Damage
Camino Pablo/Hodges Dr.

Vehicle Theft
30 Block Birkdale Pl.

Other criminal activity

Fraud False Pretenses
600 Block Rheem Blvd.

3800 Block Via Granada
Petty Theft

500 Block Chalda Way
100 Block Ascot Ct.
Not Available

Warrant Arrest
10 Block Corliss Dr.

Nuisance to the Community

Loud Music
Camino Peraul/La Mesa Dr.

Loud Party
Larch Ave./Tia Pl.
80 Block Miramonte Dr.

Public Nuisance
Joaquin Moraga Int School (2)

Vandalism
10 Block Lynch Ct.

Other

Extortion
St. Marys College

Harassment
100 Block Hazelwood Pl.

Mentally Ill Commit
600 Block Augusta Dr.

Ordinance Violation
Moraga Commons Park (2)

10 Block Brandt Dr.
Skate Park

Joaquin Moraga Int School

Threats
Seven Eleven

Transient Contact
Rear Valero

Trespass
Moraga Swim and Tennis Club

Violation Custody Order
10 Block Hansen Ct.

Not Available
Not Available

Violation Restraining Order
Not Available

Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report

May 3 - May 16

Alarms 20

911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 13

Traffic 5

Suspicious Circumstances 4

Suspicious Subject 7

Suspicious Vehicle 11

Service to Citizen 75

Patrol Req./Security Check 56

Public/School Assembly Check 1

Supplemental Report 20

Welfare Check 1

Ordinance Violation 13

Vehicle violations

Accident Injury
Moraga Way/Whitehall Dr.
Auto Burglary
200 Block Overhill Rd.

Petty Theft From Vehicle
100 Block Overhill Rd.

Reckless Driving
Wilder Rd/Wb Sr 24
Alta Vista/El Toyonal
20 Block Rheem Blvd.
Moraga Way/Oak Dr.

Tc - Property Damage
Dias Dorados Rd./Camino Sobrante

Vehicle Theft
60 Block Barbara Rd.

Other criminal activity

Burglary
10 Block Theatre Sq 106

Commercial Burglary
Beverages And More

Elder Abuse
50 Block Via Floreado

Fraud False Pretenses
20 Block Los Cerros

Grand Theft
Rite Aid

Petty Theft
400 Block Tahos Rd.
20 Block West Hill Way
60 Block Rheem Blvd.

Prowler
200 Block Overhill Rd.

Residential Burglary
10 Block Vista Del Orinda

Shoplift
Cvs

Vandalism - Felony
30 Block Moraga Way

Warrant Arrest
Safeway

50 Block Moraga Way

Nuisance to the Community

Disturbance-domestic
60 Block Mira Loma

Disturbing The Peace
500 Block Tahos Rd.
10 Block La Fond Ln.

Loud Music
10 Block La Fond Ln. (2)

Loud Party
Edgewood Rd./Lost Valley Dr.
20 Block Lonbridge Rd.

Public Nuisance
Theatre Square
St Stephens Dr./Via Floreado
40 Block Hillcrest Dr.

Other

Dependent Adult Abuse
50 Block Via Floreado

Indecent Exposure
Moraga Way/Brookwood Rd.

Litter
10 Block Camino Pablo

Mentally Ill Commit
10 Block Francisco Ct.

Violation Custody Order
Orinda Theater