

# Letters to the editor

## Supporting Teresa Onoda for Town Council

As a born and raised Moragan, a small business owner, and now a husband and father-of-two Moraga resident, I feel attuned to the values of our community. Unbeknownst to me while growing up here, many of these values have been championed by Teresa Onoda herself. Once upon a time, she was even a chaperone to my older brother's miners' camp field trip when he was a student at in elementary school.

Many of these values upheld by Teresa as priorities, highlight respect and responsibility. Respect to our residents, responsibility to the environment and (of greater impact to myself) responsibility to our local businesses. She recognizes how relationships are two-way, and how we must take care of the things that are important to us. She puts forth the effort to connect with people; and she draws on her expertise as a professional artist to provide leadership in maintaining the aesthetic of Moraga, especially its natural beauty.

Teresa, as a longstanding member of our community, will always put her best foot forward when it comes to protecting our Moraga way of life. Learn about her more for yourself at <https://teresaformoraga.com/> Evan Lowe Moraga

## No more negative signs

Signs placed along our Moraga public streets during a Council election campaign expressing "No" on a candidate have absolutely no legitimate place in our Town. The latest example is the signs expressing opposition to Teresa Onoda. This ugly kind of behavior is the mark of persons who place greater value in denigrating a candidate rather than in putting themselves publicly on the line in support of another candidate. To all Moraga voters who find this behavior as abhorrent as I do, please help me to end this practice by showing resoundingly on November 3 that it doesn't work.

Colleen Lund  
53 year Moraga resident

## Anduri for City Council

### Election Season SPECIAL POLICY

Letters to the Editor Letters related to a candidate running for office should be a maximum of 200 words so that we will have room to publish as many letters as possible. Letters regarding ballot measures will remain up to 350 words maximum. Deadline is now NOON on Thursday prior to the issue date.

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](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) for submission guidelines. Email: [letters@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com); Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Vision, Integrity, Reason, Calm, Civility, Collaboration...these are the attributes Carl Anduri will bring to the Council. As we've seen in his past service, Carl will be a voice for all Lafayette...every neighborhood's concerns, listening openly to all perspectives. Carl's ability to approach complex issues with balance, an open mind and fiscal integrity has been proven by his long history of civic leadership. His extensive career as an attorney will help ground Council decisions on a fact-based, sustainable footing. His legal expertise will be invaluable when navigating complicated legislative initiatives in the Sacramento pipeline. I can't recall a time, in all my years in Lafayette, when the need for grace, quiet intelligence, historical perspective combined with innovative thinking has been more essential. Times are changing, communities are transforming and changing to meet these times, the diversity of the population is, and should be, changing. Lafayette needs Carl's voice at the table, and for this reason I am proud to endorse his candidacy.

Kathy Merchant  
Lafayette resident for 36 years

## Save Lafayette from "Save Lafayette"

On September 23, 2020, Save Lafayette filed a lawsuit against the city of Lafayette over its approval of the Terraces proposal. The lawsuit will almost certainly fail—nearly every argument made in the lawsuit has been repeatedly refuted by city staff—but it encapsulates Save Lafayette's pattern of promoting easily refutable falsehoods based on wishful thinking.

Save Lafayette rose to prominence by forcing the city to vote on Measure L, the 2018 ballot measure for a smaller proposal featuring 44 single-family homes at the Deer Hill site, and then campaigning against it. The city and the developer had negotiated this proposal as a compromise with clear terms: if the 44-unit project was not approved, then the original 315-unit proposal would return. New state laws would make it very difficult to legally deny.

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Save Lafayette dismissed this argument as a "vague threat" and asserted that the city could force a referendum vote or deny the Terraces project based on its 2013 environmental review findings. Residents voted against Measure L and, as promised, the developer resumed the process of getting the 315-unit Terraces of Lafayette proposal approved.

Almost immediately, Save Lafayette began spreading new misinformation and questionable legal interpretations. Most blatantly, they claim that Lafayette has built enough affordable housing to satisfy state mandates—we undeniably have not. More subtly, they twist the words of state laws like CEQA and the Housing Accountability Act beyond recognition from the actual written text of those bills. They've conspiratorially accused Lafayette's city staff, independent consultants, and regional first responders of presenting "one-sided advocacy in favor of the project." Of course, Save Lafayette is itself an advocacy group that exists primarily to oppose development at the Deer Hill site.

The Housing Accountability Act is clear: to deny the proposal, Lafayette needed to show that the Terraces would create an unmitigable, specific, quantifiable impact upon the public health and safety, based on a preponderance of objective evidence. Four out of five council members agreed that this threshold could not be met and voted to approve the project.

Save Lafayette's stubborn crusade against any development on the Deer Hill site backfired spectacularly—had they simply listened to the same staff and councilmembers that they ironically accuse of misunderstanding the law and betraying residents' best interests, the Homes at Deer Hill would likely be under construction today. Instead, the group's refusal to compromise or impartially engage with state laws they don't like has paved the way for a development seven times larger.

Going forward, we must approach housing development in Lafayette with a shared understanding of legal reality and a willingness to compromise. We cannot ignore state laws or mislead ourselves about what

they mean, even if we disagree with them. We must build responsibly, but we cannot reflexively attack evidence that doesn't match our biases. We gain nothing from undermining our public officials and questioning their credibility.

Save Lafayette's conspiratorial accusations, self-defeating confirmation bias, and frivolous, expensive lawsuits will only hurt Lafayette, not save us.  
Jeremy Levine  
Chris Mickas  
Inclusive Lafayette

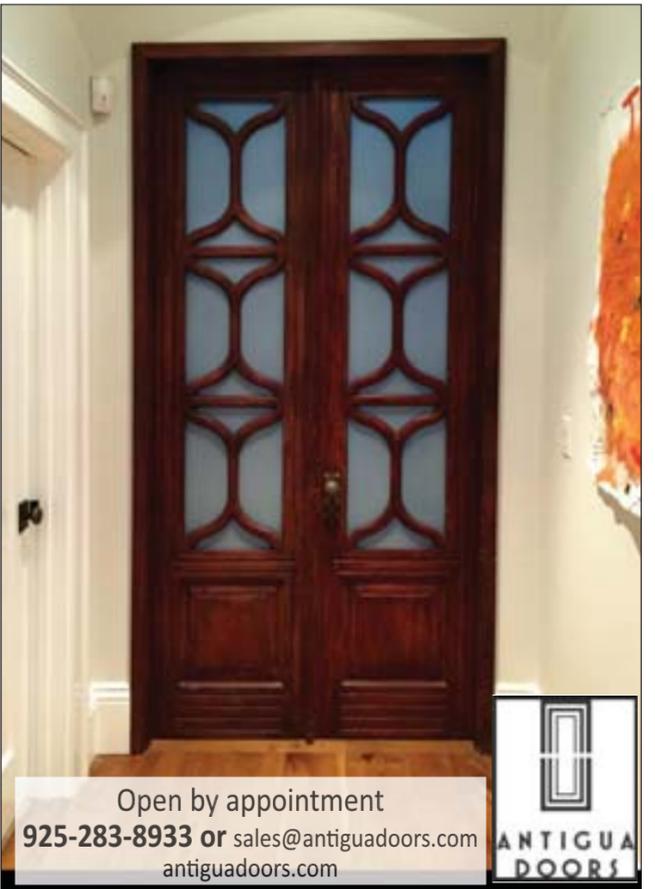
## Special thanks to our firefighters



Photo provided

Firefighters battled a grass fire Oct. 11 near Irvine Drive in Moraga.

"Thanks to all the firefighters that quickly snuffed the blaze in Moraga. Hauling fire hoses up steep hillsides was amazing to watch and we felt great appreciation. Such a relief." ~ Mike Huston and Marcia Cho



# Re-Elect Darlene Gee to the Orinda City Council

I am proud of my City Council contributions and the progress we have made in repairing our roads, delivering City services more efficiently, and adding new community facilities.

To learn more about my continued priorities and goals for Orinda, please visit my campaign website at: [darlenegeeforcouncil.com](http://darlenegeeforcouncil.com).



## INFRASTRUCTURE

- ✓ Maintain and enhance the roads and drainage rehabilitation momentum the City has achieved over the last seven years.
- ✓ Develop long-term maintenance plans that are financially secured.

“Darlene has been a significant contributor to our progress and success with Orinda's roads and drainage rehabilitation. Her expertise and commitment to improving our infrastructure is why we need Darlene on the City Council.

Terry Murphy, Former Chair  
Orinda Citizen's Infrastructure Oversight Commission

## PUBLIC SAFETY

- ✓ Maximize fire prevention and fuel mitigation efforts in Orinda - working closely with our Fire Chief.
- ✓ Increase emergency services planning, interagency coordination, and state legislative efforts for fire protection funding and insurance.

“Darlene's initiation of a joint subcommittee between Orinda, Moraga and MOFD has furthered our fire prevention coordination. She has demonstrated a real commitment to protecting our community.

Craig Jorgens  
MOFD Director, District 5

## DOWNTOWN

- ✓ Complete the Downtown Precise Plan, including well-grounded economic analysis studies.
- ✓ Advance communications with downtown property owners to facilitate opportunities.

“Darlene Gee and Inga Miller have followed through on their promises with their support of high priority for downtown improvement. They deserve our endorsement again in 2020.

Arran Schultz, Chair  
Tom Trowbridge, Former Chair OrindaVision

# ✓ VOTE DARLENE GEE

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Darlene Gee for City Council 2020, FPPC 1428111