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## Private proposal for mural art in Orinda



Photo provided

Artist Jane Kim painting a 50-foot high Monarch butterfly mural in San Francisco last year.

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda city council heard an unusual proposal Oct. 6 under Items for the Good of the City: resident Kate

Rittmann is suggesting a plan for artist Jane Kim to install large-scale mural art around the city. Rittmann was inspired by the ConnectOrinda Downtown Streetscape Mas-

ter Plan that includes ideas for public art. Years ago, Rittmann was on the board of the Rhode Island School of Design, where she met Kim, a student. Kim is a co-founder of Ink Dwell, a studio dedicated to art that celebrates wildlife and its role in the natural world. She is known for, among other works, a 50-foot-tall monarch butterfly painted on a building at Hyde and O'Farrell in San Francisco last year.

Rittmann invited Kim and her partner, Thayer Walker, to come to Orinda to identify potential sites for murals. The Ink Dwell team identified a number of potential sites for large-scale murals, including Vashall Way, Theatre Square, the side of Casa Orinda restaurant, the pedestrian overpass from BART to the village and the Orinda public library.

Rittmann imagines the project as a combination effort between the city and private sector. The Orinda Community Foundation has given the project a dedicated account for fundraising. Donations will be tax deductible. Vice Mayor Amy Worth asked Rittmann if it would be a daunting task to raise the funds, and she said that as soon as word got out, she received two emails from people who would like to be the initial donors.

The name of the account is OCF Connect Orinda Mural Project. Persons interested in donating should contact OCF President Sue Severson. Rittmann emphasized that although she is a member of the Orinda Garden Club, this is not a club project but a personal one.

Worth asked Rittmann about her background. "I'm

not an artist," Rittmann said, "but I do have a good eye." Always interested in art and architecture, her youngest child went to the Rhode Island School of Design and Rittmann was asked to join the board. She served for 12 years on the board, making friends all over the world, including Kim. "Art makes things better," Rittmann says. "I really firmly believe that. When you see a 50-foot-tall butterfly in the city it sparks the neighborhood."

Maggie Boscoe also appeared before the council to talk about Artify Orinda, the idea of Maggie Boscoe, a longtime Orinda resident and co-curator of the Lamorinda Art Council's Art Gallery at the Orinda Library. Worth initiated a matter to look at art in the community on a future council agenda, which passed unanimously.

## At long last, restoration of Moraga Adobe begins

By Sora O'Doherty

A project long in the works has broken ground, so to speak. J&J Ranch, the developers of a new housing development in

Orinda, have begun the restoration of the Moraga Adobe. The historic building is the oldest extant building in Contra Costa County. The building is subject to a memo-

randum of understanding under which the Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe can purchase the building to preserve it and make it accessible to the public and a history and

learning center. The developer will turn the restored building over to the Friends if they succeed in raising the purchase price. If not, the building would be made a part of the

housing development. However, the Friends have no doubt that they will succeed. The purchase includes the building and its surrounding 2.3 acres of land. ... continued on Page A16

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