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James Burkin
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Young activists push to pull plug on gas leaf blowers

... continued from Page A1

The children point to the 60 cities in California that have banned or restricted use of gas-powered leaf blowers as well as research done in the city of Walnut Creek, and identify reasons they say the blowers are very bad for the environment in addition to noise and air pollution, such as harm to insects, especially bees. Instead they urge the use of rakes and electric leaf blowers, although they make the point that leaving the leaves to decompose, adding nutrients to the soil, would be better still.

The matter has come before the Environmental Task Force in the past and according to City Planning Director Greg Wolff, the issue remains on the task force's work list. Wolff says it is likely to come

up this year and notes there is a joint city council and ETF meeting scheduled in March to review accomplishments and prioritize tasks for the next year. He says leaf blowers will likely be on that list.

Wolff welcomes the kids' input. "It's great to see youth involved in what will ultimately be their government," he says.

The city is also short by three planners, so assigning a staff member to the ETF has also contributed to slow progress.

Finn, who attends Stanley Middle School, is frustrated by the lack of action. "Even though kids have good ideas for saving the environment, adults do not take us seriously," he says.

The kids have also sent a letter to Lafayette School District Superintendent Richard Whitmore asking that gas-

powered leaf blowers be banned from schools.

Jennifer Renton says she's not surprised her children are proactive for their ages since she and her husband have been environmentally conscious for a long time. Fifth-graders Scout and Jamie are members of the Environmental Club at Burton Valley Elementary School.

The children are planning on walking the neighborhood to hand out fliers they've created, educating residents about the dangers posed by gas-powered leaf blowers.

"Adults are the ones using gas leaf blowers but they do not think about the problems that they are causing and we will be the ones left when the adults have destroyed the environment," says Jamie.

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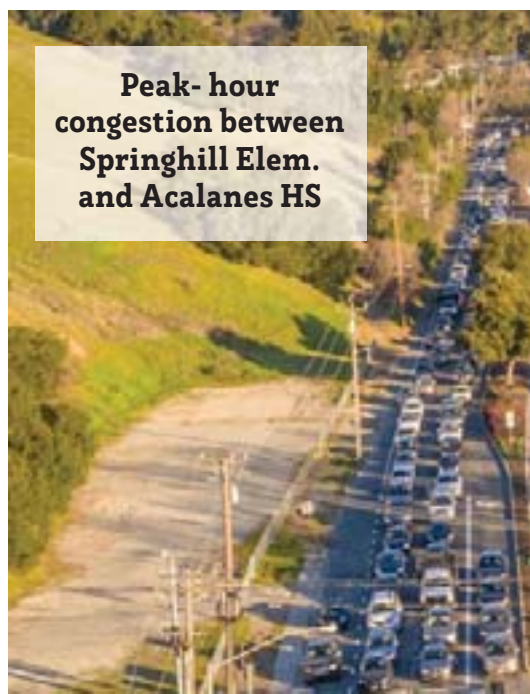
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The Terraces - Not a Done Deal



You need to know these four facts

1. The City left Save Lafayette no choice but to take legal action

- In 2013 City staff recommended denial of the original Terraces proposal for multiple health and safety reasons – then reversed itself in 2020 by recommending approval of the only slightly altered proposal.
- Site is zoned for max 14 single-family residences/14 ADUs, **not** 315 apartments. Inconsistent with City's General Plan and zoning.
- Voters decisively rejected the "Homes at Deer Hill" in 2018. Save Lafayette brought and won the lawsuit that protected our constitutional right to vote on the project.

2. Very high fire risk location, potentially causing many deaths/injuries

- The Terraces evacuation model shows 40%+ of 550 vehicles fail to escape wildfire.
- City evacuation plan for Springhill and Acalanes students questioned by the County Connection.
- 2013 City designated site a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, with an additional high risk due to prevailing winds. Severe delays of emergency evacuations.

3. Lafayette needs more local businesses and jobs, NOT more housing

- Many local jobs/businesses are being replaced by residential development.
- Lafayette already has 17 downtown residential development projects in progress.
- Lafayette has exceeded 2022 quota for affordable housing. Quotas for subsequent years will be resolved by 2023.

4. Wrong project at the wrong location – 315 apartments, 16 buildings, 550 cars – at a very busy traffic intersection

- 3000 trips daily added to an intersection that gets an F grade from traffic experts.
- Impacts school enrollment and increases operational costs.
- 500,000 cubic yards of dirt movement would destroy scenic hillside and 22 acres of open space. It would also add to the already excessive air pollution, resulting in contaminant levels **nine times** the acceptable standard (BAAQMD).

Thank you for your steadfast support and generosity. More donations are needed to help us meet the 2021 legal challenges head-on. We are confident that we can win this lawsuit - your donation helps win it.



www.SaveLafayette.org

Visit our website to learn more or to find out how you can help. To donate, please send a check to: Save Lafayette, PO Box 1183, 3641 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette CA 94549