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Letters to the editor

Thanks for the lights

This is a thank you to some wonderfully generous person or persons on Brown Avenue in Lafayette. At Christmastime a generous display of lights appeared across our valley from trees lit by white lights somewhere near Brown Avenue. From Hawthorn Drive, they appear as beautiful bunches of grapes hanging in the night sky.

I don't think this person or persons know how much joy and love they have provided so many of their town neighbors. This must have been a huge task and I (we) want to say how much we appreciate their efforts and kindness.

Mary Ann Hoisington
Lafayette

Correction of Lafayette City Manager comments to Editor

In a letter to the Editor, the Lafayette City Manager recently wrote a correction to a Save Lafayette Ad. Unfortunately, the correction was misleading. Under its State-approved Housing Element, which is effective through the end of 2022, the City identified various parcels in the downtown that could accommodate enough units to meet or exceed the State's quota. The City is not required to build the units, but only to show there is enough land zoned at appropriate densities to accommodate the need, and that its codes and requirements do not unduly constrain the building of those units. The proposed Terraces apartments were not included in the current Housing Element's list of sites. In fact, the Terraces (even if still approved after the current legal process) cannot be built and occupied before the end of the life of the current Housing Element - it will take nearly a year just to do the massive amount of grading required. Therefore, the Terraces cannot be counted towards the current quota of affordable units. We also dispute that the ad contained "many inaccuracies". We suspect that the "inaccuracies" the City Manager is referring to are differences of opinion and facts that form the basis of the current lawsuit and will be resolved by the courts. And we stand by our statement that the City needs to protect its businesses, jobs and commercial space downtown, and not sit by and see them all go away and be replaced by just housing, which is what is happening currently. Save Lafayette strives for accuracy in the information it provides to the public and is open to any clarification. Unfortunately, The City Manager's correction was inaccurate.

Michael Griffiths
President, Save Lafayette

Not So Fast

It appears we will be moving back to the Red Tier in the next few weeks. A third vaccine is now approved for emergency use. So what changes after you have had your two doses? The answer is "not that much." And here is why this is so important. A year into this and we have all had it. Enough already! But it is a little more complicated and imperative that we don't make the same mistake every time we seem to get some control on the pandemic. For the sake of our families, friends and the businesses that have struggled since they were first shut down.

Dr. Virk specializes in Infectious Diseases gives us three good reasons to continue Social Distancing, wearing masks and washing hands.

"Number one, while the vaccine reduces your risk, it does not eliminate the risk of being exposed to having the disease and asymptotically transmitting the virus to others."

"Remember that even the best of these vaccines is about 90%-95% effective, meaning, you might still have a 1 in 10 or 1 in 20 chance of being exposed and getting the disease. So the mask is protecting you."

The third reason is related to these new mutant variants and other variants still to come. "The vaccine might protect you against death, but maybe your protection against disease ends up being about 50-60%," says Dr. Poland. "If that's true, then we still want to wear masks to prevent disease, and prevent the spread of those variants, which could then mutate further causing even more infections."

We all want our "normal" back. And the only way we are going to get there is understanding that even with vaccines and a path to "herd immunity", we have a lot more work to do. Let's do it together.

Jay Lifson
Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

Moraga Municipal Code regulating celltowers

On March 10, the Moraga Town Council will be voting on an important matter: the acceptance of a Master Licensing Agreement with Verizon Wireless. This will open the floodgates to development of dozens of Fifth Generation (5G) cell towers. We estimate that there will be as many as 70 of these towers throughout Moraga for each telecom carrier that wants to provide 5G service here. These towers pose all kinds of risks: health, fire, property devaluation. The town of Moraga is woefully unprepared for this onslaught. Our

Municipal Code provides for no transparency, no restrictions, no testing, etc. This will have a real impact on the lives of Moragans. I think this is an important civic matter that your publication should do a feature story on. I am not a person who is anti-big business or distrustful of the government. To the contrary, I had a 27-year career in Federal law enforcement and retired as a Special Agent-in-Charge. But I have researched this issue and I feel there is definitely cause for concern, and that it is prudent for our local government to proceed cautiously when implementing this new 5G technology.

Mike Seitler
Moraga

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