

New eatery in Moraga goes from pop-up to permanent



Photo Vera Kochan

Lou's Chicken Shop owners (from left) Kate and Richard Kao

By Vera Kochan

Lou's Chicken Shop, located at 376 Park St. in Moraga's Rheem Valley Shopping Center, was supposed to be a pop-up restaurant while the owners figured out what type of eatery they'd like to install in the former Noodle Theory location. Thanks to the overwhelming success of Lou's, the decision became clear.

Louis Kao's Noodle Theory Oakland location takes up most of his time, so his brother, Richard with wife, Kate, had taken over Lou's Chicken Shop (pop-up) which opened in mid-May. To go from noodles to chicken was an easy transition. "It's my brother's idea to give it an Asian influence," explained Richard. "When he was running Noodle Theory he added

an eight-piece fried chicken item to the menu as a test. It was a hit, so that led to Lou's."

Noodle Theory's Moraga location closed in late April, because much of their staff had to leave for family reasons. However, still on the job at Lou's is their chef, Marco Cruz, who's been with the Kaos for 10 years beginning with Oakland's Noodle Theory. Also still on hand is Sue Shin, who continues to handle the front house details during weekday evenings.

For the time being, Lou's is a take-out/counter-service only establishment with plenty of outdoor seating. The plan is to eventually add indoor dining. The menu offers salads such as Karaage (Japanese-style) Chicken Salad or Garlic Soy Chicken Salad (made with Sriracha aioli over kimchi). Sandwich selections include a Buttermilk Chicken Sandwich (served with a jalapeno cabbage slaw) or a Kalua Pork Sandwich (Hawaiian-style pulled pork). Coming soon is a grilled chicken sandwich item. Sides include sweet potato fries, pickled veggies or tater tots. There also kid plates which are rice-based with a choice of protein and vegetable options. The beverage menu has a substantial variety of beers, wine, sodas, and iced teas.

Lou's hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for lunch, and re-opening for dinner from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. They are closed Sundays and Mondays. Their website (www.louschicken-shop.com) is in progress, but the phone (925-592-0102) is cheerfully answered. Excited to be in their new location Richard replied, "Moraga is such a great area. We're happy to be here."

Orinda city council wonders how to translate Safety Element into real safety

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The work group plans to incorporate comments from the public, the city council and the planning commission, and aims to have the draft plan adopted in late 2022 or early 2023, along with the housing element.

Vice Mayor Inga Miller complimented the team on a good job of presenting this enormous universe. Referring to questions from public submitted in writing, she asked about concerns over accessory dwelling units and development allowed under SB 9 in high fire severity neighborhoods. City Manager David Biggs responded that this is not necessarily something that would be addressed in the safety element because SB 9 units cannot be prohibited in very high fire districts. Buckley added that he thinks Orinda can think of the safety element separately from whether the city wants to place more restrictions on ADUs.

City Attorney Osa Wolff agreed with Buckley and Biggs, but explained that ADUs and SB 9 units can be prohibited under exceptions that have to come from pre-established criteria for health and safety. She suggested that the safety element might be a first step in establishing such criteria.

Council Member Amy Worth wants to maximize evacuation capacity for the community, reduce fuel, limit parking on roadways, and expand capacity of roadways by how they are managed. Biggs said that relatively new tools are now available to cities.

Worth noted that during public safety power shutoffs, city resources at the community center or library parking lot have been super helpful to the community, particularly to vulnerable persons who have to charge medical de-

vices. She mentioned ongoing work with Recycle Smart and Central Sanitation on hazardous waste and, as far as communications go, she wished Orinda had an opt-out system for more routine emergency communications. "It would be so great to have that as a goal," she said, "But it needs money and potentially even legislation." She is particularly concerned about vulnerable seniors living alone.

When asked whether a discrepancy between the city's evacuation zones and those used by Zonehaven will be resolved, Krispi said that the discrepancy would not necessarily create a problem or barrier, because people access Zonehaven by address not by evaluation zones, but it might be possible to bring them into alignment. And Biggs agreed, "We'll look at that."

Miller asked if there is anything that can be done about undergrounding power lines, and the city manager replied that they have recently reached out to PG&E and are awaiting a response from them. The city did get some funds under Rule 20A and has a plan to underground the line from Camino Sobrante to El Toyonal.

In public comments Matt Fogarty spoke about the potential benefit of Orinda joining Marin Clean Energy and Lynn Trowbridge spoke on behalf of Wilder about its designation as a shelter in place community. She also said that Wilder has offered to do an evacuation drill, but nobody has taken the idea up. Worth said that that idea should be taken up.

Council Member Darlene Gee's greatest concern is how the city can utilize the safety element. "I'm having a hard time seeing how this is coming together to something other than sitting on the

shelf," she said, It seemed to her that the document was an exercise in stating the obvious, but she said she was "having a hard time seeing how this can become actionable." Mayor Dennis Fay added, "I think that our residents expect more out of this safety element because of where we are in the world now. Residents want to see something a little more concrete."

City Manager Biggs noted, "our goal is to take something that is a state mandate and produce something that is helpful," adding, "We are making a lot of progress: Orinda is in top 5% on cities making provisions for fire." But he appreciated the comments and promised to come back with something more robust. Members of the public are invited to comment on the draft safety element at www.planorinda.com/safety-element

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The Lafayette City Council is soliciting applicants to sit on a new committee to implement Vision Zero

The City of Lafayette is looking for a total of two (2) qualified residents to participate in a multi-disciplinary Vision Zero Task Force to help City staff develop a data-driven Local Roadway Safety Plan (LRSP) to help support the City's efforts to implement Vision Zero.

The intent of the Local Roadway Safety Plan is to summarize specific changes to policies, programs, standards, enforcement procedures, education efforts, infrastructure improvements, and other action items to be taken by City departments and that will reduce speeds, reduce collisions, and move the City towards zero fatalities and severe injuries. Two qualified at-large community members will help to make up the multi-disciplinary Task Force.

Residents who are interested in representing at-large community members on the Vision Zero Task Force must:

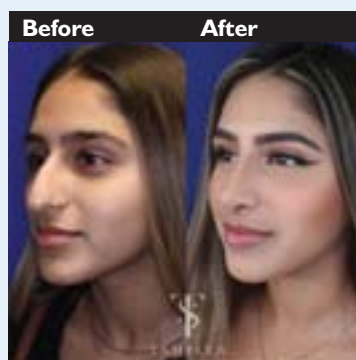
- Be a current resident of the City of Lafayette
- Understand and agree to the time commitment of the Task Force
- Commit to improving safety on our City's transportation networks
- Have a background in Transportation Planning, Engineering or Public Health

Task Force members can expect to participate in a minimum of four meetings over the next six to eight months, at a minimum, in addition to other responsibilities, as needed. Completed applications must be received by 5:00pm on August 19, 2022.

More information on this Task Force and a link to an application can be found on the City's website: <https://www.lovelafayette.org/city-hall/city-departments/engineering/transportation/local-road-safety-plan> or by calling the City Clerk's office at (925) 284-1968.

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