



See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
City of Orinda:
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 Phone (925) 253-4200
Chamber of Commerce:
www.orindachamber.org
The Orinda Association:
www.orindaassociation.org

City Council

Regular Meeting:

Tuesday, Sept. 6, 7 p.m.

By Teleconference Only

Planning Commission

Tuesday, Aug. 23, 7 p.m.

By Teleconference Only

Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission

Wednesday, Sept. 14, 6:30 p.m.

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Orinda Planning Commission approves first Lamorinda hydrogen filling station

By Sora O'Doherty

The Union 76 station on the corner of Moraga Way and Northwood Drive in the Orinda Theatre District will be able to sell hydrogen fuel, in addition to gasoline. The project was first proposed in December 2020 and was the subject of a study session in April 2022.

The plan, as approved, adds two hydrogen dispensers, one each between each set of existing gas pumps on the site. In addition to the pumps, there will be an above-ground hydrogen fuel tank and related equipment added to the facility. As a result of the new equipment, the station will lose 8 of their existing 16 parking spaces. While the station has been renting out parking spaces, the city is requiring that the remaining

parking spaces be reserved for customer use.

The Union 76 station dates back to the '50s or '60s in downtown Orinda. There are currently four gas pumps, a convenience store, and a service bay, all of which will remain. The new hydrogen fuel dispensers will be provided by FirstElement Fuel, Inc., providers of True Zero hydrogen fuel. According to FirstElement's website, the company is committed to building a better world by addressing the three major energy and environment challenges that face us today: clean air, energy security and global climate change. "Fuel cell vehicles are widely recognized as the ultimate automobile technology for reducing our impact on energy and the environment," according to FirstElement.

ment.

Some issues regarding the station were resolved at the Planning Commission meeting on Aug. 9, when the project was unanimously approved by commissioners. City staff had recommended that the increase in the size of the canopy not be authorized because it did not appear to be driven by any operational concerns. However, the applicant explained that a larger canopy was required because of the need to move the columns supporting the canopy to allow space for the new fuel dispensers. The applicant did agree to work with the city to find a solution that would allow the new dispensers, but keep the increase to the canopy size to a minimum.

At the early study session, the Commission had made some

suggestions about landscaping, preferring a "living wall" of plants to screen the new tank and other equipment. However, the applicant explained that they are not proposing to implement this suggestion owing to the continued drought in California. They suggested a fence covered with artificial vegetation, but that option did not receive the support of either staff or the Commission. A fence painted to match the building was eventually agreed upon. However, the applicant is planning to add additional street trees to increase the landscaping of the station. Commissioner Brandyn Iverson wished for more, but the other commissioners, including Commissioners Mautner and Smith, noted that this is a service station, not a park.

Theatre Square is going to the dogs

By Sora O'Doherty

Must love dogs? Jen Frase just loves dogs. In fact, she adores them. As a photographer for the past 15 years, she changed her focus to just dogs about two years ago and now has opened Jen Frase Photography, a dog photography studio in Theatre Square.

The Orinda shop will operate on an appointment basis, with appointments being



Jen Frase, dog photographer, at work at her grand opening in Orinda Theatre Square.



Photos Sora O'Doherty

booked online. The studio grand opening on Saturday, Aug. 13, offered goodie bags for dogs, merchandise, cookies and water. Although she sees her new focus on the studio, Frase will continue to book location photo shoots if her customers prefer that, but location shoots are longer and cost more.

In studio, Frase uses plain, bright colored backdrops, but she may add some props for various holidays. She likes to bring in the dog's owner along

with the dog. The owner can stay and help. She says that she's never been bitten, but expects it to happen sometime. How does she keep a dog still for a photograph? Frase explains that she lowers the lights, gives lots of treats and belly rubs. The dog only needs to stay still for a second. In her sessions, which can be either 30 minutes or an hour long, she says that 90% is not shooting. Nevertheless, she admits that some dogs just can't do it.

Although her passion is dogs, Frase says that she won't turn anyone away, and has been asked to photograph a couple of cats. Frase lives in Lafayette with her husband and twins, who just started high school at Acalanes. Their pet is Monk, "the love of my life," Frase enthuses. Monk is 5 years old, part Shih Tzu and part miniature poodle.

For more information and to book appointments, see Frase's website: <https://jenfrase.com>

Lamorinda elections begin to take shape

... continued from Page A1

In District 1, Gregory Allan Hasler and Christopher Gerard Young will contend for the seat of incumbent Gregory Baitz,

who did not file for reelection. In District 3, Vincent James Dell Aquila will challenge incumbent Steven Michael Danziger, and in District 4 Michael James Roemer will challenge incumbent Michael Dean Donner.

On the federal and state levels, US Representative Democrat Mark DeSaulnier faces

a challenge from Michael Ernest Kerr of the Green Party, and State Assembly member Democrat Rebecca Bauer-Kahan faces a challenge from Republican Joseph A Rubay.

At the time of publication, not all of the candidates who pulled nomination papers had yet qualified to be on the ballot.

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