



MORAGA

See public meetings schedule on this page and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
Town of Moraga:
www.moraga.ca.us
 Phone: (925) 888-7022
Chamber of Commerce:
www.moragachamber.org
Moraga Citizens' Network:
www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

Town Council: Wednesday, Feb. 8, 6:30 p.m.

Planning Commission: Tuesday, Feb. 7, 6:30 p.m.

Park and Recreation Commission:

Monday, Feb. 13, 7:00 p.m., Special Meeting

Moraga School District Board Meetings:

Tuesday, Feb. 14, 6 p.m. www.moraga.k12.ca.us.

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Town council gives thumbs up to Comprehensive Advanced Planning Initiative/Housing Element update

By Vera Kochan

Heading down the home stretch of the long and winding road which is the Comprehensive Advanced Planning Initiative/Housing Element, Planning Director Afshan Hamid and Consultant Barry Miller made their final presentation to the town council during its Jan. 25 meeting. The council was asked to consider three resolutions and two ordinances in order to adopt the new Housing Element by the state's Jan. 31 deadline. Bollinger Canyon rezoning and Rheem Objective Development and Design Standards will be considered in February and March.

While many residents still feel disgruntled about Moraga's requirement to add within the next eight years 1,118 new housing units to a town of roughly 9,456 square miles, perhaps one can take heart in the fact that San Francisco's 46.87 square miles is required to add 82,000 new homes to its already jam-packed living conditions. It would seem that S.F. has nowhere to go but up.

The Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) has broken down Moraga's requirements into 318 very low-income units, 183 low-income units, 172 moderate-income units, and 445 above moderate-income units.

Council members unanimously approved all three resolutions and the two ordinances after months of updates, surveys and changes requested by themselves, Moraga residents and the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

Resolution 1 is the Final Environmental Impact Report. It certifies the FEIR for the Comprehensive Advanced

Planning Initiative; adopts a mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP) including 24 different measures to reduce future development impacts; and adopts findings and statement of overriding considerations for the Housing Element. Hamid notes that this is a "Program Level" EIR – future projects will still be subject to environmental review.

Resolution 2 is the Adoption of the 2023-2031 Housing Element; it finds that the town has responded to all state comments; it also finds that the Element is in substantial compliance with the government code; and it authorizes transmittal of a "tracked change" and "clean" copy to HCD for a compliance determination. The state has 60 days to issue a decision letter upon receipt.

Resolution 3 concerns the General Plan Amendments. This resolution amends the 2002 Moraga General Plan so that it is internally consistent with the Housing Element; it responds to state law to address wildfire and evacuation in the Safety Element; it responds to state law on "Vehicle Miles Traveled" (VMT) for measuring transportation impacts; and it also includes various other (non-substantive) amendments to keep the plan current.

Ordinance 1 pertains to Moraga Center. This ordinance increases allowable density from 20 to 24 units per acre on mixed-use sites and most R-20 sites; and it rezones several "commercial-only" parcels to mixed use (allowing housing, commercial, or both). This ordinance would not change development standards (such as heights, setbacks, etc.) adopted in 2010 and 2020 as part of the Moraga Center Specific Plan (MCSP) and MCSP Implementation Project. Projects in the

Housing Element call for staff review of these standards in 2023, including recommendations for council consideration.

Ordinance 2 is directed toward the Rheem Center. This ordinance creates two new zoning districts: Rheem Park Mixed Office-Residential, and Rheem Park Mixed Commercial-Residential. It also adopts standards for these districts allowing housing up to 24 dwelling units per acre, in addition to office/commercial uses; lastly it amends the zoning map for key sites in the Rheem Park commercial district.

As mentioned earlier, many residents are fearful that the Moraga as we know it will take a turn for the worse, in a variety of directions. The plain and simple truth is that the state is requiring all of its municipalities to conform to the 6th Cycle Housing Element mandates. According to Hamid and Miller's staff report, non-compliance will result in "adverse consequences, including ineligibility for many state and regional grants (including grants for transportation, planning, etc.), vulnerability to lawsuits, fines and penalties, and potential loss of local land use control."

Community input has been unprecedented with outreach to over 7,000 people. A survey of 1,200 individuals showed that the majority of respondents were in favor of having more amenities and a variety of housing options.

There are many benefits on the horizon for Moraga. A better mix of housing will allow seniors, young families, first-time home buyers and the town's workforce a chance to afford living in Moraga.

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Moraga's disc golf course slated for a facelift



Photo courtesy Moraga Parks and Recreation Department

Moraga's disc golf course is scheduled for an upgrade.

By Vera Kochan

One may assume that disc golf is a relatively new sport, but it was "invented" nearly 50 years ago by Ed Headrick, inventor of the Frisbee. The concept is much like that of traditional golf, except that a flying disc or Frisbee is used in place of a ball and clubs; and instead of a hole the disc is thrown into an elevated metal basket. The same goal of completing the course with the fewest number of throws is the object of the sport.

The disc golf course at Moraga Commons Park (1450 St. Mary's Rd), was estab-

lished/donated in 1982, by the Women's Society. It has 9 holes with a course length of 2,610 ft, and an alternate length of 3,175 ft. It is described as located "on a gently rolling hill, with cut grass and well-trimmed trees. Paver/Rubber mat tees on easy to moderately difficult holes." Currently, the Moraga Disc Golf Club has approximately 100 members.

According to the Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA), "Disc golf shares the same joys and frustrations of golf, whether it's sinking a long putt or hitting a tree halfway down the fairway. There are a few differences

though: Disc golf is often free to play in public parks, although pay-to-play courses are trending upward; you probably won't need to rent a cart, but converted golf course layouts are also on the rise; and your 'tee time' will usually come during tournament competition, not casual play."

Disc golf can be enjoyed by people of all ages, and PDGA boasts of having over 200,000 lifetime members in 54 countries totaling more than 9,800 disc golf courses worldwide and counting. An additional upside to the sport is that there's less likelihood of losing the disc as opposed to a golf ball. The \$15 cost of a professional quality disc will probably be the most a player will spend on the sport.

According to a Jan. 11 staff report by Parks and Recreation Director Mackenzie Brady, staff was approached by resident Mark D. Robeson, who with his son, frequents the town's disc golf course. Feeling that the course needed an upgrade, he recommended that the town apply for a \$15,000 grant from the Burton D. Morgan Foundation (of which Robeson is a trustee). A grant application was submitted on Dec. 5, 2022, and approved by the Foundation, which is "committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of its grant-making activities." The funds were received by the town later that month.

Some of the site improvements will include updated tee pads, signage, benches, and trees. Any design fees will be donated by frequent course user and premier disc golf course designer Leonard Muise. Labor costs will be kept to a minimum through community work days organized by staff.