



Independent, locally owned and operated!

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Published December 8th, 2010

Mulholland Ridge Trees Targeted

By Sophie Braccini

The Lamorinda Weekly recently received an anonymous, but very concerned, note from a resident. According to the writer, "within the next two to three years... PG&E will be removing all the trees over 17 feet tall within 100 feet in either direction of the high voltage lines. This would remove most of the trees on Mulholland Ridge and make the neighborhoods an eyesore." The Town of Moraga halted the removal of these trees last spring - so what happened? Since the Town put a stop to the tree removal, PG&E and the Planning Department worked on tree removal permits, and replacement, in compliance with the Moraga municipal code that regulates the removal of historic and native trees.

On October 25th, the Planning Department received a communication from PG&E's legal department citing a recent California Court of Appeal, Third Appellate District, published opinion that the California Public Utilities Commission has jurisdiction over all of PG&E's tree trimming requirements, and that they supersede any local requirements. "The Town of Moraga does not have the authority to regulate anymore," confirmed Moraga Planning Director Lori Salamack, "PG&E can remove trees that could interfere with their lines. For example, a distant tree that's so tall that it could interfere with the electric lines if it fell will be removed."

PG&E indicated that work on Mulholland Ridge for 2010 had been completed and was done in the interest of public safety and reliability. Agents will patrol again in February of 2011, and then figure out their plan of action, if any, going forward.

Reach the reporter at: sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA