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EXPERIENCE MATTERS

Linda Di Sano Ehrich, Realtor 93 Moraga Way - Orinda, CA 94563 925.698.1452 Linda@LindaEhrich.com www.LindaEhrich.com DRE# 01330298





Moraga's New Planning Director: Ellen Clark

By Sophie Braccini



Ellen Clark explains the Livable Moraga Road concept to a resident during the Pear Festival Photo Andy Scheck

Then Shawna Brekke-Read left her job as Moraga's planning director for a nice new gig in South Lake Tahoe, senior planner Ellen Clark was appointed interim director. It did not take long for Town Manager Jill Keimach to decide that promoting from within was the right strategy, and Clark is now the town's planning director. She directs a department that is tackling many projects and issues, and she is already familiar with the topics and the people. Clark brings to the department the calm and endurance of a marathon runner.

Clark began her career in 2000 with a consulting firm in Berkeley; she decided to move to the town of Mammoth Lakes with her husband, an architect, when she had her first child. She was the small town's acting planning director when she applied for the senior planner position in Moraga a year and a half ago. "The family wanted to go back to the Bay Area, and I picked Moraga because it was a similar size community, where you get to work on very different types of projects, which I find more interesting," she says.

Clark has found that in Moraga, even when the projects are small, the issues are complicated; so her analytical mind is challenged. "I was thinking about it as we are looking for a new planner," she explains. "Moraga is this little town of just 16,000 people, suburban, mostly residential, but with enough issues to keep it very stimulating." ... continued on page A10

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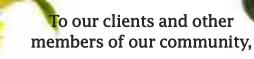
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Ruth Eddy 925.788.5449 ruth.eddy@bhghome.com CalBRE#01313819

Kress Hauri/Larry Jacobs 925.899.5739/925.788.1362 larry.jacobs@bhghhome.com kress.hauri@bhghome.com



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