

Published June 27th, 2018

## City rushes to rezone as developer pursues original 315-apartment project

By Pippa Fisher



Aerial view of the Deer Hill Road development site. Photo courtesy City of Lafayette

While Lafayette city leaders address the rezoning of the controversial land on Deer Hill Road in order to bring it into compliance with the general plan, they also took the step of enacting a 45-day moratorium temporarily halting any development on that land.

Two days later the developer resubmitted plans for the original development - the 315 apartments known as The Terraces.

Following the failure of Measure L that would have approved a zoning change to low-density and would have allowed the development of 44 single-family homes at Deer Hill, along with a tot lot, sports field, dog park and extra parking, the 22-acre parcel reverted to high density administrative professional office zoning which must now be changed to be consistent with the general plan.

At the June 11 meeting the city council agreed to instruct the planning commission to consider several zoning choices that would bring the land in line with the general plan of up to two homes per acre. The planning commission was due to meet on Monday, June 25, after this edition of Lamorinda Weekly went to press.

The council met at a special meeting on June 13, passing an urgency zoning ordinance enacting the 45-day moratorium on any uses that are inconsistent with the low density designation of the general plan.

On June 15 the city received a letter from the developer, O'Brien Homes, withdrawing the Homes at Deer Hill project and requesting the city immediately resume processing the apartment project, which had been suspended in 2014 when the developer and city worked out the lower-density Homes project. The city has 30 days from June 15 to respond.

Founder of the preservationist group Save Lafayette responsible for the "No on L" campaign, Michael Griffiths, is watching closely. "The eye of the storm is the rezoning now, as it impacts the apartments," he said.

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[back](#)

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