

## Moraga Town Council and Bruzzone Family Embark on the Same “Charrette\*”

By Sophie Braccini



The Moraga Town Council chose the Dahlin Group on January 23rd as the architect that will provide a visual representation of what the Moraga Center could look like, when a specific plan is approved.

Dick Loewke, a professional urban planner and representative of the Bruzzone family, which owns the land addressed in the Specific Plan, expressed concern about the order in which the town is conducting the opera-

tions. “The charrette focuses on what the Center will look like,” said Loewke, “but we need first a better understanding of what it takes to get it started, what’s needed to stimulate this economic development and to sustain it.” According to Loewke, there are several key factors that are necessary: define the infrastructure improvement and define the critical mass of mix of housing, office and retail. He insisted that the implementation chapter and the de-

sign guidelines that are the building blocks for visual simulation should come first. Mayor Linda Deschambault and Vice-Mayor Dave Trotter maintained that the charrette’s purpose was to create an image that would help the community visualize what the Center could be, and that the other elements of the process were conducted simultaneously.

Both parties agreed that cooperation between the property owner and the architect would be productive. Joan Bruzzone confirmed that she would be happy to work with either firm. The Dahlin Group was chosen unanimously by the Council and awarded a \$65,000 contract. The deciding factor was the offer by Dahlin to create a 3D animation that will take viewers through a guided tour of the proposed ‘new Moraga.’ Both the Town Council and the property owner concluded that the meeting had been constructive and was a step in the right direction.

*\*Charrette is a French term that means “cart.” For architects, it refers to a competitive bidding process.*