

Meet and question Lafayette City Council Candidates and hear and question City Manager Steve Falk on the State of the City

Candidates' Night Forum Monday, October 6, 7:30 p.m.

**Lafayette Community Center
500 St. Mary's Road,
Lafayette Sequoia Room**
Moderator:
Byrne Mathisen of Lafayette
There are 4 City Council Candidates for three Council seats

State of the City of Lafayette City Manager Steve Falk

Hosted by
Lafayette Homeowners Council

A public service announcement from the Lamorinda Weekly

INVITATION

Inform yourself about the two open space initiatives called J and K!

Open Space Initiative Forum

Monday, October 13, 7:30 p.m.
Soda Center at St. Mary's College

Moderator:
Lee Borrowman
Editor of Lamorinda Weekly

Speakers: Dick Loewke, Yes on J
Renata Sos, Yes on K
Bob Reynolds, No on Both

Hosted by
Moraga Citizens' Network

Sponsored by
Moraga Citizens' Network and Lamorinda Weekly

LAMORINDA Community

Condo Project Finally Gets Okay

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East Elevation of Lafayette Park Terrace, Hollman Bologna Architects

Concerned neighbors throughout the process have requested reducing the height and mass of the building, and increasing the distance between the new building and the Lafayette Pointe condos next door.

At the meeting a letter was presented by Kathy Skovgard on behalf of the residents of Lafayette

Pointe and Randy Castro, President of Pleasant Hills and Valleys Homeowners Association, with nine specific requests.

Noting that, "we've made changes in direct response to the neighbors concerns," Mike Hollman of architectural firm Hollman Bologna, was "basically in agreement with all nine points except the

last one." Even that one they ended up compromising on – reducing the height of the building, again.

Neighbor Carol Gray wanted to voice her opposition, "We feel the development is out of proportion to the site. We also are concerned with the number of cars – it's already a crowded court. The people of the east end do not need

or want intense development on this side of town. Once this goes through – what's next? It sets a precedent for future developments." She went on to compliment the Council, however, for being very considerate and attentive throughout the process.

Council members recognized that the applicant has gone a long way toward accommodating neighbor concerns. Member Carol Federighi mentioned that the density is not inappropriate for the site, and that twelve individual homes that could be built on the parcel would have a greater negative impact.

Curious residents can see story poles on the site with bright orange tape to mark the height of the building, just past the cemetery, turn right into Mt. Diablo Court.

Moraga Town Council Candidates Discuss Priorities

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Kolbe explains, "Joan Streit (the Town's Finance Director) projects that beginning as soon as the summer and fall of 2009 our expenditures will begin to exceed our revenues by as much as \$100,000 a year; and within five years we will be looking at deficits of as much as \$600,000 a year."

Dennis Wanken believes that all of the issues faced by the town are the consequence of the budget crisis, "The infrastructure of our community is rapidly evolving from needing repairs to needing replacement. Moraga faces an infrastructure bill of nearly \$40,000,000. This bill constitutes replacement of residential streets, utility distribution systems, and improvement of arterial roads some of which are currently dangerous."

Each of these four candidates has ideas on how to correct the situation, "My highest priority will be to address the need to reduce unnecessary expenditures and increase revenues without adversely affecting the local services our citizens expect and rely upon," promises Harpham.

Kolbe sees eye to eye with him, "Unless we focus on reducing expenditures and increasing revenues, we will have to begin cutting back staff and local services – police, park & recreation and others – something nobody wants to see."

Mendonca focuses on the process to get there, "I am particularly interested in working with fellow Council members and Town officials in establishing a well thought out budget reserve that could potentially provide an ongoing income stream for the Town of Moraga." She adds a positive spin to the situation, "While budget shortfalls often necessitate the implementation of both reduced expenditures and enhanced revenue streams, they also can provide the catalyst for identifying creative revenue enhancement opportunities."

Wanken stressed the need for the community to get together to solve its problems, "Stakeholders in our community need to work in unison to promote and assist current and new businesses to operate in Moraga and the growth versus

no-growth advocates need to come to compromise in the best interest of all citizens in Moraga."

Harpham stresses the importance of trying to maintain the level of service Moragans have come to expect. "Maintaining our police, park & recreation and infrastructure needs must be the highest priority for all of us at this point." And that's where he meets with Mike Metcalf, who didn't list the budget as his first priority, but one of the consequences of the budgetary constraints: the difficult situation of our police force.

"Our police force struggles to provide the services our residents and businesses need and deserve," states Metcalf, "thirteen officers are inadequate to service 16,400 citizens. I will see that our police force is increased by several officers, consistent with what we can afford. Augmenting the police force will put a dedicated traffic safety officer back on the streets, and will free up police management to work on emergency preparedness and department efficiency." Using his experience

on the Council, he proposes, "I will encourage St Mary's College to contribute to funding our force, since we are obliged under law to provide police services to the college." Metcalf cited as well the maintenance and improvement of our infrastructure.

Brad Kvederis does not share his opponents' financial concerns, "Our Town's budget problems will disappear anyway as the last of the pre-Proposition 13 houses are sold or passed down over the course of the next decade." Kvederis' first priority is to preserve the character of our town, "My highest priority is to permanently ban tract housing in Moraga, and to preserve every remaining acre of our open space that I possibly can." Kvederis explains, "The housing market likely won't experience a resurgence for years, so now is not the time to build large numbers of homes. All we'll accomplish is to create an oversupply of housing and drive down local property values even further -- not to mention ruining our small-town character."

Confusion Over Campaign Signs

"Some people confused it with our Measure E. I want to be clear that the district does not support or oppose local issues like Measure J."

Negri added that the district does not plan to take further action. "The District has contacted the 'Yes on Measure J' campaign and the Town of Moraga regarding the signs, but neither the Town of Moraga nor the District has any legal authority to remove the signs."

The use of the high school slogan was sure to raise more than one eyebrow, so why do it?

George Lakoff, Professor of cognitive linguistics at the University of California, Berkeley, where he has taught since 1972, suggests that, "the use of 'Go Cougars'

on Measure J serves two functions. First, it suggests that the supporters of Measure J are the real locals, while the supporters of Measure K are not and hence are interlopers. Second, since the proposals are about which is better for open space, 'Go Cougars' suggests (without overtly claiming it) that measure J would allow animals more open space to roam."

Moraga resident Frank Comprelli goes even further, "I think that the Measure J campaign people...are misleading voters by trying to piggyback on a school measure on the same ballot. This sort of confusion can only hurt the school bond measure."

Mary Jo Rossi, spokesperson for Measure J, said, "In a democracy, there is nothing wrong with painting signs red, white and blue – those are American colors – even our candidates for president have red, white and blue signs. Measure J advocates are mainstream Moraga residents who are

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youth sports leaders, parents, firefighters, and educators who take great pride in Moraga – not fringe Berkeley extremists like the individuals supporting Measure K."

Fringe Berkeley extremists? At a public meeting held on September 25th, Dave Bruzzone explained to what the

Measure J campaign is alluding: "Many supporters of Measure K are County residents with Moraga addresses, they are not Moraga residents," he explained, referring to the folks who live in the unincorporated

part of Bollinger Canyon. He suggested that a look at the 460 report, which lists financial supporters of the Measure, would show a significant number of groups that are not from Moraga.

Renata Sos responded on behalf of Measure K. "Those assertions are incorrect," she said. "Residents of Bollinger Canyon are part of this community, they send their children to Rheem school, shop in town, and coach the sports groups." She added that the backers of Measure K are a cross-section of residents and that 80% of the contributors are Moraga families. According to Sos, the Sierra Club gave \$2000 in 2007 to the campaign, which represented 10.6% of the total dollars raised. "For the next quarter the 460 report will show an even lower percentage," adds Sos, who wishes to dispel the rumors that measure K supporters are outsiders: "Nine out of ten of our volunteers are Moraga residents, a few come from the Bollinger unincorporated area and one is an Orinda resident."

The Color of Politics

The design of campaign signs is a whole field in its own right, incorporating elements of human perception and psychology.

A survey by the University of Florida claimed that a yellow background with black lettering was the best color combination for a sign to attract attention; the second best combination is white on blue, followed by yellow on blue.

Besides plain visibility, colors carry emotions and have historically been associated with ideas. The color white evokes images of purity; politically, white is often associated with pacifism.

Orange has been identified in the past as one of the colors of royalty, and has since evolved in politics to represent religious political interests.

The color black is alternately associated with fascism and anarchism, and can be used to great effect in small amounts to provide shading and detail on print designs but is traditionally the color choice of extreme politics that fall outside the realm of democracy.

Red and blue have switched party affiliation over the years; at this point the line is still fairly blurry so we tend to see a lot of red, white, and blue campaign signs. Very patriotic – not exactly distinctive, but usually safe.

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