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Lafayette

- Public Meetings**
- City Council** Monday, February 28, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd
 - Planning Commission** Tuesday, February 22, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd
 - Design Review** Monday, February 28, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center in the Arts & Science Discovery Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
 - Circulation Commission** Tuesday, February 22, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center in the Arts & Science Discovery Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Police Report



Thou Shalt Not Steal...2/1/2011 A car parked outside the Lafayette Safeway was broken into and a bible, magazines and religious literature stolen. The thief got away with a book titled "What Does the Bible Really Teach?" Let's hope he/she reads it!

A-Hunting we can't go...1/23/2011 Nearly \$4,000 in duck hunting gear was stolen from a truck parked on Upper Happy Valley Road. That must have ruffled a quite few feathers, but the ducks are probably "down" with that.

He said...She said, 2/4/2011 He said he had permission to enter her home and use her car while she was gone. He said that they were dating. **She** said she hadn't dated him for over a year, that he **did not** have permission to enter her home, and **most certainly did not** have permission to drive his car, let alone crash it into a tree, causing \$2,000 damage. Furthermore, she said her car was a stolen vehicle and police should arrest him.

He'll end up walking anyway, 2/4/2011 The good news: "Hey, driver, remember your Honda stolen from Lafayette BART parking lot yesterday? We found it, abandoned, nearby." The bad news: "The locks are broken and the ignition is damaged, so it's not drivable. You'll probably have to pay the tow fees too." Ouch!

Townhomes a Possibility at Hungry Hunter Site

By Cathy Tyson

Although Jack and Audie Dudum still own the Hungry Hunter property at the corner of Pleasant Hill Road and Mt. Diablo, Signature Properties has an option to purchase it. The developer is looking for some direction prior to beginning the permitting process to see if its proposed twenty-three townhomes will be a good fit for Lafayette.

As a recent Planning Commission meeting Signature Properties participated in a study session along with the Design Review Commission to gather feedback on a proposed plan for the three to four bedroom units in three stories, two levels over a garage on the parcel.

The acre and a half parcel has been for sale for quite a while – although there was some initial interest from Bev Mo, In and Out Burger, and a medical building - none have followed through.

Signature Properties is looking into a new layout of the townhomes arranged surrounding a central garden courtyard with the front doors and garages facing into the shared community area. Project Manager Tom Quaglia thanked the Commission and explained this study session, "really helps;" comments from a prior study session drove a significant design change from outward street facing homes to this new iteration that turns inward.

While the parcel can be called a gateway to the city it also has unusual zoning – sandwiched on the east and west sides by two and three story office buildings, lower density residential to the south and southeast and a small area of multifamily residential on the southwest corner that is accessed by Mt. Diablo Court; Highway 24 is on the northern edge and the cemetery is just a

couple of blocks down Mt. Diablo. The very preliminary design has darker colors to blend into the neighborhood and is tucked in much like the existing Hungry Hunter building to make for a subtle transition. Existing mature redwood trees and landscaping around the perimeter would shield the development from some of the freeway noise.

Although there was some discussion of a podium building, which would be taller and much more of a statement, many of the Commissioners weren't in favor of that option – "A different animal altogether," it would have substantial parking on the ground level and townhomes above producing a more "urban" feel and limiting open space to decks.

Noise was another concern brought up by resident George Wilson; he was concerned about the

ambient noise level from the freeway and traffic on Mt. Diablo. Quaglia commented, "I don't think the noise issue is insurmountable," and described projects they have done fronting busy El Camino Real.

Planning Commissioners had differing opinions and consistently declared "it depends" since a more finalized architectural proposal is not before the group, but most seemed to generally support the project. Many commented on the importance of the site as a gateway, "This is our front door and it needs to set the tone," said Planning Commissioner Karen Maggio.

"Direction was provided to the applicant," said Planning and Building Services Manager Niroop Srivatsa. Now it's up to Signature Properties to weigh the options about going forward. The City can still approve or deny the project or ask for significant amendments.

Lamorinda's Councils Talk Roads and Development

... continued from page A1

Lafayette's Council proposes to apply \$3 million of the city's reserve fund monies to road repairs over the next three years and potentially pursue a parcel tax to fund the difference. Anduri said that the Council would be meeting with residents who live on failing roads on March 1st to discuss their support of a November-ballot tax measure of just under \$100 per parcel that is limited to ten years. The parcel tax measure, if pursued, would be a citizen-led effort according to Lafayette Council member Don Tatzin.

Moraga Council member Mike Metcalf acknowledged that

his town also has a significant problem with aging road and storm drain infrastructure, although not nearly as large as his neighbors in Orinda. Metcalf said the town is working to define the magnitude of the problem and how to best communicate the issue to residents. Moraga currently spends about \$500,000 a year on the repair of arterials and collector roads.

Orinda Council member Dean Orr suggested that the public works departments consider creative ways to combine road projects across the three communities to take best advantage of available

construction monies.

As far as development, Lafayette had the longest list of projects in the pipeline including luxury condos, a senior assisted-living facility, a senior affordable housing residence, apartments, and townhomes. A long and inclusive process for development of a downtown development plan should be concluded by midsummer.

In Orinda, three model homes at the Wilder luxury-home development are under construction and two of the five ball-fields on the property will be completed by June. Construction of the 73-unit Pulte

development awaits financing; a senior affordable housing development will take another few years to fund. Community input to a downtown revitalization plan is ongoing.

Moraga was the only one of the three communities with a finalized plan for downtown development. The town's housing element was certified last year. A forty-unit residence has been proposed for the vacant parcel across from Rheem Center. A three-member economic development team is working to develop a plan for what will best serve the town in the half-occupied Rheem Center.

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