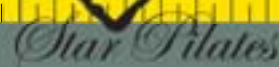




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## Council Clarifies Traffic Calming Policy

By Sophie Braccini

On the heels of a decision granting Campolindo area residents new four-way stop signage at the intersection of Campolindo Drive and Calle la Montana, the Moraga Town Council is spreading the word that it is willing to discuss traffic calming projects that do not necessarily satisfy to the letter all of the strict requirements contained the Traffic and Safety Calming Guide.

The Guide stipulates that a precise percentage of neighbors must be in favor of a specific traffic calming measure, such as a stop sign, in order for the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) to make a positive rec-

ommendation to the Council. "The guide sets guidelines for TSAC to make a recommendation to the Council, but it is the Council that makes the final decision," responded Town Manager Jill Keimach to a question from Mayor Karen Mendonca.

"People need to know that even if they do not get the exact number of signatures, they can appeal to the Council," said Mendonca, "and that needs to be clearly indicated in the Guide."

Due to a lack of responses, the Campolindo petitioners failed to show the 70% of yays that is required by the Guide. However, the Council felt that there was enough evidence that the signs

were a matter of public safety, and there was no clear opposition to them, to allow petitioners to purchase the new signs and pay for their installation.

During the discussion, Council members more than once referred to a previous Larch neighborhood stop sign project; the supporters of four new stop signs dropped the petition after failing to get enough signatures. Keimach noted, "If they want to have the Council review the question they should bring it back to TSAC, which would either make a positive or negative recommendation to the Town Council; the Council would then debate the issue and make the final decision."

## Man Hunt Near the Upper San Leandro Reservoir

By Sophie Braccini

At approximately 6:45 p.m. on Monday, July 25, an East Bay Regional Park District patrol officer was attacked in the fields and hills that extend south from Moraga to the Upper San Leandro Reservoir by two assailants carrying what he said sounded like automatic weapons. The officer, who was not hurt, took cover and called for reinforcement. Forces from Moraga, Lafayette, Orinda, Richmond, the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office, and the Highway Patrol, including an armored truck and helicopters, came to his rescue.

The search was led by East Bay Park Police Captain Mark Ruppenthal, who is familiar to Moraga residents as their former Chief of Police, and was called off at 10:00 p.m.

due to darkness. Ruppenthal believes that the incident erupted because the gunmen were trying to protect a marijuana growing farm, hidden somewhere in the wilderness. A decision was made on Tuesday morning to wait for reinforcements in order to be able to scour the large expanse of hills in search of pot fields.

"I am very pleased at the response our department made and the assistance we provided," said Moraga's current Chief of Police Bob Priebe, "We were able to provide one sergeant, three patrol officers, and one reserve officer to assist. I am very happy with the positive outcome of getting the involved officer out of the dangerous area safely and with no injuries to anyone."

Priebe explained that the area involved is far outside the Town's borders—the incident and suspected grow area are in Alameda County. "Rancho Laguna Park is still a safe place to enjoy and there should be no concern for safety based on last night's activities," Priebe stated the next day.

Later in the week, Ruppenthal confirmed that the investigation is still open and personnel would be returning to the area soon.

Ruppenthal also discussed hiker safety on the EBMUD trail between Rancho Laguna Park and the San Leandro Reservoir. "It is safe, as is any walking in wilderness; be aware of your surroundings," he said, "these people don't want to be found—hikers must stay on the trail."

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