



## Moraga Civic News

### Public Meetings

#### Town Council

Wednesday, November 14, 7:00 pm  
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,  
1010 Camino Pablo

#### Planning Commission

Monday, November 19, 7:00 pm  
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

#### Design Review

Tuesday, November 13, 7:00 pm  
Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

#### School Board Meeting

##### Moraga School District

Tuesday, December 11, 7:30 pm  
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate  
School Auditorium  
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
www.moraga.k12.ca.us

See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

#### Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us  
Phone: (925) 888-7022

#### Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

#### Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



## Police Report

**Halloween hijinx, 10/31/12** The owner of a Chevrolet on Corte Santa Clara called police to report that sometime during the night on Halloween an unknown suspect smashed out the passenger side rear window. Estimated damage, about \$200. Apparently the thrill of complimentary candy is not enough.

**Bike stolen, 10/31/12** A Moraga Road apartment dweller parked his pick-up inside his garage around 9 p.m. on Halloween. When he got up the next morning to leave, someone had removed a mountain bike from the pick-up bed and several tools that were inside the cab through a smashed window.

**Halloween D.U.I. 10/31/12** It was 10:30 at night when officers observed a car swerving all over the roadway on Moraga Way near School Street, followed by a non-injury collision at that intersection. Cops determined that the driver was under the influence and was arrested.

**Campaign signs stolen, 10/30/12** Sometime during the early morning hours, a couple of political signs were taken from the front yard of a home on Madsen Court. Estimated value \$16. No leads at this time.

**Very loud party, 10/27/12** Partygoers were spilling out onto Eileen Court from a loud party. Police estimate there were 250 people at the house and in the dead end street. Turns out four tenants of the home were hosting. Cops asked them to gently suggest the party people leave. As a little remembrance of their visit, police gave the renters an official noise ordinance warning.

**D.U.I. 10/24/12** A citizen reported what appeared to be a drunk driver near the Moraga Center at 6 p.m. Officers made contact with a 57-year-old exiting a local liquor store that matched the description given by the caller. Field sobriety tests were given and it was determined that with a 0.21 blood alcohol level, more than two and a half times the legal limit, that he should definitely not be driving. He was arrested and taken to the Martinez Detention Facility. Maybe he was thinking he wasn't quite happy enough at happy hour.

### Julie Barlier *Selling Homes* in Lamorinda



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 Real Estate Chair, Lafayette Partners in Education

As first time home buyers, we feel very lucky to have met Julie. Julie is experienced, knowledgeable, responsive, and dedicated. She was patient and gave us great advice throughout the process. Julie made sure we found the home that was right for our family and was invaluable during the bidding process. Julie is interested in building a relationship and always went the extra mile. We love our new home and we have Julie to thank for making it happen!  
~ 3224 Palomares Ave. | Agnes K



## Town Council Considers Joaquin Moraga Adobe

By Sophie Braccini

Will the home of the founding father of Moraga, which is actually in Orinda, be preserved as a historic landmark or will it become a private clubhouse for a 13-home subdivision? When asked that question by the Friends of the Joaquin Moraga Adobe (FJMA), the Moraga Town Council unanimously agreed to do what they could to help preserve the historic site. But the Town arrives very late in a game that started three and a half years ago and apparently ended with the approval of the subdivision of the 20.33-acre Adobe property by the Orinda Planning Commission—until the FJMA appealed that decision.

There are many obstacles in the way of FJMA's wish to turn the Adobe into an accessible historical site: the home of the Moraga family is on private property in Orinda zoned for development; the plan approved by the Orinda Planning Commission will turn the Adobe into a private clubhouse and it considered that plan to be adequate preservation.

Even if the City of Orinda agreed that the building deserves a more historically correct fate, what sort of financial compensation could be offered to the site's current owner?

"I wish the property would have been on the other side of the border (in Moraga)," said Kent Long, President of the FJMA during the heartfelt plea he made to the Town Council October 24. According to FJMA, the Adobe is the oldest historic building in Contra Costa County — it was built by Joaquin Moraga after he and his cousin, Juan Bernal, received a land grant from the Mexican government that included what is now most of Lamorinda and Canyon. "The existing building comprises two rooms that are the original adobe rooms built by the Moragas in 1841 and where the family settled," said Long.

According to Long, the development project that creates 13 lots for single-family residences raises two main issues. First, it transforms the Adobe into a private clubhouse,

which means that the two original rooms will not be preserved as a historic site, and the public (mostly school groups) will not have access to it. Second, the view from the Adobe that sweeps the entire Lamorinda area and that was the reason the Moragas chose that specific place, will be lost, with the building of new homes and planting of trees.

Long's presentation to the Council fell on sympathetic ears. "If you give up your past, you give up your identity," said Vice Mayor Howard Harpham. "When you lose history, it's gone," agreed Mayor Mike Metcalf. But council members concurred that finding a practical solution would not be easy. Who would own the Adobe? Who would operate it if it became a public museum? Where is the money to finance such a project?

Harpham was not afraid to say that Eminent Domain could be the course of action. "The thing that should be done is just take the bull by the horns and if you want to pre-

serve your past and identity, and your children's education, then go ahead and do it." The Council recommended that FJMA continue to approach private foundations that could help fund the establishment of a public, restored facility.

"There is an opening here for the governments of Moraga and Orinda to do something. My concern is that this may not be the highest priority of the Orinda City Council," said Metcalf. A subcommittee composed of the mayor and Council Member Dave Trotter was appointed to represent the Town on this issue.

Council Member Karen Mendonca cautioned that the approach had to be respectful of Orinda since the property is located within its borders. Town Manager Jill Keimach recommended that the subcommittee work on a specific plan for this project. The Council will discuss the plan at its November 14 meeting, a few days before the City of Orinda will hold a hearing on the issue. (Read a related article on page A6.)

### State of the Town Address and Volunteer Recognition

Join the Town of Moraga for the annual Moraga State of the Town Address and Volunteer Recognition Night, Thursday, November 15, at the Moraga Country Club, 1600 St. Andrews Drive, Moraga. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. with appetizers and refreshments.

This is a wonderful opportunity to meet your local elected and appointed officials and network with community groups, residents and neighbors as Mayor Metcalf shares his perspective of Town achievements from the past year and recognizes all of the volunteers who have finished their terms on Town committees, commissions and boards. RSVP by November 9, 2012 by calling (925) 888-7039 or email [briones@moraga.ca.us](mailto:briones@moraga.ca.us)

## New Home Concept Moves Forward

By Sophie Braccini

Imagine a net-zero energy home perched on an impossibly hilly site, melting into the trees as lichen and moss organically grow on it and protect it. The latest dream of Lafayette architect James Wright for a Donald Drive property is certainly not your standard suburban home, but the members of Moraga's Design Review Board (DRB) who reviewed the plans last week were very taken with the concept and recommended the project move forward, as long as the Fire Department does not ask the owner to cut down all the trees that will shield the new home.

The 4,270.50 square foot single-family,

three-level residence on a vacant 13,203 square foot hillside parcel adjoins the Hacienda de las Flores. A circular bridge driveway off of Donald Drive will lead to the garage on the upper level. The different levels of the home will step down the hillside. A 2,647 square foot middle, or mezzanine, level will be the main living area with a cantilevered back deck; the 1,278 square foot lower level will include two bedrooms and two bathrooms. Construction requires a hillside development permit because the slope of the hillside is approximately 54 percent.

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