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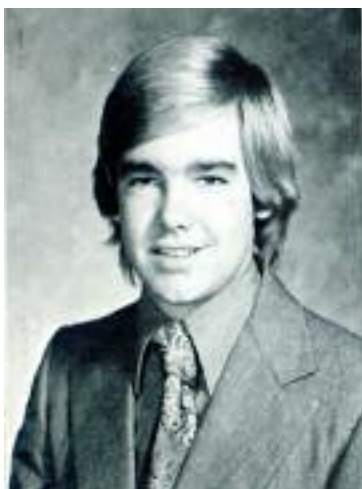
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Giving Dreams an Address

Lafayette

## Home Grown Mayor for 2016

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Other challenges to address in the coming year include Community Choice Aggregation – what Mitchell calls “a pretty big deal.” CCA would provide Lafayette residents with a choice in where their energy comes from, giving the option of cleaner, greener energy. The mayor wants to gather extensive community input on the topic.

Living in Lafayette his entire adult life, Mitchell brings a keen understanding of traffic, congestion, and

semi-rural growing pains as the city continues to evolve from his days as a kid. Residents who want an up close look at local democracy are always welcome at city council meetings on the second and fourth Monday evenings every month, starting at 7 p.m. Jan. 11 in the Community Hall of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. The agenda is not out yet, but is easily accessible via the city website, www.lovelafayette.org.

Mark Mitchell graduated from Acalanes High School in 1975 Photo provided

Lafayette

## Citizen Group Legal Challenge to Deer Hill Project Found Invalid

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Ordinance 641, adopted on Sept. 14, 2015, includes a number of items: a zoning amendment, a planned unit development, a development agreement, a land use permit and a hillside development permit for the Deer Hill project. The referendum petition could have repealed all of the acts in Ordinance 641.

“If the legislative act of Ordinance 641 were suspended or repealed, the City’s zoning ordinance would be inconsistent with its General Plan,” wrote city attorney Mala Subramanian. “Courts have consistently held that a referendum seeking to repeal a zoning amendment which would result in a zoning ordinance that is inconsistent with a General Plan is a legally invalid referendum.”

She points out that the California Supreme Court agrees; initiatives that create inconsistencies between a general plan and zoning are invalid.

The inconsistency that would have been created was the crux of the matter, Subramanian explained, citing

a court case that described it as “not merely a technical infirmity ... but as the linchpin of California’s land use and development laws.”

Attorney for the land owner, Allan Moore, as well as the developer, O’Brien Homes, also agreed: “We concur with the city attorney’s analysis.”

The current General Plan designation for the parcel in question is “Low Density Single Family Residential;” the referendum would have resulted in a zoning designation of “Administrative Profession Office.”

Faced with compelling reasoning by the city attorney, city council members unanimously opted to determine that the Save Lafayette Referendum is invalid and refused to repeal Ordinance 641, an action that is consistent with what the court recently determined in Moraga in the David Bruzzone and City Ventures, LLC against the Moraga Town Clerk and Town Council and also the deBottari versus City Council case.

Two speakers questioned the decision, asking about other options including perhaps changing the General Plan, and also respecting the point of view of the many residents who signed the petition.

Outgoing mayor Brandt Anderson, who is an attorney in his day job, rephrased the question. “Can this be fixed by a general plan amendment? The answer is no. The legal situation is clear: you can’t ‘after the fact’ change the General Plan,” he said. “Anything we would do would simply lose in court. There’s no question about it.”

Arguing against opponents’ claim of lack of leadership, council members countered that the project has changed significantly from 315 apartments to 44 single family homes with a great deal of amenities to the community; there has been a real effort made to improve the project.

Save Lafayette organizer Michael Griffiths, commenting on the decision, said the group is “weighing its options.”

Lafayette

## Celebrating Don Tatzin’s 30 Years on the City Council

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Former Orinda city council member and mayor, now state Senator Steve Glazer complimented Tatzin as a mentor who brings insight to his many roles.

Because they represent low service, low tax cities, Moraga mayor Mike Metcalf and council member Dave Trotter and Orinda city council member Amy Worth joked, “We couldn’t afford a proclamation.”

Former Lafayette city council member Ann Grodin reminisced that Tatzin was the critical person to have the vision and to figure out the financing for the spectacular new library.

Ivor Samson, former Citizen of the Year, as well as mayor, put Tatzin’s length of service in a humorous context, comparing his 30 years to the Castro Brothers of Cuba, Zimbabwe’s President Robert Mugabe, among others.

Explaining that an official recognition usually occurs when someone steps down, City Manager Steven Falk quipped: “We’re concerned you’re not going to retire.” He pointed out that Tatzin leads by example, is very supportive of staff and that there is no job he is unwilling to do.

Avon Wilson served on Tatzin’s first city council many years ago; she

called him “the guiding light” who serves with grace, nuance, intelligence and capability.

“He’s the Cal Ripken of local politics,” said Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Jay Lifson.

Responding to the outpouring of support, Tatzin diplomatically credits persistence, not taking himself too seriously, striving to learn something and enjoying himself. He concluded that he has gained more than he has given to the city.

Reflecting on his civic career and many accomplishments, Tatzin first thanked his wife, Ellen Reintjes, and said there are many things he is proud of. Tops on the list is implementing a virtuous cycle, a chain of events that reinforce themselves through a feedback loop.

He praised a community of volunteers along with prudent planning to protect hillsides and ridgelines. “Thirty years ago people complained that we had a downtown with nowhere to go,” now the opposite is true as the city seeks to “manage its success.” He is also proud that the city has opened its arms to those less fortunate, built affordable housing and welcomed those with developmental disabilities.

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## Kindergarten Registration is Just Around the Corner

Will your child start kindergarten in 2016? Registration dates in Lamorinda’s school districts are just around the corner. To be eligible for kindergarten, a child must turn 5 years old by Sept. 1. To be eligible for the transitional kindergarten program, a child must have his or her fifth birthday between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2. Children currently enrolled in transitional kindergarten are not required to complete the kindergarten registration process for next year.

New immunization requirements for 2016, under a new law known as SB277 that begins Jan. 1, state that exemptions based on personal beliefs will no longer be an option for the vaccines that are currently required for entry into child care or school in California. For more detailed information, visit: <http://www.shotsforschool.org/laws/sb277faq/>.

### Lafayette

The Lafayette School District will offer its "Roadmap to Kindergarten" informational presentation for parents from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 7 in the Multipurpose Room at Lafayette Elementary, 950 Moraga Road, Lafayette. Registration for kindergarten/transitional kindergarten will take place at the district’s four elementary schools on Tuesday, Jan. 19 and Wednesday, Jan. 20 at the following times:

**Burton Valley Elementary** 9-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m.  
561 Merriewood Drive  
(925) 927-3550

**Happy Valley Elementary** 9-11 a.m.  
3855 Happy Valley Road  
(925) 927-3560

**Lafayette Elementary** 9-11 a.m.  
950 Moraga Road  
(925) 927-3570

**Springhill Elementary** 9-11 a.m.  
3301 Springhill Road  
(925) 927-3580

Registration packets can be obtained from the schools beginning Jan. 5. For more information visit the district’s website, [www.lafsd.k12.ca.us](http://www.lafsd.k12.ca.us).

### Moraga

Online registration for incoming kindergarten/transitional kindergarten students in Moraga opens Tuesday, Jan. 5 – go to <https://moragaesd.asp.aeries.net/air> to begin the registration process. Specific registration dates at the district’s three elementary schools will be announced soon. For more information visit the district’s website, [www.moraga.k12.ca.us](http://www.moraga.k12.ca.us).

### Orinda

Orinda Union School District registration information was not available by press deadline; check the district’s website, [www.orindaschools.org](http://www.orindaschools.org), for information.