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## Split city council OK's Orinda parade on the Fourth

... continued from Page A1

A representative of Lamorinda Moms Demand Action said that group is excited and enthusiastic Assembly member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan and the national president of Moms Demand Action have agreed to participate in the parade. They would be masked and riding in a convertible, while other members of the anti-firearm group would walk alongside the vehicle.

Miller led off the council discussion, characterizing the decision as incredibly difficult. She acknowledged that Orinda loves its parade, and praised the OA for raising the money, providing the volunteers, and creating the ambience that "brings us all together."

"Nothing would make us feel more normal," she said, but added, "I don't believe either the OA or the city are prepared to run a parade," noting cities that have canceled events, including Piedmont, Danville, Alameda and Martinez. "If it were easy," she pointed out, "others would be doing it." She quoted Contra Costa County Public Health Officer Dr. Chris Farnitano, who said that

a parade was safe for people who are vaccinated, but that he would discourage unvaccinated people from attending, and would encourage them to get vaccinated. "We hold the parade for the children," Miller concluded, "and they can't be vaccinated until September."

Vice Mayor Dennis Fay was in favor of approving the parade, noting that the local rate of vaccination is high, "well past herd immunity." He said that Dr. Anthony Fauci says that the chance of transmission outside is very low. Still, he agreed that masks should be encouraged and that any council member participating in the parade should wear a mask. Council Member Nick Kosla said that he was coming at the decision from another perspective. "I was thrilled to go to my kid's 'advancement'" he said, adding, "As long as guidelines are followed, the OA is really commendable for even wanting to try."

Council Member Darlene Gee was particularly agitated, saying there wasn't a more difficult decision that she would want to be voting on. Even though there is an extremely high level of vaccination, Gee said it would have

been her choice to wait another year. But she wouldn't oppose the parade going forward and will attend, wearing her mask.

Mayor Worth did oppose the parade for this year. "I appreciate the work of the OA over the years, their heroic work with seniors around town this year, their amazing inspiration during the COVID pandemic," she said. She said that she had spent a lot of time talking to staff in other cities, so many of which have deferred for one more year. She distinguished the event from graduations partly because of the limitations that were possible to enforce, and also because those events represented milestones in individuals' lives that only happen once. She also was concerned about the intensity of the parade for volunteers and for city staff, noting that the city currently has decreased staffing.

"There are lots of uncertainties," Worth said. "We don't know how many people will come. We may plan for two to three thousand, but get five to seven thousand."

The 3-2 vote was very unusual for a council that is almost always unanimous in its decisions.

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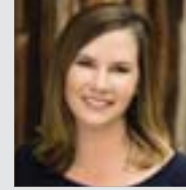
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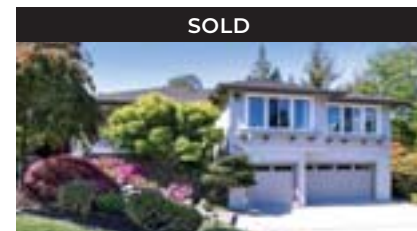
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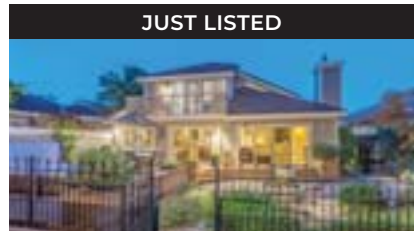
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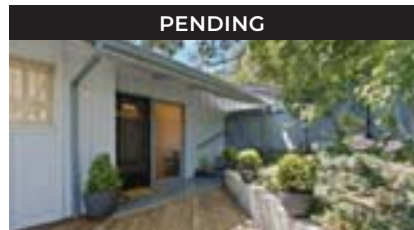
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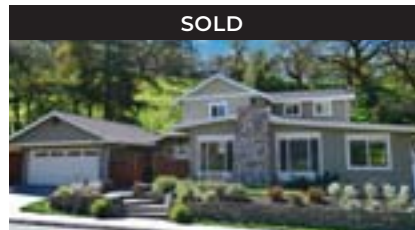
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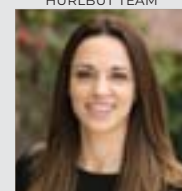
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