

# Proponents for local land use control submit initiative to state attorney general

By Jennifer Wake

Lafayette Mayor Susan Candell is working with a group of non-partisan, ethnically and geographically diverse local electeds and community activists, led by Mayor Bill Brand of Redondo Beach, to override numerous state laws that eliminate or severely erode local control over local development. The group submitted a proposed initiative to the State Attorney General for summary and title on Aug. 16 to amend the Constitution of California to make all land use and zoning a municipal affair only.

“Local communities are best suited to determine how to develop their cities while balancing budgets against the multitude of other challenges each community uniquely faces,” Candell said. What concerns the mayor most is that the housing legislation being put forward by state legislators has done nothing to solve the real affordability and homelessness crises in California. “These laws are increasing inequity and only benefit developers and real estate speculators,” she said.

For example, if Senate Bill 9 passes, Candell says any single-family lot in Lafayette can be split and converted to up to six units without any public hearing or CEQA review.

“There are no exemptions for lots in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones like in our

neighborhoods north of Highway 24 with single ingress/egress,” Candell said. “Since the rules of this legislation do not favor or encourage existing homeowners to make these changes, developers and speculators will take the profit, not the former homeowners, at the expense of the neighborhoods.”

And Candell believes Senate Bill 10 is even worse. “Instead of a single lot to six units in SB 9, SB 10 allows conversion of any lot into 14 units, by right, with no local review. And, most egregiously, none of these units are required to be affordable.”

According to Candell, La Fiesta Square is currently for sale in Lafayette and it is expected that it will be bought and converted to a large mixed-use project, with retail/commercial on the bottom floor, and residential above. While she supports these types of projects, she’s concerned that the community will have little, if any, input on the project, which is one of the biggest and most iconic corners in Lafayette.

“The state is also forcing us to develop our BART parking lots into denser and taller housing than anywhere else in our city, again without any community input,” Candell said. “We will lose the parking for riders who need to drive to BART, and the new units have very little parking required.”

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# New mural celebrating diversity unveiled in Lafayette



Photo provided

The new mural located at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Oak Hill Road in Lafayette.

When Lamorinda resident Lara Dutto contacted Three Thirty Three Arts, she hoped to bring a public mural to Lafayette that felt welcoming to all cultures and celebrated diversity. After over a year of hard work, from the initial design phase, to securing funding, to gaining approval from the city of Lafayette and organizing the installation, the Walnut Creek-based organization’s artists and 13 volunteers helped bring the mural – located at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Oak Hill Road – to fruition.

“The mission of our organization is to bring people together to create public artworks for the benefit of a community,” said Three Thirty Three Arts COO Tari Loring. “The artwork is a byproduct of the collaboration between many different people of various races and ages coming together in a unique way to create the art.”

The mural installation spanned 3.5 days to complete. On the first day, an artist from Three Thirty Three Arts painted the black outlines of the artwork. Over the following two days, two

of its artists led the group of volunteers consisting of teens and young adults who helped fill in the colors and details. Dutto worked alongside the Three Thirty Three Arts team throughout the process and joined in to help paint as well, said Loring.

The result is a vibrant piece of art titled “Unity in Diversity” that includes a dragon, panther, Monarch butterflies, and tropical flowers. In addition to the artwork, Loring said the entire building wall was repainted and some of the bushes were replaced with new drought tolerant plants.

Special thanks to Three Thirty Three Arts lead artists Pancho Pescador, Denis Dukhvalov, Callan Romero, as well as the 13 volunteers, Diamond Construction, Village Associates Real Estate, First Republic Bank, Lamorinda Arts, the 33 individual donors from the GoFundMe campaign, the city of Lafayette, Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, and Dreyer’s (in-kind donation of ice cream for the mural celebration event).

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**Lafayette Public Meetings**

**City Council**

Regular Meeting  
Monday, Aug. 23, 7 p.m.  
Teleconference via City of Lafayette’s YouTube Channel:  
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

**Planning Commission Meeting**

Tuesday, Sept. 7, 7 p.m.  
Teleconference Meeting via Love Lafayette YouTube  
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>

**Design Review**

Wednesday, Aug. 25, 7 p.m. Zoom  
Teleconference Meeting via Love Lafayette YouTube  
<http://bit.ly/LoveLafayetteYouTube>



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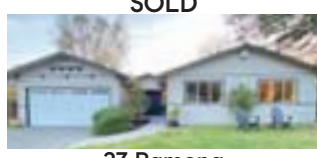
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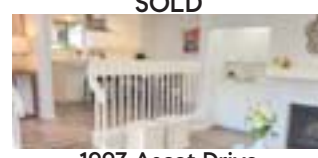
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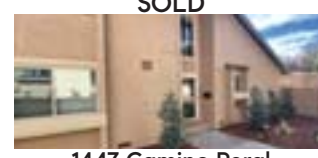
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