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Letters to the editor

Maintaining Lafayette's character

Your article concerning the Oct. 14 Lafayette Homeowners Council meeting quoted resident Lauren Herpich as saying, "When the General Plan Advisory Committee [GPAC] was first talking about a mission statement, there was a resounding outcry that we are not semi-rural anymore." Lafayette City Manager Niroop Srivatsa is quoted as saying that she has never seen such a significant shift in community expectations concerning growth as there is today.

While no one can deny Lafayette's downtown has changed, Ms. Herpich is dead wrong concerning the values of most Lafayette residents. And while "expectations" about what growth will occur have perhaps changed due to the constant harangue of housing advocates, the bias of Lafayette government toward development, and dictatorial legislation from Sacramento depriving communities of local planning control, Ms. Srivatsa's comment is dead wrong if she means to suggest that Lafayette residents desire growth.

In fact, in a recent GPAC "Community Values" survey, the responses concerning the desired physical character of Lafayette, registered far more than any other, were that Lafayette residents fervently wish to maintain the small town and semi-rural aspirations of Lafayette. "Semi-rural" was the fifth highest rated value desired by Lafayette residents (342 of 688 responses), exceeded only by "safe" (450), "great parks and trails" (417), "family-friendly" (375) and "encouraging open space" (347). "Limit growth" immediately followed "semi-rural" (322). That survey inexplicably did not offer "small town" as a response option, but scores of respondents wrote it in anyway. "Semi-rural" received ten times the favorable responses as "encourage growth" (34 responses) and "encourage a more urban experience" (30). Hundreds of written comments were consistent with those numeric responses, particularly concerning the fervent desire to maintain Lafayette's unique character, and not become another Walnut Creek. Comments concerning a later draft Mission Statement were materially similar.

So, despite the constant screaming of advocates and legislators that Lafayette residents are despicable elitists and racists (which is not true), and that Lafayette owes it to the world to destroy itself, Lafayette residents continue to love the character of their town, however it is described, and deeply wish to maintain it.

Eliot R. Hudson
Lafayette

The cost to cross

Can it be true that a short bike lane in the MEDIAN of Pleasant Hill Road is being considered? Which would be a few hundred yards long, from Mt. Diablo Boulevard to Deer Hill Road? Which would cost \$3.1 MILLION So the first cyclist's little ride would represent \$3.1 million. The second ride would represent \$1.5+ million. If 10 people a day used it, 365 days a year, it would take 840 YEARS to pay for itself, if we assume each ride is worth \$1 of our tax money. (Hard to believe? Check my math).

Of course, that figure is true only if there are no accidents, deaths, or other untoward costly events, caused by cyclists and pedestrians crossing CAR TRAFFIC to REACH this obscene little boondoggle, or to get to the other curb, and then suing the city.

Oh wait, maybe 20 people a day would use it and it would only take four CENTURIES to earn its keep. Please tell me I'm going to wake up and find this is just a terrible dream.

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