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Letters to the editor

Wilder issues

Sora O'Doherty wrote that on Jan. 9 the City Council voted that the Wilder Owners Association provide a shuttle service at a significant expense to the 245 families living in the Wilder community, who already pay Wilder association dues of over nine thousand dollars annually. Ironically, they agreed to relieve Wilder's insolvent developers from its obligations.

The shuttle must run during both morning and evening rush hours and on demand and to operate from Wilder to the playing fields, to downtown, to BART and back. As O'Doherty noted, decades have passed since this requirement was written - before the abundance of electric and hybrid cars in Orinda, before the pandemic, before people began working from home, before empty spaces in the BART lot. In the WOA's survey of residents, 94% of respondents said they have no use for a shuttle.

The Planning Commission had met four weeks earlier and had voted unanimously to recommend to the City Council that the shuttle requirement be eliminated as a needless expense. One commissioner said, "I have done shuttle bus projects and, in this day and age, it is very old thinking and it won't work."

Nevertheless, the City Council ignored the Planning Commission's unanimous recommendation and voted that Wilder's 245 families maintain a shuttle when the City Council demands it.

The city requires only Wilder residents to pay for maintaining the Arts and Garden Center and the five playing fields on Wilder Road, open to all Orindans, yet profitably rented out by the city. The city now wants to increase the burden on 245 families. This time it wants us to maintain and operate a shuttle for anyone desiring to travel from downtown/BART to and from these same facilities.

Why is the City Council treating the Wilder community differently from the rest of Orinda? Why insist that 245 families assume expenses for amenities used by all families in Orinda? If the City Council agrees to relieve Wilder's insolvent developers, who are not Orinda residents, from its obligations, why do they insist on such unequal treatment for the 245 families that are their own constituents?

Kathleen Finch
Orinda

Sunday library hours

I read with interest your front-page article on Jan. 17, 2024 regarding the Contra Costa County Library system refusing to allow our local libraries to be open on Sundays. First, I would point out that not only Orinda and Lafayette had Sunday hours before the pandemic, but Moraga also was open on Sunday afternoons, because the Friends of the Moraga Library funded those hours. Since the pandemic, the County has continued to refuse Sunday openings for our patrons, despite the fact that the Friends are again willing to underwrite the staff costs. The County's insistence that unless all branches are open on Sundays, then no branches should be open seems punitive, rather than equitable. As noted in your article, at least "by opening up some branches on Sundays, the libraries would be available to everyone in the county." I encourage all Lamorinda library patrons to contact County Librarian Alison McKee with your requests for Sunday openings: alison.mckee@library.cccounty.us

Thank you,

Sally Whittaker
President
Friends of the Moraga Library

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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