



## ABOUT TOWN ▪ FEBRUARY 1, 2010

### BI-WEEKLY UPDATE FROM MORAGA TOWN STAFF

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#### HATE CRIME INVESTIGATION

The Moraga Police Department has exhausted all investigative leads associated with the September 7, 2009 incident on Wandel Dr. A forensic analysis of the cross found in the street failed to yield any evidence and no witnesses have surfaced. The investigation will be suspended until further leads develop. Anyone with any information is encouraged to contact Lt. Jeff Price at 925-888-7049.



#### TOWN COUNCIL ADOPTS MORAGA CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN (MCSP) AND HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE

Bringing to a close the 7-year process that started with the adoption of the 2002 General Plan, the Town Council unanimously adopted the Moraga Center Specific Plan (MCSP) and Housing Element Update on January 27. This accomplishment was the result of hard work and dedication on the part of the Town Council, Specific Plan Subcommittee, Planning Commission, Design Review Board, Park and Recreation Commission, Moraga residents, property owners and technical experts.

As designed, the plan is an economically viable, environmentally sensitive approach to development that calls for the creation of a mixed-use village with local serving commercial development and a range of residential opportunities. Essential to the plan are the revitalization of the existing shopping center and Moraga Ranch complex, construction of new residential units and preservation of the creek corridor. While the Plan does not authorize immediate construction, it is an important step in defining the future development potential of the area. Construction of new dwelling units will enhance the customer base for the existing shopping center and the addition of new businesses could help to reduce sales tax leakage and contribute to the local economy.

While much of the Specific Plan focuses on new construction, it also provides for the revitalization of the existing shopping center and Moraga Ranch. New residential development in close proximity to the shopping center will strengthen the commercial core and enhance the quality of life in Moraga. With many new dwelling units within easy walking distance of the center, new residents will be just steps away from an enhanced business and social environment. Along the Camino Ricardo corridor and extending to the top of the hillside, low density single-family development consistent with the existing neighborhood is proposed. Similar to the Sonsara development across the street, this neighborhood is planned to provide traditional single-family residential development on 10,000 square foot minimum lots.

The highest density residential development in the MCSP area is planned for the relatively flat area across the creek from the Moraga Center. In this area, active senior dwelling units are planned potentially ranging from studio apartments to 2-bedroom condominiums. These units are intended to be smaller than traditional single-family residences and meet the needs of a growing senior population. By clustering development along the creek, this housing opportunity would provide seniors with easy access to new and existing opportunities for shopping, dining, socializing and recreation within the Moraga Center area and nearby facilities such as the Moraga Commons and Moraga Library.

Adding to the diversity of the residential options within the Specific Plan area is an opportunity for up to 100 Saint Mary's College and/or workforce dwelling units. These units could be located above or adjacent to new commercial development in a mixed-use environment. By creating opportunities for student and/or workforce housing, commute trips into and out of Moraga are reduced and peak hour traffic on the arterials in Lamorinda will not be adversely affected.

A key element in the MCSP is that it proposes no more peak hour peak direction traffic than the 2002 Town of Moraga General Plan, but the total number of dwelling units is higher because the plan calls for a range of lower-traffic generating housing opportunities in the specific plan area. This range of housing opportunities is necessary to address the Town's Regional Housing Needs Allocation. Housing that is developed at a minimum density of 20 dwelling units per acre, including senior housing and workforce housing, is planned to meet the requirement in state law for affordable housing for low income households. State law, however, only requires the Town to make these housing opportunities available; the Town is not required to build the housing itself.

In addition, the MCSP has been identified as a potential site for the development of a 20,000 square foot multi-generational community center/gymnasium. The Moraga Parks and Recreation Master Plan calls for the development of a community center use on an appropriate site based on a community-wide search.

A similar rare opportunity exists at the Moraga Ranch. Distinct in its architectural style, the Moraga Ranch is a collection of red painted wood framed buildings with white trim and characteristic white ranch fencing. Located at a key intersection in the Specific Plan area, the Moraga Ranch is home to several existing businesses and ranch-related activities. In addition, two recently renovated buildings on the ranch property present immediate business opportunities. Substantial infill opportunities also exist on the ranch property. One suggestion for new commercial development in this area is a small winery producing wine from locally grown grapes and providing related goods and services.

In sum, the MCSP was designed to address a number of important issues in the Town of Moraga. It provides for the economic and physical revitalization of the existing shopping center through reinvestment and increased residential and commercial development. It meets the needs of residents by providing increased shopping and dining opportunities and a range of housing options especially senior housing for an aging population. It helps local employers attract and retain necessary employees by providing housing opportunities for the local workforce. It addresses the traffic impacts of new development on neighboring jurisdictions and it recognizes special opportunities for recreation and hospitality.

For more detailed information on the plan, visit the Town's website.



## TOWN COUNCIL GOAL SETTING SESSION

On Saturday, February 20, from 8:00 a.m. to noon, the Town Council will hold its annual goal setting session in the La Sala room at the Hacienda. Interested residents are invited to attend the meeting to hear the discussion and share ideas about goals for the Town. If you cannot attend you may submit ideas for topics to any member of Town Council or to the Town Clerk ([mmcinturf@moraga.ca.us](mailto:mmcinturf@moraga.ca.us)). The Town Council will formally adopt the goals that are identified in this meeting at a future Town Council regular meeting.



## RANCHO LAGUNA II APPEAL CONTINUED TO MARCH 10, 2010

On January 27, the Town Council continued consideration of the Rancho Laguna II appeal to March 10, 2010. The staff report for this agenda item will be available on the Town website on March 5.



## MORAGA ORINDA FIRE DISTRICT TRI-AGENCY COMMITTEE

The Moraga Town Council will participate in a joint meeting with the Moraga Orinda Fire District, (MOFD) and the City of Orinda on March 3 to discuss a proposal from a citizens group called FAIR. The FAIR group is recommending that the three agencies consider dissolving the MOFD and contracting with CONFIRE to provide fire service and a private provided for ambulance service. They believe that this approach will save money that could be used to repair infrastructure. Anyone interested in this matter should plan to attend. The meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. at the Orinda Library Garden Room, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda.



## LAGUNA CREEK STORM REPAIRS AT HACIENDA

Four contracts were awarded to continue the design work to repair the storm damage along Laguna Creek on the Hacienda property. The Town has been working with FEMA and CalEMA to complete all of the necessary environmental clearances before continuing. Currently, the repairs are scheduled for late this summer, but the schedule depends on getting the required permits from various State agencies.



## TOWN COUNCIL PRESENTS A PROCLAMATION THANKING ROTARY CLUB OF MORAGA

Rotary Club of Moraga provided the people power to disassemble the old and failing Commons Park “upper” play structure and assistance with installation of the new structure. Rotarians, their Rotaract Club and members of Boy Scout Troop 246 volunteered many hours, saving the Town over \$3,000. At the Town Council meeting on January 27, Vicky Devlin, Rotary President and about 15 Rotarians accepted the proclamation and plaque for their efforts. Thank you Rotary Club of Moraga for your service to our community.



## ANOTHER ROUND OF STIMULUS MONEY?

Local agencies are preparing for another round of economic stimulus funds that might become available in the next few months. Information available indicates that any projects funded with the money should be ready for construction immediately. In order to better position the Town for the funding, staff is researching the possibility of implementing a pavement rehabilitation project (similar to what was done on Moraga Road from Sky-Hy to Buckingham) on Rheem Boulevard. Unfortunately, the area impacted by the landslides cannot be tackled because of the environmental clearances required to repair the subsurface slides prior to repaving. However, remaining portions of Rheem may be eligible. No information is available on how much money may be available (IF ANY!), so the limits of the repairs are unknown at this time.