

Civic News Moraga

Infusion of Contemporary Design for Rancho Laguna II

... continued from page A5

The architectural choices of the Dahlin Group are commensurate with higher-end homes – wood, stone, crafty architectural details, with some modern simplifications and integration of indoor and outdoor spaces that will appeal to young, affluent families.

In its report, staff called out some details it found to be at odds with the rest of the design: a flat roof above a bedroom and optional porch, a tower rising above the ridgeline, cable elements supporting a flat roof above an entry that staff found to be too industrial-looking. Board members reacted positively to the design as a whole, and opinions were divided about the modern elements; some liked the roofs they found appealing and interesting, but not the cables, and vice versa. The board's decisions are based on approved design guidelines to which every project in town must conform.

Two neighbors on Birchwood Drive asked questions about the

landscape. Now the hills are bare – the result of years of grazing – and the residents were concerned that creating rows of trees along the road that will serve the development would look odd. The board recommended that the developer smooth the landscaping and integrate it seamlessly into the natural surroundings.

The board also approved the installation of wood fences along the back yards of the properties that will be built on Rheem Boulevard to give homeowners some privacy – the entrances to these homes will be from a private road and their back yards will be seen from the boulevard. Board member John Glover cited the Sonsara development, where thick, varied landscaping between the fencing and Camino Ricardo creates a pleasant feel for passers-by.

Final approval by the Design Review Board is expected in the coming months.

Civic News Orinda

OUSD Board Candidates Talk Common Core

... continued from page A6

Aware that some are concerned about losing local control, Brown observed that “most people are not trained in education theory. While OUSD needs to have a say in setting its own curriculum, when it comes to how to teach a child, I need to trust the experts – the teachers.”

Jason Kaune said Common Core reached his radar earlier than many other parents because he has corporate clients who were required to start building tools to address the standards before they became a national concern. “Like most changes, there is good and bad. Teachers seem to appreciate how Common Core will let them innovate and change the way they teach. Math may be problematic, but you have to just manage that change, and make sure that kids who can advance have the opportunity to do so.” Having seen the implementation level long enough, he believes that “some making it a flashpoint read a lot into it. It has become a symbol for people upset with change. I view Common Core favorably – weaving flexibility in so that our country's students learn what they need to learn. A thoughtful process of rethinking what you do and trying to do it better is a good thing.” He is concerned, however,

about the apparent de-emphasis on social studies and civics. “Civic Education has to be at the heart of education.”

“Going deeper into subject matter to create true understanding of concepts will be more useful than just learning a formula,” said Julie Rossiter. “If students can get to that actual level of understanding and learn how to reason, rather than just broadly mastering historical facts, they might be better able to apply their learning in later life.”

But she too is uncertain where Common Core will lead. “At our last meeting, we had a lot of board policies to be revised. Math is a work in progress. We need to make sure that we teach in the best possible way, and ensure that kids coming out of our district can take the highest level of math at whatever high school they attend. In the past, you could have certain kids skip pre-algebra for geometry. Now you can't do that. You can't just eliminate an entire level.” She feels OUSD must offer acceleration options at middle and high school levels, and has urged the board to enact a policy enabling students departing Orinda's middle school to take calculus rather than pre-calculus.

From Front Page

New Art Form Makes Debut Spin at Art and Wine Festival

... continued from page A1

He and fellow artist Bill Carmel walked into the Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery in Lafayette and spoke to Perlmutter, pitching the idea of a collaboration at the Art and Wine Festival. Perlmutter was enchanted, so her gallery is generously donating the canvases and organizing the artists. She describes the upcoming exhibition as “exactly the kind of community/art hybrid event that I love to share.”

Unfortunately Barry had existing plans to visit England during the days the festival is being held, so Carmel, along with other artists

including Kaleo Ching and Judy Chamberlin, will be doing the trAction painting, but on a smaller vertical surface. Because the festival is so popular, there just isn't room to do the large-scale bicycle version; attendees can watch the process as it develops to produce the bright, musically inspired pieces.

All of the artists are donating their time and talent to produce these one-of-a-kind works. Perlmutter will also have larger trAction art from Barry, along with other pieces from a variety of artists on display in the Perlmutter

Gallery, across from Diablo Foods for those who would like to take a peek or purchase.

Artists are slated to be painting from 12:30 to 6 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 20 and 21, at the Fiesta Stage tucked into the small street just past the The Cooperage American Grille off of Lafayette Circle. For more information on John Barry and his unconventional art of skainting (skating painting), go to www.traction-painting.com. Complete details about the Art and Wine Festival can be found at www.lafayettefestival.com.

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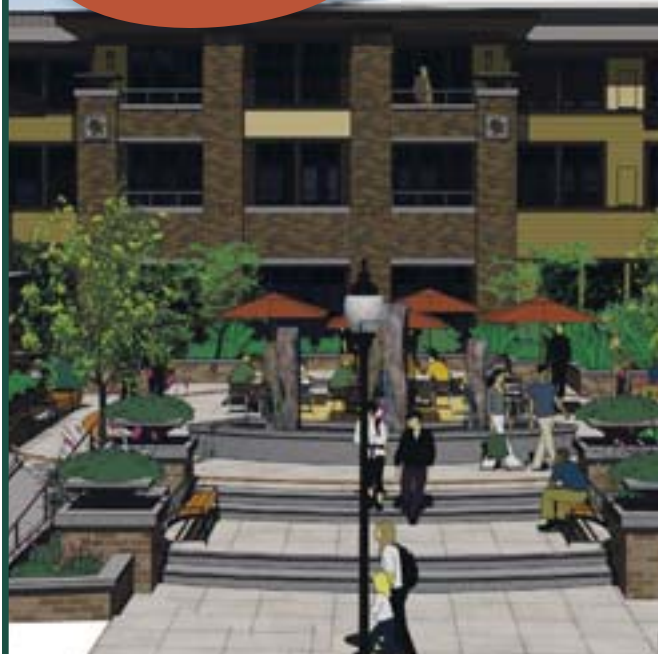
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