



Moraga

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, March 23, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, April 13, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Planning Commission

Monday, April 4, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, March 28, 7 p.m.
Monday, March 14 canceled
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

School Board Meeting Moraga School District

Tuesday, April 12, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga
www.moraga.k12.ca.us
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us
Phone: (925) 888-7022

Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



Moraga Police Department

Traffic Stop Bonanza, 3/01/16: It was 2 p.m. when cops pulled over a car on a traffic stop, and found both the driver and passenger had outstanding, not in a good way, county arrest warrants. The pair were taken into custody without incident. Cops found illegal drugs, weapons, drug paraphernalia and evidence of possible identity theft.

Unauthorized Unwanted Credit 3/01/16: A Moraga Road resident learned a Chase Amazon credit card had been opened using his personal information and also reported that he received multiple declined credit application letters is the mail that he hadn't applied for. The victim had the Chase account closed and, thankfully, did not suffer any monetary loss. Cops advised to place a fraud alert on his credit and seek the use of a credit monitoring service.

Stolen Car 3/03/16: A Donald Drive resident parked his car in front of apartment complex before leaving on a two-week vacation. Upon his return, the car had vanished. Police looked, but it was nowhere to be found. No suspects or leads at this time.

Party is Over 3/06/16: At 12:30 a.m. cops responded to a complaint of a loud party on Ascot Drive. Cops spoke with three residents and advised them of the Town of Moraga ordinance regarding loud parties. Turns out that two of the three had been issued party warning notices within the past six months and were issued citations. Cops gave all three a warning notice, and "counseled" the hosts as to the repercussions should this happen again. The approximately 20 partygoers dispersed.

Vehicle Burglary 3/06/16: An unknown person drilled out the lock cylinder on a Miramonte Drive resident's Ford F-250 truck, and stole an estimated \$1,300 worth of stuff from the vehicle that was parked in a carport.

Hillside Slides Threaten Country Club Houses

By Sophie Braccini

At the beginning of March Tim and Eileen Alford made a tough decision, leaving their home in the Moraga Country Club they felt might not be safe anymore, and moving themselves and their three children in with friends. They were afraid their home was prone to landslides from the onslaught from the recent rains.

Since January the property owner of the land next to theirs, East Bay Municipal Utility District, had noticed landslides and had agreed with the East Bay Regional Park District that the trail along Moraga Creek needed to be closed, but the agency only recently noticed the impact on homes with backyards that abut the trail. The Alford's home along Augusta Drive needed to be "red-tagged" — deemed uninhabitable — and others are at risk.

Alford says that around March 8 he noticed that "a portion of our deck was leaning," and then started to inspect the ground behind his property. "I noticed cracks in the EBMUD ground that started to affect our foundations," he said. Alford and his wife felt it was unsafe for the family to stay in the house and moved out. The town of Moraga was contacted, the house inspected and red-tagged. Alford feels that since EBMUD knew about the slides since January, the agency should have informed the adjacent property owners.

"We observed a small slide along the trail by the creek," says Andrea Pook, EBMUD spokeswoman, about what happened in January. "We decided [with EBRPD, which owns the

trail] to close it and commissioned an initial study to look into the slide." Pook says EBMUD learned that there are existing slides in the whole area, and plans to work with the park district to determine the extent of the slide.

EBMUD further indicated that they were informed in March of movement up the hill, close to the homes. The agency sent an engineering team there on March 10, but the soil was so saturated and constantly shifting that there was no possibility of remediation. "We do plan to go out below the houses, remove the trees so they don't fall," says Pook.

EBMUD say they've hired experts to continue further investigation, but that the soil needs to be drier in order to do so.

"Houses are on private property, and these are natural landslides," says Pook, adding that deciding on responsibility is not as important at this time as keeping the area safe and keeping an eye on the creek.

Alford and his family are not certain of what the next steps will be. "We have to figure out what is best for our family," he says. "We are lucky we are healthy. The question is, is the house livable, and if not where does the responsibility lie?"

He adds that typically insurance companies do not cover landslides. A local lawyer who said he'd rather remain anonymous confirmed that no responsibility is involved when it is just Mother Nature doing her thing; only when human-made activities or negligence can be proven can the re-



The trail below the country club homes shows damage from the slides.

Photo Rob Lucacher

sponsibility of a neighbor, like EBMUD, be attributed.

EBMUD said that in January the only information they had involved the trail, and that they were in the midst of initial studies when the situation worsened the weekend of March 12-13. "We would have informed the homeowners," says Pook, "but we didn't get to that point." The spokesperson added that the agency

is now focusing on communication with all the neighbors and is asking residents to stay clear of the area.

The State of Emergency declared by the town of Moraga on March 16 covers the entire town, including "other storm related damage" such as the landslide on EBMUD property along Moraga Creek behind the homes on Augusta Drive.

Five Surveillance Cameras Approved For Moraga

By Sophie Braccini

Moraga should have its own surveillance camera system in place by this summer, the last of the Lamorinda cities to do so.

The installation was a Town Council goal for 2016, and on March 9 the council members took the first step by approving a plan for five standing cameras and a few mobile Reconyx proposed by acting Chief of Police Jon B. King. Now, funding needs to be found and individuals who have said they were ready to contribute to the safety device system may be asked to do so. It will take a few months for staff to come up with a Request for Proposal and get a vendor approved.

King made a strong presentation to the council. His most convincing arguments were statistics from Lafayette that showed that in a time of increased crime rate in the county, the neighboring suburb had succeeded in reducing the number of burglaries by half while doubling the number of solved burglaries.

"The number of solved cases rose to 66 percent," said King, linking this success to more cameras installed in the city. The average solve rate is 10 to 15 percent. To further drive his point home King added that during the same period, the crime rate in Moraga had increased by about 30 percent.

The interim chief explained that the system he was recommending was similar to what Orinda and Lafayette have been using. It will include installing five camera systems at exits of the town: Canyon Road, Moraga Way, Rheem Blvd., Moraga Road and St Mary's Road. Each system would include an automated license plate reader camera and two high definition color surveillance cameras. The data collected would be

transmitted through a wireless network to the police department.

King also recommended the acquisition of two Reconyx systems, motion activated infrared cameras that can be installed for a short period of time to investigate various situations at specific locations. King estimated the total cost at about \$100,000.

King stressed the fact that safety is a multifaceted effort. Police and city staff have been meeting with homeowner associations, service groups and at Neighborhood Nights Out — events to bring awareness to neighborhood safety. The police department has also established a database in which residents can register their individual systems and agree to

allow police to review recordings if there is a crime that has occurred in their vicinity.

Three residents came to speak in favor of installing cameras, including Dennis Martel of the Moraga Country Club, who said he has 35 years of experience in law enforcement.

... continued on page A9

Just Listed in Moraga!



731 Crossbrook Drive, Moraga

Situated at the top of Crossbrook Drive, this stunning classic ranch home has 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms with two additional offices/bonus rooms. This home has a fabulous floor plan and is conveniently located minutes from shopping, schools, parks and BART.

Offered at \$1,398,000 | Call us for more details!



Bernie & Ryerson Team

925.200.2222 or 925.878.9685
gabernie@pacunion.com
ken@ryersonrealty.com
License #: 00686144 | 01418309

PACIFIC UNION
CHRISTIE'S
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

License # 01866771