



Published April 19th, 2017

EBMUD, parks district under town scrutiny regarding Moraga landslide

By *Sophie Braccini*

Every month the Moraga Town Council reviews the status of the landslide that formed below Augusta Drive last year that resulted in three families having to leave their homes and the closure of a portion of the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail.

At the April 12 council meeting Moraga resident Dennis Martel, whose home is affected by the landslide, brought to the town's attention a geotechnical study that was done in January of 2016 when the first land movements occurred. The subsequent collapse of the hillside that destabilized the uphill homes happened two months later. Martel alleges that the agency did nothing to prevent the further degradation of the situation.

The three affected property owners initiated a lawsuit against EBMUD and East Bay Regional Parks District after EBMUD denied responsibility

Moraga town manager Bob Priebe, who received a copy of the geotechnical study a few weeks ago from Martel, explained to the council that in the "Conclusions and Recommendations" section of the report the consultant describes the active landslide area as appearing to be part of a larger landslide that predates the residential development in the area. The report also states that if true, failure of the slopes below the trail have essentially reduced the restraining forces on the landslide, which could potentially lead to additional landslide movement further upslope. The report adds that additional and potentially more significant movements could occur if the landslide is not stabilized, particularly if the region continues to experience significant rainfall.

Several precise recommendations were included in the report including borings of the active slide area and development of a slope stabilization repair scheme. The report recommends these activities be carried out as soon as possible, to prevent additional and potentially more significant slope movements from occurring. In March of 2016 three families had to leave their homes because of worsening conditions.

During the council meeting Priebe said that the two parties - the residents and the agencies - have shown interest in speeding up the litigation and that a meeting is being scheduled and will likely occur in May.

The town manager added that next month, EBMUD will be asked to come to the council to report on their efforts to resolve the more than a year old situation.

Council Member Dave Trotter indicated that he had been appointed to the East Bay Regional Park Advisory Committee last January and had asked that the park district present at its June 26 meeting its plan to deal with various segments of trails damaged by storms, including the Moraga one.

Priebe said that staff has created a page on the Town's website at www.moraga.ca.us/Augusta_Drive_Landslide to provide all staff reports and related attachments for the public to view.

Reach the reporter at: sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA