



Moraga

Public Meetings

City Council

Wednesday, May 24, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Planning Commission

Monday, June 5, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

Design Review

Monday, May 22, 7 p.m.
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Moraga School District
Thursday, June 6, 7 p.m.
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Library
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 Report



April 25 to May 2 Alarms

4/27 Likely false alarm from cleaning service
4/27 MBR glass break triggered alarm. Nothing vandalized or taken
4/27 Key fob activation. Nothing unusual seen or heard.
4/28 Garage door activation.
5/1 400 block Fernwood Drive. Residence found secure.
5/1 100 block Miramonte Drive. Nothing unusual seen/heard.

4/25 Bench Warrant

Police pulled over a vehicle for a driving violation and found its driver outstanding – having had two previous warrants issued, that is. Driver was cited and released on a signed promise to appear in court. Maybe someone else should drive that day.

4/25 ID Theft

Saint Mary's College — attempt to open checking account in Memphis.

4/26 Residential Burglary

Homeowner lost electronic items, jewelry and sports memorabilia. Burglar was not a good sport.

4/29 ID Theft

Fitness center guest lost his driver's license and several credit cards. The thief used the info to make \$4,000 in purchases. Police working out with surveillance tape.

4/27 Dispute

BFF? Not even close. It didn't turn out especially well for either of two intoxicated male roommates, one of whom suffered a minor scratch. The other got a courtesy lift to a nearby BART station likely until cooler heads prevailed.

4/27 Warrant arrest

Police gave a 41-year-old female on Rheem Boulevard who held an outstanding warrant a lift to Martinez Detention Facility.

4/27 Suspicious Circumstances

Police investigated a reported suspicious circumstance at Saint Mary's College. It was so suspicious we can't tell you what happened. Truthfully — we don't know.

4/28 Auto Burglary

Doors to a previously locked and unattended vehicle netted thief/ thieves \$100. The owner discovered two keys on the front driver seat.

4/28 Vehicle Larceny

A Prius parked on Miramonte Drive was relieved of an estimated \$50 in miscellaneous items. It might be old school, but there are no witnesses or leads.

4/28 Incident

Police retrieved three airsoft rifles from Saint Mary's College Public Safety. Zero shots in the dark later said rifles were headed for destruction.

4/28 Auto Burglary

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Town-Gown relationship at an all-time high

By Sophie Braccini

Saint Mary's College has scored big with the Town of Moraga recently as it had its master plan approved — after five years of work — as well as banners that will welcome students downtown in the fall. Town-gown relationships are blossoming as commencement week, starting on May 27, gets near.

“Wednesday night was really a remarkable moment in the history of the Moraga-Saint Mary's town-gown relationship,” said Tim Farley, the college community and government relations director, at a public meeting following the May 10 town council meeting. He spoke of the five years of public outreach, environmental impact reviews, and multiple planning meetings that led to the seemingly effortless approval by the town council of a plan that will direct the college's development over the next 15 years.

Saint Mary's does not plan to

increase in any major way its number of students, as confirmed by college president Jim Donahue at the council meeting. The vision is to improve the services provided to the students on campus, including lodging, sports facilities, and student learning and recreation spaces.

The neighboring city of Lafayette was consulted during the process. Its concerns revolved around traffic generation during construction. With the number of students staying mostly the same, the traffic study did not show any additional everyday impact.

The only element that had been noted by the planning commission during its final review was the water usage impact. The college's environmental report showed a 19 percent increase in water use, and proposed the use of the use of a water well. Commissioners had asked at their April 10 meeting if Saint Mary's could improve their water

conservation practices. College's staff responded that the percentage increase had been calculated because facilities such as campus housing were added to the campus, but that it would be unlikely that water use would increase as much because the number of students and faculty would not change significantly.

The council, like the planning commission last month, approved the plan. Over the next five years the phase one projects should be completed, including a new roundabout at the crossing with St. Mary's Road to create a better entrance to the campus and improve bike circulation; a new library and learning commons; the construction of a second story for parking over the existing public parking area; the creation of a second emergency entrance/exit routes; the renovation of the McKeon pavilion; a new residence hall; repurposing the

Madigan gym; and a new student center for academic activities and food.

The college received town approval during the same council meeting for hanging about 20 pole banners around town when school starts again to welcome parents and students. One council member argued that these were commercial banners that should be restricted to the commercial areas, per town policy. But the majority approved the proposal as made by the college, asking that the content highlight an event, such as back-to-school, that would be of interest to the whole community, rather than displaying subjective content.

The banners were approved for 30 days. They should be displayed before and/or after the California Independent Film Festival banners that were approved to be hung from mid-August to mid-September.

Moraga Community Foundation to pay for License Plate Recognition cameras for town entrances

By Sophie Braccini

Lafayette has them, Orinda has them, and soon Moraga will too: License Plate Recognition cameras.

These cameras that read cars' license plates when vehicles enter or exit town will be installed as soon as the Moraga Community Foundation has raised the necessary \$60,000. Residents are invited to contribute.

The town of Moraga approved the purchase of five video cameras in March of 2016, just one week before the sinkhole that collapsed under Rheem Boulevard threat-

I'll bet the woman whose car was burgled on Ascot Drive is less upset about losing \$260 in stolen goods than learning her vehicle master key was missing. Changing the vehicle locks sets her back \$1200.

4/28 Violation City Ordinance

These college students are slow learners. Residents hosting 15 loud and unruly guests had been cited once already for noise. Now they're repeating the lesson.

4/29 Violation City Ordinance

Police found 86 college-age revelers and alcoholic beverages in one apartment on a Saturday night. Clearly the elbow room was as tight as some guests. Police 86'd the group; the residents received a warning.

4/30 Vandalism

Another roommate tiff. Roomie one in the front yard, avoiding an extremely intoxicated second in the kitchen, who had broken several items. The inside subject beat a hasty retreat to a back bedroom when police arrived. They coaxed him out, but he pulled away, then slammed his head into the patrol car. He was arrested and deposited at Martinez Detox...er, Detention Center!

5/1 Larceny

How out of control are real estate prices in Lamorinda? It's so bad that someone just stole a “for sale” sign posted in the 2100 block of Ascot Drive.

5/1 Stolen property

2018 license plate tabs stolen from a Toyota.

5/1 ID Theft

Fraudulent use of an ATM card in Colorado. Bank notified; card closed.



Moraga Community Foundation members from left: Bob Fritzky, Edy Schwartz, Tom Schnurr and Hays Engelhardt answered questions about the video cameras last Saturday at the Moraga Community Faire. Photo A. Scheck

ened to dig a big gap in the town's coffers, and all non-essential expenses were put on hold. But one resident decided not to give up. Kristen Beckwith had lived through a scary experience that opened her eyes, and she decided to get the town to act.

The Moraga mom remembers how last year she saw on a private home camera two individuals stealing from her neighbor's mailbox in Moraga. She contacted the police. Moraga had no video camera to track their car, but Lafayette had and the next day Lafayette police sent her an image of a car that had been identified on video as belonging to suspects in another case, and she was able to confirm that it was the same car.

“I understood how these cameras were great tools to solve crime,” Beckwith says. Since then she has not stopped the campaign. She has been joined by Paul Cohune, who says that there is a perception in town that crime is on the rise.

Both Lafayette and Orinda have installed such cameras in the last few years. Lafayette Chief of Police Eric Christensen attributed the dramatic drop in residential burglaries in 2015 — 60 percent

— to prevention, that include residents' vigilance and security cameras installed in town. Both police chiefs in Orinda and Lafayette have said that not all crimes can be prevented or solved by video cameras, but both cities have examples of cases where the license plate reading devices were key in the capture of the bad guys.

Beckwith and Cohune are supported in their quest by the Moraga police department and Police Chief Jon King, who says he believes that the devices are both a deterrent and a crime solving tool.

Since the financial situation of Moraga is not improving, the residents decided to take the matter in their own hands. Beckwith, Cohune and King met with the Moraga Community Foundation and asked the nonprofit to support them.

MCF's president Renata Sos said that the board unanimously approved the project and decided to actively participate in the fundraising effort. The campaign was named the Community Watch Program; its objective is to raise \$60,000 to install the five systems that were approved over a year ago.

The whole structure will con-

sist of five license plate readers installed in conjunction with high definition overview cameras to be able to accurately identify the vehicles. Each unit will be installed at five high traffic entrances and exits of the town. The information collected will be accessed solely by police officers as part of a crime investigation. The data will not be transmitted over the internet.

Cohune and Beckwith quickly started reaching out to community groups in town and were present at the Moraga Community Faire. Beckwith says that some people are concerned about being “watched” but adds that the vast majority is supportive. The first number of donations was encouraging, but there is still a way to go.

Sos and other members of the MCF are also engaged in fundraising for the cameras. The foundation's president noted that the mission of the foundation is to invest in projects that are significant and for the benefit of the community as a whole. She and the board believe that the project is timely and encourages the project to go to the www.moragacommunityfoundation.org to donate.