

Published July 12th, 2017

With fanfare, Miner Road reopens to the public after sinkhole

By B. B. Kaye



Residents and city dignitaries cut the ribbon to reopen Miner Road. Photo Steve Ehrhardt

seen, is not too bad of an outcome."

She thanked elected officials. "We lean on all these folks, because it was any number of state, regional, and federal agencies we had to interact with. The City of Orinda by itself doesn't always have quite the loud voice that we think we do, so we want to thank all these folks for their support."

State Senator Steve Glazer added, "Total cost came in at \$2.8 million dollars, this from a city budget of \$11 million. In a small town, that's a big number. The Federal Emergency Management Agency, the State Water Resources Control Board, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, Caltrans, and more... all had to come together to approve every step to get subsidies... the good work from Larry Theis resulted, we believe, in significant subsidy... 75-90 percent covered by other agencies."

EBMUD Director Marguerite Young said, "This is an amazing list of collaborators coming together. Hats off to Orinda for getting this done in record time."

Afterward, Public Works Inspector Tod Fierner painted some gravity: "People wonder why it took six months. Three of those months were because of the rain. What was ironic about the day (the sinkhole started) is we had driven over this area three times, because we had a tree down. School buses went through here that morning. Beneath it was air. The asphalt held everything up. There was no base underneath at all. Oh, my God, it was lucky nobody got hurt. About 6,000 people use this road."

Chris Carpenter, community affairs representative for Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, shared, "We had to work within the slope of existing sewer lines. We had pumps at the manhole up the street, pumping out and over into this manhole. The pipes are supported by ground, so when ground went away, pipe support went away, and the pipes broke. We were here 24 hours a day for months, making sure we don't have an overflow into the creek system. Once a creek's involved, you get water agencies involved, and state legislature... it ends up a big deal. PG&E has gas lines through, and water mains. All the permits required... once you crest the slope line of a creek, Fish and Game, Army Corps of Engineers, everybody has to approve.... If you just fix what's there, you can get reimbursed pretty easily.... But if you just put back what was there, they may face the same issue again. In trying to improve, and still get reimbursed, there was a lot of work. The right thing to do is fix all the problems. I'm sure many of Larry's (Theis) late nights and hours were spent working with people to pull that off."

At 8 p.m. on Friday, June 30, Miner Road was reopened to public traffic.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA