

Letters to the Editor

Go Gaels women's basketball!

As one of four retired guys who follow women's and men's St. Mary's Basketball please note that Thursday, Jan. 18 the St. Mary's Women will play the Gonzaga women in Moraga at 6:30 p.m. We will be at midcourt cheering for the women and we ask that all of the Lamorinda community make plans to attend this game to show support for these student athletes, every one of whom will graduate with an earned degree.

When St. Mary's travels to Gonzaga they will be met by 6,000 Bulldog fans. Our women usually play before 400 or so fans. So there are more than 3,000 empty seats available for the Lamorinda community to fill and cheer on the women as our McKeon gym holds 3,500.

Some of these role models are babysitters and nannies for your children. This game is an opportunity for the community to show its support for the women. The game starts at 6:30 p.m., so if a fan and family left the house at 5:45 p.m.

and watched a bit of pregame, then the game, one would be home by 8:15 p.m. – two and a half well spent hours.

Please join us on Jan. 18 and cheer on the Women of St. Mary's basketball. Go women's Gaels.

William R. Anderson
Moraga

Thank you for the article on private roads

I think the unfairness of having about a quarter of Orinda residents pay for all public road maintenance without getting any support for their private road maintenance was under-emphasized.

I had only lived in big cities prior to purchasing my Orinda home 23 years ago. When the agent told me it was a private road my reaction was "My how quaint," not having any understanding of the implications.

My fellow private road residents have been maintaining our culverts and our private road with our own funds for about 50 years.

During all this time we have been paying the same taxes and assessments as our neighbors on public roads. We regularly clear debris from our road drains. When our street drainage gets blocked we individually call Roto-Rooter and pay the bill. When the road needed repaving, we asked all the property owners to share in the cost but only a few were willing to participate. We really wish to maintain friendly relations with our neighbors so recourse to the law is not an option. Furthermore the law is not clear on the cost sharing responsibilities.

Road maintenance public funds both avoids neighbor alienation and acts as a disaster insurance policy. Should a road collapse and an expensive repair be required the cost is shared by all Orinda residents rather than falling upon the few residents of one particular private road.

The city council represents the interests of the entire community of Orinda, yet to date it has failed to deal with this fundamental unfairness which diminishes our col-

lective sense of community. The requirements for a road to become public exceed the specifications of many, possibly most, currently publicly maintained residential streets. In addition to bringing our street up to unreasonable specifications staff have also suggested a special 20 year assessment for our road would be required. This seems both excessive (\$1000/year/parcel) and unfair, as we have been paying for both our own private road maintenance and paying taxes and assessments all along.

It is of course reasonable for the city council to hesitate taking on the additional liability, but the cost is completely unknown. The private roads have not been surveyed to determine their current condition. An estimate of \$22 million was mentioned in the last city

council meeting but this is a speculative guess and in my opinion possibly an order of magnitude to high. (Caltrans only spends about \$100,000 per mile lane for road maintenance.) It seems to me reasonable to have the city council request a survey of all private roads and their culverts to be able to assess the repair and maintenance cost realistically. Some of these costs may be shared with the state and federal government by increased miles in the public infrastructure.

The Orinda private road residents enjoy their public road neighbors to stand in solidarity with them to rectify this inequity. This issue has been ignored for too long.

Charles Porges
Orinda

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

EBMUD updated Watershed Master Plan available for public view

By Nick Marnell



Siesta Valley in Orinda

Photo courtesy EBMUD

Each Lamorinda community presents a unique challenge to the East Bay Municipal Utility District as it manages the 29,000 acres of land and water under its jurisdiction. Many of those challenges are outlined in the EBMUD 2017 Watershed Master Plan, released for public scrutiny in December. Here are examples of district management directives for each local municipality.

Lafayette

EBMUD manages not only the water in the Lafayette Reservoir but also the land in the watershed surrounding it. An ongoing district goal is to "continue to modify as necessary and implement the Lafayette Reservoir watershed fire management plan" and to maintain the fire roads in the watershed. According to the district Lafayette Reservoir Vegetation Management Plan, accessible watershed areas are mowed, and "goats and sheep, supplied by Goats-r-Us, may also be supplemented into the treatment regime, if they are available." The district occasionally employs hand crews occupied by the CALFIRE Delta Camp.

"When using CALFIRE, it's a cheaper resource, they do great work, we interact with their agency and provide good training for their personnel," said Ed Gonzales, assistant fire chief of the Contra Cos-

ta County Fire Protection District, which responds to fire and other emergency calls in the Lafayette watershed area.

Moraga

EBMUD states its goal of "co-ordinating with the town of Moraga on the planning and development of the Larch Avenue area to limit water paragraph quality effects, risk of wildfire, and degradation of views on the Upper San Leandro Reservoir watershed." The Larch Avenue area lies in the drainage of Moraga Creek, which drains to the reservoir.

According to Interim Town Manager Jim Holgersson, EBMUD "made a broad PR presentation about new water infrastructure system-wide which was in response to inquiries about why EBMUD rates were going up. Otherwise we are not aware of the details yet."

Orinda

Just about the entire city of Orinda lies within either the San Pablo Reservoir or the Upper San Leandro Reservoir basins. The potential for development anywhere along the watershed interface has implications for EBMUD and the district lays out a management directive for the El Toyonal area "to limit the effects of development on water quality, fire and fuels management, public encroachment, degradation of views, and street

extensions and to improve public access and egress and emergency access to this area."

However, the concern of north Orinda residents over the inadequate water flow from many of the hydrants is not addressed under fire and fuels management. "That directive regarding coordination with Orinda is not a new goal but continues the type of coordination we have had in the past regarding shared boundaries, interface areas, rights of way, etc. Upsizing the water distribution system to increase hydrant flows is not the

type of item that would trigger this provision," said Richard Sykes, EBMUD Director of Water and Natural Resources.

Larry Theis, Orinda director of Public Works and Engineering, had no comment on the Watershed Master Plan as his department had not yet reviewed the document.

Regarding a recreational directive that affects all of Lamorinda, EBMUD had proposed a two-year trial for allowing mountain bikes on a limited number of its trails, but the trial period was not specifically mentioned in the master plan. "The

watershed document now proposes about seven miles of trails in the Pinole Watershed which will be open to bicycles and about one mile from Tilden down to San Pablo Dam Road. Given the limited size of this, we decided to not call for the trial but to just change the signage and trail configuration to make it happen," Sykes said.

The public has until Jan. 29 to submit comments to the district regarding its 2017 Watershed Master Plan. The document is available on the EBMUD website.

You Already Know Us ...

So let us help you prepare to sell your home this year!



To sell your home in 2018 start by getting rid of "stuff". De-clutter & deep clean your home. Buyers pay a premium for well maintained homes so take a hard look at what "should have" been & needs to be done (gutters, painting, landscaping). Also get a Home & Pest Inspection now. This will give you an idea of work & repair costs up front. Prepare yourselves. Separate your emotions from the process & begin to treat your home as a commodity that needs to get the highest price possible. Finally, let us give you a free current valuation of your home based on competition & the current market.



Larry Duson 415-297-2680
larry.duson@dusonjoneshomes.com

Jeanne Jones 925-989-2262
jeanne.jones@dusonjoneshomes.com



Moraga interim town manager

... continued from page A4

He knows that his time in Moraga is likely to be rather short; he does not want the permanent position, but he wants to use his experience to evaluate the town's organizational chart and may reassess some staffing needs. He was struck, however, by the thrifty state of the town that has low funding as well as one of the lowest cost and staffing per capita in California. For him saying that Moraga is not efficient is an opinion, not a diagnosis based on fact.

Holgersson says that seeking funding for the maintenance of the storm drains is the right thing to do. He adds that he has seen other cities very successfully use low-inter-

est state stormwater loans to handle their drainage issues, and will support Moraga's attempt to do so.

He says he is looking forward to seeing the hillside and ridgeline regulations being finalized, the winery regulations being considered, and the emergence of new development projects. He believes that with the Moraga Center Specific Plan and its zoning regulation underway, Moraga is giving itself the opportunity to develop harmoniously and sustainably. Holgersson has also worked with many colleges and universities, and considers that uncovering more areas of common interest can foster the completion of new projects.

Specializing in Swimming Pools

Lamorinda Solar

36 Years in Business



Call For Winter Special Pricing

Be ready for a great Summer in your pool

New Solar System, Solar Panels Replacement

Removal & Reinstallation of Panels (for new roof) Discount until Feb. 28

Save up to \$100 per month

A New Variable Speed Filter Pump Can Save You 90% on Your Monthly Energy Bill!

Programable for desired speed for filter, SPA, waterfall & solar.

\$200 off

Removal and Reinstallation



The Best Service Under the Sun Since 1981!

Mark Frey, Owner
Local family owned business

\$75 off per

Panel Replacement

925-952-9239

www.LamorindaSolar.com

CA Lic. # 416616

\$75 off

any repair (over \$200)