



# Orinda

## Public Meetings

### City Council

Tuesday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m.  
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library  
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

### Planning Commission

Tuesday, Nov. 6, 7 p.m.  
Library Auditorium, Orinda Library  
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

### Citizens' Infrastructure

### Oversight Commission

Wednesday, Nov. 14, 7 p.m.  
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,  
22 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA 94563

### School Board Meetings

### Orinda Union School District

Monday, Nov. 12, 6 p.m.  
Regular Board Meeting  
8 Altarinda Rd., Orinda  
www.orindaschools.org  
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

### City of Orinda:

www.cityoforinda.org  
Phone (925) 253-4200

### Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

### The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community. Send a letter to the editor: letters@lamorindaweekly.com

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## Public Works inspector honored for service to Orinda residents

By Sora O'Doherty



Tod Fiermer

Photo Sora O'Doherty

Public Works Inspector Tod Fiermer was honored for his dedication to the residents of Orinda by the City Council on Oct. 16. Homeowner Lee Munroe of Easton Court had written to City Manager Steve Salomon praising Fiermer for interceding on his behalf with Pacific Gas and Electric Company

regarding a dangerous tree on his property. The large tree could fall at any time, and could cause a lot of damage to nearby electrical wires, but PG&E said that they could not help with the expense of removing the tree as it was on Munroe's property. Munroe contacted the city, and Fiermer went out and inspect-

ed the tree, agreeing that it could cause major damage and expense if it fell. Fiermer contacted PG&E, and, through his diligent intervention, made the company realize that the expense of removing the tree would be far less than repairing the damage it might cause if it fell.

Director of Public Works Larry Theis introduced Fiermer, speaking about how he goes out of the way, beyond the normal, to serve the people of Orinda, and how much he enjoyed working with him. "Tod puts on the most miles in the city," Theis said, "going from site to site every day." The first face many residents meet when they contact the city, Fiermer responds very quickly, Theis added, "sometimes more quickly than expected: 'I'll be there in 10 minutes!'"

"I don't do my job to get honors," Fiermer said. "I love the city of Orinda. When I wake up in the morning, its not like I'm going to

work. I like to hit the ground running. I get to talk to all kinds of people. What I try to do 99 percent of the time is to meet people in person. Sometimes they love me, and sometimes they hate me, but nine times out of 10 they walk away satisfied" after a face-to-face meeting.

Council member Dean Orr praised Fiermer as "the coolest, calmest, most collected individual," who deals with whatever disaster befalls the city, such as the Miner Road sinkhole. Mayor Amy Worth added that she and Fiermer were the first people on the scene when that sinkhole occurred in January 2017. Council member Eve Phillips noted that Fiermer "gets to work at all the worst times" and Vice Mayor Inga Miller praised his work on the problems encountered on Orchard Road during the East Bay Municipal Utility District pipe repairs in the summer of 2017.

## Orinda accepts 53 Rheem Blvd. easement; homeowners threaten suit

By Sora O'Doherty

Despite an emotional plea from homeowner Dawnell DeSpain of 53 Rheem Blvd., the Orinda City Council on Oct. 16 voted unanimously to rescind its previous refusal to accept the offer of an easement path across the property and to accept the easement. A few days later, attorney Nathan L. Scheg wrote to the council and demanded that they immediately rescind that action. The basis for the demand is that, according to Scheg, the subdivision that includes the DeSpain parcel fronts upon a public stream, San Pablo Creek. Scheg argues that this fact brings into play California Government Code section 66477.2 which, Scheg says, means that the city had only five years in which to accept the easement, and, having failed to do so, the easement was extinguished.

Following a special meeting of the city council on Oct. 23 to consider, in closed session, the threat of litigation by the DeSpains, city attorney Osa Wolff responded to the DeSpain's attorney on Oct. 24. She disagreed with Scheg's arguments. She pointed out that the creek is

private, not public, and that the trail easement's purpose is not to provide access to the creek or its banks but to connect to Parkway Court. Also, while, in Wolff's opinion, the trail easement does not legally depend on there being direct benefit to the residents of Subdivision MSO 05-951, she found that such benefit does exist. However, she added, city staff identified technical issues relating to recording the resolution and have therefore calendared a consent item for Oct. 30 to rescind and replace the resolution adopted on Oct. 16. The city, she said, remains committed to continued good-faith settlement discussions.

A public hearing had been scheduled for Oct. 26 on the DeSpain's application for an exception permit to construct a fence that exceeds the six-foot maximum height limit of the Orinda Municipal Code. The DeSpains wished to build a seven-foot fence. However the hearing was canceled, because, according to Associate Planner Adam Foster, the zoning administrator lacked sufficient information to rule on the application.

## ConnectOrinda launched in Orinda

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo Sora O'Doherty

Residents were served refreshments and asked what changes they want to see in downtown Orinda at the Oct. 13 launch event for ConnectOrinda, the city of Orinda's Downtown Streetscape Master Plan project. Participants took time to write suggestions on a large map provided, and Plan-

ning Director Drummond Buckley and Assistant Planner Adam Foster and others conducted walking tours through the village and the theater district, also known as the crossroads sections of Orinda.

The first walking tour was of the village and was led by landscape architect and urban planner

John Gibbs, principal at WRT, an Oakland-based urban design firm. Community groups (Friends of Orinda Creeks and Orinda Vision) served as volunteer docents at certain points along the tour.

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## PEOPLE WE TRUST SUPPORT AMY WORTH FOR ORINDA CITY COUNCIL



"Tom and I moved to Orinda when we were starting our family, and it was one of the best decisions of our lives."

### ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mark DeSaunier, U.S. Congressman  
Ellen Tauscher, Former U.S. Congresswoman  
Steve Glazer, State Senator,  
Joan Buchanan, Former Assemblywoman  
Candace Anderson, Contra Costa County Supervisor  
Inga Miller, Orinda Vice Mayor  
Darlene Gee, Orinda City Council Member  
Dean Orr, Orinda City Council Member  
Susie Epstein, Acalanes Union High School District Trustee  
Cara Hoxie, Orinda Union School District Trustee  
Julie Rossiter, Orinda Union School District Trustee  
Hillary Weiner, Orinda Union School District Trustee  
Brad Barber, Moraga-Orinda Fire District Director  
Mike McGill, Contra Costa Sanitary District Director  
Vicki Gordon, Contra Costa Community College Board Member  
Richard Rainey, Retired Contra Costa Sheriff and State Senator  
Beverly Lane, East Bay Regional Park District Director  
Gary Yancey, Retired Contra Costa District Attorney

### COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Laura Abrams, Former Orinda Mayor  
Chris & Dixie Anderson  
Carol & Andy Amstutz  
David Anderson  
Julie Atkinson  
Wesley Ayers  
Jill Baker  
Cindy Barber  
Sandy Barnett  
Allena & Steve Behnke  
Lauren Bennett  
Rick & Barbara Bennett  
Michael Bowen & Amy Roach  
Betty Brotherton  
Carol & John Brown  
Bruce & Lisa Burrows  
Stacy Campos  
Roxanne Christophe & Vincent Davis  
Eric & Dvora Citron  
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Micki & Bob Cooper  
Lance & Mary Jo Cowles  
Vanessa Crews, Former AHUSD Trustee  
Jesse Crews  
David Cronin  
Dick & Susan Curry  
Sis Curtis  
Catherine E. Cutler, Former Vice-Chair  
Orinda Planning Commission  
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Liz & Mark Dauter  
Connie De Laveaga & Bob Stoops  
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Barbara Doyal  
Pam & Desmond Elder  
Gail Emmons  
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Sandy Guptill  
Charlotte Guppy  
Greg & Lucia Haet  
Alan & Pam Hall  
Peggy & Ernie Hartz  
Peter & Helen Hasselman  
Steve & Tish Harwood  
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Bea Heggie, Former First Lady of Orinda  
Aram Hodess & Suzanne Fox  
Ella Hoffnagel & Terry Murphy  
Hillary and Dave Hoppock  
Bruce & Jackie Horwitz  
Tim Hoxie  
Robert & Shelley Hubner  
Roxanne & Scott Hughes  
Sharon Iverson  
Anne Jacobberger

Toris Jaeger  
Elisabeth Jewel & John Smith  
Steve & Pat Johnson  
Lisa Jorgens  
Kathleen Kolman & Stuart House  
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Bill Judge, Former Orinda Mayor  
Joey Judge  
Nancy Kaible, Former OUSD Trustee  
Linda Landau, Former OUSD Trustee  
Jim Landau  
Bobbie Landers, Former Orinda Mayor  
Mark LeHocky  
David Levin & Kristine Hubner  
David & Elizabeth Libby  
Kathryn Macbride & Stephen Isaacs  
Cinda & Tom MacKinnon  
Janet Maimone  
Ruth Majdrakoff  
Madelyn Mallory & Mark Bresnik, MD  
Lacey & Jim Marchetti  
April & Gordon Matthews  
David Mayeri  
Mary & Mark Maxson  
Joan & Frank Maxwell  
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Christina McCormick  
Bruce McGurk & Jan Cushman  
Abraham B. Mintz  
Jared & Jan Miyamoto-Mills  
Joe Moran  
Hillary Murphy  
Melba Muscarolas  
Eartha Newsong

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Wick Smith  
Todd & Laurie Smith  
Melissa Sovozool  
Bill Staggs  
Pamela & Clint Stefan  
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Carl Stoney  
Margaret Stewart & Severin Borenstein

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Doreen & Bill Wagner  
Gerry & Clark Wallace  
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Gayl Westendorf & Laura Kim  
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Arlene & Jeff White  
Paul & Barbara Winters  
Diane Wolcott  
Tom Worth  
Vicky Yancey  
Molly Young  
Mahboud & Nicky Zabetian  
Rachel Zenner  
Midge Zischke  
Michael Zischke & Nadine Sponamore  
Jane Zuercher  
Partial list.  
Titles for identification purposes only.

