

Letters to the editor

A response to recent letters on Climate Change

The science of climate change begins with John Tyndall in 1859. He measured large differences in the abilities of “perfectly colorless and invisible gases and vapors” to absorb radiant heat. So-called “greenhouse” gases, including CO2 and methane, transmit incoming solar radiation, but absorb long-wave infrared radiation reflected back from the surface of the earth.

Svante Arrhenius in 1895 presented a paper to the Stockholm Physical Society titled, “On the influence of Carbonic Acid [CO2] in the Air upon the Temperature of the Ground.” His “hot-house theory” of the atmosphere showed that without CO2, the earth would be extremely cold, and with more CO2 it would be hotter. By 1904, he became concerned with increases in atmospheric CO2 caused by burning coal and oil and calculated expected changes in temperature.

What we now know is that atmospheric CO2 and global temperatures have been relatively stable for the past 10,000 years prior to the industrial revolution. However, since the start of the industrial revolution in 1760, atmospheric CO2 has increased by 50 percent, from 280 to 415 parts per million – higher than at any time in the past three million years. And the rate of increase in atmospheric CO2 is currently accelerating. Scripps Institute of Oceanography: <https://scripps.ucsd.edu/programs/keelingcurve/>

In the late 1970s and 1980s Exxon and Shell Oil extensively researched the effects of CO2 from fossil fuels on the earth’s climate. Shell, for example concluded “by the time the global warming becomes detectable it could be too late to take effective countermeasures to reduce the effects or even to stabilize the situation.” When it became apparent that decreasing the release of CO2 would adversely affect profits, the companies started a concerted campaign to deny and cast doubt about the scientific findings, which continues to this day. https://biotech.law.lsu.edu/blog/Shell_Climate_1988.pdf

To further understand the earth’s climate, see the following links: www.climate.gov/#understandingClimate

NOAA Antarctica 101: www.climate.gov/news-features/features/antarctica-colder-arctic-it%E2%80%99s-still-losing-ice

Jim Urlick
Orinda

Periphery residents want to be seen

After a decade-long uptick in elementary school students’ commutes increasing from 6 minutes to 30 minutes, residents in the northeast of Lafayette started organizing efforts to thwart WAZE users. Commuters from outside jurisdictions, as far away as Antioch and Brentwood, were using Reliez Valley, Lafayette district’s school bus route and residential road, to bypass 680 and Taylor Rd. south during peak morning travel. We knew that in order to protect our district students’ commutes, we needed multiple turn restrictions during school bus hours, some of which were eventually approved by District 5 County Supervisor Fed-

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 must be factually accurate and 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

eral Glover.

Being that some of us live within a very illogical area of County, versus Lafayette, made finding support for our district kids very difficult. It took over two years and thousands of resident volunteer hours to get three out of the five requested signs approved. Our area is home to a triple-junction of county supervisory districts where we needed to appease 3 out of 5 County Supervisors often with conflicting motivations for their constituencies. And, even though we have Lafayette 94549 addresses and are within the Acalanes/Lafayette school districts, we are in an unincorporated portion of county and have a very outdated Pleasant Hill Sphere of Influence (SOI).

SOI is a bureaucratic map layer used by cities for future planning and ours has been outdated and illogical since at least 1988 when the Acalanes/Lafayette district boundaries were changed to correctly include us for reasons of topography, community identity, access roads, and commute patterns. Typically, SOI updates are initiated by city managers and county supervisors, but ours was overlooked and it has recently fallen on us to correct it. Having a logical SOI, a Lafayette SOI, versus a Pleasant Hill SOI, is one step towards unraveling the illogical boundaries that plague the northeast of Lafayette and make progress with respect to issues like circulation so difficult. Correcting the SOI is also a first step towards annexing to Lafayette if neighbors and the city of Lafayette come to see this as mutually beneficial.

We currently cannot vote in Lafayette city elections or on city referendums that often affect us and we share common community values with most Lafayette constituents whose city slogan is Green hills, Great schools. Our SOI application has been submitted to LAFCO, the public agency tasked with helping to facilitate logical boundaries. In the meantime, Pleasant Hill will not take a position on our SOI request and Lafayette City Council, voted 4-1 to oppose correcting the SOI, citing costs and already overburdened staff as reasons for their denial. This is leaving us frustrated and wondering who will represent our best interests? LAFCO will deliberate on our SOI request after June 4.

Kristen Altbaum
Lafayette (unincorporated)



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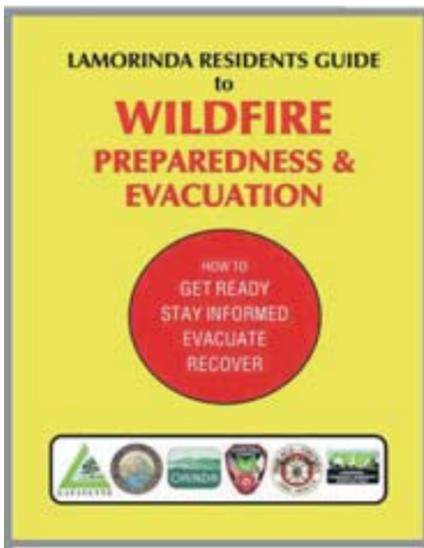
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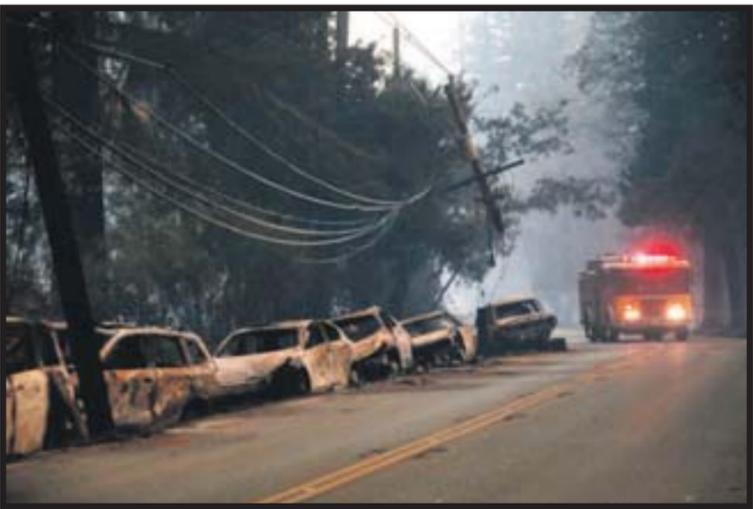
Is Lafayette paradise, or the next Paradise?

Last week we all received this [Lamorinda Residents Guide to Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation](#) in the mail, reminding us that: **“Six of the 20 largest fires in California’s recorded history have burned in the last five years, and 10 of California’s most destructive wildfires have occurred since 2015.”** Increased danger from firestorms is most acute at wildland-urban interfaces – what we all used to call semi-rural neighborhoods. In size, extensive open space and limited infrastructure, **Lafayette shares many vulnerabilities with Paradise CA, before Paradise was flattened by last year’s Camp Fire.**



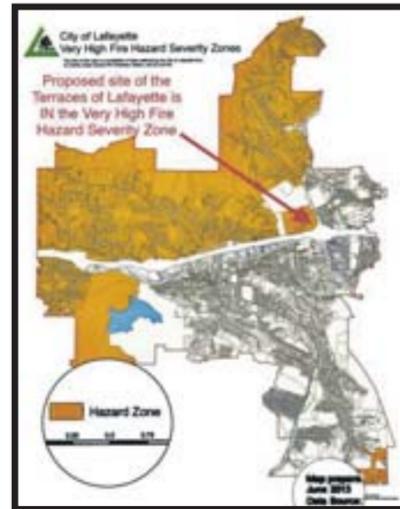
The proposed Terraces of Lafayette would compromise public safety.

By further exacerbating traffic congestion around Deer Hill and Pleasant Hill Roads, the proposed 315-apartment Terraces of Lafayette would create significant unmitigatable health and safety hazards to our community. Lafayette must therefore require a rigorous Supplemental Environmental Impact Report on the Terraces, completed by a qualified consultancy of the City’s choosing and subject to formal public review and comment. Instead the developer, O’Brien Land, has preemptively commissioned, from its own picked and paid consultants, an Addendum EIR, which is meant for “minor” corrections and avoids the public comment requirement. O’Brien’s Addendum relies on traffic data gathered in 2009, and somehow neglects to mention the fact that the 22-acre Deer Hill parcel was designated a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, by ordinance of the City Council, in 2013. **Cramming in 315 apartments, 672 parking spaces and multiple large multi-story buildings at a chokepoint intersection in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone is just poor planning.** If a major fire event should occur in Lafayette, every household along the Pleasant Hill Road corridor would face potentially deadly delays in evacuation time and first responder access time.



Our City Council must insist on thorough, independent and current analysis before considering any application for the Terraces.

Please email cityhall@lovelafayette.org, and cc contact@savelafayette.org, to add your voice to those demanding sensible development that doesn’t make our precarious fire situation worse. For more information please visit us online at savelafayette.org.



Traffic safety IS fire safety.

Lafayette’s founders designed a small, self-sufficient City with a one-street downtown surrounded by mostly low-density residential neighborhoods. They could not have anticipated 21st century political demand for high-density housing, or the current elevated risk of fast-moving firestorms. Consequently Lafayette has few arterial streets and many narrow windy roads, serving thousands of homes along urban-wildlife interfaces. **Whatever impedes first responder access and swift evacuation in the event of wildfire, imperils our homes, our families and our neighbors.**



Save Lafayette is a nonprofit group of volunteers reliant on donated funds.

O’Brien Land can outspend us by orders of magnitude. If you’re able to help financially, please send your check payable to Save Lafayette, 3220 Ronino Way, Lafayette CA 94549.