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Crossroads Park hits snag with PG&E

By Sora O'Doherty

With reluctance, the Orinda City Council agreed to put the Crossroads Park project on hold for up to three years in order to obtain either a long-term lease or title to the small park that serves as the entry to Orinda. Located at the corner of Camino Pablo and Brookwood Road, the mini-park is currently owned by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company. The 20-year lease under which the city held the land has expired, and staff offered several alternatives to the city council.

PG&E has contacted Orinda staff, indicating that the utility plans to transfer title of the land to the city, either by sale or donation. However, it is expected that it will take three years to accomplish the transfer. There is also a license involved that allows the city to perform work on the park, but it could be terminated at any time for any reason. Public Works Senior Engineer Sivakumar Natarajan presented the staff report to the council.

After some discussion, the council unanimously adopted the third alternative, to perform interim maintenance and a vegetation replacement project, and place the Crossroads Park project on hold before incurring expenses and continuing any further construction tasks that might be at risk. Under that option, the city will spend no more than \$25,000 on the interim maintenance and landscaping, and, as clarified by Council Member Inga Miller, the Orinda Community Foundation will not have to match that money. City Manager Steve Salomon advised the council that it would not be prudent to invest money, given the current state of PG&E, and the tremendous amount of bureaucracy involved in the transfer of the land.

Reach the reporter at: sora@lamorindaweekly.com

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