

## Statue Honoring Bruzzone Installed As Commission Reviews Donation Policy

By Steve Angelides

The statue honoring Moraga developer Russell Bruzzone was installed at the Moraga Commons last week while the Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed a draft policy on future donations.

The statue of children flying kites was donated to the Town by Joan Bruzzone in honor of her late husband. It was placed on the hill above the band shell where the Town's popular summer concerts are held.

The donation stirred controversy when it was accepted by the Town Council March 14 on a 3 to 2 vote. Although all the council members approved of the statue, they accepted it on a split vote because it included a plaque honoring the late developer. The Council then asked the Parks and Recreation Commission to recommend a policy regarding donations in the hope of avoiding such controversies in the future.

The Commission reviewed the first draft of that policy at its meeting last Tuesday.

The policy was drafted by commissioner Karen Mendonca. She said she adapted it from a similar policy adopted two years ago by the town of Port Angeles, Washington.

The objective of the draft policy is to spell out the Town's needs, and encourage donations that fulfill those needs as well as providing funds to maintain the donated items. The draft policy would permit memorial plaques to be directly affixed to donated items such as benches, bicycle racks, picnic tables, drinking fountains, and playground components.

However, the draft avoids the controversial topic of donated public art by excluding it from the policy and subjecting it to full review and approval by the Commission and the Council. After some of the commissioners questioned the exclusion of public art from the draft policy, Parks and Recreation Director Penelope Leach suggested that the draft be revised to include donated public art. However the commissioners present unanimously agreed that the policy should not go so far as to include loaned art.

At the Council meetings in which the Bruzzone donation was considered, former commissioners stated that previous memorial donations had been declined because the Town had a past policy or tradition of limiting memorial donations to the Heritage Patio. However, so far nobody has produced any documentation of that. At last week's meeting former commissioner Bob Giomi said he had minutes of every Commission meeting while he was a commissioner, and that he would search for such documentation.

Leach commented that if there was such documentation, the commission should consider incorporating such past policy or tradition in the draft policy. Mendonca will prepare a second draft of the policy taking into account the comments made at the meeting.



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