



# LAMORINDA WEEKLY

[Home](#) | [Read Online](#) | [Archive](#) | [Links](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Contact](#)

[printer friendly](#)

[download pdf](#)

Published November 12th, 2008

## Land Use Initiatives: "No on Both" Triumphs

By *Sophie Braccini*

Moraga's heated debate over land use and open space came to a conclusion on election day, as Moraga voters voiced a clear preference for the status quo. Measure K, also known as MOSO 2008, which would have severely restricted open space development, was defeated with 56% of voters opposed to the initiative. The initiative that favored more development, Measure J, was soundly defeated as 86.5% of voters said "No."

"We obviously are disappointed in the election result, but feel very good about what we tried to do," said Renata Sos, who worked tirelessly over the past months in favor of Measure K, "We worked very hard to give the voters of Moraga the opportunity to protect our beautiful open space and preserve our quality of life."

Newly elected Council Member Karen Mendonca supported the measure as well: "I supported Measure K because I believe that our General Plan does not give enough teeth to city leaders to protect our ridgelines and sensitive lands. If citizens want to amend the General Plan we can review the guidelines and make sure they are strong enough."

Howard Harpham was in the "No on Both" camp: "I'm glad they both failed," he said, adding that he believed that Measure K was particularly dangerous for the development of Moraga. "Now if people want to amend the General Plan we will have a discussion," he adds.

Mike Metcalf shares this point of view, noting, "This vote is a testament to the sagacity of Moraga people and we need to have gratitude to the 'No-No' people. I'm very happy about the result," he said. Metcalf is not opposed to a discussion about the General Plan but he believes that the General Plan's goals, policies and implementation programs are pretty effective, provided they are applied carefully and consistently. "It was good to learn that, during a recent Planning Commission discussion regarding the Rancho Laguna development, Planning Commissioners were testing the project against the General Plan - which is what they should be doing - and asking that inconsistencies be resolved," added Metcalf.

"We are very pleased for Moraga that J and K both failed," said Bob Reynolds, one of the initiators of the 'No on Both' movement. "However, in retrospect, we are distressed at the enormous amount of money and valuable time that was spent by the initiative proponents, the Town, and by our effort to get us back to where we were before this divisive episode started," adds a saddened Reynolds, "I blanch when I think about all of the constructive ways we could have expended these funds and incredible energies for the betterment of Moraga."

"We are thankful to the dozens of volunteers who worked tirelessly for over a year, first to get Measure K on the ballot and then to campaign for it over the past several months," said Sos, "in the end, we just couldn't offset the huge spending by the opposition: when the final campaign finance reports are in, we fully expect to find out that we were outspent by over 10 to 1."

"Moraga's election results reinforce two important points," commented Mary Jo Rossi, spokesperson for the "Yes on J" campaign, "Moraga residents are moderate and mainstream - not extreme in their viewpoints; and that Moraga citizens expect their town leaders to put aside polarizing agendas to work toward a balance between open space and future growth."

Reach the reporter at: [sophie@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sophie@lamorindaweekly.com)

[Home](#) | [Read Online](#) | [Archive](#) | [Links](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Contact](#)

[back to top](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA