


Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Monday, September 14	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Thursday, September 3 <i>August 20 cancelled</i>	
Design Review	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Tuesday, August 25	
Senior Services	3:00pm
Community Center, Alder Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Thursday, August 27	
City of Lafayette:	
http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us	
Chamber of Commerce:	
http://www.lafayettechamber.org	

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No Pot Sales in Lafayette ...at least for now.

By Cathy Tyson

Lafayette adopted an ordinance extending the temporary moratorium on medical marijuana dispensaries (MMD) for an additional ten months and fifteen days. The Moratorium established in late July of this year was set to expire on September 10, 2009; since the next Council meeting is slated for September 14, the brief gap was covered.

Because this type of business would be the first of its kind, the City of Lafayette directed staff to study medical marijuana dispensaries. Although, "at this point we don't have any medical marijuana dispensary applications," said Assistant Planner Michael Cass.

The planning services division will be looking at land use classification regulations. Police and the city attorney's office will continue to conduct research on possible negative impacts. Currently the "general retail sales activity" that could potentially cover a MMD classification covers a broad range of businesses. Obviously a MMD dispensary is not the same as a Yogurt Shack.

In Contra Costa County only Martinez and Pinole have MMDs. Currently Oakland has four dispensaries.

It's a brave new world since Proposition 215 passed in 1996 allowing a legal defense against marijuana charges for seriously ill patients smoking pot. Hearings for the landmark legislation legalizing the sale and use of marijuana in California, Assembly Bill 390, The Marijuana Control, Regulation and Education Act are tentatively scheduled for early next year.

How the State Budget Cash Grab Affects Lafayette

By Cathy Tyson

City Manager Steven Falk gave a packed house an earful on the impact of the state budget being balanced on the back of every city and town in the state at the August 10 City Council meeting. He spoke about the two separate resources that the state Legislature will be dipping into: a record \$2.05 billion from redevelopment agencies statewide over two years - \$1.7 billion for fiscal year 2009 - 2010 and \$350 million in 2010 - 2011; and \$1.9 billion will be "borrowed" from property tax revenues across the golden state.

"The budget deal amounts to nothing less than an unwanted and aggressive molestation of California's already-suffering cities," said Mayor Don Tatzin and Falk in a statement.

What that means for Lafayette is a loss of \$480,000 in property tax proceeds which is "the equivalent of half the general fund contribution to the road repair program," said Falk. This type of grab can only happen twice every ten years according to Proposition 1A, which voters passed overwhelmingly just five years ago and requires repayment with interest within three years.

"Luckily we've been prudent and have money in the bank," said Administrative Services Director Tracy Robinson. Early on in the budgeting process, anticipating this kind of cash grab, she allocated \$540,000 for the state take-away. Believe it or not the City is actually \$60,000 ahead on this front, thanks to conservative budgeting.

It's expected the Lafayette Redevelopment Agency will lose \$1.1 million for fiscal year 2009 - 2010. To put this in perspective, "that's about 50% of what the RDA receives every year," said

A Red-Eye Disturbance 7/26/09 - Lafayette Police responded to a report of a disturbance in Village Center. When they arrived, they found two male subjects engaged in an altercation. Neither party wanted to report being a victim of battery and neither had any visible signs of injury or trauma. Police noted one subject had a strong odor of alcohol on his breath and red, watery eyes. After the subject admitted to drinking a "few" bottles of wine, Police ran a background check and discovered he was on probation that prohibited him from consuming alcohol. He was arrested on a probation violation and transported and booked at the Martinez Detention Facility.

Grand Theft 7/29/09 - An alert, concerned and anonymous Marlene Drive citizen made a late-night call to Police to report a loud noise coming from the street. When Police arrived, they discovered a Jeep with open doors and a smashed rear window. Police contacted the owner of the vehicle who reported several items were missing. Digital photos of an unknown subject matter were among the missing items. There are no leads or witnesses.

The Vandalism of the Door 7/31/09 - Lafayette Police were called to an apartment building on East Street after a resident telephoned the landlord about a loud noise coming from the storage room. An unknown subject had kicked in the door of the empty storage room and made away with nothing. Cost to replace the door is \$300.

Cell Phone Harassment 8/2/09 - A Lafayette citizen called Police to report an unknown subject had been calling his cell phone for two weeks leaving annoying messages. On the morning of the day of the report, the victim had received 17 phone calls. Messages included "You're gonna find out that everyone hates you" and "I'm your gay lover; let's go for a run." The victim believes the calls may be linked to an Orinda incident that he has voiced a strong opinion about. The harassing calls began shortly after he went public with his opinion. The victim reported being afraid for his safety and was advised to change his cell number.

Potentially More Parking Downtown

By Cathy Tyson



Photo Cathy Tyson

Those quarters deposited in parking meters can really add up. In the years since meters were installed in the early 1990's, all of the revenue generated from their use and other parking related sources has gone into a special fund to acquire off-street parking. Lockboxes near BART, the sale of parking permits at city lots, and dreaded parking tickets all contribute to this fund, now at \$2.5 million. The expectation is that this substantial sum could really add to the number of off-street parking spots available in the downtown core, a long term goal of the city.

The City Council recently directed staff to send a letter to seventeen specially selected land owners inviting them, if interested, to call the City Manager for further discussion of negotiating a sale of their land to be used for parking.

The City is interested in land not only to build a parking lot, but potentially a parking structure, or possibly a public/private parking situation - over or under retail or office development.

How do all those coins total enough to put a dent in the city's parking problem? Although it seems like they're everywhere, you'll find meters exclusively in the downtown area. The 230 meters collected \$123,000 last year, with parking tickets bringing in roughly twice that amount. Last year Parking Enforcement Officers wrote just shy of 8,000 parking tickets, according to Cathy Surges-Moscato, Community Services Officer.

In looking at possible parcels, contenders had to be not too small or too big - over .45 acres, not too narrow, or too difficult to access. "Sufficiently

large to get at least a double row of parking, maybe a structure" said City Manager Steven Falk. Some possible locations are already vacant, for example at the corner of Mt. Diablo and Dewing, pictured above. One broker for the former Links appliance location already expressed an interest in selling to the City.

Now it's clear where potential locations are, and what the overall budget is, the only thing needed are some takers of the City's offer. For parties willing to make a deal, the City is required by law to pay the fair market value of a property determined by an independent appraiser. Those interested have until September 30, 2009 to make contact with city staff. This could be a way out for struggling land owners and a huge relief down the road for drivers.

Correction, issue date 08/05/09: In "Library Hosts First Ever Chess Tournament," Farhad Azimzadeh was not a professor but rather a teaching fellow at Lamar University. Since 1988 he has been working for the California Environmental Protection Agency.

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