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Patio Approved for Clocktower Tenant Patxi's Pizza

By Cathy Tyson



Artist's rendering of recently approved patio for Patxi's Pizza. Image courtesy of SZFM Design Studio.

sidewalk space.

At a prior meeting the City Council asked the architect to address some design concerns regarding the patio and the amount of available sidewalk space for pedestrians and especially handicapped pedestrians.

Noting outdoor dining at nearby restaurants like Panda Express, Yankee Pier, Pizza Antica and Baja Fresh, Mohindroo explained that he wanted to create an attractive destination, not just a through-fare block on Mt. Diablo.

Most council members agreed the width of the sidewalk was adequate, in fact the width of the sidewalk varies throughout the downtown. "Great design" said Mayor Anduri commenting on the patio, "It adds a lot of vitality."

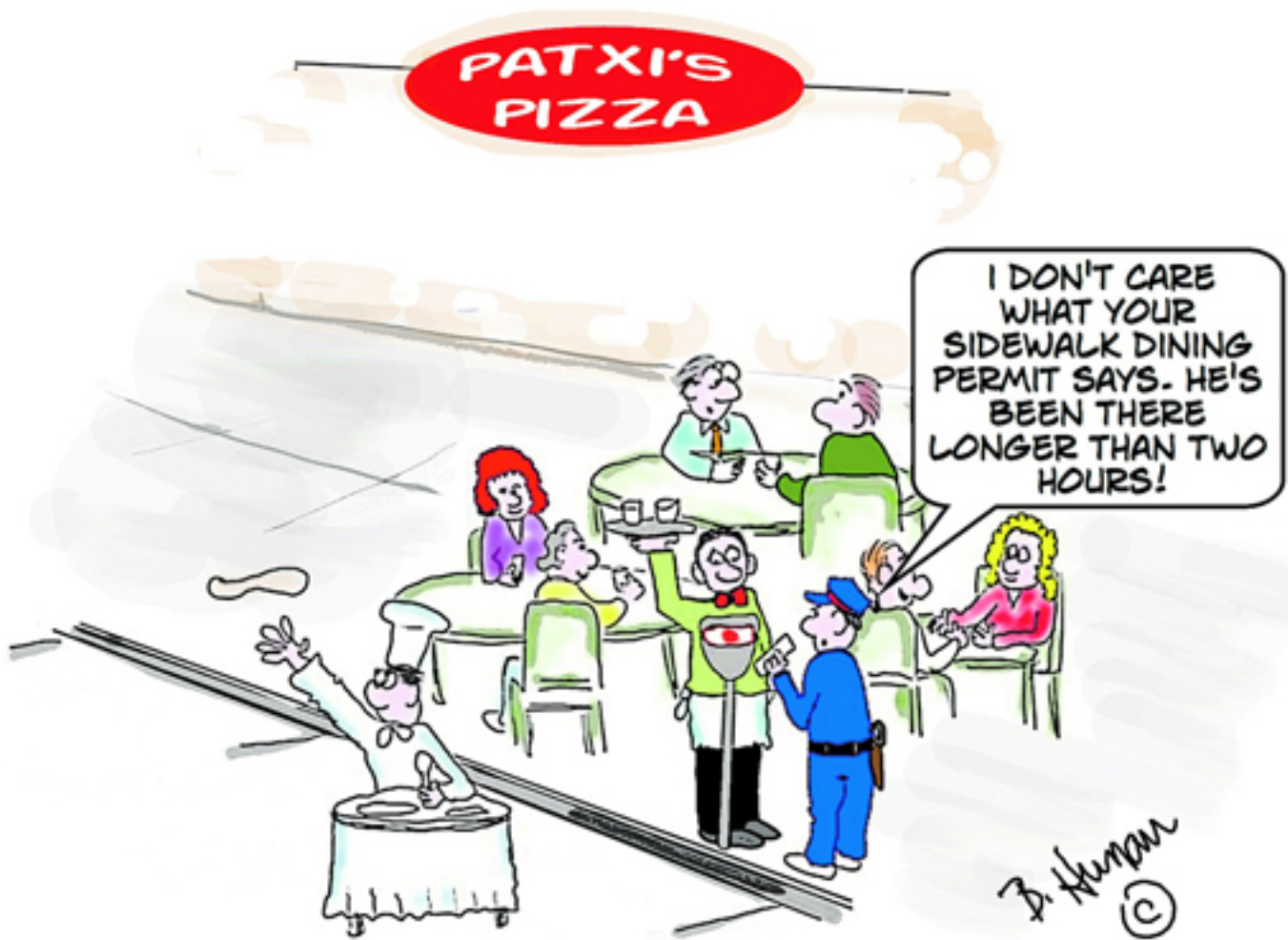
"We're very excited," said co-founder of Patxi's and General Manager of the Lafayette location Tara Fawcett, explaining that they plan to open later this month, anticipating a soft opening when the construction is complete around May 16.

It's interesting to note that Mohindroo is no stranger to Lafayette. He has worked on the design of La Fiesta Square, Plaza Park, and the Mercantile project, and headed up a consulting team that designed the development drawings of the approved, \$1.3 million Downtown Streetscape Project, funded primarily with a grant that will improve Mt. Diablo Boulevard from Trader Joe's to the Round Up. The streetscape project is slated to start in the next few months.

How wide is wide enough? Balancing the needs of pedestrians and accommodating groups of hungry diners anxious to dive into some deep dish pizza is no easy task. Throw in a sidewalk tree and parking meters along with room for wait staff and a fence to corral patrons, all add to the list of factors that weigh in on a making a decision. While the City Council is generally supportive of the concept, and agree that outdoor dining adds vibrancy to the downtown, working out the details is the tricky part.

Patxi's Pizza, pronounced Pah-cheese, is still under construction in the Clocktower building, in the space that used to house Douglass Designs. They requested an encroachment permit to use some of the sidewalk space for an outdoor patio area fronting Mt. Diablo Boulevard. Because the building is actually set three to four feet back from the property line, only half of the proposed patio would be on the city owned sidewalk.

Architect Sudhish Mohindroo with SZFM Design Studio came up with decorative metal rails and portable planters to delineate the patio from the sidewalk space. The fence is required by the Country in order to serve alcohol. The patio design will hold three tables for four and a community table that can accommodate up to eight and room for wait staff to bring pizza and dishes back and forth to the kitchen. This leaves a public right of way of eight and a half feet of usable



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