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## Letters to the Editor

Editor:

The Moraga Town Council had the opportunity at their January meeting to do what was right. All property owners should have been appalled and incensed by the impending adoption by the Moraga Town Council, of the first reading of the historical preservation ordinance. The ordinance proposed the town to declare a building or natural feature, of historical significance, without the owner's agreement. It gave the City veto power over property owners on and about their own properties. This included any building over 50 years old, or not, if so designated, our house or any structure on it, for instance and maybe yours.

Private property rights of exclusive use of one's property are guaranteed in the 5th Amendment of the Constitution. A designation of historical significance should not be forced on any property owner. Property taken through regulation is much the same as property taken through physical seizure, similar to eminent domain, except there would be no just compensation. The ordinance would increase cost to the property owner to meet ADA's strict rebuilding requirements and could subject them to fines and criminal penalties.

The ordinance affects everyone with a house originally built 50 years ago, not just commercial buildings or barns. So, you could need an exemption to remodel your ranch house or other building on your property, if it has been so designated, historically significant.

Take note now, and do something. Write or call the city before they do more to take away your rights. Before a final decision is made on nominations for historical significant buildings and properties, a public hearing will be held. Before more of your personal, private property rights are taken, speak up before or at a hearing to voice your opposition to removing the text that would not require a property owner's consent. Contact the Town Clerk for dissemination to the Mayor and Town Council Members (5) at [townclerk@moraga.ca.us](mailto:townclerk@moraga.ca.us).

Patrick and Dawn Eames  
Moraga

Editor:

January 28's Lamorinda Weekly contained a long article about a for-profit company's recent establishment of a casual carpool system in Moraga and Orinda, for which participants must pay money to the company. The article exuded great enthusiasm for the commercial enterprise. But that commercial enterprise is not the only alternative to BART.

The article neglected to mention that for over 20 years, established casual carpool spots have existed in both Orinda (near the Orinda Theater) and Moraga (by the bus stop on Moraga Way across from Viader, near the Wells Fargo bank, where there is plenty of free parking). And they are free, except that in Moraga, at least, riders are generally willing to share the cost of the bridge toll. They run themselves, and no one has to pay a service charge to some company. In the evening, the County Connection bus goes straight from the Orinda BART station to the Moraga casual carpool spot.

The article quotes a partner as saying that the company might sometime add a pickup spot in Moraga. But one has long existed. It also quotes the partner as saying that some enamored patrons (apparently unaware of the other options) have suggested the company should charge more than it now does. I have no doubt the company intends to do just that in the future, especially if it squeezes out the current free casual carpool options.

If it is not already too late, I urge drivers and riders to connect in Orinda or, between around 6:30 and 7:15, in Moraga. (The hours are shorter in Moraga because of the relatively fewer users; with more users the hours might expand.) The system requires no payment to a for-profit company or any of the procedures the company imposes (apps, signups, etc.) in order to collect its money.

Try it; you'll like it.

Blair Hoffman  
Moraga

Editor:

The Moraga Women's Society is a non-profit organization which raises money from outside sources for the betterment of our community. Since 1967 we have primarily supported Moraga elementary and Campolindo High School programs, the Moraga Library, Moraga Parks and Recreation plus many other local organizations.

The Moraga Women's Society would like to thank The Holy Trinity Cultural Center for making their facility available for our use over the years thereby helping us accomplish our goals. Monthly meetings, fundraising and social events can take place locally in a convenient, pleasant environment. Ron Mucovich and his staff are always congenial, cooperative and responsive to our needs. This facility is an asset to our community and we are very thankful for its existence and use.

The members of the Moraga Women's Society

Dear Editor:

It was good to hear Council member Dave Trotter address the unsubstantiated traffic survey at the Appeal hearing of the Moraga Center Town Homes. As he told Ellen Clark, the Planning Manager, of his concerns, it is one that the residents of Moraga have addressed over and over at the Design Review Board and Planning Commission meetings.

The town has not run its own traffic report. It is normal process for a town to do so, to not appear biased. In Moraga if a development adds 20 or more cars to rush hour, then it must report the findings to Orinda and Lafayette. In Ellen Clark's Staff Report dated July 21, 2014 to the Planning Commission entitled: "Long-Range Development: Projections and Impacts". The 'Growth Management Element' of the General Plan, adopted as a requirement of Contra Costa Measures C and J, specifies a series of performance standards and levels of service with which new development must comply (or mitigate to achieve compliance). It also specifies requirements for regional transportation planning review and coordination to ensure that needed transportation improvements are constructed as new development occurs. For example, any project expected to generate more than 10 peak hour trips must be referred to the neighboring jurisdictions of Lafayette and Orinda."

City Ventures (CV) claims that it will increase only 19 cars to the morning commute and 9 in the evening - with 90 parking spaces and potentially more cars. This is a commuting neighborhood to the City and BART, and kids are driven to school, the traffic impact on Moraga Way and Road will far exceed 19. We need a revised and substantiated traffic survey with integrity as Mr. Trotter suggests.

We hope the town does not allow CV to use 20 feet of Moraga Way and 6 feet of Country Club Drive easements (for free), because it's project is too big for the lot (so CV can make more money). We need the ability to expand the roads with all of the development planned. CV violates numerous clauses of Moraga's Plans.

Margaret Gee  
Moraga

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[back](#)

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