



## Moraga

### Public Meetings

#### Town Council

Wednesday, May 13, 7 p.m.  
Wednesday, May 27, 7 p.m.  
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,  
1010 Camino Pablo

#### Planning Commission

Monday, May 11, 7 p.m.  
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

#### Design Review

Monday, May 18, 7 p.m.  
Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

#### School Board Meeting Moraga School District

Tuesday, May 12, 7:30 p.m.  
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate  
School Auditorium  
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
www.moraga.k12.ca.us  
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

#### Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us  
Phone: (925) 888-7022

#### Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org  
**Moraga Citizens' Network:**  
www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



### Moraga Police Department

Residential burglary, 4/21/15 A Carr drive homeowner reported to police that sometime between 9:20 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. an unknown person entered the home and removed financial documents and a variety of jewelry. No witnesses or leads at this time.

Possession with intent to inhale, 4/22/15 It wasn't even 9 a.m. when cops responded to Canyon Road on a report of a person huffing from an aerosol can and having difficulty breathing. The subject had four empty bottles of aerosol dusting spray that had been recently used next to him. The subject was flailing his arms and had a difficult time trying to stand. The subject was placed under arrest and booked at the Martinez Detention Facility for possession of toluene with intent to inhale, public intoxication and two counts of misdemeanor probation violation.

Feeling OK? 4/22/15 Police were called to check on the welfare of a suspicious male subject at the town's main shopping area. He was experiencing both a mental and a medical issue. He was transported by the fire department to Kaiser in Walnut Creek for treatment.

Open container, 4/22/15 Upon making a traffic stop of a car on Sanders Drive near Canyon Road, police noticed the strong smell of marijuana coming from the inside of the car. Turns out, the driver was also in possession of an open container of an undisclosed alcoholic beverage. The passenger, who is a juvenile, was released from the scene to a parent. The driver was issued a written promise to appear and released from the scene with his vehicle.

Commercial burglary, 4/24/15 While a Country Club Drive business was closed, an unknown subject smashed the glass to a side door and gained entry. About \$550 in cash and checks were stolen from two locations within the business. Sadly no readable fingerprints were located. Hopefully the business has insurance.

Bike mystery, 4/26/15 Cops had a report of a suspicious person on the Lafayette-Moraga Trail who was riding a bike while pushing a second bike, something you don't see every

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### Gary Bernie & Ken Ryerson

## A New Future for the Hacienda de las Flores

By Sophie Braccini

Councilmember Dave Trotter called the process to transform the Hacienda de las Flores one of the most interesting things he's worked on over his eight years on the Moraga Town Council. The April 22 council meeting hearing was indeed the beginning of a process that could completely change the property from a charming but often sleeping beauty, to a vibrant world-class destination.

The idea came a few months ago when Moraga resident Joao Magalhaes proposed asking top architectural firms to study different uses at the Hacienda de las Flores through a public-private partnership. Magalhaes suggested transforming the town property by possibly adding a boutique hotel or a restaurant, or a wine storing and tasting facility, as well as preserving some public use. Council members agreed that the property is a financial challenge and in need of extensive updating. Since the town does not have the means to renovate the property alone, or the tools to make it

more profitable, a request for proposal was sent to five architectural firms. Two responded.

The council interviewed Gould Evans and HKS Architects, which were competing for the chance to create the new design concept. The selection process was on merit only and not based on a specific design or compensation package.

During its presentation, HKS, which has more than 1,000 employees, 20 offices around the world, and a very strong presence in the international luxury hospitality market, showcased some of its previous achievements. The firm said it would engage the community in online and live outreach and do a market study to see what could be supported by the local economy. Afterward, HKS would select a developer that would want to partner with the town of Moraga to develop the concept.

Gould Evans also presented some of its past achievements, including projects similar in scale to the Ha-

cienda, such as local wineries and public-private recreation facilities. Pacific Union Development Company, a developer that had worked with Gould Evans on U.C. Berkeley's Maxwell Family Field and Garage, expressed an interest in the Hacienda. The firm said Pacific Union could be included in the feasibility study from the onset. Gould Evans is a 40-year-old firm with five main U.S. locations, including one in San Francisco. It employs 110 associates.

Both firms responded to questions from council. Particular emphasis was put on the outreach to develop a concept that would get a wide support of all the stakeholders, on the importance of preserving the historic character of the building, on the challenges that the Hacienda carries, such as deferred maintenance, lack of parking, inclusion in a single family residence neighborhood, and on the firms' experience with a public-private partnership.

The two firms sketched different

ideas for the Hacienda including a wine cave for receptions, a small hotel and the restoration of the original pool at the Pavilion. Both firms were careful to state that they would involve the community in the decisions. As for the public-private partnership, they both explained that it would be the town's responsibility to craft the rules and policies to allow operators to conduct their business and generate revenue, while preserving the community center use.

Both firms impressed the council members, but the elected officials liked that Gould Evans was working with Pacific Union, and the developer had already expressed an interest in the project.

Staff will negotiate with Gould Evans and bring back a contract for council's approval. If all goes according to plan, Gould Evans will conduct meetings this spring and summer to reach a final design decision by the end of September.

## Not One, But Two Roundabouts on St. Mary's Road

By Sophie Braccini

Despite opposition by council members Teresa Onoda and Dave Trotter, the Moraga Town Council directed staff April 22 to pursue funding opportunities for two roundabouts — one at the intersection of St. Mary's Road at Rheem Boulevard and one at Bollinger Canyon and St. Mary's roads.

In her report to the council, Senior Civil Engineer Laurie Sugang recapped seven years of study and recommendations that were made to improve the safety and congestion at the two intersections. Sugang reported that several collisions had taken place at those intersections due to the lack of visibility, the steep change of grade and a deep "S" curve.

Consultant Ron Boyle of Omni-Means, which specializes in interchange, roadway and roundabout design, explained that roundabouts would serve this challenging area well. He added that roundabouts have proven safety benefits and that the state was considering making the study of them a mandatory option for all intersection improvements. "The main reason is the safety aspect," he said. He explained that the new configuration would calm traffic, shorten

the crossing distance for pedestrians and keep traffic moving, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions. "It also can create a sense of place," added Boyle.

While the roundabouts won't change the current footprint of the roads by much, there will be minor encroachments of some rights of way. The big question, of course, is cost. The total project preliminary capital

cost is estimated to be approximately \$6.5 million. Sugang explained that there are grants available for such road safety projects and that there are also other sources of funding, for example with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority. Vice Mayor Mike Metcalf, who is the town representative to CCTA, confirmed that this project is exactly the type the agency promotes.

When Mayor Roger Wykle asked how Omni-Means would handle traffic during the construction project, Boyle said part of the cost would go to constructing a temporary roadway. "It will be inconvenient, but it can be done," he said.

Barry Behr, a resident on Joseph Drive off Bollinger Canyon, said he was delighted to see this forthcoming project. ... continued on page A8

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