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Lawsuit Against the City of Lafayette

By Cathy Tyson

members held a conference with legal counsel about a recently filed action Lafayette. The group is suing the city rural character. along with the developer O'Brien Land Company and property owner nity a voice in the process to achieve Anna Maria Dettmer. The matter argues that the certification of the environmental report prepared for the lic comment, and is biased and one-Homes at Deer Hill was flawed.

Also at issue is the group's opposition to the requested amendment to the General Plan that allows a zoning change permitting lower density development with a maximum of two homes per acre, instead of the prior zoning classification (administrative/office professional) uses, which allows up to 35 dwelling units per acre.

At the same city council meeting, Ordinance 641, which covers a number of items related to the Homes at Deer Hill including the zoning hillsides, harmful air quality on resichange, was officially adopted.

the zoning amendment as follows: "This lower density and change to single family residential, better protects the character of neighboring residential neighborhoods and is consistent with the pattern of single family development north of Highway 24. ... The change also better preserves the scenic quality and natural environment with a less intense potential for development."

Lafayette resident Michael Grif-

Creeks

t the Sept. 14 city council meet- fiths is spearheading the grassroots ing in closed session, which is Save Lafayette effort. Aiming to renot open to the public, city council tain Lafayette's charm, he and a group of like-minded residents banded together, and filed this suit on Sept. 8, by a group of residents called Save seeking to protect the town's semi-

> Their goal is to give the commua better use of the property. The group feels the city council has ignored pubsided. "When government fails to protect its citizens, then those citizens must act to protect their community. We are doing so by the only means left available to us, namely corrective action," said Griffiths in a statement. "Save Lafayette's position regarding the Homes at Deer Hill project is that the current combination of homes and huge sports complex has far too many negative impacts upon the surrounding community and city as a whole."

Negative impacts such as severe traffic congestion, destruction of the dents and the violation of the city's Ironically, the ordinance explains General Plan and Hillside Ordinance "need to be adequately mitigated and corrected by the city, not ignored by cit-

ing other so-called benefits," he added. In addition to the lawsuit, the group is planning on gathering signatures on a referendum petition, to pause the development while city leaders reconsider their approval or bring the matter to voters. Save Lafayette would need to collect signatures from 10 percent of voters within a 30-day time frame.

... continued from page A2

After issuing request for propos- a civil engineer who works for Ducks als, and going through a selection Unlimited, the world's largest waterprocess, Gates and Associates, a land- fowl and wetlands conservation orscape architecture, urban design and ganization, is one of the seven land planning firm, was selected to volunteer members of the Creeks prepare the plan. They will be work- Committee. He said it is important to ing with ENGEO, a firm of engineering professionals, environmental scientists and hydrologists, and with preserve and restore the creeks. Environmental Collaborative. The Another interested party in the team started its geological assessments

tial part of the study in October. Looking for input on the creeks plan, the first of a series of community workshops to brainstorm ways to preserve and celebrate downtown creeks will occur from 7 to 9 p.m.

in August and should wrap up that ini-

Oct. 6 at the Veteran's Memorial Hall. The project schedule is slated to take a year to complete and will in- uation and is interested in opportuniclude public participation throughout. ties to improve outdated sections. It Development of concepts and options has a 50-year plan, "From Channels will be followed by a draft plan and to Creeks," that envisions converting implementation strategy and finally concrete channels into natural sys-California Environmental Quality Act tems that can safely convey flood wareview before the final plan document ters. Defining goals for Lafayette's will be produced and presented to the creeks via the Downtown Creeks Plan city council for approval.

Lafayette resident Austin Payne, tial grants to make improvements.

have a plan in place that provides consistent requirements to developers to

project is the Contra Costa County Flood Control District; it is responsible for the channelized, or concrete sections of creek. Those channels were installed in the 1960s, said Payne, and they are at the end of their 50-year useful life. Although it would be a challenge, he would like to see those areas restored to a more natural state. The district is aware of the sitwill help garner funding from poten-

Creek Day This Weekend!

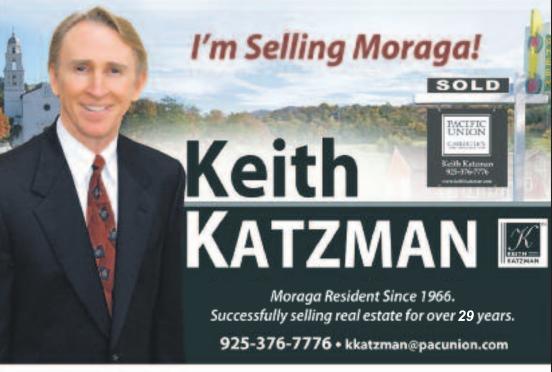
Now in its fourth year, family-friendly Lafayette Creek Day is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 27 at the brand new Jennifer Russell Building, formerly known as the Manzanita Room at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road. There will be opportunities to learn how drought affects creeks, and to dive in to help care for the Las Trampas Creek, along with guided hikes along the creek and giveaways.

'Green' Lights Go In at **Town Hall Theatre**

Submitted by Lewis Fone

Company launched a campaign less energy than before, according last year called Project Green to Town Hall Theatre Artistic Di-Light – a vast, multi-media effort rector Joel Roster. When asked to raise money to switch over its what's next for the theater, Roster energy-guzzling halogen lamps to simply smiled and said, "Everyenergy-efficient, brilliant LEDs. thing else."

n an effort to reduce its carbon Thanks to the campaign, the new footprint, Town Hall Theatre LED lights now use 60 percent





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