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Letters to the Editor

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Editor:

I have been working with (and at times against) the City of Orinda for a decade to provide a funding package to bring Orinda's roads up to an acceptable standard and then provide maintenance to keep them in good shape.

There are viable options. The City's proposed \$25 million bond to be repaid by an additional Ad Valorem tax is not one of them. It has three strikes against it:

1) 90 percent of the cost will be borne by the youngest members of our community who have recently moved to Orinda or have yet to move here. These people were not responsible for the \$80 million maintenance deficit which has been accrued over the past 25 years and should not bear the full responsibility of paying for it.

2) The proposal will fall short of repairing all the roads however it will repair enough to make a final "installment" highly improbable. City Council Member Darlene Gee, a professional transportation engineer with 35 years of experience in these types of projects, made very clear the risk the community faces if it votes for this partial fix. That could be "it" and 1,000 households will continue to live on bad roads for the indefinite future.

3) There is no provision for future maintenance. Once the roads are fixed (at a cost of \$80 million), will the unglamorous job of paying several hundred dollars per year per household for maintenance be voted for? Or will our \$80 million just go down the drain and in 25 years the community will find itself right back to where we are today?

The community needs to discuss these issues. So far, the City has not shown any intension of opening up the discussion.

I have created a web site, www.OrindaRoadFacts.info, which lays out the facts and discusses the issues. It includes a survey (www.surveymonkey.com/r/Orinda-Road-Survey-2016) and allows for feedback and questions which will be posted.

I am not against taxes. I do not believe that the City will waste funds raised through mismanagement (or at least the cost of not fixing our roads so overwhelms the minor "expense" of less than optimal management that this "waste" should be accepted as the cost of a one-time project.) I am for moving forward and voting once and for all for a program to fix our roads; provide maintenance funds; and do so in a manner which is fair to all members of the community.

Steve Cohn
Orinda

Editor:

I'm writing to correct a point of fact in the article "Spirited Discussion Ends with Approval for More Surveillance Cameras."

The vote was 5-0 for the Reconyx License Plate Readers and 4-1 for the ALPRs from the Sheriff's department. Vice Mayor Eve Phillips motioned to separate the Reconyx cameras and voted for these cameras that have a 90-day retention period. The ALPRs upload to a database out of our direct jurisdiction and California State law prescribe a retention limit of 1 year. The people against the data retention are not against safety in Orinda. They're against the Data Retention by entities outside our citizen control. California's ALPR law:

http://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billCompareClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140SB893

Vigilant Solutions, the makers of the ALPRs, takes an adversarial view of all laws that limit data retention:

http://www.officer.com/press_release/11403605/the-ugly-uglier-and-the-ugliest-of-anti-lpr-legislation

<http://vigilantsolutions.com/uncategorized/license-plate-recognition-privacy-and-data-retention>

William Chen
Orinda

Join our Public Forum

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda or one of its cities that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section. Just send your letter to letters@lamorindaweekly.com and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.



St. Paddy's Day Treasure Hunt

Save the Date!

Join Paddy at Leigh Creekside Park in Lafayette on Sunday, March 13th from 11am to 2pm. We will provide your kids with a map & clues that takes them through the Trail Neighborhood. Treasure at the end! We look forward to seeing you there.

What: St. Paddy's Day Treasure Hunt
When: Sunday, March 13, 2016
Where: Leigh Creekside Park
Moraga Blvd & 4th Street
Lafayette, CA
Time: 11am - 2pm
Other: Please email paddy@paddykehoe.com to register in advance. Space is limited.

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