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More Lafayette News

Water pumping station gets a roof, but installing it may be noisy

By Pippa Fisher



Photo provided

Residents on the east end of Mount Diablo Boulevard might be hearing loud "popping" noises as EBMUD installs the new metal roof to the new Diablo Vista Pumping Plant.

The roof deck installation, which was scheduled to start April 17, is the next stage of work on the new building that has been seen emerging next to Blodgett's.

EBMUD is constructing the new station, which, once com-

plete and electrical and mechanical systems have been tested, will replace the old pumping plant on Mount Diablo Boulevard near Carol Lane. Construction is set to continue through fall 2017.

So far, below ground drainage, electrical conduits and water lines have been installed and soil has been placed to backfill and level the ground. Inside the new pump house, water pump and piping installation is nearing completion and roofing is now

underway.

EBMUD says it will be working on Saturdays through the summer to complete on time as a result of the wet winter. Saturday work hours will be from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. with any louder activities starting after 8 a.m. Regular weekday work hours are from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Once the new plant is online and pumping water to the community the old plant will be taken out of service and demolished.

Garden Club helps Lafayette bloom at Oak Hill Road off ramp

By Pippa Fisher



Photos provided by Wendi Shively



On a recent gorgeous Saturday morning, about 10 volunteers from the Lafayette Garden Club spent roughly an hour and a half beautifying a spot next to the City of Lafayette sign at the entrance to Oak Hill Road.

Garden club member Wendi Shively came up with the idea for the project after noticing the area had been an "eyesore" for so long. The club asked the Lafayette Rotary to donate half the funds so they could purchase five-gallon plants rather than smaller ones. They also

received a commitment from the city for watering the plants.

Shively explained that the planting is all Mediterranean, deer resistant, drought tolerant and should require very little maintenance. Through the hard work of all volunteers they quickly planted over 100 plants and used 50 bags of soil amendment and compost.

Right now they are planning on providing three maintenance days per year and have plans to plant several hundred daffodil bulbs in the fall.

Judge rules

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"We're extremely pleased with the judge's decision," said Lafayette City Manager Steven Falk. "Lafayette supports smart growth, not indiscriminate growth. In this case, the city and the developer agreed to work together on a more suitable plan for that parcel. That's good government."

Trauss said that the HAA doesn't exist to protect developers; that it's meant to protect the larger number of renters that are excluded from living in Lafayette. "We still have another course of action we may pursue," she said. "By excluding 700 renters in favor of 44 homeowners, Lafayette vio-

lated Californians Fair Housing and Employment Act."

They have 20 days in which to appeal Craddick's decision.

Falk says that the city is doing its fair share to address the region's housing shortage. He points out that more than 500 multifamily units have been developed in the past seven years or are in the planning stages with more than a quarter of Lafayette's housing in rental units. "SFBARF is intent on 'suing the suburbs' over the housing crunch. In this case, they sued the wrong suburb."

Lafayette Police Chief

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As a result of stiff penalties, he hopes to get word out through the criminal community that Lafayette is tough on crime.

His style is friendly and approachable but he wants to get his message across: that residents can take steps to help make themselves less of a target.

He stressed the importance of simply locking doors and windows. He said that five of the seven break-ins so far this year involved unlocked doors or windows. The same applies to side gates. He said most criminals

enter through a back door or window.

Christensen said that an alarm – the louder the better – is a good investment and that residents should advertise that they have one with stickers visible from outside. As another form of alarm, he said, a dog makes an excellent deterrent.

Cameras, both externally and internally, have allowed police to solve many recent crimes and he thoroughly encouraged their use.

He was particularly clear on one point – that residents should

avoid confronting a criminal.

The chief suggested that if residents will be away, they should not cancel their newspapers to avoid getting on a "vacation list" which can fall into the wrong hands. It is better to tell neighbors, who can then keep an eye on the house.

Lastly, he reminded all present that the Lafayette police offer an additional service of checking in on vacationing residents' homes.

Orinda

Downtown Development

They were enamored of the creek, and saw it as a surmountable challenge. They understood Orinda's tricky relationship with BART. Most cities would love to have a BART station right in town, said the TAP Chair, David Cropper, director of development for TMG, but acknowledged that it created parking problems for Orinda.

The TAP found Orinda teens to be outstanding in their engagement, and made suggestions for methods to keep teens connected. Jessica von Borck, assistant city manager in Fremont, suggested making Orinda Way a "living street" to en-

hance the pedestrian experience. A living street is a street primarily designed for pedestrians and cyclists and a social space where people can meet and children can play safely and legally and where vehicular access is secondary or even closed for pedestrian use.

The idea of focusing on San Pablo Creek remains popular, but ULI's suggestion that funding could come from developers of 240 units of housing downtown was met with conflicting views. While some expressed a desire for smaller living units downtown for residents wishing to downsize or perhaps for

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adult children wanted to come back to Orinda and get started in the housing market, others were opposed to the idea.

One of the ideas that seemed to be met favorably was arranging a direct entrance to Theatre Square from BART near the Fourth Bore restaurant. The TAP also suggested turning Bryant Street into a parking area, but residents pointed out that the area is used for casual carpooling. Although parking was not within the TAP's scope, they recognized it as a problem, and mentioned the possibility of providing parking for employees.

Speakers in the public forum included representatives of What's Up Downtown Orinda, Orinda Vision, Orinda Watch, the Chamber of Commerce, and many individual Orinda residents.

Marty De Laveaga Stewart, an ancestor of the De Laveaga family who were formative in the development of Orinda, urged the city to go ahead with development, noting that downtown hasn't changed since the 1950s.

Andrew Van Wye favored the development of new housing units, opining that "housing delayed is housing denied."

Michael Kaplin also expressed interest in housing on Orinda Village, noting that some residents may want to downsize and their big houses, once sold, would increase the city's tax revenue.

Several speakers focused on the question, who is downtown development supposed to serve? Hillary Murphy, representing What's Up Downtown Orinda, liked that there were a lot of ideas that could be implemented in the short term, an opinion echoed by Mayor Eve Phillips.