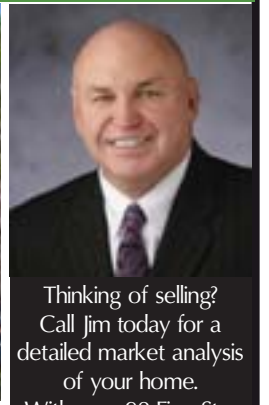


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## Moraga

### Public Meetings

#### City Council

Wednesday, April 25, 7 p.m.  
Wednesday, May 9, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### Planning Commission

Monday, May 7, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### Design Review

Monday, April 23, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### School Board Meetings

**Moraga School District**  
Tuesday, May 8, 7 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

#### Incident

#### Summary

#### Report

#### March 27 to April 8

Alarms 15

911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 2

Traffic 41

Suspicious Circumstances 10

Suspicious Subject 6

Suspicious Vehicle 3

Service to Citizen 29

Patrol Request/ Security Check 74

Vacation House Check 2

Supplemental Report 7

Welfare Check 3

#### Abandoned Vehicle

2000 Block Ascot Dr.

#### Accident Property

Rheem Blvd./Moraga Rd.

#### Battery

50 Block Ashbrook Pl.

#### Burglary

500 Block Moraga Rd.

#### Civil

10 Block Gloria Ct.

200 Block Paseo Bernal

10 Block Magee Ct.

#### Commercial Burglary

1100 Block Moraga Way

#### Coroners Case

30 Block Miramonte Dr.

#### Disturbance-Domestic

Moraga Commons Park

#### Disturbing The Peace

Bollinger Canyon Rd./St. Marys Rd.

200 Block Paseo Bernal

#### Dui Misd

100 Block David Dr.

#### Excessive Speed

Rheem Blvd./Chalda Way

Moraga Rd./Alta Mesa Dr.

Moraga Rd./Saint Marys Rd

#### Failure To Obey

St. Marys Rd./Moraga Rd.

#### Found Property

Police Department

#### Fraud Credit Card

300 Block Birchwood Dr.

100 Block Longfield Pl.

Moraga Way/Moraga Rd.



# Hillside and Ridgeline regulation approved after 5 years of work

By Sophie Braccini

At its April 11 meeting the Moraga Town Council approved the updates and modifications of its regulations pertaining to hillside and ridgeline development. The process to amend local code started five years ago, and took that long to go through iterations, public discussion and forums, as well as several staff and elected official changes, until it was finally completed. While protection is popular among a large number of residents, major property owners, such as the Bruzzone family, continue to be staunch opponents. Some people also called for caution over restricting development and its potential economic impact.

The conversation on hillside and ridgeline protection is as old as the town itself; in fact it predates its incorporation in 1974. Over the past 10 years, the major land use discussions were at the end of 2008 with the Measure K ballot proposition for more protection that lost the popular vote, and the five-year

process that aimed at removing ambiguities and clarifying the implementation of the Moraga Open Space Ordinance that was passed in 1986.

"I'm very pleased that the Town Council voted unanimously last night ... to support the new hillside and ridgeline regulations," said Mayor Dave Trotter. "I've been working since 2006 to promote and enact policies that actually protect ridgelines from development, preserve the beauty and semirural environment of Moraga, reduce the density, footprint and visual impacts of new homes in hillside areas of the town, and uphold the open space values and legal requirements embodied in MOSO."

Some of the key elements of the modification include adding new prohibition of development within 200 feet of significant non-MOSO ridgelines such as Rheem Ridge and Bollinger Ridge; new visual separation requirements for development from the crest of ridgelines

when viewed from designated view points on the scenic corridors; new development guidelines for buildings on the valley floor to minimize impact on distant views of the hills; a new "development envelope" concept to replace the "cell" as the area to measure the average slope of a development area; new procedures for final determination of high risk areas with the imposition of keeping the 1 unit per 20 acre limitation in such an area, even if the high risk is mitigated.

The town made the finding early on that amending the rules did not require that it conduct an environmental review. An EIR is needed when a project has a significant impact on human health or the environment; here, however, the modified rules are about what will not be done, not what will be done. The lawyers of the Bruzzone family argued that the town should have done an EIR because the new rules will impact safety, and will prevent development that would

be beneficial to the economy of the town.

Kathe Nelson for the Moraga Chamber of Commerce made a general statement indicating that the town should consider the economic impact of the revised rules. It could be construed that more rules means less development, and less attractiveness to new businesses. A new resident made a similar comment, indicating that Moraga should do its fair share to ease the Bay Area housing shortage.

The bulk of the higher density housing planned in town is located in the Moraga Center Specific Plan area, and that zone is exempt from the modified rules. The other area that could potentially be impacted by the new guidelines for development on the valley floor is the Rheem Center.

A second reading of the amended texts will be made at the next council meeting, before the rules are applicable to new projects.

# Staffing levels in Moraga discussed

By Sophie Braccini

During his short tenure as interim town manager, Jim Holgersson asked Management Partners for a report assessing staffing levels in town and improvements that could be made. The results show that Moraga has fewer employees than comparable Bay Area cities, and that progress could be made by using software to automate some tasks. New town manager Cynthia Battenberg hopes to use the report to improve her new team's efficiency.

"In terms of staffing, my experience these first few weeks mirrors the findings of the report that Moraga's staffing level is lean and the significant vacancies (which was approximately 20 percent in March) impact operations," Battenberg said.

The report looked at the cities of Half Moon Bay, Hercules, Lafayette, Orinda and San Anselmo, five Bay Area cities with popula-

tions between 12,000 and 26,000, and median household incomes between \$100,000 and \$200,000. The first striking fact is that Moraga has the third highest median household income (\$136,336) of the cities being compared, but less than half of the total operating budget of the peer agencies. Moraga operates with fewer staff than its peers and therefore provides less service. The areas of administrative services, public works, recreation, and park and facilities maintenance are where Moraga's staffing levels are much lower than its peers.

Management Partners inter-

viewed staff and found important strengths and organizational values that should be recognized and preserved as new people come on board. First and foremost the consultant noted the quality of existing employees who understand the importance of public service and try to serve the community as best they can with limited resources. The consultant wrote that this value is found in all levels of the departments with both newly hired and long-term employees.

The consultant also noted that Moraga staff still relies on manual systems to record and capture data,

which can present an obstacle to understanding the work that needs to be done compared to what can be done with existing staffing levels.

During her comments to the council about the report, Battenberg indicated that two vacant positions would stay open in order to save money and invest in needed technology.

Management Partners also noted that Moraga does not track the workload and performance of its employees, which makes it difficult to explain service levels to the community, and recommended that the town develop such measures.

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925 200 2222 or 925 878 9685

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