

Bollinger Canyon General Plan

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Its purpose was to describe physical context, planning and zoning history, identify potentially applicable zoning districts, provide general zoning principles and define three "parcel groups" while presenting zoning options.

The 20 parcels were grouped into three categories based on their common characteristics. Parcel Group 1 included developed residential properties at the east end of Joseph Drive and a single developed property on Bollinger Canyon Road. The entire area includes nine parcels ranging in size from 0.97 to 3.78 acres totaling 17.3 acres. Parcel Group 2 included four parcels with a combined 139 acres that have recently become part of the Harvey Ranch John Muir Land Trust. Parcel Group 3 included seven parcels total-

ing 270 acres. Two of the eastern-most parcels (186.3 acres) had once been proposed as a 129-lot subdivision (Bollinger Valley Project).

The "White Paper" was presented during a virtual meeting that same month to more than 40 attending residents in order to collect input which was incorporated with feedback from a Feb. 9 Town Council meeting. Staff used the information to develop a General Plan and zoning proposal for the Study Area which was presented on May 24, 2022 to the Planning Commission.

For Parcel Group 1, a General Plan and zoning designation of "Residential - 1 Dwelling Unit per Acre" (1DUA) was proposed. According to the staff report, "The median lot size in the parcel group is 1.77 acres, and the prevailing character is single-family residential. All but one

of the parcels is already developed with a single-family residence. Moreover, Parcel Group 1 is functionally part of the Bluffs neighborhood, which has a 1 DUA designation.

"A General Plan and zoning designation of 'Non-MOSO Open Space' was proposed for Parcel Group 2. All four of these parcels are in single ownership and have been acquired by the John Muir Land Trust. The proposed designation is consistent with the intent to retain these properties as open space for conservation and recreation."

Lastly, for Parcel Group 3, a new General Plan designation and zoning district was proposed. "This designation - Rural Residential - has a density of one dwelling unit per 5 acres and is intended to provide a transition between the Bluffs neighborhood to the

west and the open space and agricultural areas to the north and east. Similar density limits apply to the north in Lafayette and to the east in Contra Costa County. Staff developed draft General Plan and Zoning text for this new district, including development standards and permitted uses."

Public comment from property owners in the Valley Hill and Bluffs area expressed concerns about traffic and road conditions, safety (wildfire, landslides, etc.), evacuation capacity and neighborhood character/aesthetics. The largest landowner (186 acres) requested density higher than 1 unit per 5 acres.

After taking everything into consideration, the Town Council certified the FEIR (Final Environmental Impact Report) on Jan. 25, 2023. This action also included a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting

Program (MMRP) for the entire project.

The Planning Commission's April 11 feedback to the council expressed general support for staff's updated proposal after questions/comments relating to expected VMT (Vehicle Miles Traveled) with regards to electric vehicles, opportunities for density transfer, expected access points for future development, process for planned development, opportunity for owner-initiated General Plan Amendment requests, and wildfire risk assessment requirements were discussed.

The Town Council voted 4-1 (Vice Mayor Teresa Onoda voted against) to approve the two resolutions and waive the first reading and introduce by Title only the ordinance amending the Moraga Municipal Code as it relates to the Bollinger Canyon Study Area.

Minson takes over musical direction at Stanley; Jazz Cafe planned, May 12

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"I intended to become a music teacher, because all of the wonderful music and band teachers I had growing up inspired me," Minson says. "In college, life took me in a different direction and I became a performing musician and a working musician."

As Minson pieced together his musical career, performing in gigs while playing the trumpet, the French horn and dabbling with the drums (in the footsteps of his father, who was also a percussionist) and at times, singing in venues and settings ranging from orchestra pits to rock concert stages to church gigs, he never lost touch with his alma mater and kept an important side gig as an LPIE instructor. With Bob Athayde's encouragement, Minson eventually went back to school and got his teaching credential which helped him land a job in the Mt. Diablo Unified School District teaching at the elementary and middle school level. "When Bob told me he was retiring (and encouraged me to apply), I decided to go for it and luckily, I got hired and so here I am," Minson says with an ear-to-ear smile.

Minson was transitioning into his new role around the same time the youngest of his three children (now 11 months old) was arriving.

Music seems to be in Minson's bones. He loves listening to it. He loves creating it. He loves performing it. He loves teaching it. And, as much as he loves and breathes music, he loves being a family man. "I loved performing (as my main gig) but it was tough being out late most nights when I started having kids (with a now 10-year-old son and a 7-year-old and soon to be 1-year-old daughter) and I wanted a different lifestyle," Minson says. "Teaching helps me have that lifestyle, where I can do what I love (while supporting the next generation of musicians) and also still have time for my family."

Minson says regardless of one's age or stage or life or field of study or career trajectory, music has something to offer everyone. "Music is a central part of being a human being. You can't go anywhere without having music on in the background. Music is in stores. Music is in movies," Minson says. "It's everywhere and it touches on so many aspects of human life - whether it's giving you a fun beat to dance to just offering you something really powerful or emotional to touch your human spirit. I can't imagine life without it." And, music is a transferable skill that, in Minson's estimation, has as much to offer a future scientist as a performer.

"It teaches teamwork. Kids have to figure out how to

work with other people," he says. "And they're working toward a common goal of creating beautiful music together while making all the pieces fit together."

On Friday, May 12 Minson and his students will bring the magical elements of music, ambiance and community together for the annual Jazz Café so that folks of all ages can have a chance to experience the high-end prestigious elements of a night of jazz with dim lights, coffees, teas and desserts inside Stanley's multipurpose room. An assortment of food trucks will also be outside.

"The Jazz Café started under Bob's leadership and we're trying to keep the tradition alive as we transform our multi-use room into a jazz club with mood lighting, tables with flowers on them," Minson says. "The kids get to play in the kind of atmosphere that you wouldn't expect in a school gym. We'll have a professional sound person. (It's the real deal.)" The Jazz Café is free and open to everyone. It takes place at Stanley Middle School from 6 to 9 p.m. on Friday, May 12.

Josh Norek says Minson's homecoming to his middle school alma mater makes this year's Jazz Café extra special. "It's fantastic (having Todd as a product of the Lafayette school system) back. Just like the teacher character on 'Welcome Back Kotter' who returns to teach at his former school, Todd is able to return to Lafayette and help foster a love for jazz with the students."

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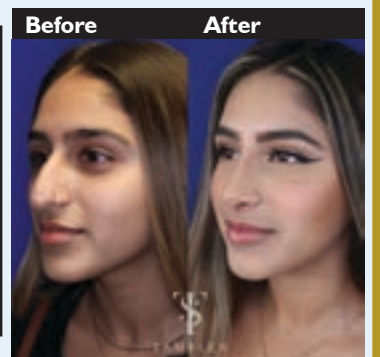
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