



Garbage Rates Soar in Orinda

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total hike of 9.75 percent.

According to Mr. Etherington, the San Francisco Bay Area experienced a three percent inflation rate in 2017.



Garbage-collection rates have soared in Orinda.

The official name of Recycle Smart is the Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority.

Representing Orinda on Recycle Smart board of directors are two members of the Orinda City Council: Amy Worth and Inga Miller. Currently, Ms. Worth is the chairperson of Recycle Smart's board.

--By Richard Colman ■

ANNOUNCEMENT:

The Icon is a periodic publication designed to inform Orinda residents about important issues in their community.

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Orinda Opposes State Land Grab

By Richard Colman

A land grab of local communities' territories by the State of California has drawn the opposition of the Orinda City Council.

On February 23, 2018, Amy Worth, a member of the city council and the city's current mayor, wrote that the City of Orinda opposes State Senate Bill 827 (SB 827), which, if enacted, would seize control of a local community's land near transit stops.

Specifically, SB 827 would give the State of California control over a given city's land within one-quarter mile of a frequently-used bus stop and one-half mile of a train station (like a BART station). SB 827 would allow apartments as high as 85 feet to be constructed.

The sponsor of Senate Bill 827 is State Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco). The co-sponsor is State Senator Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley).

In her February letter, Ms. Worth said, "As the Mayor, I was authorized by action of the City Council to forward this letter of opposition. SB 827 would exempt certain

housing projects for locally developed and adopted height limitations, densities, parking requirements, and design review standards."

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Ms. Worth continued: "SB 827 would subvert, and potentially derail, these community based planning efforts." At a town-hall meeting in Orinda on March 5, 2018, State Senator Steve Glazer called SB 827 a "crazy bill." Glazer, an Orinda Democrat, represents Orinda in the State Senate. State Assemblywoman Catharine Baker (R-Dublin), who was also present at the meeting, said she agrees with Mr. Glazer.

Mr. Glazer's senatorial district covers much of Contra Costa County and part of Alameda County. Ms. Baker's assembly district, which includes Orinda, covers much of central and southern Contra Costa County and part of Alameda County.

The Sierra Club and the League of California Cities oppose SB 827. ■



A bill pending in the State Senate could force local communities to build high-rise, high-density structures like these located near the Pleasant Hill, California, BART station.

Water: The Fountain of Youth?

By Dr. Laura Pawlak

Based on the fact that about two-thirds of the body is composed of water, it seems obvious that consuming water is important for health. Water requirements have been studied for decades. Recommendations are narrowed to two alternatives: Consume a minimum of eight cups of liquid per day or drink to quench thirst.

Research now reveals that drinking water when feeling thirsty boosts the brain's performance in mental tests. Dr. Caroline Edmonds, the author of a lead



Does water have special health benefits?

study, found that reaction times were faster after people drank water, particularly if they were thirsty before drinking.

Drinking more water than normally consumed is associated with a reduced intake of calories and sodium. The study, led by Prof. Ruopeng An, showed that people who increased their consumption of plain water by one to three cups daily lowered total energy intake by 68-205 calories each day and their sodium

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Dynamic, New Korean Restaurant Opens

By Richard Eber

As Korean food seems to be on the endangered species list in Orinda, it is necessary to venture all the way to Concord to experience the gourmet offerings of the Gen Korean BBQ House, which recently opened its doors at 1353 Willow Pass Road on the corner near the Water World Amusement Park.

Once inside this small Southern California chain eatery, one is transformed into an art deco environment where blue lighting sets the mood for an extraordinary dining experience. At each of 59 tables and several rows of counter seating, one can, at each table, find an indentation (or well), where patrons grill food in a kind of do-it-yourself Benihana way.

Every diner is given a menu, which is encased in a hardbound book. For lunch, there are 27 choices of assorted beef, pork, chicken, and fish to choose from. There are eight additional items for dinner.

While trying to determine what meats are to be selected, a large family-style salad is served with the tasty ginger-sesame vinaigrette that one finds in Asian restaurants. In addition, small plates of traditional Korean kimchee and cold, glass noodles (jap chae) are served.

Then, the good stuff comes. To start with, my friend (and fellow reporter) Richard Colman and I tried Gen's special blade steak and angus brisket along with sweet teriyaki with pineapple slices. While this was being cooked along with seasonal fresh vegetables, we ordered some white rice to refresh my pallet.

Our attentive waiter was very good at turning the large pieces of meat and cutting them with scissors, which each table is outfitted with. Currently, several experienced trainers are on site teaching new employees "The Gen Way" of doing busi-

ness.

When the tasty morsels of steak reached our plate, we were given a large selection of sauces to dip the cooked pieces in. Green tea salt, chadol, cajun, and gobchang were our favorites. Between courses, they also served these fried chicken buds, which proved to be addictive to us.

Gen is not a place for a "bun and run" kind of meal. To savor all that they have to offer, it is best to allocate at least an hour and a half for lunch or dinner. There is a lot to try and not to be missed.

There is no limit on what can be ordered. Menu exploration is encouraged. After our party had our fill of steak, we continued on to a couple of varieties of pork belly (samgyubsal). We especially liked



At the Gen Korean BBQ House, a new restaurant in Concord, tasty appetizers are served. The appetizers surround a silver-covered bucket in which customers can cook their own food.

the meats marinated in red wine and with cajun flavorings. Then came different types of calamari (squid), chicken, and shrimp -- all to complete our dining experience with the grill.

If one is still hungry, Gen has an assortment of mochi ice cream sandwiches or, as they call them, Macarons. They looked great, but we were too full to try one of these

tasty looking treats.

After consuming all of these gourmet offerings, of what can normally considered high priced entries, no guilt exists. Everything thing we ate was included in the all-you-can eat tradition. Now, the bad news. With exception of soft drinks and alcohol, the price to gorge yourself at Gen Korean BBQ runs \$16.95 for lunch and \$24.99 for dinner.

On a positive note, the meal is an excellent value, considering the high quality proteins that are utilized. In fact, when I chatted with the affable manager of the restaurant, Manny Francisco, he said that Gen depends on volume to make a profit.

Even now, there are lines out the door, especially on weekends, with patrons waiting to enter this trendy venue.

Gen Korean BBQ House is open from 10 A.M. until 11 P.M. every day except Friday and Saturday, when closing time is an hour later. Reservations for parties of 10 or more can be made at (925) 798-5679.

Richard Eber is a frequent contributor to The Icon. He is also a restaurant reviewer and avid wine maker. He is a member of the Contra Costa Wine Group. ■

Garbage Rates Soar in Orinda

Garbage-collection rates in Orinda soared 9.75 percent between March 2017 and March 2018.

A typical garbage bill that was \$114.09 in March 2017 went to \$126.22 in March 2018. Garbage bills cover a three-month period.

Between March 2007 and March 2018, garbage rates in Orinda increased 90 percent. During this interval, bills went from \$66.00 to \$126.22.

Recycle Smart is the company that provides solid waste services for Central Contra Costa County residents and businesses. The company serves Orinda, Lafayette, Moraga, Walnut Creek, Danville, and other locations.

Recycle Smart has contracted with Republic Services for the collection and disposal of garbage.

According to Ken Etherington, the executive director of Recycle Smart, the 9.75 percent price increase that began in March 2018 has two parts.

One part is a 2.01 percent increase for Republic Services, the company which handles garbage pick-up. The other part is called a Vehicle Impact Fee, which covers actual or potential road damage caused by garbage trucks. The impact fee went up by 7.74 percent in Orinda.

Together, the two increases produce a

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Water: The Fountain of Youth?

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intake by 78-235 grams per day.

A popular trend these days, alkaline water is promoted as a healthier choice than plain water. Several brands of alkaline water are available or machines can be purchased that make alkaline water.

Proponents claim that alkaline water kills cancer cells, banishes belly fat, lubricates joints, protects bone density, reduces acid reflux, and improves hydration. What scientific evidence lies behind these claims? Despite the promotion of alkaline water by the manufacturers of the product and by the media, there is very little research either to support or disprove the claims.

The pH of water is neutral, a pH of 7. Chemicals and gases can alter the pH of water. For example, rainwater's pH is slightly below 7, as carbon dioxide in the air dissolves in the water and increases acidity.

Water that is too alkaline (pH above 7) has a bitter taste. It can cause deposits that encrust pipes and appliances. Highly acidic water tastes sour and may corrode metals or even dissolve them. Fortunately, as the kidneys filter blood, the pH of blood and all cells is rebalanced close to neutral, avoiding any unhealthy effect of liquids or foods that raise or lower pH.

Citrus fruits are named for their citric acid content, but don't be fooled by that fact. Citrons, lemons, limes, oranges, and grapefruits -- all citrus fruits -- produce alkaline byproducts once digested. So, you can squeeze juice from a lemon or other citrus into plain water and make your own alkaline water. Enjoy!

Dr. Laura Pawlak (Ph.D., R.D. emerita) is a world-renowned biochemist and dietitian emerita. She is the author of many scientific publications and has written such best-selling books as "The Hungry Brain," "Life Without Diets," and "Stop Gaining Weight." On the subjects of nutrition and brain science, she gives talks internationally. ■

EDITORIAL Orinda Faces Imperialism

To build so-called affordable housing, the State of California continues to threaten the sovereignty of local communities like Orinda.

Senate Bill 827 (SB 827) in the California State Senate, if enacted, would allow the state government to grab a local community's land near a transit hub.

Specifically, SB 827 could require a local community to build high-rise, high-density housing within one-quarter mile of a frequently used bus route and within one-half mile of a train station (such as a BART station).

The housing could be as high as 85 feet.

The sponsor of SB 827 is State Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco). The bill's co-sponsor is Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley).

Under SB 827, the State of California would be able to dictate land-use policy within the designated transit zones.

If the state can grab a limited amount of land now, what is to prevent the state from taking over entire communities, dictating land-use policies to whole cities?

The Soviet dictator Josef Stalin took farmland away from peasants. The result was food shortages and famine. California does not need to imitate a tyrannical, Communist leader.

Appropriately, Orinda Mayor and City Council Member Amy Worth, with the approval of other city-council members, wrote Sen. Wiener on Feb. 23, 2018. In her letter, Ms. Worth said: "SB 827 would exempt certain housing projects from locally developed and adopted height limitations, densities, parking requirements, and design review standards."

On March 5, 2018, State Senator Steve Glazer (D-Orinda) and State Assemblywoman, Catherine Baker (R-Dublin) expressed, at a town-hall meeting held in Orinda, opposition to SB 827. Glazer called SB 827 a "crazy bill."

From about 2004 to about 2016, the Orinda City Council had, in general, sup-

ported real-estate development projects in Orinda. An example is the Monteverde/Eden Housing project at 2 Irwin Way (across the street from Orinda's firehouse on Orinda Way). Ground-breaking for the project, which is now complete, took place on Jan. 25, 2013. Monteverde has 67 units of residential space but only 30 parking spaces. The project violates Orinda's 35-

foot height limit. In 2010, Ms. Worth called the project "... a tremendous asset to Orinda" (Lamorinda Weekly, Apr. 28, 2010).

More development in Orinda cannot be tolerated. The city has used up virtually all of its available land. The city's schools face overcrowding. Parking and traffic conditions are intolerable. The city's semi-rural environment is threatened. More development will require more police services and fire services.

From 2011 to 2015, California faced a severe

drought. Expanding housing development in the state will only lead to more water consumption. If there is another drought, water use statewide could be severely restricted. Orinda residents should consider what their homes would be worth if there were no running water. Would anyone buy a home that has no running water?

SB 827 is the equivalent of an imperialist takeover of Orinda. The city must not become a colony of Sacramento or any other place.

All Orindans should mobilize to oppose SB 827. Failure to do so will result in Orinda's becoming another Tokyo or New York City. More high-rise, high-density housing in Orinda will lead to lower property values for single, detached family homes.

Orindans should ask themselves why they have chosen to live in Orinda. Perhaps Orinda residents have always wanted homes with lawns, gardens, swimming pools, and the other benefits of suburban living.

The State of California must be stopped in its efforts to destroy the state's local communities. ■



State Senator Steve Glazer (D-Orinda) has called Senate Bill 827, which gives the State of California control over a local community's land use, a "crazy bill."