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THE Rockridge News

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January RCPC Town Hall Report

RCPC Hosts California College of the Arts in a Presentation of Oakland Campus Redevelopment Plans

Audience discussion reveals widely divergent views

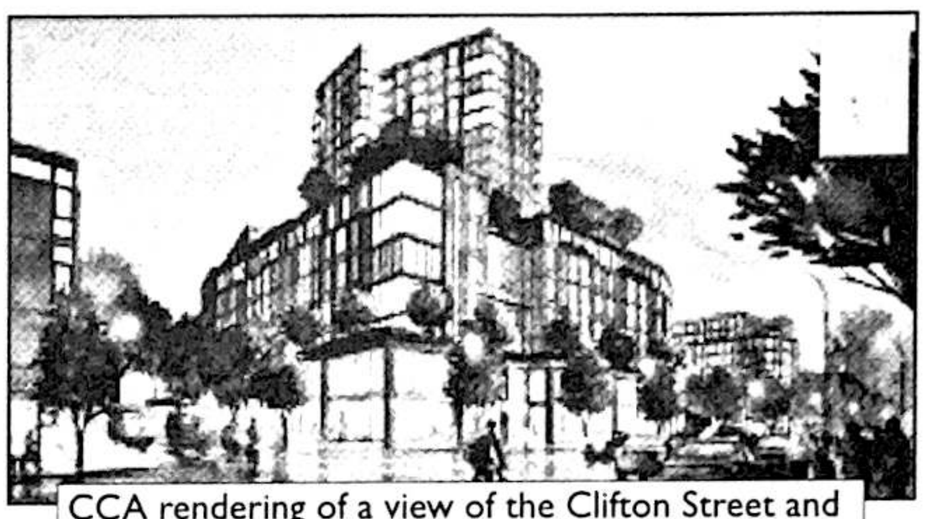
by Stuart Flashman, RCPC Land Use Committee Chair

At RCPC's January 2019 Town Hall Meeting, an overflow crowd of over 100 listened intently as Marc Babsin of Emerald Fund showed, described, and explained current plans for redevelopment of the Oakland campus of California College of the Arts (CCA). The campus, located on the east side of Broadway just north of the half-constructed "Shops at the Ridge" project (currently being rethought by Southern California developer TRC, Inc.), presently serves incoming CCA students before they "graduate" to CCA's expanding San Francisco campus.

Two years ago, CCA announced plans to relocate its operations to San Francisco and redevelop its Oakland campus.

In the Fall of 2017, CCA introduced Emerald Fund and Equity Community Builders, its development team, at an RCPC Town Hall where the team presented preliminary plans for the redevelopment and reuse of the campus. The plans included preserving three historic buildings and the Broadway entry gate; providing an arts-oriented area along Clifton Street at the campus' northern end that would include permanently affordable housing and studio space for Oakland artists; opening up approximately an acre

▶ January Meeting and Town Hall, page 10



CCA rendering of a view of the Clifton Street and Broadway intersection. *E. Bay Business News site.*

Bylaw Vote Results: At the January Town Hall, RCPC membership voted on the bylaw amendment to Section 5.1, clarifying residency requirements for RCPC. The amendment passed, with 57 ballots in favor, none against, and one not marked. The results were certified by RCPC Board Chair Leonora Sea, RCPC Board Vice Chair Alden Conner, and Stuart Flashman.

Developer Shares Redevelopment Plans for College of the Arts Oakland Property:

Emerald Fund and Equity Community Builders Propose 589 homes coupled with arts uses and 1.5 acres of publicly accessible outdoor gathering space to celebrate art and community

by Marc Babsin, Principal, Emerald Fund

Emerald Fund and Equity Community Builders (ECB) have shared the most recent proposed redevelopment plan for the Oakland campus of the California College of the Arts (CCA), including rendered views of the project from various viewpoints throughout the community.

The project as proposed includes 589 homes, including 35 permanently and deeply affordable homes for artists; over 24,000 square feet of affordable arts space; 6,500 square feet of non-profit arts office space; the preservation and re-creation of an historic precinct; and 1.5 acres of publicly accessible community gathering space.

CCA, which will be unifying its operations at its San Francisco campus in 2021, partnered with ECB to create plans for reuse of the Oakland property.

The redevelopment team met with a broad array of community organizations in 2017 to define its goals for redeveloping this iconic property. The list was long and included addressing the city's need for housing, opening the site to the public, supporting and promoting the arts, retaining historic buildings and setting, and minimizing local impacts such as traffic.

"This site's transit-rich location, generous size, dramatic topography and deep history present a rare opportunity to create a significant community asset in North Oakland," said Marc Babsin, Emerald Fund Principal. "In addition to providing much needed housing, our goal is to open the site up to the community and create a place where neighbors will gather

▶ CCA Proposed Plans, page 11

RCPC 2019 Kitchen Tour on Tap, Sunday, September 22.

2019 is an odd-numbered year, and that means it's a Rockridge Kitchen Tour year. The Kitchen Tour is the Rockridge Community Planning Council's major fundraiser, and it provides RCPC with money to support the Kevin Faughnan Memorial Grants program, the Town Halls, the Halloween Parade, and a number of other neighborhood benefits. The KT itself builds community through volunteering; as a showcase for local architects, contractors,

▶ Kitchen Tour on Tap, page 3

Are You Ready for RCPC? RCPC is Ready for You!

How do you feel about your neighborhood? Your city? Are things going the way you think they should? If the answer is "no," there is another answer: RCPC – The Rockridge Community Planning Council. Board Elections are at hand: Answer the call. See top of page 3 for details and more answers.

Op Ed

It's hard to predict what will turn up when one of those delicately balanced tiny towers of used coffee cups, forgotten messages and failed resolutions topples off the desk in the dead of night. Darn cat.

The latest crash the other night exposed a previously published Rockridge News article of mine entitled, "Rockridge Development: It's Adding Up," dated May 12, 1990. At the time, several significant local project proposals were in play:

- The large brick Medical Insurance building on Claremont Avenue across from the now-new Safeway had just been proposed and an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was in draft preparation.
- BART was proposing office, retail and parking space development on the Rockridge station parking lot.
- Dreyer's was making plans for a large office building and headquarters on College.
- Retail development and expansion were proposed for College Avenue frontage from Birch Court north to an apartment building.

The 1990 Article Continues:

"Fifteen years ago, the issues in Rockridge were development and change because there wasn't any of either.

"Those were the days after BART construction when College Avenue shops not boarded up were occupied by some of the funkiest businesses imaginable. There was actually a vacant lot on a major corner. At least Dreyer's had a genuine soda fountain staffed by real waitresses.

"Nevertheless, when BART and some College Avenue business interests pushed for high-rise residential and commercial development close to the Rockridge BART station in the 1970s to lodge a live-in pool of commuters around the station, the neighborhood launched a successful drive to downzone the area and develop a pedestrian-oriented environment.

"Today, development and change are still issues in Rockridge, but now the question is how to guide them so the still-charming urban gem is not overwhelmed.

"Recent years have seen a spate of buildings and developments proposed for College Avenue. RCPC has often argued successfully for design and use changes to make projects more consistent with the built environment and with existing zoning.

"Environmental impact reports prepared for those projects usually state no negative impact will result from this building or that restaurant. Individually, that may be true. Considered cumulatively, the projects introduce undeniable impacts on traffic, air quality, parking and visual interest.

"Decisions to permit these projects to go ahead, to require them to be altered, or to deny them are made by public officials who fundamentally want to do a good job. Still, they best understand numbers either as dollars of revenue or as votes. We may not have dollars but we do have the votes.

"What kind of neighborhood do you want to live in? Put pen to paper; voice to phone; thought to action: Call or write your representatives on the City Council, the planning commission or other public boards to let them know your opinion of the changes in your neighborhood."

The article ended with that call to the community for action, to preserve what Rockridge residents themselves had designed and wrested from the City fifteen years earlier.

Now, in 2019, the proposals of yore return, many backed by state law and legal rulings and supported by changing values and growing needs.

A long time ago, a now well-known local developer declared, "The dialectic of change is upon the neighborhood." We can now add: "Always has been, always will be."

— Don Kinkead, Editor

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Library program details/hours: Calendar, page 15

THE Rockridge News

The Rockridge News, founded March 1986 by Don Kinkead, is published monthly (except in August) and is sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC), a nonprofit public benefit organization founded to: preserve and enhance the unique character of the Rockridge neighborhood; promote the health, safety and quality of life of its residents; furnish a forum for community involvement; and provide leadership and representation of neighborhood interests.

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Jo Ellis.....Advertising & Community Calendar
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For information: info@rockridge.org

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To subscribe to **The Rockridge News**, send your check for $20, payable to ***RCPC*** *with* ***"Rockridge News Subscription"*** *on the memo line.* Mail to the address below.

Contacting The Rockridge News

Are there community issues you'd like to see covered in **The Rockridge News**? • Do you have questions about newsletter distribution? • Want to volunteer to be a **Rockridge News** block captain? • Would you like to write a letter to the Editor?

Contact us at one of the following:

Editor: editor@rockridge.org;
www.rockridge.org;
The Rockridge News, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611

Articles submitted for publication may be emailed to the editor or sent to the address above. Submissions are limited to 600 words, must include the author's name, phone number, email address, and city or neighborhood of residence, and are subject to editing. Views expressed in articles accepted for publication do not necessarily reflect those of The Rockridge News, its editor, or the board of directors of the Rockridge Community Planning Council. To reprint a Rockridge News article, contact the editor.

Newsletter Advertising/Deadline

Publication date of the March issue is:
☛ March 2, 2019.
☛ Submission deadline: February 14, 2019.

Advertising rates are $26/column inch. Six month pre-pay rate available. For display ads, call Jo Ellis at 653-3210 (after noon), or email joellis1@hotmail.com. RCPC reserves the right to refuse any display or classified ad it deems inappropriate. (Classified ad contact, page 14.)

RCPC Sets Annual Board Election, Invites New Candidates

The Rockridge Community Planning Council's annual election of board members will be held at the April 18, 2019 Town Hall. Service-minded Rockridge residents are invited to declare their candidacy for a position on the RCPC Board of Directors, if they are 18 years or older and live within RCPC boundaries. (See www.rockridge.org/boundaries.)

RCPC board members promote community projects in Rockridge; help represent Rockridge to the City on matters of zoning and development, traffic and transportation, and public safety; and contribute to strengthening our community.

Tell the Board of your interest: email info@rockridge.org *not later than* **close of business Wednesday, February 27, 2019,** describing your interest in Board membership, your general background, and special interests.

RCPC Land Use Committee

The February Land Use Committee meeting will be held Wednesday, February 27, 7:30 p.m. at the Rockridge Branch Library. The agenda includes an update on the housing study. Check at https://rockridge.org – the RCPC website – to confirm date, time, place.

RCPC Land Use Committee Update – January 2019

Happy New Year! The Land Use Committee met on January 23. A quorum was not present, so no official action was taken. However, the committee members and interested residents present discussed setting priorities for the Committee for 2019.

Topping the list was "bird-dogging" high-profile projects in the Rockridge area. These include:

- Plans for redevelopment and reuse of California College of the Arts' Oakland campus;
- Plans for a redesigned Phase II of Shops at the Ridge;
- Plans for development of the currently vacant lot at College and Claremont.

Beyond that, the Committee hopes to complete the Rockridge Housing Study and present the results to the Rockridge Community for discussion. The Committee also will consult with the Rockridge District Association about possible priorities to help maintain and promote College Avenue's retail corridor.

Committee members present also discussed the presentation on redevelopment of the CCA Oakland campus. The following observations were made:

- It is an open question whether having auto traffic enter and leave the campus on Clifton Street will work without installation of an additional traffic signal.
- Another open question is the extent to which synchronization of the traffic signals along Broadway will avert a major congestion problem once the CCA campus, Shops at the Ridge, and Baxter on Broadway

Land Use Committee, page 15

Kitchen Tour on Tap, from page 1

and craftspeople; and as a truly delightful Rockridge block party writ large.

But the Tour doesn't happen overnight, and it doesn't happen without kitchens to show.

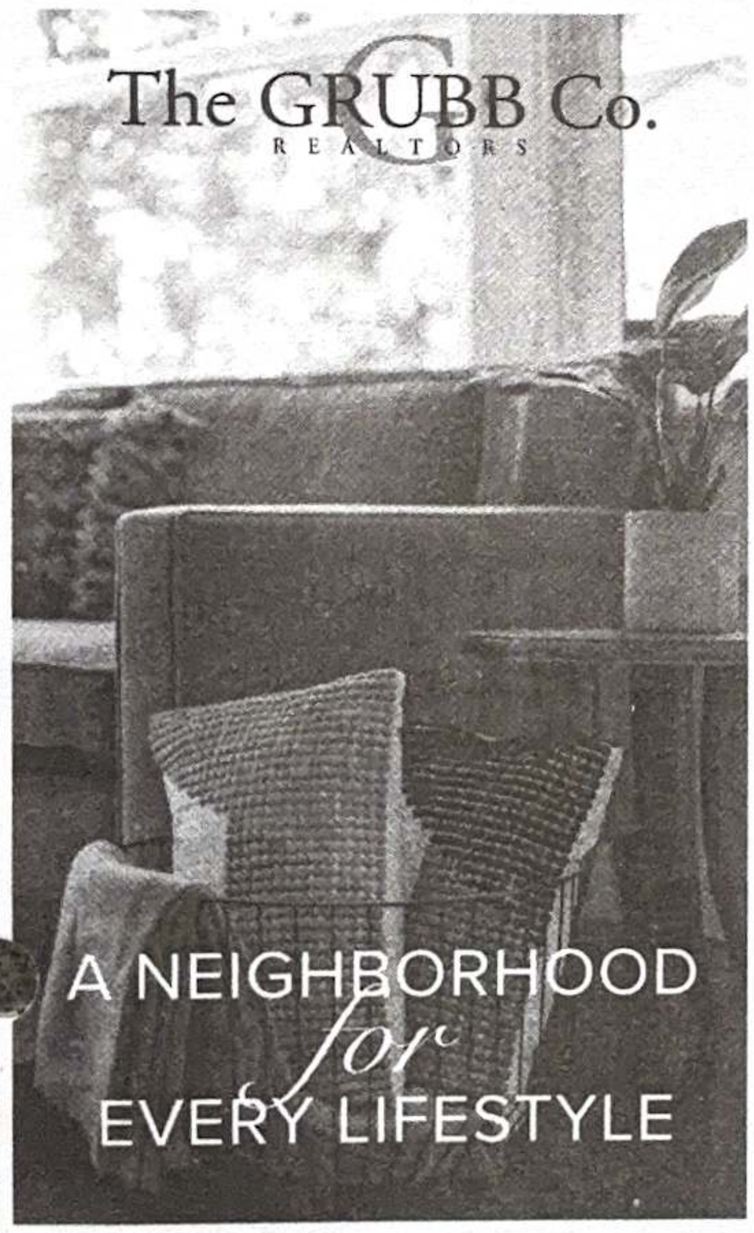
The Tour Committee invites homeowners, architects, designers, and builders to submit kitchens to be considered for the 2019 Tour. A kitchen does not have to be finished to qualify; one kitchen on a previous tour was completed just two weeks before the Tour day. The Committee isn't looking for a single design theme. Kitchens can be large or

Kitchen Tour on Tap, page 14

Behind the Scenes Volunteers: Kitchen Tour Backbone

The Kitchen Tour doesn't happen without volunteers. Currently, the Tour needs the behind-the-scenes committee members who will visit homeowners to check out kitchens; find sponsors; write and send out press releases; order Tour banners and find locations for them; create the Tour Brochure; and perform all the other tasks that make the event run smoothly.

The first planning meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 4. To volunteer as a Kitchen Tour Committee member, sign up at kitchentour@rockridge.org.



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Letters to the Editor

The Rockridge News welcomes posted letters and emails to the editor. Your name, address, phone number, email address and city/neighborhood must be included in either for verification. Only your name will appear with your letter. Letters may be edited for clarity and brevity at the editor's discretion. Views expressed in any letter are the writer's own, and may not necessarily be shared by the editor or by RCPC.

I Support the CCA Project, as Do Many of My Neighbors

Editor:

I attended the RCPC meeting regarding the proposed project at the CCA campus. I, for one, support the project and think that more housing is great for Oakland and this site is an example of a small thing that our very fortunate community of Rockridge can do to help address the housing crisis. And, I am glad I was not alone. While those who oppose the 19-story tower were the most vocal at the meeting, a showing of hands at the end of the meeting showed significant support for the project, as-is. I was heartened by many of my neighbors' passionate support for more housing and a more open and inclusive Rockridge.

— Justin Horner

Consider the Fabric of the City When Approving New Buildings

Editor:

I am NOT in favor of increased housing density; namely, I am NOT in favor of the construction of more market-rate housing erected for the tech workers who, for the most part, do not work in Oakland. I favor only construction of below market rate housing for teachers, writers, artists, and nurses — those people who are, and have been for years, an integral part of our community and who cannot afford to live here any longer. I will fight assiduously against the construction of those hideous condominiums that have popped up all over Oakland. They provide no off-street parking, no trees (which our declining bird population needs and which combat the increased greenhouse gases that have resulted from increased automobile exhaust). Moreover, our city streets are clogged with increased traffic. PLEASE: think about the fabric of our city. We need to keep our teachers, our writers, our artists, our nurses.

— Sharon L. Osmond

My Family Supports the CCA Project

Editor:

I write to express my family's support for the CCA project specifically, and greater density in Rockridge in general. When I shared the original article (complete with misleading renderings) with my family, we had a long discussion about supply and demand, denser cities like Paris, and how some people are opposed to more density in Rockridge because of how our neighborhood "feels." To this last point our 11-year old daughter said simply, "Why do people care more about how a town feels than people having somewhere to live?"

I was born and raised in Rockridge, have owned a house here for 19 years, and our kids have lived in Rockridge their entire lives. Our whole family understands that as much as we love how Rockridge is now, we who are lucky enough to live here should be open to change that will allow this wonderful neighborhood to be shared by more people. We all agreed that taller mixed-use buildings on College and Telegraph Avenues make sense, as do more multi-unit residences throughout Rockridge.

If there is greater supply, there will be less demand. And if apartments like those at the Baxter are not fully occupied, then prices will have to drop as the market corrects itself. This is a good thing!

Finally, in Ms. Lazarro's letter, she implies that apartments like the Baxter and the proposed CCA project will adversely affect Rockridge's "vibrant pedestrian-oriented mixed-use commercial district," "walkable small scale," "being able to shop local for just about everything," and "sustainable pedestrian-oriented values this community was founded on." She doesn't explain how these apartment buildings will negatively impact those things and I can't see how they (or higher density in general) would.

It's time we look at our real values — which I hope include the environment, social justice, and equity, and not just what is most personally and aesthetically pleasing to us individually — in thinking about the future of Rockridge. Yes In My Backyard!

— Star Lightner, 36-year Rockridge resident

Shafter Avenue Roundabouts Are Perplexing

Editor:

Am I the only one perplexed by the new traffic circles on Shafter Avenue? Having lived on Miles Avenue since 1994, I can count the number of times I have had a problem at these intersections, either as a pedestrian, cyclist, or motorist, on zero fingers. That is, until now. Frankly, these intersections are dangerous now in a way they never were before. Try crossing the street while a car careens around the circle: it directs the car right into the cross walk. I've had to skip out of the way more than once. Don't get me wrong, I fully support traffic circles in the right places. Anyone that's driven in Truckee or Kings Beach — or France for that matter — can attest to the efficiency of traffic circles when designed properly. The Shafter Avenue circles are not designed properly, foremost because there isn't enough room for them at these locations. On top of that, the signage on them makes them an eyesore. It's depressing to think of the number of pot holes in Rockridge that could have been filled with the money spent on these circles. So, let's review: (1) the circles make these intersections more dangerous than before; (2) their signage is an eyesore; and (3) they diverted scarce dollars from better uses. If this is government in action, I can see why some people want less of it!

— David Mitchell

Drivers Who Do Not Understand 'Hawk' Signals are a Threat to Pedestrians

Editor:

I am responding to Victoria Eisen's article appearing on page 5 of the December Rockridge News entitled "Look Both Ways Before Crossing."

I have lived on Lawton Avenue since 1989 and use the pedestrian crossing at Lawton and Broadway every day, typically during commute hours. While Ms. Eisen's explanation of drivers' responsibilities with regard to the new HAWK signals at Lawton and Broadway is useful for drivers living in the Rockridge area, my guess is the bulk of drivers up and down Broadway

Letters, page 5

Letters, from page 4

during commute hours are not Rockridge residents but rather folks traveling to or from their jobs.

My experience to date with the HAWK signal is that, despite having the white crossing light, I must, more than half the time, dodge cars continuing through the pedestrian crossing. Many drivers seem to have no clue as to their responsibilities with respect to the HAWK signals. No signage alerts them to this new signal or explains the various signal modes. The much simpler and less costly pedestrian crossing signal at Taft and Broadway seems to be better understood by the average driver.

The other thing routinely ignored at this intersection is the prohibition of left turns from northbound Broadway onto Lawton. The signage is small and located where no driver intending to make this turn will see it.

These problems would seem to be addressable with improved signage. Until then, the best advice in Ms. Eisen's article is captured in the title: Look Both Ways Before Crossing.

— Mike Ingham

Coldecott Project Coordinator Victoria Eisen replies:

I am writing in response to Mr. Ingham's letter regarding the new HAWK signal at Broadway and Lawton Street. Based on multiple complaints by residents who routinely cross Broadway at Lawton on foot, like the writer, the City of Oakland chose to install a HAWK signal due to their proven effectiveness in similar situations in other cities.

Letters, page 14

Happy to Learn About Claremont's Music Program

Editor:

Thank you for publishing the feature article by Judith Berne on Ari Brown, the music teacher at Claremont Middle School. My husband and I are both musicians who live in the neighborhood. It makes me definitely want to consider Claremont as an option for my kids, knowing there's a strong music program happening.

— Becca Burrington

RCPC Committee + Transportation News

- **RCPC's Transportation Committee Re-Launches**
- **AC Transit Public Hearings on Fare Increase Proposal**

With several new projects recently completed or underway, Rockridge residents are noticing changes to local roads and public transportation offerings. RCPC is re-launching its transportation committee to discuss how these issues affect our neighborhood and to make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding transportation. **The first transportation committee meeting of the year takes place Thursday, February 28, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Rockridge Library**. Email transportation@rockridge.org for more information about the committee and its plans. **The meeting is open to the public.**

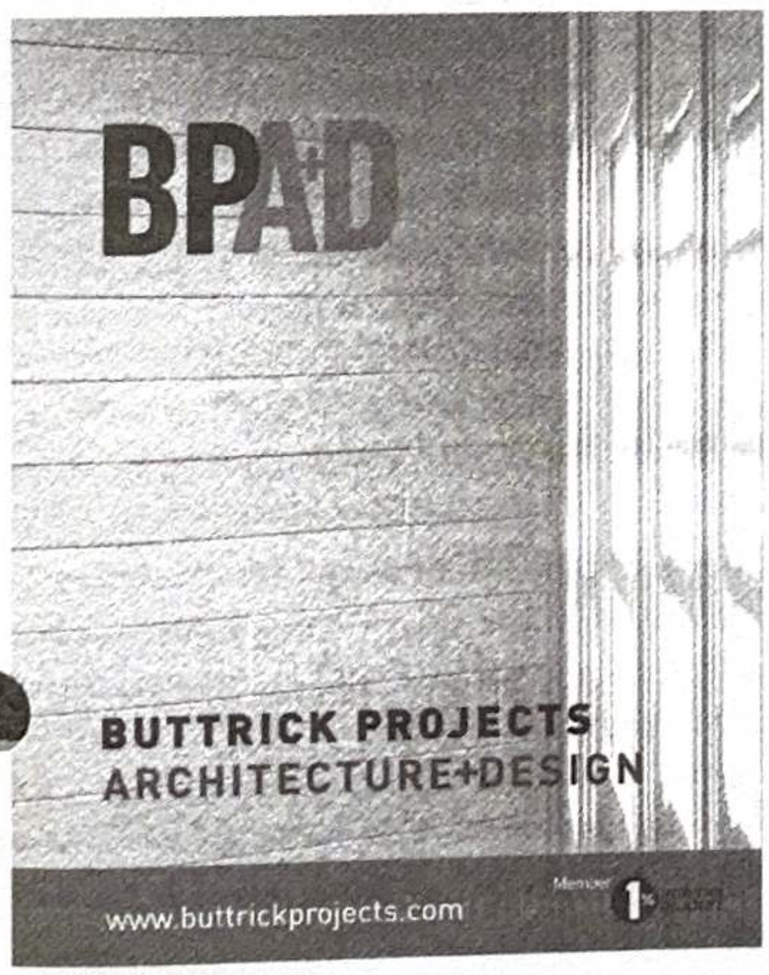
AC transit is proposing to raise fares in phases over the next 5 years until the adult cash fare reaches $3. The transit company is asking for public comment on the plan. Visit http://www.actransit.org/fareproposal/ for more information and/or comment at: http://www.actransit.org/about-us/board-of-directors/.

Save the Date: EARTH DAY at FROG Park: April 20

Spring may feel far away, but the FROG Committee is busy planning activities for the annual Earth Day Cleanup at FROG Park and Greenbelt on Saturday, April 20, 9 a.m.–12 noon. We'll bring the snacks and tools, you bring family and friends, ready to enjoy the morning and give back to our neighborhood park.



The FROG Committee welcomes volunteers and donations as we plan activities for the day. To help with Earth Day plans, contact info@frogpark.org or Fay Gordon at faylgordon@gmail.com, or LeonoraSea@comcast.net. See you in April.



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Peralta School Auction

Coming in March | You Can Help Now

Peralta Elementary School holds its annual auction March 16 at the Humanist Hall in Oakland. The auction helps provide educational necessities such as physical education, music and art classes and a library on school grounds. This year's auction theme is Endless Summer Beach Party, and the whole community is invited to attend. The school is looking for donations of items and services from local businesses to offer at the auction. Your donation would be featured on our auction website, along with information about your business. Oakland's public schools can thrive with the support of their communities! To donate, or for more information, please contact Elena at auction@peraltaschool.org. We are located at 460 63rd Street. Visit: https://www.peraltaschool.org



Mark your calendars!

The 2019 Oakland Technical High School PTSA auction gala, "La Familia de Oakland Tech," will be held Saturday, March 9, at the California Ballroom in Oakland from 6 to 10 p.m.

Like families everywhere, the Tech community is a patchwork quilt of teachers, administrators, parents, students and community members. Tech's auction celebrates the ways the Tech family members are knitted together and how, together, we are strong. Join us for the auction and gala, Tech's biggest fundraiser. We look forward to working together with you to make the auction a great success. Auction questions? Email Elizabeth Falkner and Liz Nakamoto Singer at auction@oaklandtech.com. Thank you for your support.



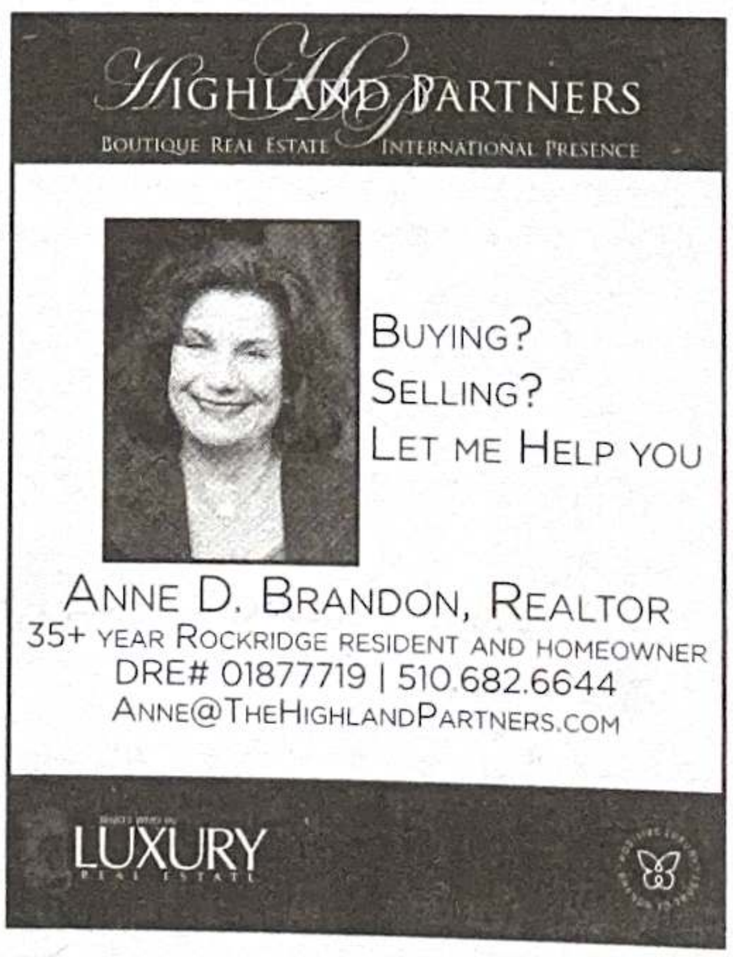
The 2019 Chabot GALA-XY is going to be out of this world! Chabot's annual Spring Auction is the PTA's biggest and most important spring fundraiser.

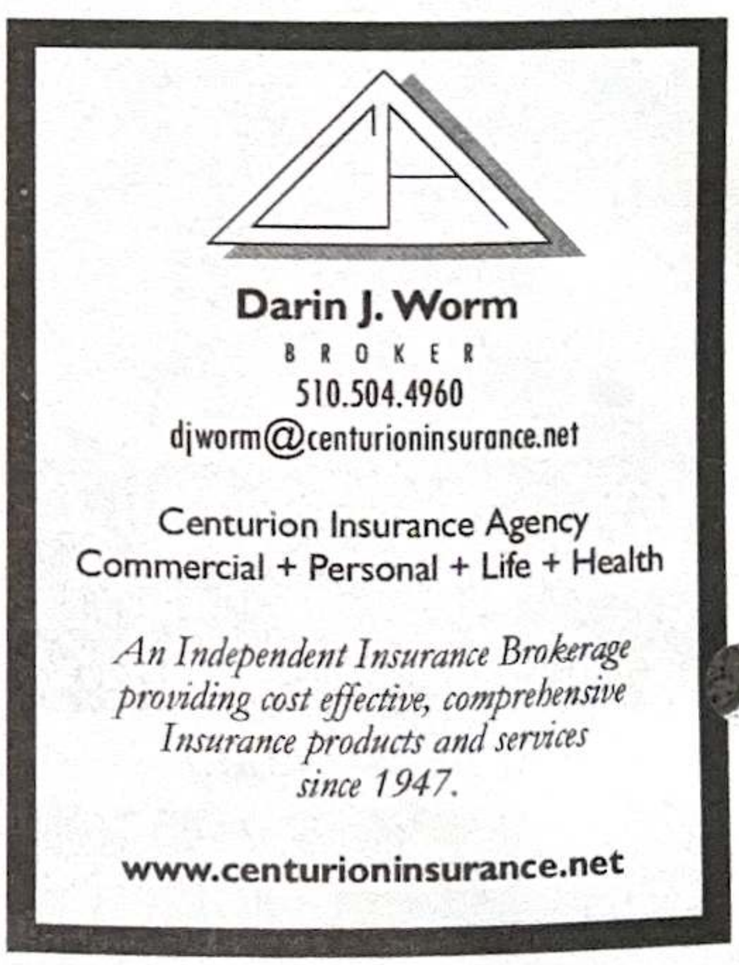
Our goal in 2019 is to raise more than $175,000 to continue supporting our dynamic enrichment programs – music, science, art, technology, library, small group specialists, and Kindergarten Spanish – as well as other vital student services not paid for by OUSD.

The Online Auction will be held from March 6 through March 13 and is open to Chabot families, friends, and neighbors. Through the generous donations of the community, our online auction features food and grocery gift cards, retail and restaurant gift certificates, services, parties, summer camps, and more.

The Spring Gala will be held Saturday, March 16, at the Greek Ascension Community Center, 4700 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland, **from 5:30 to 10:30 p.m.** Guests can mix and mingle, followed by a seated dinner and **Live Auction,** where they can bid on one-of-a-kind cakes to share with their table mates. And, back by popular demand, we will close the night with dancing... DJ Tamara in the house.



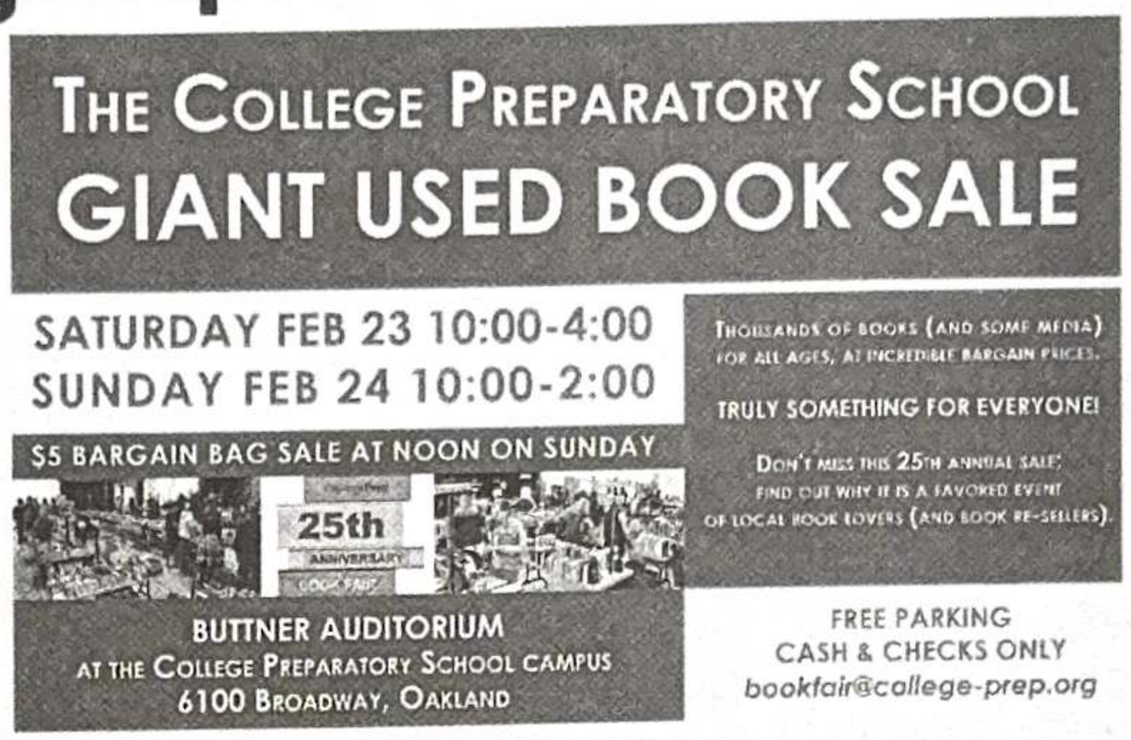








Giant College Prep Used Book Sale



If you are a book lover, don't miss The College Preparatory School's 25th annual used Book Sale Saturday, February 23, and Sunday, February 24. The sale takes place at the school, 6100 Broadway, Oakland, in the Buttner Auditorium. **There is free parking at the school parking lot**. Hours are Sat 10-4, Sun 10-2, with a bargain $5/bag sale at noon on Sunday. Thousands of books offered for children, teens and adults, with many recent and high-quality works, some media (CDs, DVDs, audio books) and all at great prices: $1-2 for paperback, $2-3 for hardcover. A few special or oversized books are priced slightly higher, mysteries even lower.

There is truly something for everyone at this sale: books to entertain, books to inspire, fiction from contemporary to classic, and non-fiction of all genres, sorted by category. Come early for best selection, and return for the bag sale. Don't miss this opportunity to stock up on great reading. Cash and check only – we are unable to process credit cards. For questions contact bookfair@college-prep.org

Improvements Continue at Hardy Dog Park

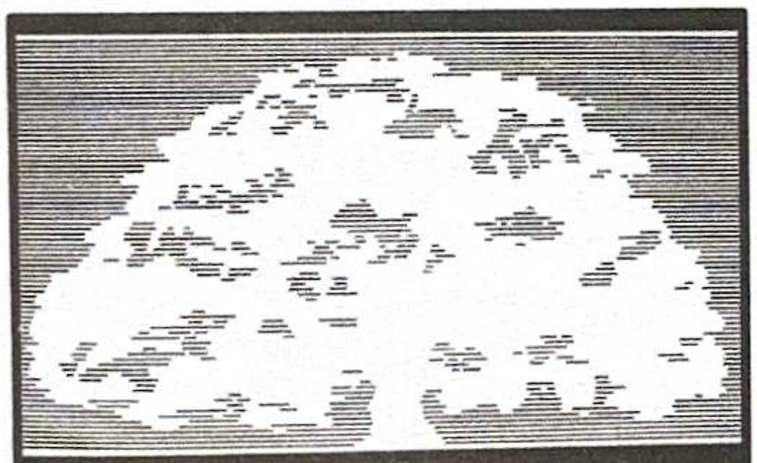
Please join us at Hardy Dog Park to build new benches as the Hardy Dog Park Group continues to make improvements to your dog park. We are installing a better water station platform on February 2 during our monthly clean- up. The new water station has a waterproof platform with a skid-resistant texture that will be safer for our dogs. Thank you to our generous donors who provided the materials for this platform.

We will be having a fun Bench-Building day on March 2. Join us: bring hammers, drills, screwdrivers, and gloves, but please leave your dogs at home, if possible. We have some generously donated wood and will be building several new benches for our dog park users, similar to that pictured at right. All volunteers will be welcome to join in the fun. We will have some extra nails and wood for kids to build with as well.

The Big Build will be simultane- Woof, page 12



Hardy Dog Park volunteers successfully test our prototype bench.



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Eyes on Rockridge

'You Don't Take Over From My Dad' -- Still Working and Active at Age 97

by Judith Doner Berne

He said he's slowing down. But Victor Silva, who turned 97 on New Year's Eve, still works, gardens, cooks, walks, drives and takes an active part in the lives of his close-knit and mostly close-by family.

His grandson and his family live "just down the street" from his home, which he built in Lower Rockridge in 1981 but didn't occupy until about 12 years ago. Daughter Elena, a retired therapist, lives in Upper Rockridge. A son and another grandson live in side-by-side houses he built (and used to live in) in Lafayette. And his granddaughter, who lives with her family in a suburb of Los Angeles, calls him every day. "My parents were really close to my three kids," Elena told me. "He's been a great dad, a great grandfather."

Silva, who, as you can see from the photographs on page 9, looks years younger. He says, "Oh, I don't know," when asked about his long and full life. "I guess it is moderation and exercise. I just try to eat nicely. I can cook anything."

"My mother made sure we all learned to cook," the West Oakland born and raised Silva says of himself, his five brothers and two sisters. He was 12 when his dad died and "We all had to hustle." So, they sold newspapers on the streets of downtown Oakland.

"He's a real product of the depression," Elena said. She relayed the story of when an older brother, who had the "hot downtown corner" for selling papers, was promoted, her dad expected to inherit that corner. When he didn't, "he was so upset he just sat right down on the curb and cried. When he finally looked up, he said he saw more money than he had ever seen" as, even in hard times, Oaklanders opened their wallets to a sobbing child.

A graduate of and football star at McClymonds High School, Silva said his mom made him turn down the college scholarships he was offered because she needed him to help support the family. So he apprenticed as an ornamental plasterer, working on the Chapel of the Chimes, then studied to become a welder. Looking back, "I was making 50 cents an hour. I'd give $10 a week to my mother and I'd have $10. I don't know how I did it."

He met his late wife, Dorothy, a Castlemont High graduate, at Sweet's Ballroom, a "go-to-venue in downtown Oakland during the Big Band era of WWII," according to Wikipedia. "I saw that girl on the dance floor. I just 'knew' her," Silva said. They were married for 70 years and she always called him "Honey." His first grandchild picked it up and it caught on because "Honey, that's who he is," Elena said. His wife's wish before she died six years ago was for him to go back to dancing so he wouldn't be as lonely without her. "So I went to the senior center and did ballroom dancing five days a week," Silva said. "It was fun."

ALL PHOTOS: JUDITH DONER BERNE

He served in the Navy during World War II, stationed at the Naval Air Station in Alameda. "During the war years I got my real estate broker's license and I was building on the side," he said. After his discharge, he became a general contractor and studied law for a time.

Besides constructing his current home, the two Lafayette houses and other buildings which he has since sold, Silva built, owns and manages the two-story retail/office building at 5332 College Avenue. You might know it, because it houses the i do Bridal Boutique and the Gold Star Beauty Lounge on its first floor plus professional offices upstairs.

Rockridge therapist Lauren Field is one of his tenants. "I went to graduate school with Elena," she emailed me. "When we completed our master's degrees, Elena suggested we build the office space Vic had available into a counseling center. Together we offered low-fee therapy to those who could not otherwise afford it.

"Vic has been my landlord since 1989 or so," Field said, "and I am very fond of him. I still offer low-fee therapy (I charge from $30 to $100) for my services, but it is Vic to whom I owe this ability; his rent is very reasonable. If he charged more, I couldn't do it."

Working and Active, page 9

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MARVIN GARDENS REAL ESTATE



Working and Active, from page 9

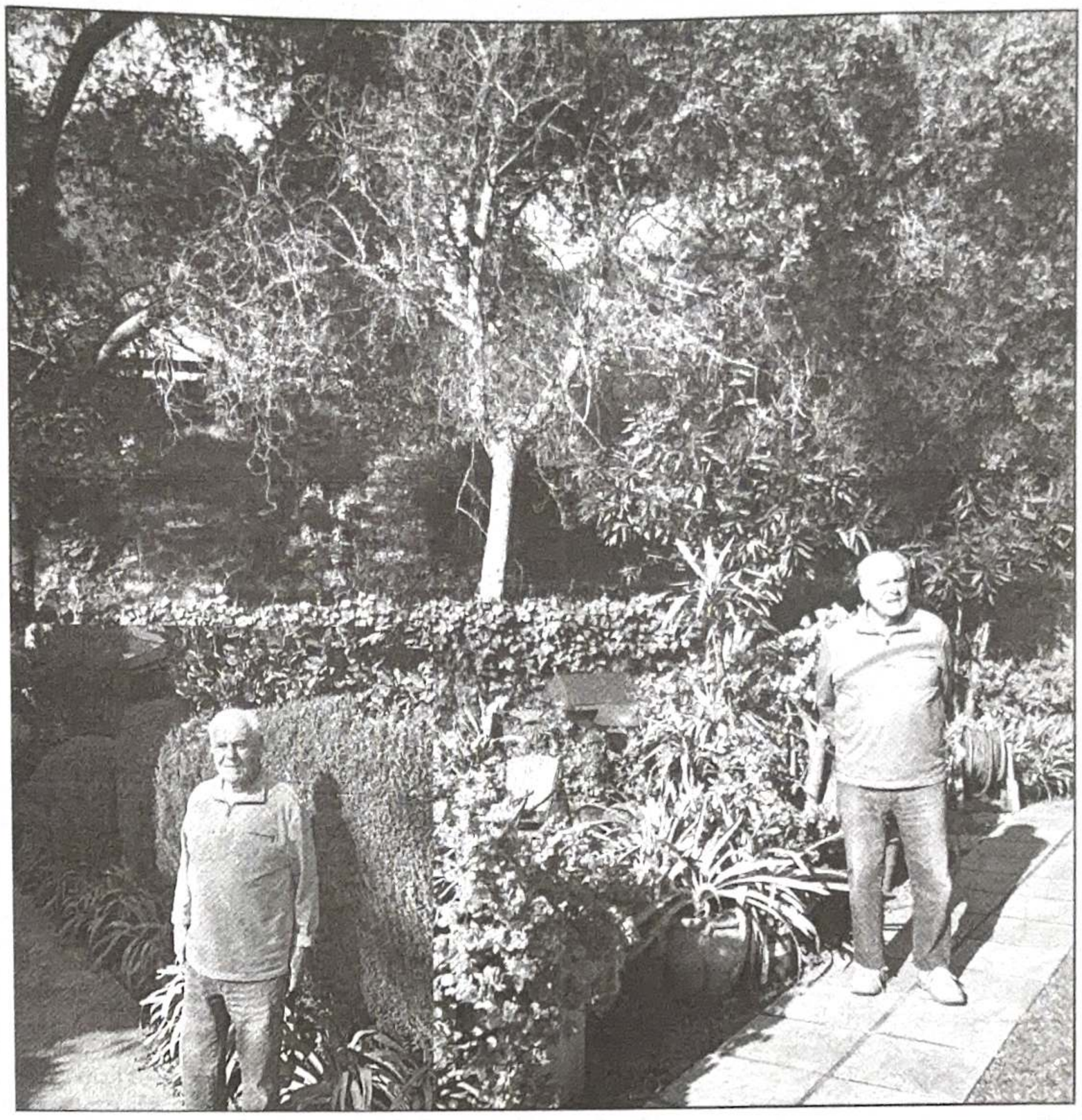
Silva also continues to oversee the six-unit apartments he built on Clifton and his 12-unit building on Ashby in Berkeley. "You don't take over from my dad," Elena said. He's proud that "Everything I own today, I never had a loan on."

An avid athlete, he played baseball, tennis, handball and racquet ball over the years and still tries to take a walk every day. But what seems to sustain him now, in addition to his family, is cooking and gardening.

"I like to cook. I've been cooking all my life," Silva said. Two of his specialties are chicken cacciatore and pot au feu," Elena told me, and he once cooked for a Mexican restaurant she ran in Lafayette. "Now," she bemoaned, "He cooks too much. At any given moment he could feed an army." His choices when he eats out are the ethnic restaurants in East Oakland and in Oakland's China-town. Within Rockridge, he likes Becky's "because I don't cook Chinese."

Since his wife's death, Silva turned the living room of his house into an office, his desk up against the front window where he can look out on one of his gardens which, as a Master Gardener, he has knowledgeably planted and propagated.

Indeed, you can see hundreds of plants growing in a series of gardens that run front, side and back of his house, including an entire wall of rosemary. The gardens, plus a greenhouse and a tool shed, sit on his 5,725-foot lot. "You never completely learn gardening," he said. "There's just so much to know."



After stints living in Montclair and Lafayette, Silva said he was glad to get back to the diversity that marks urban Oakland. "I like Oakland. It's mixed." And, "I love this house."

To comment on this column and/or suggest ideas for future columns about Rockridge people and neighborhoods, please email judyberne@att.net.

"You never completely learn gardening," says 97-year-old Victor Silva, above, a Master Gardener since 1985.

Silva is proud of the plants he has planted and propagated, including this wall of rosemary, at left.



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Rockridge Market is Holding Steady

Closing date	BR	BA	Address	Original price	List price	DOM	Selling price
1/05/2019	3	2	5359 Broadway	$995,000	$995,000	33	$890,000
1/11/2019	3	2.5	5646 Oak Grove Ave	$1,295,000	$1,295,000	12	$1,600,000

Homes sold this January closed 9% over the asking price on average.
There is currently a 30 day supply of inventory in Rockridge.
The Average price per square foot is $687.91.

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January Meeting and Town Hall

from page 1

of the 4-acre campus to the public for park use; and building between 500 and 600 new residential units. They promised to return later with more details.

In September 2018, the development team previewed those details to the RCPC Land Use Committee, which provided feedback. A follow-up Town Hall planned for November was delayed due to poor air quality caused by the Camp Fire east of Chico. It was delayed again in December by a scheduling conflict.

Plans presented at the January Town Hall fleshed out the earlier designs shown at the 2017 presentation. New specifics included a 19-story residential tower near the northern end of the campus – on the other side of the new park area from the historic Treadwell Mansion. Other added details include: the total number of residential units (589); the number of affordable units (35); the amount of affordable artist studio/live-work space (24,500 sq.ft.); the size of the park (1.5 acres); the amount of off-street parking spaces (374-449); the amount of bike parking (590 spaces); the height of perimeter buildings (65-85 ft); and the height of the tower (190 ft.).

The developers explained that a lot of market-rate housing was needed to offset the costs of preserving the historic buildings; providing the public open space; below market-rate artist housing and office space for local nonprofits; as well as other proposed public amenities. The only way to fit all that housing on the site was a high-rise structure. They noted they had yet to submit a development application. Once submitted, the project would require a general plan amendment and rezoning, and a full environmental impact report (EIR) to evaluate the project's visual, traffic, and other effects. The public approval process would take two to three years with many opportunities for public input. The next formal opportunity for public participation will be in determining the scope of the EIR. The City's Planning and Building Department ought to announce when that scoping process starts, but the department's web page is under construction and unavailable. Call the Department (238-3941) to get more info. The developers do not expect actual occupancy until 2024, and acknowledged that changed conditions between now and then might result in changed plans.

A half-hour of audience questions followed, from technical questions about the project design and architecture to queries about traffic and parking issues, which Mr. Babsin said would be addressed in the project EIR.

The 10 minutes before the meeting's 9 p.m. close were devoted to getting a general sense of where the audience was from (the majority lived within 1/2 mile of the campus); how they felt about the project (divergent views from strong support to strong opposition); followed by rapid-fire short comments which spanned a wide range. A comment on the need for more housing drew applause, as did a comment on the need to focus on affordability. A representative of Councilmember Dan Kalb's office said Kalb had not taken a position on the project, but he hoped to see more affordable housing than now proposed.

Video of the program is posted on RCPC's YouTube channel, along with a short presentation on a technical RCPC bylaw amendment voted on at the meeting. Find the videos at https://tinyurl.com/y9gbo85o.

Find the developer's project website at https://tinyurl.com/yaszqdmc.

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CCA Proposed Plans

from page 1

and engage with one another, much like a Temescal Alley or First Fridays."

The redevelopment vision – which honors and recreates the historic setting – is centered upon 1.5 acres of community open space and offers a host of on-site public amenities, including communal gathering spots, a sculpture garden, a green commons and a pedestrian promenade culminating in an overlook offering panoramic views of downtown Oakland, the Golden Gate Bridge and everything in between.

Inspired by Mayor Libby Schaaf's Spring 2016 White Paper on the affordability crisis facing Oakland artists as they struggle to remain in their homes and their workspaces, Strategies for Protecting and Creating Arts & Culture Space in Oakland, as well as the 100+-year legacy of arts education on the site, the development proposal seeks to support Oakland's artist community through deeply affordable homes reserved for artists, affordable workspaces for artists and affordable office space for nonprofit arts organizations. The project creates an opportunity for an Arts Walk along Clifton Street, in addition to a public sculpture garden in the re-established historic sett ing.

Under the proposal, a freshman student dorm would be converted into 35 permanently and deeply affordable homes for artists, arts space would welcome visitors to the site and line the streets at the intersection of Broadway and Clifton, and a National Historic Register Victorian mansion would be repurposed into affordable office space for arts nonprofits, much like Preservation Park.

As a prime example of transit-oriented development, the project also leverages the region's investment in its transit infrastructure. The site is located only .6 miles from the Rockridge BART station, a 12-minute walk or a brief bus ride away. Frequent buses along Broadway and College Avenue also provide excellent access to downtown, across the East Bay and to San Francisco.

Emerald Fund and ECB have shared the proposed vision with numerous community stakeholder groups through a series of meetings over the past year and a half and recently submitted a pre-application filing to the City of Oakland Bureau of Planning to begin the entitlement and environmental review process. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is anticipated, and the preparation of studies underlying the EIR will occur over the next 18 months. The project entitlements will likely include an amendment to the General Plan, a new zoning classification and new height limits. Public hearings for approval of the project are anticipated to occur in late 2020.

Emerald Fund and ECB have a project website to provide interested individuals with up-to-date information: 5212Broadway.com

Proposed Project – 5212 Broadway, Oakland

- Total size of site – 4 acres
- Publicly accessible community gathering space – 1.5 acres
- Market-rate homes – 554
- Deeply affordable homes for artists – 35
- Affordable office space for arts nonprofits – 6,300 SF
- Affordable art space/live-work space – over 24,000 SF
- Three significant historic buildings and a grand historic staircase renovated
- Garage parking spaces – .64 to .76 spaces per unit
- Bike parking spaces – 590
- Four perimeter residential buildings – 6 to 8 stories
- One taller residential building – 19 stories.

About Equity Community Builders (ECB): ECB has over 20 years of experience in the adaptive reuse of historic buildings and

CCA Proposed Plans, page 13

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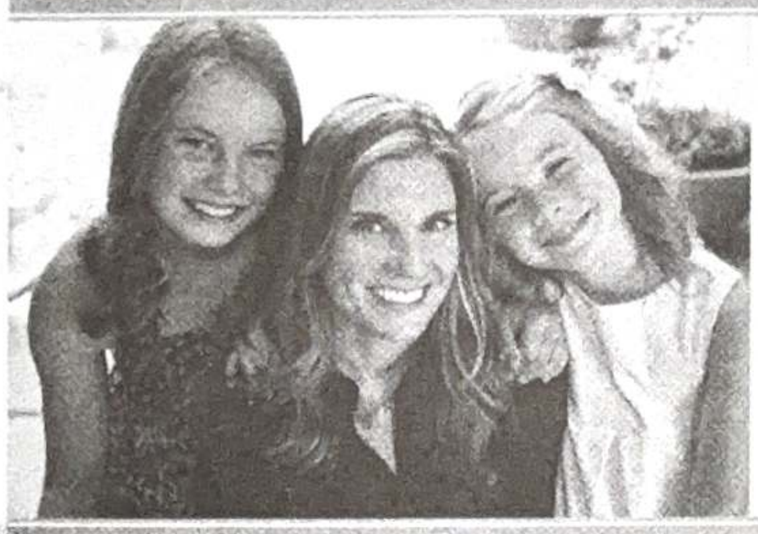
from page 7

Hardy Dog Park

ous with our monthly clean-up, starting at 9 a.m. March 2. We will be building and cleaning rain or shine, so please come join the fun. And, as always, we can use your clean newspaper bag donations at our park. Please do not bring bags that had food in them as the used food bags bring rodents and we want our park to stay clean and healthy. Questions?

Email HardyDogPark@yahoo.com

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CCA Proposed Plans

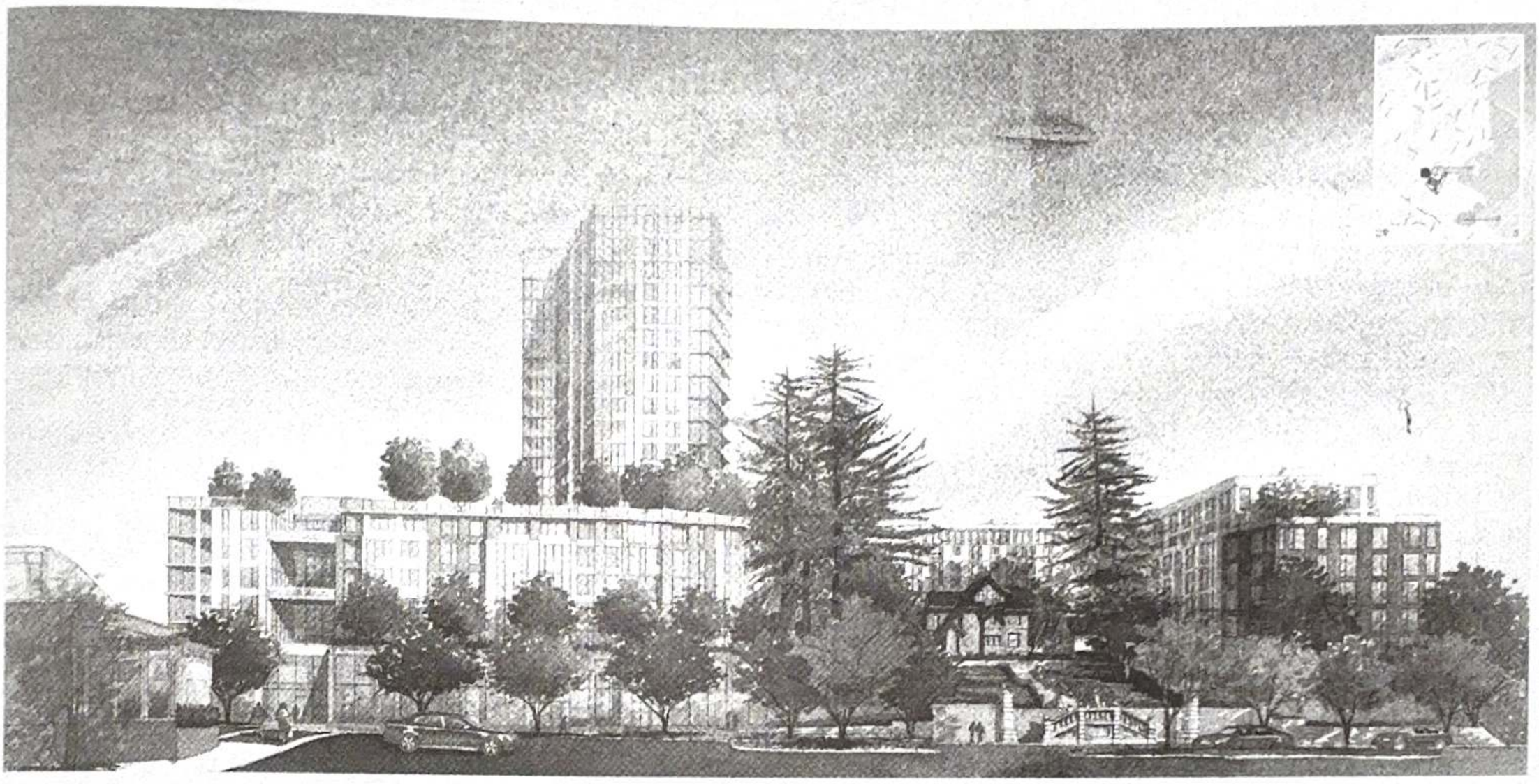
from page 11

cultural landscapes, working primarily with nonprofits to help them develop one-of-a-kind facilities.

ECB is the proud developer of Girls Inc. of Alameda County's Oakland headquarters and has a successful history of working with CCA.

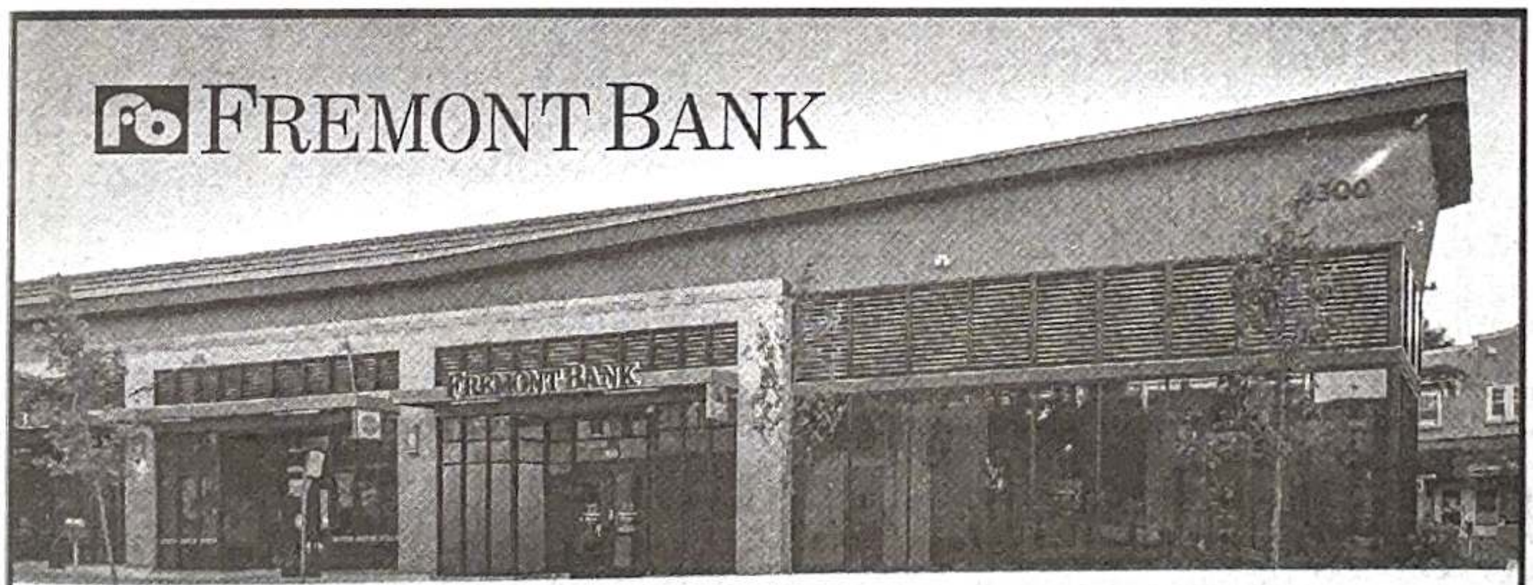
About Emerald Fund: Emerald Fund has 40 years of experience working in established communities to create mixed-use housing that is transit-oriented, fits the neighborhood context and provides significant community benefits. In Oakland, Emerald Fund has worked on the West Oakland Urban Farm and Park, The Ellington in Jack London Square and The Essex on Lake Merritt. Emerald Fund is known to hold and operate the apartment buildings they develop for many years. Emerald currently owns and manages over 1,600 apartments.

COLLEGE & BROADWAY



The proposed redevelopment offers 1.5 acres of public space coupled with market rate and permanently affordable artist housing.

Editor's Note: This article and graphic were written and supplied by Equity Community Builders and Emerald Fund. Neither has been edited or revised by The Rockridge News or by the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC).



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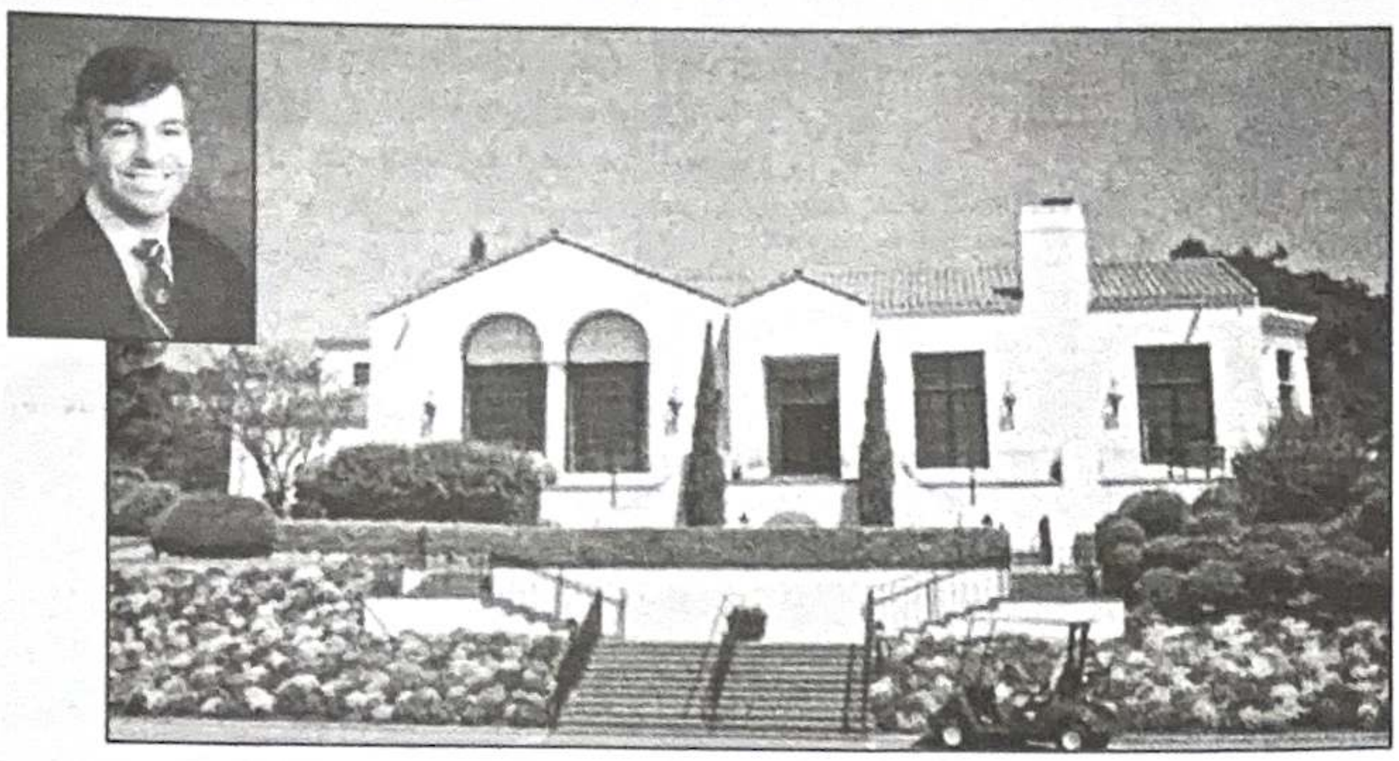
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Sequoyah Country Club
4550 Heafey Road, Oakland

Oakland's historic 105-year-old Sequoyah Country Club has elected technology business owner Steve Hart, photo above, as President, and named three other new Directors. Hart, a Rockridge district resident, succeeds Oakland attorney David Stein who helped oversee completion of major enhancements to Sequoyah. A member of the Club since 2011, Hart was deeply involved in the completion of the most sweeping enhancements to the Club in the past two decades. Working with various committees, Hart brought a technological focus to projects, increased membership and revamped Club services.

As a freshman at the University of California at Berkeley, Hart launched Advantage Microsystems, a Bay Area information security service. *From material submitted by Jim Zelinski.*

Letters

from page 5

A 2010 study in Tucson, Arizona, found the before-after evaluation results were as follows (both statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level):

- 29 percent reduction in total crashes
- 69 percent reduction in crashes involving pedestrians

(See https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/10045/.)

More recently, a 2017 study of two cities with numerous HAWKs – Austin, Texas and Tucson, Arizona – showed 96 percent of drivers yielded to pedestrians in the crosswalk when the HAWK was activated. Pedestrian compliance was similarly high with 70 percent crossing during the drivers' steady red. The authors concluded these signals improve safety at unsignalized crossings, like Broadway/Lawton used to be. (See https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/publicroads/17janfeb/02.cfm.) Oakland now has five active HAWK signals throughout the city. As that number grows, city staff expect driver familiarity and compliance to increase.

— Victoria Eisen, Consulting Caldecott Project Coordinator Department of Transportation City of Oakland

Kitchen Tour on Tap

from page 3

small (or very small like the 41-square-foot gem on the 2017 Tour), rustic or high-tech, Mid-Century Modern or Post-modern, open-plan or separated. You get the idea; the Tour is always eclectic with something for every budget and taste. Tour guests come to admire and to be inspired by Rockridge's beautiful kitchens, and to meet the professionals whose artistry, design genius, and craftsmanship produce the amazing results.

Past tours have also included one whole-house tour. If you find the idea of displaying all of the great facets of living in your home as well as your kitchen intriguing, please let the Committee know. Previous houses have ranged from historic properties to up-to-the minute sustainable green designs.

The Tour Committee is accepting submissions through March 1, 2019, at kitchentour@rockridge.org. Works in progress are most welcome, although the project should be expected to be completed by the beginning of September at the absolute latest.

RN classifieds

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Your 36-word message is $22. (Phone number counts as one word.) **Make check payable to RCPC** and write **Rockridge News Classified Ad** on the memo line. Mail to: **RN Classifieds**, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611. ***The classified ad March issue deadline is February 14. The March issue*** *will be out* ***March 2.*** *For information: Email Susan Montauk via smontauk@gmail.com*

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Email Rockridge News Community Calendar items to: joellis1@hotmail.com, phone 653-3210 (after noon), or mail to: Rockridge News Community Calendar, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611. Deadline is the next to the last Tuesday of the month. **Compiled by Jo Ellis**

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

FOR CHILDREN

- **Family Story Time**: Stories/songs/rhymes (for all ages); Saturdays, 10:30am.
- **Toddler Story Time**: Songs, active rhymes and stories (for 9 months to 2 years), Thursdays, 10:30am, upstairs.
- **Pre-School Story Time**: Read-alouds, songs, and rhymes (ages 2 to 5); Thursdays, 10:30am.

All story times followed by Play Time; parents and caregivers invited.

SPECIAL EVENTS: all ages welcome.

- **Stretching for Caregivers:** bring your children to **free** basic stretching session for adults. Wednesdays, 10:10am.
- **Chess Club:** learn the basics; **Instruction and chess sets provided. Best for ages 8 to 12.** Wednesdays, 3:30-4:30pm.
- **Mix It Up Family Game Night:** Bring your favorite game or try one of ours. Every Tues 6:30-7:45pm (except for Family Craft Night).
- **Family Craft Night: Usually 2nd Tues (closed 2/12), 6:30-7:45pm. Make Valentines on 2/5.**

FOR TEENS

- **Rockridge Teen Advisory Board (ages 14-18):** Help advise the library how to better serve teens; **get community service credit for school.** 2nd Sat. each month, 1 to 2pm.
- **Teen 'Scape Program**: Play video games and make craft; every Tues, Thurs, and Fri, 3:30 - 5pm; Wed, 1:30 - 5pm (during school days).
- **Study Room Hours**: High school tutor available for homework help. Tues, and Thurs 4 - 5pm; Wed, 2:45 - 4pm (during school days).
- **Decorate Stress Balls:** with different faces, 2/6, 2pm.
- **Book Page Roses:** make paper roses using old book pages: 2/13, 2pm.
- **Peer Circle, A Healing Space for Youth:** series of youth-led Restorative Justice (RJ) circles about relationships, racism, social justice, and more. Safe space provides young people an opportunity to engage in community building and to learn skills to become RJ leaders in their community. Age 11 and up. (Gift cards available for participation). Second Wednesdays, 4 – 5 pm.

FOR ADULTS

- ***** eBook Help**: Work one-on-one with a librarian to download eBooks. Fridays, 2 -3:30pm. Make appt. online or call 597-5017.
- **What's New In Breast Cancer Research:** Alta Bates Summit Medical Center presents updates on major advances in research, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer. **Call to register: 510-204-5656.**
- **AARP Smart Driver Class** (for ages 50+): refresh driving skills; learn new research-based driving strategies. Classes on Saturdays, March 23 & 30, 10:30am-3pm but **space limited. Sign-ups start Feb 1.** Call 597-5017 or visit the library to register.
- **Second Saturday Book Club:** 2nd Sat each month, 3 - 4pm. Phone for details and book selection: 597-5017.
- **Writers Support/Critique Group**: Bring 15 copies of up to 5 pgs. of any prose for on-site reading/discussion (OK to come empty-handed). 3rd Sat. each month,1 to 5pm; wheelchair-accessible. Info: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com.
- **Lawyer in the Library:** Free legal info and referral. 1st Tues each month; 6pm-8pm. Sign-up for lottery starting 5pm; lottery at 5:45 pm.
- **Knitting Meet-Up**: Third Sat. each month, 3pm. Bring your knit and crochet project; **all levels**.

UPSTAIRS ART GALLERY

Feb: Alex Hauptman: Grids – Photography.

Library Hours
Tues, 12:30 to 8pm.
Wed, Thurs & Sat: 10am to 5:30pm.
Fri, 12 to 5:30pm.
Closed: Sun and Mon; also, Tues, 2/12 & 2/19.

East Bay Booksellers Book/Poetry Readings

FREE and open to the public.

- Thurs, 2/7, 7pm. **Esmé Weijun Wang:** *The Collected Schizophrenias: Essays.* In conversation with **Caille Milner.**
- Sun, 2/10, 3pm. **Poetry Flash**. Poets from Kelsay Books/Aldritch press: **Rachel Dacus, Carol Lynn Stevenson Grellas, Eileen Malone, Kathleen McClung, Lenore Weiss** and **Andrena Zawinski**.
- Wed, 2/13, 6:30pm. **Freud's Bar** (talks by local Bay Area psychoanalysts/psychologists, aimed at students ages 16-25, while enjoying drinks and snacks). Mtg topic: All the Jazz: The Therapy in Music, The Music in Therapy. Presenter: **Henry Markman, MD.**
- Tues,2/19, 7pm. **Sandy Allen:** *A Kind of Mirraculas Paradise: A True Story About Schizophrenia.* In conversation with **Rahawa Haile.**
- Tue, 2/26, 7pm. **Mikhail Iossel**: *Notes From Cyberground: Trumpland and My Old Soviet Feeling.* In conversation with local author/poet **Matthew Zapruder**.

East Bay Booksellers, 5433 College Ave. More info abt. the authors, books and other events: 653-9965 or info@ebbooksellers.com.

Volunteer at Chabot Space & Science Center

Help families learn science through interactive and hands-on science demonstrations. **RSVP for Volunteer Orientation: Sat, Feb 9, 10am to 12:30pm.** Volunteers work 8 hours per month (two shifts) to greet visitors, share the activity schedules, work registration, and usher people to theater seats, exhibits and telescopes. For more information and to RSVP for orientation: www.chabotspace.org/adult-volunteers.htm or volunteers@chabotspace.org.

North Oakland Senior Center

5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way

Mon. – Fri., 9am to 4:30pm. **Programs include:** Arts/crafts; health counseling; dancing and exercise; trips, tours and theater outings; Alzheimer's support groups, computer classes/more.

- **Free AARP Tax Preparation:** Thursdays, by appointment, beginning Feb 7. Call 597-5085 to schedule appointment.
- **Thunder Valley Fun Bus:** $35 fun(d) raiser for the Sr. Center on March 14. Treats and games on a deluxe bus. **Reserve space now (in person: cash or chk.).**

Seniors age 55+ join for $12 annual dues to get discount and other benefits. Receive "The North Oakland Senior Times" for full schedule of classes/events, lunch menus, and volunteer opportunities. More info at 597-5085.

Temescal Farmers' Market

Open Sundays, 9am to 1pm (all year). Sample the goods; meet the growers. **Live music. Bring reusable bags.** 5300 Claremont Ave. (off Telegraph) at DMV parking lot.

Land Use Committee

from page 3

are fully built and occupied.

■ It's unclear to what extent the proposed semi-public (privately owned but open to the public) open space on the campus will be a popular community amenity, as opposed to an amenity primarily benefiting the development's residents.

■ Also unclear is how successful the proposed Clifton Street "Art Walk" will be in establishing a vital artists' community when it is far removed from other Oakland foci of arts activity.

■ Concern was expressed on shadowing effects of the 19-story building, especially as it might affect nearby roof-top solar installations, and the question of the project's energy use. (After 2020, new residences will be required to have zero net CO2 emissions.)

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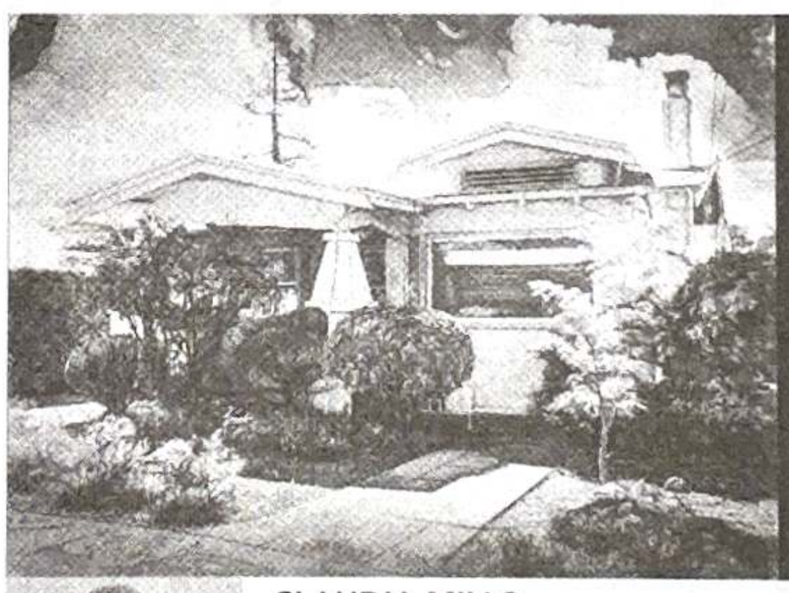
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