THE Rockridge News
www.rockridge.org
VOL 38 • NO. 4 • ISSUE NO. 407 • APRIL 7, 2023 CIRCULATION: 5,800 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES
Sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) • 4900 Shattuck Ave., PO Box 22504, Oakland 94609

How to Build Affordable Housing in Rockridge?

Nuts and Bolts discussed at RCPC's Town Hall in March

by Casey Farmer, Chair, RCPC Board of Directors

Nearly 70 residents gathered for a Town Hall on the topic of affordable housing in Rockridge on Tuesday, March 14. This topic was chosen due to the many questions about how to build affordable housing in a high-resource area like Rockridge, especially on the few large and vacant available parcels.

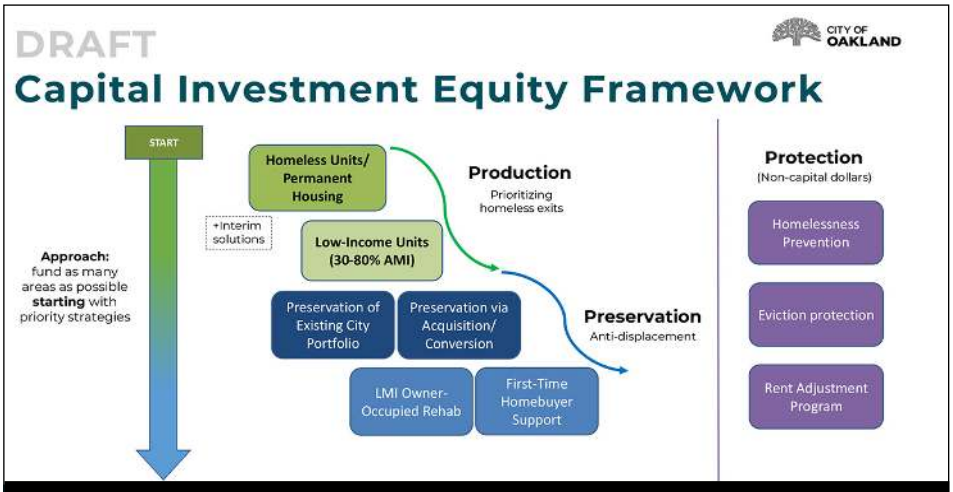
Commencing the event, City of Oakland Housing and Community Development Senior Advisor **Chris Norman** gave an overview of the City's efforts to build and invest in affordable housing.

Rick Jacobus, principal at Street Level Advisors (a consulting firm that provides economic analysis to municipalities and local agencies, including BART) provided a high-level overview of the costs, financing mechanisms, and risks of building a housing project. He has co-developed a free online calculator tool that enables any member of the public to assess housing development costs, in which they can include affordable units, add or subtract units, adjust parking amounts, and much more: https://calc.inclusionaryhousing.org/ihc/.

"Some communities appear to have set affordable housing requirements too high as a way to prevent development of market-rate housing — this only makes the housing challenge facing low-income people worse," said Jacobus.

Who invests in market-rate housing projects? It may be your very own pension plan. CalPERS, CalSTRS, and many other retirement funds regularly invest in housing development projects. Who invests in affordable housing projects? We do. The generous voters and taxpayers of Alameda County and Oakland currently fund Measure A1 and Measure U

March Town Hall, see next page



This slide reflects the City of Oakland's investment approach to affordable housing. It models best practices and the Association of Bay Area Government's three-pronged approach to address the housing crisis: Production, Preservation, and Protection.

Presented by Emily Weinstein, Deputy Director, City of Oakland's Department of Housing and Community Development.

April RCPC Election Uncontested

by Ben Friedman, RCPC Board Member and Election Officer

The Rockridge Community Planning Council's 2023 election is uncontested: six residents, including five incumbent directors, applied to fill six vacancies. All six applicants were verified as residing within RCPC boundaries, and, accordingly, have qualified as nominees. They are: **Mark Aaronson, Louisa Bukiet, Star Lightner, Ken Rich, Zac Unger**, and **Tom Lollini**.

As authorized under the bylaws in the case of an uncontested election, the Board has cancelled further election proceedings, as well as the annual meeting ordinarily scheduled for the third Thursday in April. On April 22 all nominees will commence their terms as newly elected directors. Brief bios of the six newly elected directors will appear in the May edition of the *Rockridge News*, as is customary.

The board expresses its gratitude to all those who were interested in running for election and those who put forward nominations for new board members. The next election will occur in the spring of 2024, at which time all interested residents will again be encouraged to run for the board. Rockridge needs you!

For more, information, email election@rockridge.org. ■

RCPC

March Town Hall

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(successor to Measure KK), which fund affordable housing units. Additionally, some portions of State and Federal taxes are used for affordable housing. Oakland also levies "Impact Fees" which are a subsidy from market rate developers into our Affordable Housing Trust Fund.



Jeff Levin, Policy Director for East Bay Housing Organizations, explained the two ways to make housing affordable: through rent subsidies (such as Section 8 vouchers) or through capital subsidies (a grant to pay the costs of building affordable housing, such as the Low Income Tax Credit Program).

"There is a tremendous gap between housing being built at market-rate versus what we are producing in affordable housing," said Levin. He noted that in 2012, the State Legislature ended Redevelopment which had previously invested $1 billion per year in affordable housing. One way the City of Oakland responded to that loss was by imposing "Impact Fees" on market-rate housing construction that help fund affordable housing projects and that have generated $80 million since their inception in 2016.

Ben Metcalf, Managing Director of U.C. Berkeley's Terner Center for Housing Innovation, spoke about legislative changes that have impacted housing in California. Metcalf noted that since 2016, nearly 100 State laws pertaining to housing have been passed and signed. He detailed the three categories of changes to the State's housing laws:

Planning and Zoning Enforcement

• Cities are required to zone for many more housing units. • Requiring affordable housing to be distributed throughout cities, not concentrated in low-income neighborhoods but also mixed into "high-resource neighborhoods" like Rockridge. • New enforcement authority to penalize municipalities which are not in compliance, such as proposing infeasible housing sites. • Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU), also referred to as granny units or backyard cottages. These units must now be easily approved by each City's Building Department, ADU permitting has grown significantly throughout the state, from 2,100 units in 2016 to 21,000 units in 2021.

Entitlement Streamlining

• Making permit processses for housing move faster if projects adhere to the existing zoning, such as by limiting the number of public hearings.

Metcalf highlighted the State's success in growing the number of affordable units constructed each year (doubled since 2016 to ~20,000 units per year despite increased land, material, and labor costs). This growth is due to increased State and Federal investment in affordable housing and changes in State law to permit higher-density affordable housing projects. However, there are still many more families who qualify for affordable housing than units available.

March Town Hall, see next page

THE RockridgeNews

The Rockridge News was founded in March 1986 by **Don Kinkead** and is published monthly (except August). It 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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Are there community issues you'd like to see covered in the *Rockridge News*? Have questions about newsletter distribution? Want to volunteer to be a *Rockridge News* block captain? Want to write a letter to the Editor? We'd love to hear from you.

All letters must be limited to 600 words and are published at the discretion of the RCPC. Send them to: editor@rockridge.org. Please be sure to include your name, email address, and city and street of residence. **All submissions accepted for publication are subject to editing for clarity and brevity.**

The Rockridge News reserves the right to refuse any articles, letters, display ads, or classified ads.

Newsletter Subscriptions

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

Mail payment to: **RCPC**, 4900 Shattuck Avenue, PO Box 22504, Oakland, CA, 94609

Display Ad Deadline for MAY 2023: April 20, 2023

Advertising rates are $28/column inch. Six-month pre-pay rate available. For display ads, call Jo Ellis at 510-653-3210 (**after noon**), or email joellis1@hotmail.com. Email Susan Montauk at smontauk@gmail.com for information regarding classified ads.

Views expressed in published articles do not necessarily reflect those of The Rockridge News, *its editor, or the board of directors of the Rockridge Community Planning Council.*

March Town Hall
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Questions from Rockridge Neighbors:

What is the data on the impact of market-rate housing increasing the number of affordable units? Is there a "Trickle Down" effect?

"This is the big question. All of the researchers agree that generally market-rate housing is helpful for affordability because not building is a core cause of the housing crisis we now face. If you don't build enough housing, there is a supply shortage, which pushes rents and home prices up and that is what is driving the affordability problem," said Jacobus.

Are there alternative ways to make construction cheaper?

"The simplest answer is "no," but a workaround we've seen is building smaller units. There is potential in modular housing but so far we've only seen modest cost savings," said Metcalf.

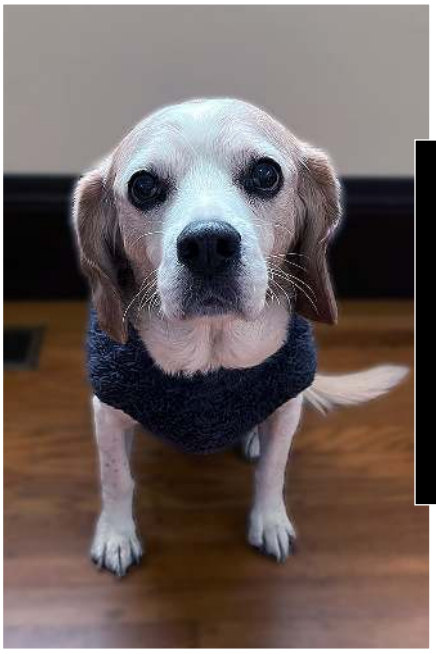
Land costs in Rockridge and Temescal are over $11 million per acre, which is a lot higher than in the downtown area. How does that affect the ability to build affordable units?

"It makes it very hard," said Jacobus. "It does make it hard, it drives up the costs. But land is not the only factor — the costs to entitle and permit also play a role," noted Levin.

In a neighborhood like Rockridge, where large sites for new development are rare, what would be the most feasible way to build as much affordable housing as possible?

One thing that we are seeing is splitting large sites into separate projects: one part is affordable and one part is market-rate, so the affordable project can leverage funding sources earmarked for fully affordable projects. This also results in more affordable units," answered Jacobus.

How do we protect the lifetime investments of Rockridge homeowners and their single-family homes from multi-family project incursions while balancing the need for more housing?



This is Higgins, a 10-year-old Beagle mix, staying warm in his sweater during the fall rain. He may be getting old, but he is still young at heart. Higgins has been a Rockridge resident since he was a puppy and enjoys walking through the neighborhood with his family. Higgins loves people and enjoys any attention he gets.

editor@rockridge.org.

"Some amount of change has to happen. Another way to think about it: The absence of housing means profound change as well — as we see increased displacement, increased homelessness, and increased 'out-migration' of our children and our families. Change is going to happen, either because you don't build and your neighborhood withers from within due to high costs and instability or because you do build and you welcome some kind of growth that hopefully is diverse by including multiple levels of affordability," said Metcalf. "This is why it's important for groups like RCPC to mitigate the legitimate concerns of neighbors about housing growth and the need for more neighbors… we all have to face some burden when housing is developed but the question becomes how do we manage that burden," said Jacobus.

Nine Bay Area counties are currently considering a bond to increase housing production, preservation, and protection on a regional level through the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority. This measure may come before voters in 2024.

For all presentation slides and more information, see Rockridge.org. ■

Share Your Thoughts!

Transit-Oriented Development at Rockridge Station

Drop by our open house and provide input on goals and objectives for future development at Rockridge Station!

WHAT | BART Open House about Rockridge TOD
WHERE | Rockridge BART Station Plaza
WHEN | Thursday, April 13th, 2023
5:30–7:30 PM (Drop by any time)
You can also download meeting materials and provide your comments at bart.gov/RockridgeOpenHouse

BART is working with the City of Oakland to advance Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) at Rockridge Station. Our goal is to initiate developer selection in late 2023, and then begin the process of community outreach, design, and entitlement with the City.

How Could Oakland's Housing Element Impact the Future of Rockridge?

by Ronnie Spitzer, RCPC Board Member, and Stu Flashman

In February 2023, Oakland's Housing Element, which outlines how the city will address housing development from 2023-2031, was approved by California's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Attention now shifts to implementing that element through zoning changes. Phase 1 Preliminary Zoning Code Amendments have been released for public review. The Planning Commission will hold a hearing on those changes on April 15. Public comments will be accepted until May 5, 2023, via email to generalplan@oaklandca.gov.

The Housing Element is a mandatory part of the City's General Plan within the Oakland General Plan. The General Plan acts as a "Constitution" to guide the City's future. It includes a collection of policies related to various aspects of community life (e.g., transportation, safety, parks & open space, etc.). The Housing Element, one of the required parts, must show how the City will provide housing to meet expected future population growth. The entire Oakland General Plan is currently being updated — its first update in over 20 years. To learn more about the General Plan Update, visit bit.ly/OaklandGPU and sign up for announcements.

The Zoning Ordinance implements General Plan policies and controls what types of uses are allowed in the various parts of the city. It regulates what can be built in the city's many neighborhoods, including building heights, density, parking, as well as what kinds of uses are allowed. The recent enactment of State bill SB 9 meant that, in California, zoning can no longer limit housing to one house per lot: Oakland's zoning is changing accordingly.

The General Plan revision is proceeding in two phases. Phase I, through Summer 2023, includes the new Housing Element. Now, zoning changes are being readied to implement that new Element. A Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), analyzes the potential environmental impacts resulting from the proposed changes (see bit.ly/OakGPUDEIR). The City is inviting comments on the DEIR until 5pm on May 9, 2023. Comments can be submitted via email to generalplan@oaklandca.gov. The City will also hold a public meeting on the DEIR on April 19, 2023, at City Hall. Phase II of the General Plan Update (starting Fall 2023) will cover the other State-required elements.

On College Avenue, properties are currently zoned for a maximum height of three stories, with ground-floor commercial uses and more varied uses (including residential) allowed above. Rockridge residential streets currently include a mixture of residential types, with an average density of 10 to 15 units per acre. The General Plan designates most Lower Rockridge residential streets as "Mixed Housing Type Residential (RM)," with the most common corresponding zoning for single-family or duplex housing being RM-1.



Figure 1. Examples of missing middle housing types.
Source: https://missingmiddlehousing.com/.

Major streets such as Claremont and Alcatraz are zoned for a mixture of single-family homes, duplexes, townhouses, and small multi-unit buildings, with RM-2/3 or RM-4 zoning respectively.

The currently proposed Phase I zoning amendments may significantly transform Rockridge. The "Missing Middle Housing" zoning amendments would change the development standards in formerly single-family neighborhoods to allow higher densities, including multi-unit

Housing Element, see next page



Housing Element, from previous page

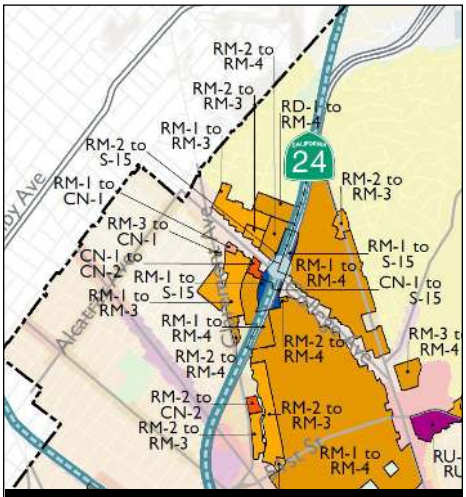


Figure 2. Existing zoning and proposed zoning changes.

housing types ranging from duplexes and townhouses to smaller apartment buildings. An example of how missing middle housing might look is shown in Figure 1 (see previous page).

All Mixed Housing Type Residential zones will allow 4 units or more on lots greater than 4,000 sq. ft., and at least 1-2 units on any lot. The minimum lot size would decrease. Buildings could be spaced more closely and be higher, and more of the lot could be covered by buildings. (i.e., less room for yards) A big difference in what the new RM-4 zoning would allow, compared to the other rezonings in Rockridge, is that it would increase how many units (beyond four) would be allowed on lots bigger than 4,000 sq. ft. Under certain circumstances, a limited number of commercial facilities (general food sales, full-service restaurants, general retail sales, etc.) could be allowed by-right in the RM-4 zone, and conditionally in RM 1, 2 and 3 zones.

The City is proposing to rezone much of the Lower Rockridge residential area from RM-1 to the higher density RM-4, as shown in Figure 2. This would allow a broader range of housing options within our "high resource area," and is, in part, a response to HCD's stated concerns. However, these zoning changes don't address affordability. A separate affordable housing overlay district attempts to incentivize affordability.

The City is considering upzoning the rest of Lower Rockridge during Phase II. Zoning in Upper Rockridge (above Broadway) is largely unchanged. All this conforms to what was proposed in a letter to the City from the RCPC board (available on rockridge.org). Some other organizations made similar requests. The City is soliciting feedback on these proposals during the General Plan and accompanying rezoning processes.

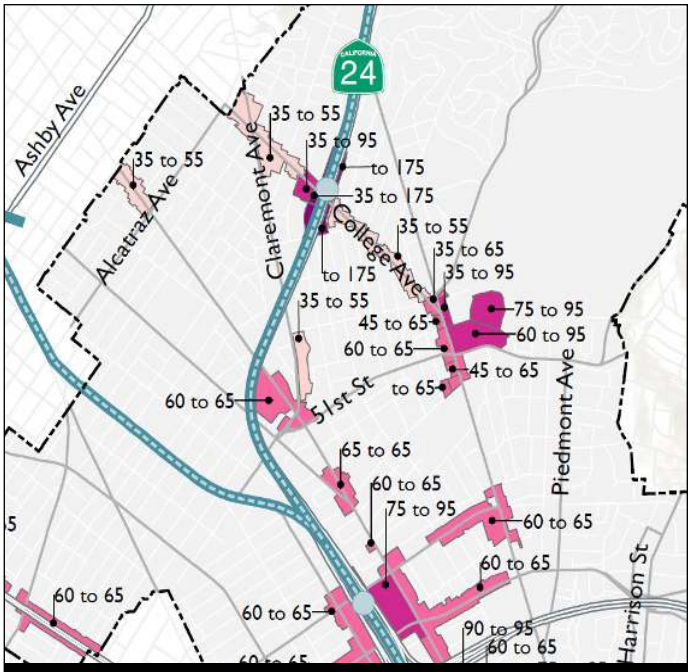


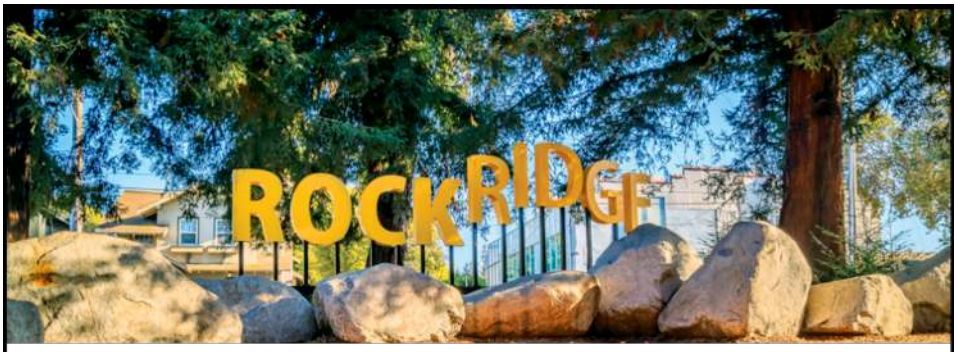
Figure 3. Proposed and existing commercial building heights.

On College Avenue, the proposed zoning changes would increase maximum building heights from 35 feet to at least 55 ft. On the BART station property, the maximum height would go to 175 feet (15-17 stories). Zoning for some other nearby areas, such as the Trader Joe's parcel, would also allow higher and denser construction. (see Figure 3 above).

Future issues of the Rockridge News *will provide more information on the General Plan.* ■

The Planning Commission Zoning Update Committee will discuss the proposed zoning amendments at its in-person meeting on April 12, at 3pm.

Note: The Planning Commission will conduct a public meeting to receive comments on the Draft EIR on **April 19, 2023, at 3pm** in the Council Chambers in Oakland City Hall, 1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza.



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Upcoming Events at the Rockridge Library

For Children

Storytime: Every Thursday and Saturday at 10:30am.

Read to a Dog: Thursdays at 4 pm

Intergenerational Origami Workshop: Tuesday, 5/2; 4 pm, & Tuesday, 4/18, 5/16; 6:30 pm.

Storytime: Soul Soup with Amber Hines, Saturday, 4/15; 10:30 am. Sing, dance, and play. Amber's drumming blends traditional and contemporary music to uplift the spirit.

(Chess Club will resume in June.)



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For Adults

Rockridge Book Club: Saturday, 4/8; 3:30 – 4:30 pm. Join the Rockridge Book Club every 2nd Saturday for a lively discussion. April's book is *Finding the Mother Tree* by Suzanne Simard. Please call (510) 597-5017 for more info and to get a copy of the book. 5/13 is our next meeting — book t.b.d.

Check out our Seed Library. Seed packets are ready and waiting for you to take them home. Bring your leftover or extra seeds to share with the community. If you have any questions, contact us at (510) 597-5017.

Save the Date for The Decolonized Kitchen with Maribel Garcia: Saturday 5/27, 11 am.

Intergenerational Origami. (See dates and times for children).

For Teens

Teen Advisory Board (TAB): Wednesday, 4/12 & 5/10; 4-5pm. Join the Rockridge Branch Library Teen Advisory Board and take an active role in creating, planning, and implementing programs and services you want to see at your local library. Every 2nd Wednesday in the TeenZone. New members welcome!

Poetry and Pudding on Wednesday April 12th 3-4pm in the meeting room for Black Out Poetry and Oreo "dirt" cups. This event immediately precedes the monthly TAB meeting, 4-5pm.

After School, Weekdays: Pop-up crafts, card games, and board games happen in the TeenZone.

Summer Volunteers: Rockridge Library is looking for volunteers ages 11 to 16 to help with our Summer Programs in June and July. Please contact Stanley at slamontagne@oaklandlibrary.org or stop by the Children's Reference Desk.

All Oakland libraries will be closed Monday, 5/29 for Memorial Day. Find more information at www.oaklandlibrary.org/events. ■

A Rockridge Nonagenarian Retires as Block Captain

by Susan Montauk, Rockridge News Distribution Manager



Rockridge News **volunteer, Edward Jay**

Many, many thanks to **Edward Jay**, who, at the age of 92, is hanging up his Block Captain hat for the first time since he started delivering The *Rockridge News* in 1985. He is a sterling example of how service to your community can keep you fit but he is eager for someone in his neighborhood to take over his route as soon as possible. Or, if you prefer, we have another choice — on College Avenue — to replace **Leslie Osterweil** (Thank you, Leslie and Gideon). Please let us know if you would like to be Block Captain for Edward's Chabot route or Leslie's route.

Route 051: Odd and even numbers on Chabot Road from Ivanhoe to Chabolyn Terrace

• **CAv1:** Businesses and apartments along College Avenue from Clare-mont Ave to BART. Stacks at Zachary's and Crossroads (shared stand with East Bay Express), 1951, Supercuts, and the Golden Squirrel.

Block Captains deliver newsletters door-to-door. Their bundles are delivered to their front porches the first weekend of each month except August. To volunteer, call (510) 547-3855, or email Susan at smontauk@gmail.com. ■

Celebrate Earth Day at Big Frog Park

by Alison Drury

When: April 22, 2023
from 9am to 12pm

Where: Meet at the big oak tree by the Big Frog play structure to sign the waiver to participate in the cleanup and related activities.

In celebration of Earth Day 2023, Friends of the Rockridge Greenbelt (FROG) are planning a cleanup of Big Frog Park along with other activities. This year's Earth Day theme is "Invest in Our Planet," which was developed to encourage citizens, businesses, and governments to invest in our planet and improve our environment — and leave a better legacy for future generations.

Tasks include weeding, pruning, trash pickup, raking, sweeping, gardening, and applying a non-toxic sealant to the Little Frog play structure (weather permitting). Families and groups are welcome. Students needing service hours for school can receive a signed letter verifying their participation.

Please bring your own gardening gloves and refillable water bottles. Some gardening gloves will be available onsite, so please bring disposable gloves if you'd like to borrow a pair. Tools will also be provided, but if you have your own, please bring them. Coffee and snacks will be provided.

For a proper headcount, please RSVP to: info@frogpark.org by April 18. ■

IN MEMORIAM
Susan Bernosky

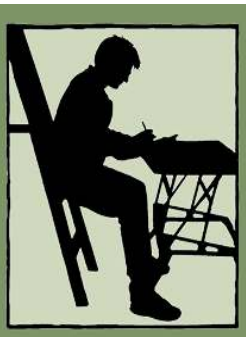


Susan Bernosky ended her battle with cancer on Wednesday, February 22, at the age of 65. She had been an insurance agent since 1987, working in Rockridge for more than 25 years with Allstate, Strahan Insurance Services, and most recently at Cook, Disharoon & Greenhouse Inc.

Susan worked with the Rockridge District Association (RDA) for more than 15 years, serving as treasurer, long-faithful president, and behind-the-scenes as a mover and shaker. She helped the RDA enhance Rockridge through public works as well as promotional and beautification initiatives.

Susan was a lover of motorcycles, Burning Man, other people, good discussion, and the arts — often writing her own poetry. She was widely known, respected, and appreciated.

She and **Dave Bernosky** had been married since 2001 after having first met at Burning Man. She is survived by three grown children and two stepchildren. Her memory will be a blessing to all who knew her. ■


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Questions? Chair@Rockridge.org

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She Tracks Rockridge Crime — for All of Us

by Judith Doner Berne

eyes on Rockridge

"Covid did us in." That's **Karen Ivy's** take on the seeming lack of public interest in attending meetings of the Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC), despite Oakland's upsetting crime statistics.

"They just stopped coming," said Ivy, even though meetings have resumed every other month in the upstairs conference room of the Rockridge Library and are also accessible via Zoom, just as they were during the pandemic. Only two residents showed up for the February meeting, hosted by Ivy, NCPC chair **Mike Ubell,** and treasurer **Eric Neville**. Five others tuned in via Zoom.

"Karen has been the core of the Greater Rockridge NCPC for many years," Ubell said. "She established and maintains the website and email lists. She transcribes our meetings She's not deterred by meeting attendance and continues on."

"I'm not about to give up on it," said Ivy, who, with her husband, **Jim Ringland**, has lived in Rockridge since 1986. "Communication with the police is so important. We don't have much violent crime," Ivy said. "We have property crime in spades." She considers reading crime reports and comments by residents on Nextdoor "as part of my duties."

That's also because she finds that the Oakland Police Department's (OPD) monthly crime reports for both lower and upper Rockridge have not been kept up to date and therefore are inaccurate. Still, she emails the statistics she receives to residents and adds her own summary of the findings, for which she regularly gets a "thank you."

However, the recent ransomware attacks on the City have apparently impacted the crime statistics too. "When I pulled the 90-day list of reported crimes in Oakland from the city data feed on March 3, there was nothing in it after February 7, for any beat anywhere in the city," Ivy said.

To keep up with city-wide shootings and homicides, as she suggested in the February 2023 issue of the *Rockridge News*, the next best bet is the daily papers or Nixle.com for OPD.

"I was bored," Ivy gave as one reason she took over as NCPC secretary in 2007. She had recently retired as a senior consulting systems engineer in the information technology division of Bank of America. No, she had no real background in police work, except that "one of my older cousins was a cop… and I'm a detective story addict."

Although it's not part of her proscribed NCPC duties, she's a regular participant on the panels that conduct oral interviews of Oakland police officer candidates. Each panel, according to City ordinance, must have one senior city employee, one non-senior City employee, and one citizen. "So, if citizens don't participate, police can't be hired," she said.

Ivy sends out emails to let Rockridge residents know of upcoming interview panels. "They feed you. It's not an all-day thing — usually from 8am to 2:30-3pm. You have a steady sequence of candidates that all field the exact same questions."

Eyes on Rockridge, see next page





Eyes on Rockridge, from previous page

"I find Karen to be one of the most dedicated and driven volunteers to ever work on the NCPC," said **Susan Montauk**, a former NCPC chair. "And she is so very consistent and precise in her communications to 12X and 12Y (police beats for lower and upper Rockridge) citizens. I believe Covid dampened the participation factor for lots of organizations. RCPC stopped doing in-person Town Halls, for instance — so no surprise there.

"I believe it would take a very high-profile Town Hall to revive interest in the NCPC, but there are issues that roil OPD now, and how that affects our neighborhood should be addressed," Montauk continued.

Inspired by her mom, a library assistant in Napa who organized the statewide library assistants' union, Ivy earned a master's in library science from Cal Berkeley. And, although she started as a librarian, she's proud that in an era in which career changes were less common, she opted for high-tech just as the industry was emerging. "I was doing online searches before the World Wide Web."

Another feat of which she is proud is that she recently lost 75 pounds. When Covid hit, the gym where she took water aerobics shut down, "I started walking. It also involved changes in my eating habits." She has since resumed water aerobics, adding it to her walking routine.

When Ivy isn't in motion, she's reading or doing IT as a volunteer for Life Ring Secular Recovery, which helped a relative regain sobriety. "I don't watch television. We have one but haven't used it in years." She also has been singing alto with the Oakland Symphony Chorus for 24 years and is a past member of the Oakland Symphony Board.



After losing 75 pounds, Karen Ivy enjoys a cookie at the Hudson Bay Cafe.

"We like Rockridge so much," Ivy said. "My husband is a regular at Cole Hardware. I'm in and out of the library all the time." No, she's never been a victim of crime herself. "I never have my face in a phone. I'm interested in what is going on around me." But, ironically, her locked car, parked in the library lot, has been broken into twice during NCPC meetings, although there was nothing of value.

"Karen has been involved with NCPC forever, as far back as when I was chair, and that's going 14 years plus," said **Chris Jackson**, operations manager for the Rockridge District Association. "So, she certainly served her time and continues to do so."

The next NCPC meeting is **Thursday, April 13, at 7pm**, at the Rockridge Library. The agenda includes crime statistics, a neighborhood discussion, a Q&A period with a representative from the Oakland Police Department, and a speaker from the Oakland Office of the Inspector General.

To comment or to offer ideas for future columns, please email judyberne@att.net. ■

The next meeting will be held at the Rockridge Library:

Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 7pm, in the Rockridge Library's upstairs conference room. It will be a hybrid meeting for those who want to attend remotely.

For Zoom link, visit: https://www.rockridgencpc.com/

To suggest meeting topics, send an email to: chair@rockridgencpc.com.

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Gardens in the Pocket

by Carol Kasparek

Flourishing visual delights can be thoroughly enjoyed by all while walking around Rockridge this spring — these include two beautiful pocket gardens, one at the corner of Miles and Hudson and the other at the corner of Locksley and Forest. Created by **Patrick Cullinane**, and developed with assistance from John Kamp, the gardens were made possible through funding from the Kevin Faughnan grant that Cullinane received last September from the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC).

"When the opportunity presents itself and you have the capacity to do something to make your community a better place …you need to respond to that," said Cullinane about his application for the grant.

"I like doing landscaping that is for the public, not hidden… that makes walkability even better," says Kamp, a landscape and urban designer, and licensed landscape contractor.

In the grant application, Cullinane noted that he would seek help from a professional landscaper. He looked no further than three blocks away to **John Kamp**'s place. Kamp used Cullinane's concepts for each section to determine specific plants and placement. With a low- to high-design, Kamp incorporated the color and durability they both wanted to display.



Patrick Cullinane determines where best to place specific plants.



Urban designer, John Kamp ensures the gardens are properly watered.

Rockridge shares a Mediterranean climate with western Chile, Western Australia, the Western Cape of South Africa, and most of coastal California. The dry summers and wet winters are fairly unique, according to Kamp. Plants were chosen that would thrive in the dry summer months. Another design factor they integrated was to have the natural display be "curb-friendly" so it looks intentional, flexible, and wild. Agave, Euphorbia, and Clarkia were some of the plants they selected. Local gardeners should note that plants often fail due to either under-watering or over-watering, and they should be careful not to water lavender at all during the summer.

Last month, they went to work on implementing their plans. Locksley/Forest was the first area to be transformed. Neighbors, who also contributed plants and watering to the current project, had already tended the corner. Clearing the ivy at the site was one of the most difficult amendments. "We should have used a truck to yank out some of the tougher tendrils," noted Kamp, who incorporated the big-hole process — digging a hole much larger than the size of each plant — to allow for maximum aeration and drainage. The site has a unique feature, freeway ramp watering, where moisture moves down the overhead freeway into the garden patch. Much of the remaining water needs are provided by osmosis, yet Cullinane frequently lugged gallons more to ensure there was enough for proper growth. He explained that, as root systems go deeper, watering needs lessen.

As for Miles/Hudson, the two incorporated the existing colorful growth with some height variations. Cullinane envisions a gathering spot on the corner and added benches as a way to bring people together. A bench and plant recently went missing at the site, but otherwise, the plea on Cullinane's sign to respect the space has been heeded. The gardens continue to benefit from supportive neighbors who contribute plants, water, and tending.

Cullinane and Kamp see other areas that could be enhanced. They offer to provide plant lists and checklists to anyone interested in taking on a project of their own. The duo plan to remain stewards of the gardens so they continue to flourish.

Contact Patrick Cullinane at pbc117@sbcglobal.net, or John Kamp at kamp@prairieform.com, for more information. ■

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Oakland Tech Bulldogs Win Third Division 1 State Title



Oakland Tech's Bulldogs secured the teams place in history — claiming their third straight title last last month with a win over Santiago High of Corona. ■

Ashby Village: Is it American Midnight?

by Sigrid Deusberg

Are we in a new, unstoppable nosedive for American democracy? Or a grim rerun of our forgotten history that we can fix and emerge from intact and improved? Join acclaimed historian **Adam Hochschild** for an exclusive Ashby Village Arts & Culture Series presentation on his new book, *American Midnight: The Great War, A Violent Peace and Democracy's Forgotten Crisis*, on **Sunday, April 30 at 2pm**, on Zoom.

Ashby Village is a community built and led by and for older adults who share their skills, support, and expertise to navigate the challenges and opportunities of aging.

Every day, members, supporters, and over 300 trained volunteers come together to provide social engagement opportunities and support services for one another and our various communities. Together, we imagine and create the best possible experience of aging — with optimism.

This event is free for all to attend. To register, please use this link: https://tinyurl.com/HistoryAV, or email sigrid@ashbyvillage.org.

To learn more about membership and volunteer opportunities, call (510) 204-9200, or visit ashbyvillage.org. ■



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Get a Total Makeover: Surprising Ways to Re-Invent Your Look along College Avenue

by Susie Wyshak

Style Your Old Jewelry at Pavé Fine Jewelry Design

Have old jewelry that's too good to sell or give away but "not you" enough to wear? "Transforming old, unloved jewelry into new pieces has been a big part of Pavé's business over the past 40 years," says **Michael Endlich**, owner of Pavé Fine Jewelry. "Styles change and elders pass down cherished jewelry that's not quite current," he says.



Vintage wedding ring diamond re-imagined into a new "nautilus" ring.

Customers can bring their jewelry in and Pavé will redesign it or repurpose it into something they want to wear. Imagine turning a brooch into bracelets, cufflinks into earrings, or rings into necklaces. "It can be a wonderful way to re-incorporate grandma or our parents into our lives. You keep the ancestral connection yet make the jewelry your own."

Talent abounds at Pave Fine Jewelry Design. Master jewelers work onsite at Pave's workshop, so they don't need to send work out as other jewelers may do. And many of the Sales Designers are also certified gemologists. Customers often bring in heirloom jewelry to be maintained or repaired. Pavé will also melt precious metal jewelry into something completely custom-made or recycle gems for a brand-new look.

Find them at 5496 College; pavefinejewelry.com; (510) 547-7000.

Style Your Face at Yours Truly Permanent Cosmetics

Would you love to have that summery freckle-nosed look year-round? Now you can. Yours Truly owner and artist **Megan Hessler** attributes an Instagram "freckle filter" for the new trend in freckle tattoos that last up to three years. Not a freckle fan? Black beauty marks add instant glamour.

Illusions of fluffier, more even, thicker, crisper eyebrows are in reach. Hessler's team of certified and licensed Body Art Practitioners help clients of all genders touch up their looks without the hassle of makeup or hair dye. Hessler herself sports a brow lamination for a brushed-up look.

Lash-line tattoos help the eyes pop with semi-permanent eyeliner, adding even more lid definition and a "fresh awake look" without smudging or

Makeovers, see next page

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Yoni Temple manager, Tessa Bagwill, models the eyebrow dying process.

Makeovers, from previous page

skin irritation. Hessler herself models the benefits of lip blush. This full-lip tinting (nothing like the bold lip liner of the '80s) solves uneven lip coloration or lack of pigmentation.

"The year 2016 marked a turning point in semi-permanent cosmetics," Hessler explained. "Dyes and techniques used today have become much more natural looking, unlike the harsh, blue-green, metal-based facial tattoos of past decades." What happens after one to three years? The tints simply fade away. Unless you come in for touch-ups, that is.

Find them at 5292 College Ave, yourstrulyoakland.com.

Style Your Hair (yes, that one) at The Yoni Temple

How Berkeley can Rockridge be? Home to the "Berkeley Brazilian," The Yoni Temple offers the community "a safe, sacred space where you can feel pampered while receiving a wax."

Coined by owner **Ashley Apple**, the "Berkeley Brazilian" evolves waxing trends of the past few decades into a new "do" combining a natural '70s look in the front with the famous "Brazilian" in the back — minimizing pain with high quality skin treatments, soothing music, therapeutic grade essential oils, and nourishing ambiance. They offer a gender-inclusive full menu of body waxing services.

The women-owned, women-run boutique also offers eyebrow and eyelash tinting.

Find them at 5831 College, (510) 239-3052, theyonitemple.com

Style Your Wig at Arellano Salon

So, it's time to get a wig. Hair stylist **Carlos Arellano** offers a solution to those wanting something other than an off-the-shelf wig look: He styles wigs to fit naturally to a face's shape and with an eye to the customer's personal style. "When you buy a wig, it doesn't come tailored to your face," he explained. Arellano takes the same approach when cutting and styling a wig as he does with hair.

Arellano, a hair stylist since the mid-'70s, can also dye wigs as long as they are made with 100 percent real hair. "People who have had chemotherapy and want to wear a wig will come in, or I will go to their house to style their wig," he said. Clients with hair toppers (hair pieces attached by combs) and hair implants also look to Arellano to cut and color their hair. He has styled hair at his cozy Rockridge salon since the mid-1990s.

Find them at 5475 College, (510) 207-4672; arellanosalon.com.

Seeking a new career along with your new style? The Rockridge businesses in this article all employ state-licensed artists who honed their craft in school and on the job.

Susie Wyshak is a local real estate agent who enjoys helping people and businesses. ■

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RCPC Financial Statement 2022

RCPC General Fund	
Income	
Contributions	$345.00
Rockridge News	$43,887.00
Kitchen Tour	$22,648.44
Interest	$22.99
Total Income	$66,903.43
Expenses	
Rockridge News	$42,251.90
Contractors	$5,279.42
Insurance, Permits, Sales Tax	$1,506.00
Misc Admin & Program Expenses	$3,677.94
Kevin Faughnan Memorial Grant	$661.50
Events	$1,778.40
Total Expenses	$55,155.16
Net Receipts (RCPC)	$11,748.27
BALANCE SHEET	
Assets	
RCPC Assets, Savings/Checking	$96,302.79
Equity & Liability	
KF Community Improvements Prgm	$5,618.41
Legal Fund Reserve	$55,000.00
Equity	$23,936.11
Net Receipts	$11,748.27
Total Equity & Liability	$96,302.79

Attention Residents: Burglars Disguised as Delivery Drivers

The Oakland Police Department (OPD) has seen an uptick in residential burglaries where the individuals involved are disguised as Amazon workers. In several of the cases, individuals wearing Amazon delivery driver vests approach a residence and ring the doorbell to determine if the residence is occupied or not. The individuals then force entry into the residence, take several items, and flee the area in a vehicle.

OPD is actively investigating each of these burglaries. If you are a victim or have information regarding any of these incidents, call (510) 238-3951. ■

Saftey Tips and OPD Recommendations:

• Make your home look occupied, and make it difficult to break in.

• Lock all outside doors and windows before you leave home.

• Leave lights on when you go out or connect some lamps to automatic timers during the evening.

• Do not allow deliveries, mail, newspapers, or flyers to build up outside your home while you are away.

• Call the OPD non-emergency number at (510) 777-3333, to report suspicious persons.

For immediate emergencies, use the number for the Oakland Fire Department's stand-alone dispatch center: (510) 444-1616. OFD will pick up in seconds most of the time.



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3/10/2022	2	1.5	5222 Shafter Ave	$1,195,000	$1,195,000	22	$1,400,000
3/10/2022	3	2	6494 Benvenue Ave	$2,100,000	$1,980,000	22	$1,980,000
3/17/2022	3	2.5	278 Cross Road	$1,795,000	$1,795,000	12	$2,150,000
3/17/2022	2	1	471 North St	$1,025,000	$1,025,000	13	$1,525,000
3/20/2022	4	3.5	6119 Acacia Ave	$1,950,000	$1,950,000	18	$2,550,000

Homes sold in March closed 21% over the asking price on average.

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