THE Rockridge News
www.rockridge.org
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Sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) • 4900 Shattuck Ave., PO Box 22504, Oakland 94609

Five Incumbents Return to Rockridge Community Planning Council Board; One New Member Elected

by Ben Friedman, RCPC Board Member and Election Officer

Congratulations to the new and returning board members who were elected to fill two-year terms in the 2023 uncontested RCPC election *(for information on RCPC's bylaws regarding uncontested elections, see www.rockridge.org)*. Incumbents returning to the board are **Mark Aaronson, Louisa Bukiet, Star Lightner, Ken Rich, and Zac Unger. Tom Lollini** is new to the board. Bios of this year's slate of RCPC members appear below.

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.

Mark Aaronson / Chabot Road



I moved to Rockridge in 1976 with my wife Marjorie Gelb. We still live in the same house on Chabot Road where we raised our two daughters — both now reside in nearby Oakland neighborhoods with their husbands and our four grandchildren. I spent much of my career as an activist lawyer representing clients in civil rights, anti-poverty, and environmental matters, and as a law professor at U.C. Hastings, where I was the founding director of the school's in-house clinical educational program. I was appointed to the RCPC Board in December 2021, and have been its chief liaison regarding the repurposing of the Dreyer's site by the East Bay Jewish Community Center. Working with neighbors most immediately affected by this development, our objective is to ensure that throughout the JCC's planning, community concerns such as traffic impacts, and a variety of needs from recreational to housing, are given serious attention.

Louisa Bukiet / Margarido Drive



I joined the RCPC board to help shape our neighborhood's future, and where I will continue to build a vibrant and inclusive community. I moved to Rockridge in late 2016 while pregnant with my twins — the beautiful gardens everywhere, interesting people who are our neighbors, and the engaged hubbub of College Avenue and beyond have made this a place where I'm excited to build community. Professionally, I work on ways to create more housing opportunities for more people, especially those who have traditionally been shut out of homeownership or have limited options available to them due to disability or lack of financial resources. As Rockridge contemplates a number of new housing developments, I'd like to continue adding my knowledge to the land-use activities of the board, and work to ensure our neighborhood's resources and opportunities are accessible to new residents.

RCPC Board Members, see page 2

RCPC: MAY TOWN HALL

Rooms for Rent? How to Home Share

by Casey Farmer, Chair, RCPC Board of Directors

More and more homeowners have begun renting empty rooms in their homes to fellow community members. In addition to providing additional income, renting a room in your home helps fill the need for more affordable rental options in the area, especially for essential workers who don't want long commutes. Others welcome the companionship or the ability to age in place — particularly elders who may have lost a spouse due to aging or illness.

On **Monday, May 15, at 7:30pm**, the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) will host a virtual Town Hall about home-sharing services and programs which support homeowners seeking to rent out a bedroom or ADU. This Town Hall is part of a series on the topic of housing (RCPC's March Town Hall focused on the economics of building housing and the meeting was summarized in last month's *Rockridge News*).

Four panelists have been invited to share their expertise and explain the programs they operate, provide examples of successful home sharing, and review the rights renters have when renting a private room.

Jill Lindenbaum is the founder of Roomily and an expert in home-sharing programs. Roomily, featured in a July 2022 *Rockridge News* article, is unfortunately no longer operating. However, Jill remains driven to support home sharing as a means of

May Town Hall, see page 5

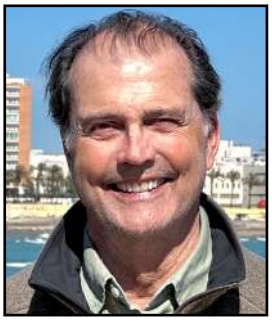
RCPC Board Members *continued from front page*



Star Lightner / Colby

I grew up in Rockridge, and attended Chabot Elementary and (back then) Claremont Jr. High School. I returned and bought a house here after law school and met my husband over the back fence! Our kids attended local public schools where I spent years volunteering. I'm pleased to now be on the RCPC board where I can give back to the neighborhood I've lived in most of my life. As an environmental lawyer, I once had a knee-jerk opposition to development. However, I'm saddened to see how the racial and economic diversity that once existed in Rockridge has eroded and believe we need to be pragmatic about accommodating thoughtful growth in our community. I also believe that most people in Rockridge are more aligned than not, and I'm looking forward to continue serving on the RCPC board where I will work to find common ground on housing and other important local issues.

Tom Lollini / Broadway Terrace



I am an architect and urban planner with 30 years of executive leadership experience in community and university planning, design, and development, and an extensive background in public advocacy for sustainable, affordable, and equitable community development. I retired in 2018 to create Studiolollini, a strategic planning practice that affords me time to volunteer. I presently serve on the RCPC Land Use Committee. My career focus has been to help make cities better places for everyone and to create a more sustainable, socially responsible approach to growth and development. My work inspired the transformation of San Francisco's Embarcadero, brought U.C. Berkeley and the City of Berkeley together to co-create thousands of units of student housing, and led the development of the world's most sustainable and first Zero-Net Energy campus, U.C. Merced. I have lived in Rockridge for 15 years. My wife, Franchesca Garagorri, has lived here for 30. We have four children and six grandchildren.



Ken Rich / Manila

This will be my third year on the RCPC Board where I have tried to focus on housing issues as well as neighborhood retail. I am a city planning and real estate development leader with 27 years of experience working on planning and development projects and policy in San Francisco and around the Bay Area. I served as Director of Development within the S.F. Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development from 2010 to 2020. Projects approved under my direction focused on low- and middle-income housing, waterfront revitalization, workforce development, and the arts. I have a master's degree in City Planning from U.C. Berkeley as well as a bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley and a master's degree from Columbia University, both in History. Outside of work, I enjoy mid-century furniture and industrial design, early 20th-century art, classic science fiction, foodie-oriented travel, and, of course, exploring new cities and neighborhoods.

Land Use Committee Meeting

RCPC's Land Use Committee Meeting will be held:

Wednesday, May 24, 2023, at 7:30pm, via Zoom.

The meeting is open to the public.

Use Zoom link: bit.ly/3c0r6X0
or email: landuse@rockridge.org.

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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Contacting The Rockridge News

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 350 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.

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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.

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RCPC Board Members *continued from previous page*



Zac Unger / Oak Grove

I've been a Rockridge resident since I was five years old, and even ended up buying a house on the same street I grew up on. I've been an Oakland firefighter for 25 years, and I am the president of the firefighters' union. My wife, Shona, and I have three kids who have all made their way through Chabot, Claremont, and Oakland Tech. We love living in a neighborhood where we run into friends every time we step out the front door. My RCPC-ish interests include wildfire mitigation and emergency preparedness, and trying to find creative solutions to increase the affordable housing supply so that our kids, and their friends, can afford to enjoy Rockridge as much as we have. ■

Shop, Visit Local Businesses While Delivering the *Rockridge News*

by Susan Montauk

The *Rockridge News* relies on more than 100 neighborhood volunteers, ranging in age from four to 92, to hand deliver this newsletter door-to-door. Currently, the newsletter needs one more volunteer to take over the route of **Leslie Osterweil**. Please read the description below and let us know if you're available for her route.

CAv1: Businesses and apartments along College Avenue from Claremont Ave to BART. Stacks left at various stores along the route.

Block Captains deliver newsletters door-to-door. 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. ■

Foxtail Grasses — It's That Time Again

by Anna L. Marks



Spring marks the beginning of foxtail season. You know, those little sticky weeds that pop up everywhere. Foxtails shed thousands of seeds that can quickly spread around the neighborhood, so it's important to completely remove them to prevent them from returning. When you see foxtails (see photo) in your yard or while walking around the neighborhood, please pull them out.

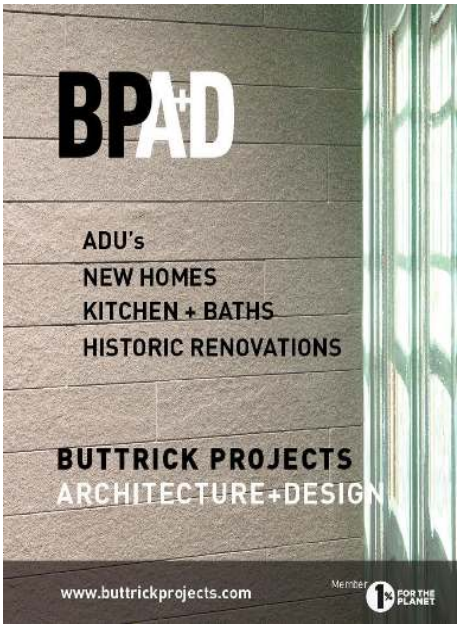
The grasses can cause serious problems including infection and organ damage, or even result in hearing loss. This can be a big problem, especially for cats and dogs. The earlier in the season they are removed, the less damage they can do. Once the barbed grasses get into their little feet or ears, they can burrow deep and cause a lot of pain and distress. They can even be inhaled, and enter through the nose.

If you notice your pet showing any unusual symptoms including incessant licking or problems with chewing or swallowing, see your vet immediately. Children should use caution too as they are also susceptible to getting them in their noses, on their clothing, or in their shoes or socks, causing discomfort.

The best way to remove foxtails is to dig out the root with a simple garden tool. Mowing them and leaving the clippings on the ground or sidewalk is the worst way to remove them as this also allows the seeds to spread around. Put them into your regular garbage in a plastic baggie where they won't be able to spread. ■







Employees at the Rockridge Trader Joe's Vote to Join Union

by Barbara Schultz

Crew members of the Trader Joe's store on College Avenue have been engaged in an effort to unionize since last August, and late last month they elected to join the Trader Joe's United (TJU) union that was formed by workers in Hadley, Mass., and Minneapolis, Minn.

Employees had the opportunity to vote anonymously during sessions held April 19 and 20. When the results were tabulated, the workers had voted 73 to 53 to unionize, making our local store the fourth in the country to join — and the first in California.

"The next step is for us to talk to our lawyers about getting bargaining dates and join the broader Trader Joe's United group at the bargaining table," says organizing committee member **Nava Rosenthal**. "We have been talking with TJU all along, but now the idea is for us to bargain for one contract for the whole union."

The workers at the College Avenue store hope their effort will allow them to bargain collectively for safer working conditions, better and more accessible health benefits for part-time employees as well as those who work full-time, a revised paid-leave structure, and generally more transparency and clarity from management on issues that affect workers.

"During the pandemic we had plastic barriers at registers to separate us from the customers, and one day we came into the store and they were gone," says Rosenthal, who has worked for Trader Joe's for five years. "There was no discussion about it. That's one example."

"Many of our store's policies are not written in the employee handbook; they're at the discretion of management," explains organizing committee member **Dominique Bernardo**, an 18-year Trader Joe's employee. "We'd like to see codification of safety policies. As in any city, we sometimes have to deal with issues surrounding theft.

"We want de-escalation training for managers so we don't have to call the cops every time there's an issue in the store involving someone with mental illness. If we can protect our benefits, feel safe at work, feel valued like we matter as humans, that's going to go straight from us back to the customers."

Mattering "as humans" is on many crew members' wish lists, including one employee who asked to remain anonymous. "We are human beings first, and so are the mates, and so is the captain. I have nothing against them," she says, noting that Trader Joe's job titles follow a nautical theme. "I'm trying to balance this job with being a full-time student and I need health benefits. That's it."

Another sentiment echoed by multiple employees is how much they enjoy their jobs — the cheerful good humor that greets Trader Joe's shoppers is genuine. "We're the ones at the front of the store," says Rosenthal. "We're the ones who create that fun and exciting environment. I'm excited by the idea of knowing I can continue doing all that because I love my job and my coworkers."

It will likely take months before all of the TJU members and their attorneys can agree with Trader Joe's management (which declined to be interviewed for this article) on a mutually acceptable contract. Meanwhile, the organizing committee plans to hold listening sessions where all employees can voice their opinions and make suggestions as to how the union should proceed to represent them. It's important to the organizers that every employee has a voice in this process.

"As I've been finding throughout this process, which is the whole point of a union, you can get bravery, courage, and strength from everyone else. You don't have to have it all within yourself," says Bernardo. ■




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May Town Hall, from front page

both providing affordable housing and supporting the changing needs of homeowners.

Rachel Matthews is the Manager of Home Match, a program of the senior service provider Covia. Home Match is a shared-housing program that provides free, personalized services in the Bay Area and beyond to help find the right match for both renters and homeowners.

The organization's website notes that some renters choose arrangements in which they provide household activities in exchange for lower costs (referred to as "supportive housemates"). As one participant notes, "The whole Home Match process makes the living arrangement feel safe, secure, and lasting." Learn more at covia.org/programs/home-match.

Kyra Mungia is the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of TRiOPlus (Teachers Rooted in Oakland Plus). The organization's mission is to build a coalition of public and private community stakeholders working to ensure teachers — especially Black, Latino, and other teachers of color — can afford to live in the cities where they teach. "Our kids shouldn't have to pay the price for our broken housing system. We believe a marketplace for discounted housing can institutionalize affordable housing not only for educators but also other underpaid public employees," said Mungia. Learn more at trioplus.org.

Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) is the local administrator for the Federal rental housing program known as Section 8, which subsidizes low income tenants. This program pays rent directly to landlords. A director from OHA will speak at the Town Hall.

Have questions for the panelists? Send them to Chair@Rockridge.org. To attend on Zoom, RSVP at Rockridge.org or scan the QR code. Spread the word to those who may benefit from the conversation. ■

SCAN ME



This is Nico, a nine-year-old Bedlington Terrier. Nico came from a farm in Wales as a puppy and still acts like one. He is a high-energy yet easy-going dog, and because he doesn't shed, the house is very clean as well. He thinks College Avenue is Paris as he gets treats galore from all the vendors. His owner Phil says he is the warmest, easiest dog to take care of, and hopes he'll be around for another six or seven years.

editor@rockridge.org.





Transit-Oriented Development at Rockridge BART — the Conversation Begins

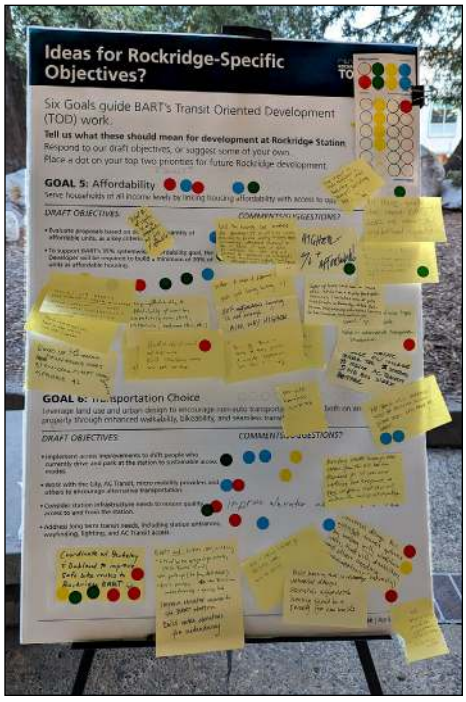
by Anna L. Marks

BART held an Open House last month at the foot of the Rockridge station to gather input and help set objectives for developing a transit-oriented housing project on the site. The BART property consists of two lots — one just across from Market Hall on Shafter Avenue; the second is located along Miles Avenue (the rest of the site is owned by Caltrans and can't be developed, see map on facing page).

"This is the very beginning of the community process. It's probably going to be years before there's a housing development here, but we want to move relatively quickly compared to other BART projects. We're looking to find a developer to start that process by the end of this year. Once we have a developer team on board, there will be a lot more of a process involving the community, the City, BART, and the developers," says BART Director **Rebecca Saltzman**.

When Home Depot was intending to move into the neighborhood, local response was swift and negative (see *Rockridge News*, November 2022). At that time, neighbors made it clear to the City that housing was the preferred use for the lot at 51st and Broadway as well as the site of the old College of the Arts site at Broadway and Clifton — both sites could add a lot of housing to the area. However, at this early stage, and with no design to review, community response to housing at the station has been mixed.

The idea of new housing here is promising — this would make room for many more people to enjoy the amenities Rockridge has to offer. It would mean increased support of the businesses along College Avenue, and has the potential of increasing social and economic diversity in the neighborhood. Some neighbors,



BART Open House, see next page



Cultivating a Culture of Sharing

by Ryan Lindsay, Library Assistant, Rockridge Branch

The Rockridge Branch Library is one of 13 locations in the Oakland Public Library (OPL) system that hosts a seed library. The branch started this particular seed-lending program in January of this year. The little library is housed in an old-school card catalog with each drawer loosely organized by plant type — vegetable, flower, grain, etc.

Anybody can come into the library and help themselves to the selection, whether they have a library card or not. There is no need to check them out, just grab what you need and go. All that is asked in return is that any leftover seeds be returned to the green donation box that sits on top of the card catalog… and please be sure to label and date all donations.

The OPL recently received a grant that is going towards the Resilient Gardening program. The grant is funding a variety of really cool gardening-related seminars and events at various Oakland Library locations throughout Spring and Summer.

For information about the seed program or related events, visit oaklandlibrary.org/seed-lending. ■

The Decolonized Kitchen with Maribel Garcia

Saturday, May 27, 2023
11am to 12pm
Rockridge Branch Library
5366 College Avenue

The Decolonized Kitchen is a gathering for anyone looking to learn in a community about indigenous foodways, ethnobotany, and cooking. Join **Maribel Garcia** for a morning of connection and reclamation and learn about our native plant relatives — one recipe at a time.

Maribel Garcia is a descendant of the Purépecha people from the state of Michoacán, Mexico. As an educator, Garcia is deeply focused on centering indigenous knowledge and creating collective learning spaces in which participants feel empowered as lifelong learners. ■

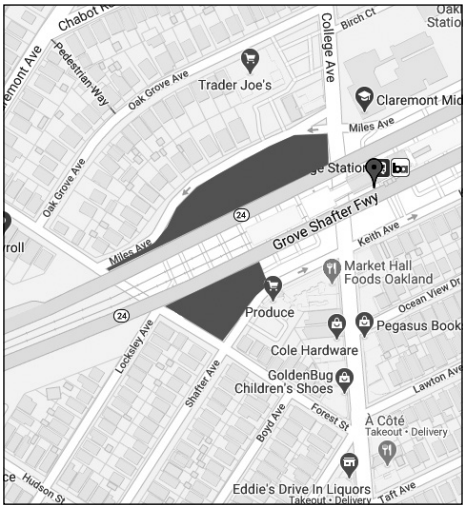


Photo/Anna L. Marks

BART Open House, from previous page

however, expressed concerns about the impact of increased traffic on local streets; the environmental impact to the underground waterway (Temescal Creek runs beneath the station); the removal of redwood trees at Shafter and Forest; the reduction of available parking for BART riders, shoppers and area diners; and the loss of the skateboarding area.

Like many residents, **Theresa Nelson** would like to see more housing in Rockridge but she has worries about building under and near an elevated freeway. "The idea of additional housing on College Avenue, particularly above the many one-story buildings, makes a lot of sense — two stories, three stories, four stories — and the Housing Element of the General Plan calls for that. The BART property development makes no sense to me because it'll have to be built so close to the freeway. Those of us who lived through the '89 earthquake and remember part of the Bay Bridge falling down and the Cypress Structure falling — having housing right next to a freeway is unsafe," says Nelson.



Speaking on behalf of the Rockridge Community Planning Council, the board's Land Use Chair, **Ken Rich**, addressed this concern. "This will be an interesting process to follow. Designing safe residential buildings next to BART and the freeway is perfectly possible, and more difficult design challenges than this are accomplished all the time, but it will be complex. There are only a few pieces of land owned by BART at Rockridge which are sufficiently clear of the freeway. Given the urgent need for housing production in Oakland, we should carefully follow this process and see where it leads."

Director Saltzman agrees that there will be much to consider, especially when doing construction at a busy, active site, but remains positive. "The BART team is familiar with doing this. There have been a lot of successful BART developments in Oakland with sites that have a lot of housing surrounding them. I think we're ready for the challenges."

Saltzman emphasized that there will be many more community meetings and opportunities for input, in person and online, and encourages anyone with questions to email her at Rebecca.Saltzman@bart.gov. ■

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Starter Bakery — Where You'll Find Legendary Pastries, and Careers, in Rockridge

by Susie Wyshak



Owner Brian Wood wants to hire locally for his new College Avenue shop.



Flaky, buttery pastries are made fresh daily at Starter Bakery.

The Rockridge community took **Brian Wood** by surprise. He opened Starter Bakery's first retail location at 5804 College Avenue in March, thinking most customers would have previously experienced his famous buttery and flaky Kouign Amann pastry at the Temescal farmers market, or a local cafe, or maybe even at Oakland's Pop Up General Store where he first debuted the now-legendary pastry back in 2010.

"So many locals had never heard of us." Wood says. "Many of them are now regulars at the bakery. The neighborhood has been so welcoming."

Breads and pastries are baked throughout the day. Kouign Amann fans may be intrigued to know the Cardamom Pistachio Twist and Chocolate Babka are the new customer favorites. Healthy options include yogurt parfaits and sandwiches to eat-in or take-away. There are also some vegan items. Starter chose small-batch coffees from Oakland's RoastCo for its coffee bar.

Meet and Eat

The Rockridge location has a vibe designed for conversation, coffee, and connection. "We wanted to create a refined and special experience for our retail customers," says Wood. High ceilings allow air and light to penetrate deep into the space, balancing a cozy, yet spacious, feeling.

Hints of an industrial feel combine

Starter Bakery, see next page

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Starter Bakery, from previous page

with a naturalistic environment incorporating locally-crafted white oak surfaces, hand-painted tile, ceramics, glass, and lime wash paint. The bakery represents perfectly what's called a "third space," a welcoming place other than the two places where many of us spend most of our time: work and home.

A Life in Baking

Opening a brick-and-mortar bakery was not always in the plan for Wood, although it's a natural evolution for someone who cherishes community connections. Before opening Starter Bakery in 2010, the head baker and CEO had been a restaurant pastry chef, a chocolate production manager, a baking instructor, a wholesale bakery product developer, an author of *Advanced Bread and Pastry,* and an industry consultant. His wholesale bakery began in Emeryville and migrated to a large production facility on Gilman Street.

Interested locals are welcome to explore working at Starter Bakery. Wood says, "We have people who live in the neighborhood in the back-of-house who had no experience who want to expand their horizons. We also have experienced employees, some who studied Hospitality at Laney, and other programs." Full-time employees qualify for Kaiser's health-care, largely funded by Starter.

What's Next?

Expect earlier hours, and eventually later hours for those wanting to grab warm baguettes and desserts in the late afternoon. Wood also anticipates offering the space for meetings and events; the newly painted wall makes a perfect projection screen.

Tip: Ask about the loyalty program when checking out, and visit them at starterbakery.com for updates.

Starter Bakery is open Wed-Sun from 7:30am-3pm at 5804 College Ave., and can also be found Sundays at the Temescal Farmers Market.

Susie Wyshak is a "foodie" real estate agent who welcomes local food and home questions. ■

Forest Street Neighbor Finds a Need, and Fills It

by Anna L. Marks

Joshua Redel was fed up with the potholes on his street brought about by the unceasing atmospheric rivers that deluged the Bay Area this past winter. Despite Forest Avenue being included in the citywide paving plan in the 2022 fiscal budget, the street was badly in need of repair. Redel decided to take matters into his own hands and fill the holes himself.

"I got tired of slamming my tires into the potholes, so I bought some cones, some vests, some lights, five 50 lb. bags of cold patch asphalt, and got to work near the intersection of Shafter, making my way towards Claremont."

Frustrated at the expense of the task, Redel posted to the Colby neighborhood forum to ask for help. "I'm probably going to need ten times that much to get through the distance between College and Claremont. At $20 per bag, I don't think I can afford it alone." Neighbors responded, and he received enough funding for 36 bags. On his way to pick up the bags, Redel found a city crew filling the holes from Miles to College, and they promised to fill Miles to Claremont by the end of the week. He updated supporters with the good news, saying, "I'll make sure they haven't missed anything and then I'll give all of you your money back."

To view Oakland's five-year paving plan, visit https://www.oaklandca.gov/projects/20225yp. ■



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Chabot Road Residents form Task Force to Address Potential Impact of JCC Development

by James Crawford, Karen Lee, Leslie Moldow, Sheela Subramanian, and Eric Newman

The Jewish Community Center of the East Bay (JCC) is in planning and preparation mode for an early 2025 construction kickoff at the soon-to-be vacated Dreyer's site on College Avenue (scheduled for December 2024). As with any project of this size, the forthcoming plans will generate inevitable questions and concerns from the local community.

As soon-to-be neighbors of this center, Chabot Improvement Partnership (ChIP) created a task force with members of the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) to bring together a growing group of involved citizens to collaborate with the JCC in order to facilitate a critical step in the process: listening to community voices and partnering for the best outcomes, and to create an atmosphere built on trust, transparency, and durable solutions.

Community needs and requests were largely ignored by Dreyer's, and more recently, Safeway. Leaning on this experience, all parties have agreed that genuine collaboration is necessary for the project to be an enduring success. Meetings have already been in progress — members of the JCC's development team have been meeting with the task force since last August, and with RCPC for about year.

During the February 7th RCPC/JCC Joint Town Hall, the presenters gave an overview of the project goals and guiding values, showed updated plans and renderings for the site, and discussed ways in which the JCC has worked (and will continue to work) with Fehr and Peers on traffic and parking mitigation concerns. After the presentation, the program held a Q&A covering several topics that need ongoing consideration.

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Traffic

Several attendees expressed concerns about the impact of additional traffic in the neighborhood. The existing plan that JCC presented includes a preschool and after-school programs for 220 students, up to 200 summer camp students, and as many as 100 visitors to the campus daily. In addition, there will be those attending events held at the space formerly occupied by Yoshi's.

Currently, the plans would provide these groups access to the site through the Chabot Road entrance — presenting a major concern for safety and traffic issues for Chabot Road neighbors. The three nearby intersections (College/Chabot, Chabot/Claremont, and Claremont/College) are already congested at current traffic counts, and the additional traffic from the schools and events, and employees at the 20-plus nonprofits, will exacerbate this growing challenge by potentially adding thousands of cars through this residential street each week.

To address these challenges, an initial traffic study commissioned by the JCC has been completed, and **Melissa Chapman**, CEO of the East Bay JCC, has begun the process to do additional studies. She has expressed a willingness to discuss ways to mitigate the traffic and agreed to share the results of the traffic study with the task force. Since plans are still early in the developmental stage, she feels it is premature to release the data to the public at this time.

ChiP asserts that the traffic study is designed to establish a baseline of traffic, but does not estimate future usage. They intend to use this data to propose traffic mitigation strategies that are data-driven and durable for both the Center and the people who will be impacted by it every day.

Housing

Oakland is facing a severe housing crisis and every unit counts. At the task force meetings, **Mark Aaronson** and **Ken Rich** of the RCPC have expressed the desire on the part of the organization to include housing in JCC's plans. This debate began in the 1980s when Dreyer's took over three residential units on Chabot and Claremont for commercial purposes (this issue was covered in the *Rockridge News*, April 1988). That debate continues today, and ChIP has asked that these be returned to residential use. Recently, Chapman stated that the JCC intends to continue to use these spaces for the community center.

Based on current plans, the former Yoshi's Club on Claremont Avenue will continue to be used as an events space.

Special Events

The community center intends to hold events and celebrations on a regular basis. Based on current plans, the former Yoshi's Club on Claremont Avenue will continue to be used as an events space. The main entrance will remain on Chabot Road, and the staff parking will be accessed via Claremont. At the meeting, several community members expressed concern about the plan's impact on noise, traffic, and parking, and asked if the JCC would shift the main entrance to Claremont Avenue. Chapman has agreed to explore that possibility. Ultimately, any changes to traffic flow would need City approval.

The hope and intention of the task force is to continue to collaborate with the community and create a project that everyone can embrace, enjoy, and benefit from for years to come.

Neighbors interested in being involved with the task force, please email chabotip@googlegroups.com. ■

Frog Park Thanks You — Our Neighbors

by Theresa Nelson

After a difficult winter of storms and winds, Frog Park needed a lot of cleanup, and thanks to almost 100 volunteers who turned out on Earth Day, the 22nd of April, the park is ready for summer fun.

Volunteers resealed the wood play structures, helped prepare an area for a pollinator garden in the fall, cleared weeds from the creek, picked up downed branches and bark, cleared weeds and trimmed ivy, cleaned the dog park, and more.

Enormous thanks to Bakesale Betty, Boichik Bagels, and Ain't Normal Café for their very generous donation of pastries, bagels and schmear, and coffee to keep our volunteers well-fueled for a busy day. Special thanks to volunteer teams from Boys Charity Team, the Rockridge Masonic Lodge (see photos below), and St. Theresa Church, who helped so much.

And, finally, thanks to Rockridge Market Hall, which supplied enormous amounts of much-needed cardboard to start the mulching process for the pollinator garden. ■

SAVE THE DATE:
Creek-to-Bay Day: September 23

We'll be planting the pollinator garden and doing some overall park clean-up and maintenance.

Special thanks to Chris Jackson of the Rockridge District Association for organizing a team to plant grasses at the Rockridge BART Station.



Photos/Anna L. Marks

Masonic Hall volunteers came out in force to help with the Earth Day cleanup at Frog Park.





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Discover Art Where It Happens at East Bay Open Studios

by Anna Marks

The annual East Bay Open Studios, produced by Oakland Art Murmur, has been a Bay Area tradition for more than 40 years. The free, self-guided tours offer a unique opportunity to view and purchase a wide variety of artwork directly from artists in various neighborhood settings around the bay. The family-friendly event encompasses more than 185 artists' studios and exhibition spaces throughout 15 local cities, daily from 11am to 5pm. Three local artists are participating this year.

Originally from New Jersey, musician and artist **Robert Temple** of Reclaimed Luminosity makes custom lamps from salvaged items. "I love exploring the combination of light, form, and function. My lamps are all one- or two-of-a-kind, featuring unexpected forms that develop organically as I work. They are made using mostly recycled and up-cycled materials."

Temple's work will be on display May 20th and 21st, at 552 47th Street.

Studio One Arts Center will be featuring several participating artists, including two from the Temescal community, **Gail Robinson** and **Caroline Stern**. Robinson teaches workshops in public schools, art camps, and senior centers. She works with collage and mixed media, using materials from found objects, magazines, and vintage photos.

Stern, who describes her work as "messy, like life," was inspired to become an artist in pre-school where she could paint freely on easels. "I started working as a decorative artist while attending the College of Arts." Be prepared to visit a small studio where the artwork is all hers.

Both artists will have their work on display May 20th and 21st at Studio One, 365 45th Street.

Open Studios are being held May 13/14 and 20/21, from 11am-5pm daily, visit https://eastbayopenstudios.com. ■



Artist Caroline Stern calls this painting "New Beginnings."

Opening Celebration & Exhibition

May 12th, from 6-9pm
Uptown Station, 1955 Broadway

View the work of more than 100 participating East Bay Open Studios artists — mix and mingle while you enjoy food and beverages featuring Black Cultural Zone's Akoma Farmer's Market vendors, a custom cocktail from Homebase Spirits, and music by DJ Laron, aka "Freakpusher." ■

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Rock-N-Stroll Returns to the Avenue with "Family Fest"

by Jody Colley, Rockridge District Association

The Rockridge Rock-N-Stroll returns to College Avenue on the second Saturday of each month — from May through October. Each monthly Rock-N-Stroll includes a theme, beginning with "Family Fest" on **Saturday, May 13, from noon to 4pm**. The series is produced by the Rockridge District Association and offers live outdoor music as visitors stroll the avenue from Broadway to Alcatraz — enjoying sales, craft stations, tastings, pop-up vendors, and other fun activities.

Family Fest includes activities for all ages and some specific for kids and moms. Moms can celebrate Mother's Day weekend by tasting chocolates and cheeses, picking out flower bouquets, enjoying free waxing, and much more. Younger strollers can catch storytime at the library, free balloons, arts and crafts, and planting tables with pot decorating — to name a few of the activities.

Open Mind Music (5521 College Avenue) will showcase two bands composed of family members — MeloDious, and Bumford & Son. The multi-talented Ted Silverman and his chip-off-old-block son, Stu, make up Bumford & Son. They play fun, engaging bluegrass-based music with a touch of Dylan and Dead.

MeloDious, a terrific trio of siblings, will rock the block with keyboard, bass, and drums — playing original tunes along with classic songs of Elton, Stevie, and other favorites. They will be performing at Yoshi's in June, but catch them here first!

Other live music includes Nilo Ayele Afro Brazilian Grooves (McNally's Irish Pub), East Bay Serenaders (Cole Coffee), Five & Dime and Gony B. (College Avenue Presbyterian Church), Claiborne and Friends (Beer Baron Whiskey Bar & Kitchen) and more. All performances are outdoors. ■

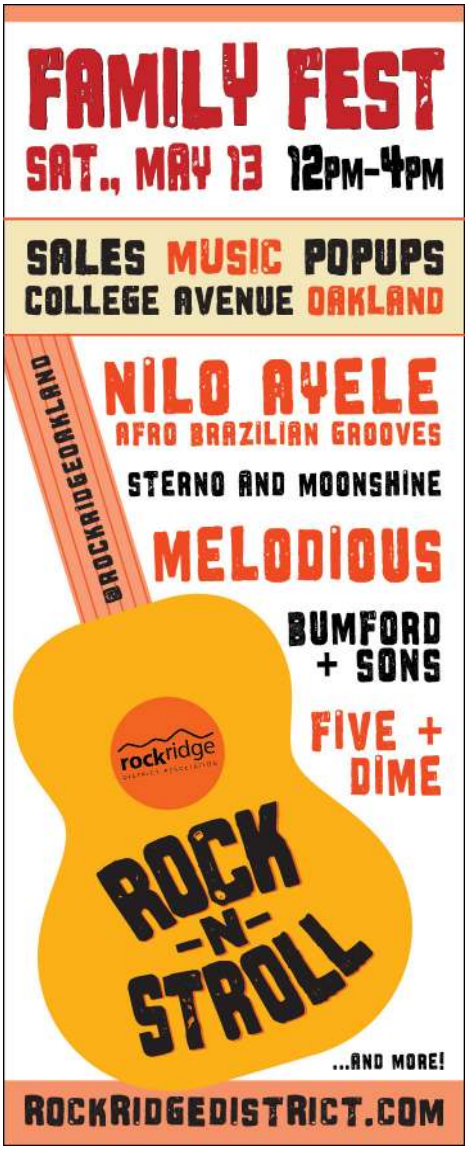
June 10: *Taste of Rockridge*
July 8: *Art Bizarre*
August 12: *Pup Promenade*
September 9: *Scavenger Hunt*
October 14: *Fall Fest*

All events are free, all ages are welcome. Visit RockridgeDistrict.com for schedule.



The band MeloDious is comprised of three siblings: Micaiah, Memphis (pictured above) and Matthias Dempsey.

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April Meeting of the NCPC Reveals Need for More Accountability

by Carol Kasparek

Rockridge residents gathered in person at the library and online for the April meeting of the Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC). Attendance was up from the last meeting in February, with the majority of the attendees showing up in person. The agenda included two presentations — one by representatives from the newest city department, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), and a second by Community Resource Officers (CROs) for Beats 12Y and 13X. The CROs were unable to attend as they were helping clear the homeless encampment on Wood Street.

OIG Audit Manager, **Shayleen Morris**, and Communications Director, **Kiana Gums**, reported on the mission of their department, formed as part of the conclusion of the 20-year Negotiated Settlement Agreement (NSA) agreed to by the Oakland Police Department. Inspector General **Michelle N. Phillips** is tasked with reviewing programs and patterns that are part of the 52 elements of the NSA. Her office will then present data and make recommendations to the Police Commissioner.

Morris described the difference between the OIG and the Community Police Review Agency (CPRA) as a focus on policies and procedures for the OIG while the CPRA investigates specific incidents. With the goal of establishing "constitutional policing," Morris said they hope to "disrupt the culture to make the OPD more accountable." Gums offered that the Office seeks "as much data as possible" to make accurate and useful recommendations for systemic change.

Attendees had questions about the purpose of the OIG. One participant commented "I don't know what independent oversight looks like, how are you getting info out to the community? What's the strategy?" Morris and Gums noted a quarterly newsletter on the city website, an upcoming Safety and Oversight event, an FAQ Fridays feature, and regular visits with community groups such as the NCPC. "We want partnerships. If you are well-informed, public engagement will be more effective," said Morris.

Participants directed the discussion to concerns about staffing, and the increasing number of break-ins and assaults. "Your new department sounds great, but I think most of us here want to know about progress in getting officers on the streets and reducing the crime in our neighborhood," declared one attendee. "Why would you be an officer here if nothing gets processed?" added another. "Why are police officers the people who respond to mental health issues?" was also asked. NCPC Secretary Karen Ivy noted her own study using data from 2019 that showed Oakland, when compared to San Francisco, had about 20 percent fewer officers per 100,000 residents.

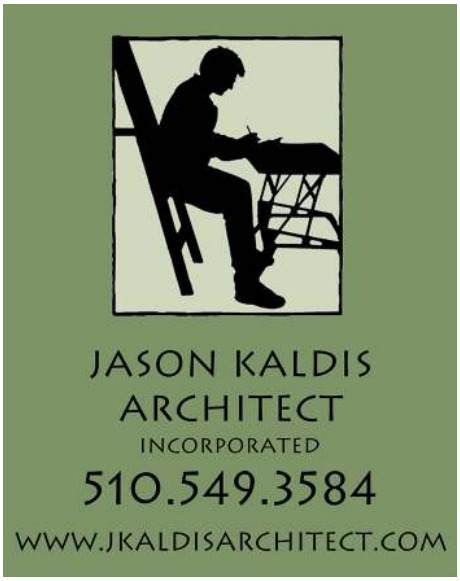
Morris responded that the OIG is conducting a staffing study which will be critical to making changes in the OPD. Among several options under consideration are moving officers from administrative positions into the community, integrating other departments into responses, and balancing the desire of neighborhoods for more or less police presence. Verifying these options, needs, and concerns will be part of the study. "Just hold us accountable," urged Morris. ■

The next meeting will be held at the Rockridge Library:

Thursday, June 8, 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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4/11/2022	3	2	6060 Harwood Ave	$1,195,000	$1,195,000	12	$1,656,060
4/11/2022	3	1.5	6443 Hillegass	$2,100,000	$2,100,000	0	$2,100,000
4/18/2022	2	1	5950 Canning St	$1,068,000	$1,068,000	13	$1,068,000
4/18/2022	2	1	5245 Manila Ave	$749,000	$749,000	11	$1,066,000

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