

## Servino's to move, paving way for new farm-to-table spot



ELLIOT KARLAN / FOR THE ARK

The Servino family, owner of Servino Ristorante at 9 Main St., and building owner ACV Argo Tiburon LP separately announced Oct. 1 that the restaurant would return to its original location on lower Ark Row next spring and that a farm-to-table retail-restaurant space, Malibu Farm, would take its place.

Downtown landlord also says Michael Mina restaurant to open in early 2021, Shark's Deli to be developed into bistro.

By **DEIRDRE McCROHAN**  
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Popular Italian eatery Servino Ristorante will move back to its original home on lower Ark Row next spring, paving the way for an organic farm-to-table retail-and-restaurant chain to take its place on lower Main Street.

In an exclusive announcement to The Ark, landlord ACV Argo Tiburon LP said Oct. 1 that Malibu Farm — which has eight loca-

**also downtown**

Tiburon is reviewing plans for Green Taste Vegan Goods market to open on Main Street, page 7

tions across Southern California, Hawaii, New York, Miami, Mexico and Tokyo — will open at Servino's longtime home at Main St. in 2021 or 2022 after renovation and a redesign of the two-story building.

See **RESTAURANTS, PAGE 24**

## Landlord says it has no takers for Tiburon Playhouse, will redevelop theater building

By **DEIRDRE McCROHAN**  
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Apparently dashing hopes of residents seeking to preserve Tiburon's downtown movie theater, landlord ACV Argo said it has made several unsuccessful attempts to bring in a new operator and instead is looking at the building with an eye toward

redevelopment.

The owner of the three-screen Tiburon Playhouse, David Corkill of the Cinema West theater chain, announced last month the theater, which had been closed since March amid the coronavirus pandemic, would be shutting down permanently after

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**election 2020**

## Hopefuls for council and school board square off in forums



Block



Kemnitzer



Lynch



Schlunt

## Belvedere council candidates discuss seawall, disaster prep

By **HANNAH WEIKEL**  
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Racial equality, disaster readiness and the COVID-19 pandemic were among the issues at the forefront of a discussion between the four candidates competing for three open seats on the Belvedere City

Council at a Sept. 29 virtual forum hosted by The Ark and moderated by the League of Women Voters of Marin County.

On the rapidly approaching Nov. 3 presidential election ballot, incumbent Nancy Kemnitzer is seeking a second term on the

See **BELVEDERE, PAGE 18**



Emerson



Hornbrook



Jaffee



Webb

## Reed district board candidates talk about pandemic, inclusion

By **EMILY LAVIN**  
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The four candidates vying for two seats on the Reed Union School District board of trustees generally found common ground on key issues facing the district at a Sept.

30 virtual forum hosted by The Ark and moderated by the Marin League of Women Voters of Marin County.

Those on the ballot in the upcoming Nov. 3 Presidential Election include appointed

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**Belvedere**, *continued from page 1*

council and will be competing against newcomers Chelsea Schlunt, James Lynch and Steve Block for the three vacancies.

Kemnitz, who is set to retire from her job as a law partner at Kemnitz, Barron & Krieg next year, was first elected to the council in 2016 after running unopposed. She was appointed the city's mayor last July and previously served nearly 10 years on the Planning Commission. She and her husband have lived in Belvedere for 35 years and raised two children. Kemnitz said her many years serving the community and the multiple emergencies she's handled in the past year as mayor have given her the institutional knowledge needed for another term.

"My priorities are simple: keep our residents safe in these challenging times, preserve the physical beauty and character of this place and foster community and inclusive involvement by all ages," Kemnitz said.

The three challengers also have backgrounds in public service and have been involved in the issues currently facing Belvedere.

Block is an attorney who does pro-bono work for Marin groups, including non-profits 10,000 Degrees, the Canal Alliance and Marin Legal Aid. He's a member of the Belvedere Block Captains Program and serves as a Belvedere Community Foundation trustee. He said his drive to give back to the community stems from family members who were committed to public service.

"I think that these experiences will serve me well and the city well as we confront the challenges and opportunities ahead," Block said.

**History**, *continued from page 16*

Sausalito, Belvedere and Tiburon people are to be congratulated in attending these concerts as they are the best in music and culture.

\*\*

In justice to its guests, the Alta Mira Hotel reminds pedestrians that the hotel grounds are not a public thoroughfare. People who have been in the habit of making it a short cut at all hours of the day and

Schlunt, co-founder and general manager of pumbing, heating and air conditioning company Bellows Services, has volunteered for the Block Captains, Tiburon-Belvedere Joint Recreation Committee board of directors, the Reed Union School District and the Tiburon Peninsula Soccer Club. She also is a member of the Marin Recovers COVID-19 construction-industry advisory group. A Belvedere resident of four years and "full-time working mother of three," Schlunt said she understands the issues facing young families and children in Belvedere.

"I want to serve Belvedere's residents on our council and give everyone an equal voice," Schlunt said. "I believe leaders must mirror the constituents that they serve, and I mirror a large portion of our community."

Lynch is a retired partner at the legal firm Latham & Watkins and has served on the Belvedere Planning Commission since 2014. He also chairs the city's Committee to Protect Belvedere's Seawalls, Levees and Utilities and is board president of The Redwoods senior community in Mill Valley. Lynch said during his time as a litigator he dove deep into issues, listened to different points of view and strove to reach consensus among opposition.

"I bring that same skill set — that same listening, that same capability — to my service for Belvedere, and I will bring that same service to the City Council if I'm elected," Lynch said.

**Candidates stress importance of disaster preparedness**

At the forum, candidates fielded several questions about issues surrounding Belvedere's preparedness against rising sea levels, power outages, earthquakes, fires and floods — issues that have colored many of the city's decisions in recent years, from

night are asked to discontinue this practice.

\*\*

Rain commenced falling last evening at seven and according to our local rain prognosticators such as Capt. Matt Lange, Capt. August Petersen and B. Watt Leigh, the rain is here for a few days.

*Contributor Hillary Don, a local historian, began writing this column May 7, 1992 — and he hopes to one day include history from his birth year, 1932. Contact him at hdon@thearknewspaper.com.*

**watch the forum**

The Sept. 29 Belvedere City Council candidate forum can be viewed at [marinlwv.org/candidate-forums-nov32020](http://marinlwv.org/candidate-forums-nov32020).

maintaining a reserve fund in the budget to the revamping of public walking lanes that can be used as evacuation routes.

All four candidates pointed to disaster preparedness as their biggest priority in the coming year, with particular emphasis on Belvedere's multimillion-dollar seawall project. The project has become a pressing issue in recent years as the city works to address studies that show a 100-year storm event could overtop Belvedere's existing flood infrastructure and cause extensive flooding in the Belvedere Lagoon and that a severe earthquake could displace the city's two arterial roads and rupture the utilities buried underneath.

Before the end of this year, the Belvedere City Council will likely be asked to vote on a roughly \$20.1-million conceptual design for the project, which would raise seawalls along Beach Road, San Rafael Avenue and a short stretch of West Shore Road and install metal sheet piling along the shoreline to protect against earthquakes.

City officials have not yet determined how the project will be paid for but have said it will likely be through a combination of grants and a new parcel tax.

Two of the candidates, Kemnitz and Lynch, are members of the city's seawall committee tasked with studying the project as well as viable alternatives and cost. Both candidates stressed the importance of seismic and flood protections.

Kemnitz said the project is intended to protect both the lagoon and residents on Belvedere Island, who could lose utilities like water and electricity if the city's arterial roads were destroyed by an earthquake.

"The levees are our only roads in and out of town, and they harbor all of our (utility) infrastructure," she said. "If Beach Road fails in an earthquake there will be no water pressure to fight fires on the island."

Lynch called the seawall project "the most important thing we are dealing with right now."

"We now understand the problem, the next step is the solution," he said. "We are at the point of understanding and agreeing upon a conceptual solution, which will then be reduced to what they call shovel-ready drawings that can be priced out."

Schlunt agreed that the city's seawalls

must be raised. She said her focus would be on finding a "fiscally responsible" way forward with the project "that doesn't put too much pressure or burden on the citizens of this town," including young families and residents on a fixed income who might be concerned about increased property taxes.

"There's a cost to doing these repairs, and if we don't it could be orders of magnitude worse if and when there is a disaster," she said.

Block said the "elephant in the room" is how the project will be paid for, noting it's going to be a "big lift" for residents no matter how the project is revised and pared down.

"There's already lines being drawn between the lagoon and the island and people talking about a battle of Belvedere. That's not where I want to go as a city," he said. "My commitment to the city is that we're going to approach this problem in an inclusive and a unifying manner to try to reach a consensus."

Kemnitz, who has been actively looking for outside funding sources for the seawall project, said she was encouraged by a Marin Civil Grand Jury report released last month that urged the county to create an office to seek grant funding for regional infrastructure projects that adapt to climate change.

Lynch agreed the possibility of a regional grant is the "most notable" of "a number of different funding solutions" the city is currently looking at.

The candidates also pointed out several weak spots in the city's disaster planning.

Block said the city's evacuation plan needs to be "dusted off" and pressure tested to see if it's still workable. He also said chipper days should be expanded and utility lines on West Shore Road should be undergrounded to protect against sparking a fire that spreads up the island.

Kemnitz went a step further and called for a "complete overhaul" of the city's emergency evacuation plan.

"I have started working with staff to do this," she said, adding the new evacuation plan should take into account "lessons learned" from recent wildfires that at least two routes are needed, including one by foot.

Schlunt agreed, and said she'd like to have a citywide evacuation drill similar to those done in schools.

"I'd love to see us as a city actually physically prepare and have a day where we give

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**Belvedere**, *from previous page*

it a shot," she said. "We have to stay vigilant with disaster preparedness."

Lynch said that while Belvedere isn't considered a high wildfire-risk area, "there's no question that a fire would be a calamity," specifically pointing out the city's water for fire suppression runs under roads that are vulnerable to earthquake damage. He also highlighted egress issues in the city, particularly around the undergrounding project on lower Golden Gate Avenue.

"That is a serious potential problem that needs to be addressed," he said.

**Communitywide anti-racism effort needed moving forward**

All candidates also decried an Aug. 21 police incident at Yema, a Black-owned clothing shop in downtown Tiburon, and praised the response from Belvedere officials, including the launch of an independent investigation into the officers' conduct.

Video footage of the incident shows a Tiburon police sergeant repeatedly questioning storeowners Yema Khalif and Havi Awash as they were working in their store late at night. The sergeant, who has since resigned from the force, repeatedly demanded physical proof they owned the store and didn't back down until a neighbor yelled down from a balcony to vouch for Khalif. A Belvedere officer and a second Tiburon officer were also at the scene.

The incident spurred a rally of more than 200 people outside the Tiburon police station demanding accountability for the officers' actions, as well as a joint Town Hall-style forum, where residents from Belvedere and

**League of Women Voters to host virtual candidate, ballot info forums**

The League of Women Voters of Marin County is holding three virtual candidate forums for races that will appear on Tiburon Peninsula ballots in the upcoming Nov. 3 election.

The forums include:  
**• Mill Valley School District board:** 7-8:30 p.m. Oct. 9. The race for two four-year seats on the board of the school district, which includes Strawberry Point Elementary School, includes incumbent Bob Jacobs and newcomers Joan Hottenstein, Michele Crncich Hodge and Elli Abdoli.  
**• Marin Healthcare District board:** 7-8:30 p.m. Oct. 12. The two incumbents, Harris Simmonds and Ann Sparkman, are being challenged by Edward J. Alfrey and

Melissa D. Bradley.  
**• Marin Community College District board:** 7-8:30 p.m. Oct. 14. The four incumbents — Philip J. Kranenburg, Eva Long, Stephanie A. O'Brien and Stuart Tanenberg — will face challengers Robbie T.B. Powelson and Paul da Silva.

In addition, the league is hosting a series of presentations on the pros and cons of the 12 state propositions that will appear on the ballot. Those are scheduled for 10 a.m. Oct. 13, 6 p.m. Oct. 20 and 11 a.m. Oct. 21.

All the forums and the pros-and-cons presentations will live-streamed on the league's YouTube channel.

For more information, visit [marinlwv.org](http://marinlwv.org).  
 — *Deirdre McCrohan*

Tiburon aired concerns about racism in the community and local police departments.

The local incident came on the heels of nationwide unrest and protests against police brutality after the Memorial Day killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police. Floyd's death led to widespread demands that police departments adopt changes to their use-of-force policies, including bans on chokeholds and strangleholds.

Lynch said that racial inequity is "one of the most critical things we are dealing with." He said the Yema incident highlighted a "disconnect" between how people understand encounters with the police.

"I think the city's response of launching an investigation was the proper one," Lynch said. "It's critical that that run its process,

and we can't prejudge what the outcome of that will be."

Schlunt called the incident "distressing on numerous levels" but noted that it's forced the community to confront its racial inequities. She said she's also heard from an equal number of residents who are supportive of the police.

"We are fortunate to live in a safe community, and I would hope that all people in Belvedere can say that they feel it's safe too," she said. "I'm hoping that this can be used as a teaching moment so it never happens again."

Block said the police should be expected to interact with all residents and visitors with the same degree of "respect and professionalism." He said it's up to the City Council

to provide sufficient oversight and ensure that expectation is met.

"I'm not sure that's happened in the past because I'm not sure we were aware of the potential for a problem, but we sure are now," Block said. "I think that we need to move forward and keep a close eye on this issue and demand some accountability."

Kemnitz, who has helped lead the city's response, said she met with Khalif and Awash at their store a couple days after the incident and reached out to Tiburon to express an interest in participating in the joint Town Hall forum, which ended up drawing more than 400 participants.

"I have spoken with the activists, they prefer concrete actions to resolutions, so we have a number of actions in progress," she said. She pointed specifically to assistance for residents of The Hilarita, an affordable-housing complex on Ned's Way, joint recreation programs, a community program on the book "Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents" by Isabel Wilkerson and a special presentation from a school-district representative at an upcoming City Council meeting.

The candidates also considered whether racial-bias and inclusivity training should be expanded beyond the Belvedere Police Department to other city officials and staff.

Lynch said the training should be offered to everybody in the community, including city staff and elected officials.

"We learn so much by talking about these issues, by understanding perspectives, by learning what it's like to walk a mile in someone else's shoes," he said. "I think that kind of training ... ought to be expanded to our entire community."

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**Belvedere**, *continued from page 19*

Schlunt said anti-racism and inclusivity talks should start in schools. She said her son is already learning about those topics at the Belvedere Nursery School.

“We need to start with educating our children at a young age about the value of treating people as one and as the same,” she said.

Block said diversity and sensitivity training “can really only go so far” because racism is often engrained and can be difficult to root out. He said structural changes would be more effective and meaningful, such as more diversity among staff at Belvedere City Hall.

“I think that actions speak a lot more strongly than words do in this area,” he said.

Kemnitzer noted she’s completed a workshop through Showing Up for Racial Justice Marin, which she said should be mandatory for all City Council members and offered to the entire community.

“I have found through the SURJ training that the more I learn, the more I know I need to learn,” she said.

**Candidates support education over mask enforcement**

The council candidates said they would like all Belvedere residents to make a habit of wearing masks when out and about to prevent the spread of COVID-19 but said the best way to get compliance in the community is through education, not through citations and fines.

Face coverings have been required in Belvedere since Marin imposed mask requirements in April, and in July the city became the first municipality in the county to give police officers the option to issue noncriminal citations of \$100-\$500 for rule-breakers.

So far, no such citations have been issued. Instead, the city has opted for police to hand out free disposable masks to anyone seen without one in a public place, like the shoreline paths or Belvedere Community Park.

Meanwhile, Belvedere, now with 20 positive cases, has held one of the highest COVID-19 case rates in Southern Marin at 1,052 cases per 100,000 people.

Block said masks are difficult to enforce when the rules don’t require people to wear them when exercising outdoors unless

they come within 6 feet of someone else. He said handing out free masks has been an “effective way to get people focused on the issue.”

However, he said, “Where people are continually recalcitrant, then I think we have to enforce it and cite them.”

Kemnitzer, who has issued messages to the community as mayor throughout the pandemic encouraging masks, said the Police Department has so far handed out 37 masks to residents. She said the education over citation approach is “mostly working” in Belvedere.

“The complaints we get are mostly in Community Park, not in random places throughout the city,” she said.

She said the biggest violators of the face-covering rule in Belvedere seem to be children and teenagers who gather at the park to play or hang out.

“I’ve had a lot of great conversations with our teenagers, telling them that I’m the vulnerable one that they have to protect,” she said. “This is neighbors helping neighbors.”

Lynch said he believes the higher case rate in Belvedere could be due to the fact that many residents travel for work or have second homes in areas where the virus abounds. He said he supports education over enforcement but that citations would be appropriate “if we get to the point where education is not effective.”

“This is life and death stuff,” he said. “Compliance should not be discretionary.”

Schlunt, who has helped form virus-safety measures for construction companies through Marin Recovers, said adherence to the mask order is “incredibly important,” especially as businesses and schools try to reopen safely. She suggested working with the local school districts to remind kids about the importance of wearing a face covering.

“Education is what we need to do. I’d hate to see it get to an enforcement or citation point,” she said. “Let’s find out who in the community is having a hard time following those guidelines, and let’s figure out what we can do as a community to support them.”

*Reporter Hannah Weikel covers the city of Belvedere, as well as crime, courts and public safety issues on the Tiburon Peninsula. Reach her at 415-944-4627.*

**Reed**, *continued from page 1*

incumbent Liz Webb, the co-founder and CEO of eVOC Insights consulting firm, as well as challengers Dan Emerson, the senior associate athletic director for compliance at the Academy of Art University; Charles Hornbrook, a Tiburon Parks, Open Space and Trails Commission member and the managing director at Transiliency; and Jacqueline Jaffee, an attorney and the executive director of Adopt A Family of Marin. All four candidates have kids enrolled in the district.

Viewers who tuned in to the forum, which was live-streamed on YouTube, heard the candidates field questions including how to best approach education amid the coronavirus pandemic, how to achieve educational equity for all students and how to best solicit and use feedback from all stakeholders to shape district priorities.

**Candidates support return to class amid pandemic**

All of the candidates said they supported a full-time return to class for students amid the pandemic. After opening the year in distance learning, the Reed district this week transitioned to a hybrid learning model in which all students will have two days of in-person classes and three days of distance learning each week. The district is targeting Nov. 9 to bring all students back to campus for a shortened school day five days a week.

Hornbrook said he was in favor of a quick return to class for students, though he noted not all parents feel comfortable with that path. He said the district should focus on using technology to make accommodations to best serve those families who don’t yet feel ready to send their kids back to campus.

“How can we build flexibility using technology and help build better solutions for all of the parents?” he asked.

Jaffee said she understands the need to have children back on campus and noted the priority was adhering to public-health rules.

“The only way to safely and effectively navigate that return is through what we do know, which is our county guidelines,” she said. “The school district is doing just that, offering multiple paths to return so families can find what is appropriate for them.”

Webb, who as current member of board voted to approve this week’s transition to the hybrid model and the Nov. 9 target date for a full-time return, agreed. She pointed out the district has implemented a host of new safe-

**watch the forum**

The video of the Sept. 30 Reed Union School District candidate forum can be viewed by visiting [marinlvw.org/candidate-forums-nov302020](http://marinlvw.org/candidate-forums-nov302020).

ty protocols to ensure students are as safe as they can be while in the classroom.

“It is a time where we need to navigate uncertain conditions, but we do need to rely on Marin public health and the guidelines that have been set forth for us,” she said.

Emerson said he felt like the current district board had taken the right approach with a phased-in return to class, noting districts that have rushed to bring students back have had issues.

“The ultimate goal is to be able to go back in a safe environment where everyone feels OK in the classroom,” he said.

As the district welcomes students back to class, it’s also offering a full-time distance-learning program for those families who don’t want their kids to return to campus this school year. Superintendent Nancy Lynch last week said the district is exploring a third learning option for parents who did not previously enroll their kids in full-time distance learning but are not yet ready to start in-person classes.

Some parents have advocated for kids who continue distance learning to be able to use Zoom to be part of a class with their in-person counterparts. However, teachers and administrators have said that likely wouldn’t work, as teachers would not be able to split their attention between those in the classroom and those learning online.

Hornbrook said he would support using technology to see if that type of split classroom could work, as a way to ensure “everyone feels safe and secure and they’re learning and staying with the same teacher.”

While Jaffee said many districts are allowing students to use Zoom to be part of in-person classes, part of the job of board members is to heed the guidance of teachers, administrators and the superintendent who have stated they “do not find it beneficial, they find it detrimental, they find it distracting for teachers and for the students.”

However, she noted the situation is fluid and said she would be open to reconsidering in the future if recommendations from teachers changed.

Webb generally agreed with Jaffee, noting the district’s mission is to ensure all students receive the same level of academic and

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**Reed**, *continued from previous page*

social-emotional teaching whether they’re physically present in the classroom or not.

Having students be part of live classes online is “not an equitable solution,” she said. “That’s why teachers and the superintendent have not put that option on the table.”

Emerson said it would only be possible to have students use Zoom for live classes if there were two staff members per class, so one teacher could focus on the kids who were online. He noted that would likely be unrealistic given budget constraints.

He said he backed the decision to not offer that option to students, though he said that doesn’t mean the decision couldn’t be revisited in the future.

“You want that to be fair to and to be an excellent process for all students to get the education they deserve,” he said.

All of the candidates acknowledged the pandemic could leave the district facing tough financial decisions in the coming years, particularly when it comes to funding from the Foundation for Reed Schools. The foundation typically raises about \$2 million for the school district but has been hard-hit by the pandemic, which has forced it to cancel many of its major events and has made it more difficult to solicit donations.

If budget cuts do become necessary, the candidates said, a top priority would be preserving teacher jobs.

Hornbrook noted not only is the district dealing with the pandemic, but enrollment is declining. If there are budget shortfalls, he said, the first step should be to look for other means of revenue, such as grants, that could help avoid cuts. He also said the district could look into offering some employees an incentive to retire early, something it did this past spring.

“I think it’s looking and seeing what faculty can provide so we don’t have to make some draconian or not-based-in-a-thoughtful-discussion cuts,” he said.

Jaffee said that while she hopes the community is able to rally around the foundation, a shortfall in its funding could put some of the district’s programs, such as Spanish at Reed Elementary School, at risk.

“I really hope that we are not in a situation this spring where we are negotiating budget cuts, but we also need to be realistic that that might be the situation we are in,” she said.

Webb noted the district wants to “do everything we can to maintain the integrity of our amazing staff” and pointed to the early-retirement plan the district offered last spring to get ahead of any potential staff cuts.

If budget cuts are necessary, she said, the board would have to weigh the recommendations of staff.

“This very much would come down to the superintendent’s decision-making authority, and we would need to review what those decisions are,” she said.

Emerson said he had first-hand experience with the financial impacts of the pandemic on education, as he has taken a pay cut in his position at the Academy of Art University. He agreed with Hornbrook that the district should examine other funding streams that could help stave off potential budget cuts.

If it does get to the point where cuts have to be made, he said, the board would “have to lean on the superintendent” who can hopefully bring stakeholders to the table to discuss the issue.

“They can have those conversations to find the best avenue to have it minimizing the impact on our kids,” he said.

**Diversity a priority for district, candidates say**

The candidates also agreed that diversity and inclusion need to be priorities within the district, where some 20 percent of students identify as students of color.

Jaffee said tackling issues of diversity and inequality starts with creating awareness within the community, “making sure the community knows there are neighbors who need help and support and then identifying how we help.” District policies should reflect those conversations, she said.

Webb said principles of diversity and inclusion are built into the district’s strategic plan, a roadmap that lays out the district’s short- and long-term goals. She noted the district still had “a long way to go” in putting those policies into practice.

“Our students need to understand from their teachers how to talk about these issues,” she said, and the district should keep them at the forefront so students “can bring them home to the dinner table.”

Emerson said diversity and inclusion start at the top, with the district ensuring it has a diverse board making decisions so board members can truly understand issues facing low-income students, students of color and students of different religions.

He also said the district should focus on implementing hiring practices that increase the diversity of its staff, who should be educated through workshops and speakers to deliver lessons about race to students.

“When hoping for inclusion, you’re hoping for fairness,” he said, stressing the importance to look at “everyone and all points of views impacted by the decisions or policies you make.”

Hornbrook agreed that a priority of the district should be ensuring its faculty represents the diversity it wants to be targeting and said it’s important for the district to keep diversity discussions at the forefront.

“It’s reaching out and making sure that we’re listening to all diverse parent groups and making sure we’re meeting their needs as well as their students’ needs,” he said.

The discussion on inclusion also touched on recent social-media accounts associated with Redwood High School that have been circulating anti-Semitic and other hateful content. The Tiburon Peninsula has had its own incidents of anti-Semitism over the past couple of years, including an incident in 2018 when a Star of David was found spray-painted on the playground at Bel Aire Elementary School alongside graffiti of male genitalia.

Emerson noted parent communication is a big component of ensuring the district is inclusive.

“It’s educating students and giving things to parents who can help continue that education at home,” he said.

Hornbrook stressed the need for age-appropriate education across all three schools, noting teachers can use examples of incidents and language currently being used around the country.

“I think the faculty is ready to go on these pieces, I think they’re well-trained and very eager to share their knowledge,” Hornbrook said. “It’s just making sure that the board gives the superintendent that support that this is what we want as a priority.”

Jaffee said the district needs to call out and strongly condemn racist or anti-Semitic incidents.

“The way to keep anti-Semitism and racism at bay is to foster trust, community and

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**Seminary, from page 5**

porary home to private evangelical Christian college Olivet University. North Coast purchased the property for \$85 million in 2014 and originally sought to move the private Ross-based Branson School to the site, along with housing. That proposal was blasted by neighbors for being too high-impact and fell apart after Branson dropped out, citing the community backlash.

A second plan in 2017 that would have brought housing and a 1,000-student graduate school made up of a combination of commuters, on-site boarders and online students to the property was similarly rejected by neighbors. That plan was rendered moot after the Marin Board of Supervisors denied the developer's request to extend the property's 1984 Master Plan by another four years, instead requiring North Coast to submit a new Master Plan application in order to develop the site.

That decision prompted representatives from North Coast and a group of neighbors in early 2018 to form a working group, dubbed Seminary Tomorrow, in hopes of reaching a compromise for the property.

The two sides reported progress, but the meetings stopped short of producing the desired compromise, with the proposed school for the site emerging as the major sticking point. Community members said North Coast would not provide specifics on exactly how many students the school would enroll, how the school would operate or the percentage of housing that would be set aside for the school's use. As a result, those neighbors said, they couldn't fully endorse any component of the plan.

Representatives for North Coast, meanwhile, have said the process reached a point where members of the working group were making individual demands regarding the project. The developer has been adamant that analysis by the county is the next logi-

cal step in finalizing the plans.

North Coast filed its revised project with the county earlier this year, but a hearing in front of the Design Review Board was delayed until September due to the coronavirus-related shutdowns. At the virtual meeting, feedback from the board and community members was overwhelmingly negative, with both citing continued concerns about the development's scope and saying North Coast wasn't being transparent about its plans.

The Seminary Neighborhood Association refers to the Design Review Board's rejection of the project in its appeal, saying the county decision to begin environmental review disregarded the board's input.

"The entire (Strawberry Design Review Board) hearing process was an exercise in futility that was always going to be promptly ignored by county staff if it did not suggest moving forward," the appeal states.

The appeal also takes issue with language in the application that states North Coast is proposing "no change" to the scope of the existing use permit for the school. The appeal insists that the current conditional use permit for the property, granted in 1953, limits educational use of the property to a self-contained seminary and requires housing on the property to be "incidental" to the educational use.

The appeal states there must be a new conditional use permit granted to allow North Coast to have market-rate housing and the proposed 1,000-student school on the site.

However, those claims appear to conflict at least in part with assertions made by county officials, who on numerous occasions have said that the expiration of the 1984 Master Plan lifted restrictions on current housing on the site, allowing North Coast to rent units out to the general public. Officials have also said the 1953 use permit allows North Coast to place a school on the site with no restrictions on enrollment,

school hours or other characteristics.

The appeal additionally says amendments proposed by the applicant to the Strawberry Community Plan to allow for market-rate housing and a school of up to 1,000 students seek "to unwind the entire concept approved for the property based on decades of community and county input."

In an email, Charles Goodyear, spokesman for North Coast, said the neighbors in their appeal "are making an overly narrow and potentially unconstitutional interpretation" of the property's current conditional use permit and called the argument that the property is limited to a self-contained seminary "nonsense," noting that "no school or college ... is ever self-contained."

Goodyear said the appeal is "wholly without merit, and if allowed to stand would deprive North Coast of due process."

He said the current plan includes several elements identified as priorities by neighbors; North Coast has previously said those elements include the residential-care facility, daycare and open space. He also noted North Coast had submitted two alternative housing plans to be considered by the county during the environmental review process. One, a "maximum density" plan, proposes 546 units of housing on the site; the other references the facilitated Seminary Tomorrow process in proposing 233 units, "a level of development considerably less dense than what is allowed on the site," Goodyear noted.

He urged supervisors to "listen to planning land-use experts" and keep the project moving forward to environmental review.

"North Coast is simply seeking a proper, professional review of this development proposal," he wrote.

*Emily Lavin is The Ark's assistant editor and Strawberry reporter. Reach her at 415-944-3841.*

**Theater, continued from page 1**

more than 60 years.

Corkill cited the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic as the primary cause of the closure.

Many in the community expressed disappointment in the seemingly sudden announcement, though it appears Corkill had been considering closing the Playhouse for several months before making the official decision.

SG Ellison, president of A&C Ventures, the parent company of building owner ACV Argo Tiburon LLC, said in a Sept. 30 interview the company was notified in January — before the pandemic began — that Corkill would not be renewing his lease.

"He said he wasn't getting a lot of customers and couldn't make it work," Ellison told The Ark.

Corkill, however, said that isn't quite true. Rather, he said the property manager in January asked if he was interested in re-upping his lease for another five years, and at that time Corkill said he was undecided.

Corkill last week provided The Ark with an email he sent to the landlord in mid April, which notes that he'd previously stated he was unsure about whether to renew but that the pandemic now "gives us the opportunity to explore options that may be beneficial to us and the landlord."

In the email, Corkill said suggestions about a management agreement or partnership to keep the theater open could work in the long run, but that in the meantime he has other short-term rental obligations and that his theater equipment could be better used elsewhere.

Instead, he noted the theater's rent is "far below market" for a space of the size and asked if the landlord would be interested in early termination of the lease, set to expire in January 2021, "so the building can be repositioned sooner rather than later?"

"I thought, if I gave them back the building early, would that help them with the redevelopment plans?" Corkill said in an interview. "I didn't want to renew a lease on a building that would be closed indefinitely, and I wanted to explore options with them."

Corkill said he was initially unsuccessful in negotiating out of his lease and continued paying rent while the theater was shut down amid the pandemic. He later was able to negotiate out of the lease and announced the decision to close in mid-September.

Ellison said ACV Argo has reached out to a number of Bay Area theater operators to see if any would be interested in taking over and got no takers. Instead the company said it will look to redevelop the site at 40 Main St.

See **THEATER, NEXT PAGE**

**Theater, from previous page**

It would be the latest downtown redevelopment effort for ACV Argo, which owns several commercial properties on both sides of lower Main Street, as well as on Tiburon Boulevard. The company owns 5 Main St., which is currently under construction to house celebrity chef Michael Mina's planned new restaurant, and former New Morning Cafe and Grass Shack sites at the corner of Tiburon Boulevard and Juanita Lane that is being transformed into a 2½-story commercial-residential space with businesses on the bottom level and condos above.

ACV Argo on Oct. 1 also announced its plans to open farm-to-table retail-restaurant Malibu Farms at 9 Main St., currently home to Servino Ristorante, which in spring will return to its original location on lower Ark Row. The same announcement included a concept to redevelop the old Shark's Deli site at Tiburon Boulevard and Beach Road with an indoor-outdoor bistro.

Ellison said he and other company of-

ficials had a number of discussions with Tiburon Town Manager Greg Chanis and other town staffers about what could be built at the Playhouse site that complies with the Tiburon General Plan.

Chanis said town officials have had "numerous" discussions with ACV Argo, but the company has not yet submitted plans for anything.

The Tiburon Playhouse building is zoned to allow neighborhood-serving businesses as well as visitor-serving uses. Tiburon has already started allowing mixed-use housing, incorporating those business or visitor-serving uses on the ground floor of structures with housing on upper floors, such as at the former New Morning Cafe building.

Chanis said any use that doesn't adhere to current zoning rules would need to be reviewed and approved by the Tiburon Planning Commission.

*Deirdre McCrohan has reported on Tiburon local government and community issues for more than 30 years. Reach her at 415-944-4634.*

**at a glance**

Marin data is per the county Department of Health and Human Services as of 3 p.m. Oct. 5. **Tiburon:** 63 diagnosed cases, up from 62 the previous week. The town has an overall rate of 701 total cases per 100,000 residents.

**Belvedere:** 20 diagnosed cases, unchanged from the previous week. The city has an overall rate of 1,052 total cases per 100,000 residents.

**Strawberry:** 16 diagnosed cases, unchanged from the previous week. The community has an overall rate of 295 total cases per 100,000 residents.

**Marin:** 4,557 diagnosed cases, 4,317 recovered, 91 deaths and six current hospitalizations. Up from 4,487 cases and no new deaths from the previous week. The adjusted

seven-day case rate was 5.7 new daily cases per 100,000 residents, and test positivity was 2.9 percent. Marin's R-eff was 0.79 as of Oct. 5, according to the California COVID Assessment Tool.

**California:** 826,784 diagnosed cases, 16,149 deaths, per the California Department of Public Health as of Oct. 4. Up from 807,425 cases, 15,640 deaths the previous week.

**U.S.:** 7,396,730 cases, 209,199 deaths, per the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as of 3 p.m. Oct. 5. Up from 7,129,313 cases and 204,598 deaths the previous week.

**World:** 35,109,317 cases and 1,035,341 deaths, per the World Health Organization as of 7 a.m. Oct. 5. Up from 33,249,563 cases and 1,000,040 deaths the previous week.

**Coronavirus, from page 5**

Rafael's Canal neighborhood, where a large number of essential workers live in dense housing complexes with multigenerational families.

The new state metric will require that testing positivity for those who live in the lowest quartile of Marin's California Healthy Places Index census tracts do not significantly lag behind the rest of the county. The metric will be based on the maximum threshold to qualify for any tier — for example, for Marin to advance to the orange tier, those

in the lowest quartile must be within 5 percent of the threshold to enter the tier, or testing positivity of no greater than 5.2 percent, even if the county's overall coverage remains 2.9 percent.

For the county to further advance to yellow tier-1 status, the least restrictive tier, the overall county average must drop below 2 percent, but those in the lowest quartile on the Healthy Places Index also cannot have testing positivity greater than 10 percent of the threshold to enter the tier, or 2.1 percent.

Current testing-positivity figures for those in the lowest quartile were not available at The Ark's press time. — *Kevin Hessel*

**Radios, continued from page 5**

the other side.

"Between the fact that we were having dead zones and the need to replace a lot of the batteries, we started looking into a replacement system," Gavzer said.

The new radios, made by ICOM, were chosen because they had the strongest signal when tested at different points of the island this summer. Gavzer said they will be "simple and easy" to use because the designated frequency will eliminate the need for block captains to search for the correct channel. A repeater device will be located at the top

of the island to relay signals to the current dead zones.

Every block captain will receive a new radio, and others will be kept at the incident command centers in Belvedere and Tiburon. Block captains will likely be trained to use the radios via Zoom, and a drill will be scheduled in the coming months.

"The nice thing about these things is that you don't have to be face-to-face," Gavzer said. "It makes a drill relatively easy."

*Reporter Hannah Weikel covers the city of Belvedere, as well as crime, courts and public safety issues on the Tiburon Peninsula. Reach her at 415-944-4627.*

**Reed, continued from page 21**

morality in our schools and in our city and in our county," she said. She noted one place to start would be to make sure the district takes all religious holidays into account when setting the school calendar for the year.

Webb agreed that communication is paramount.

"We need to not be afraid of the conversation and recognize that it is around us," she said.

**Candidates commit to collecting, sharing data**

All candidates said they supported the district conducting an annual survey of stakeholders — including current families, alumni, faculty and community members — and publicly sharing that data.

Jaffee noted she sits on a recently revamped district communication committee, which has recently been focused on figuring out how to better survey different groups and distribute that information.

"Pulling from all those community members vested in this district would help us to

reach father and do better work," she said.

Webb also sits on that committee and said she supported gathering that kind of data.

"Any feedback we can get in any means is very, very valuable," she said. "It's important for all of us to partake in that and for the board to be able to discuss it and understand what the themes are that come out of that research."

Emerson agreed the more information, the better, but noted what is done with that data is important.

"That way you can take that and have that conversation, and it should be open to anyone who wants to see it," he said.

Hornbrook called collecting data "critically important" but said he didn't think surveying stakeholders once a year was enough, instead advocating for doing it each trimester.

"I think it's really important as a pivotal part of the community in Tiburon, Belvedere and East Corte Madera for us to communicate that out and be totally transparent about it," he said.

*Emily Lavin is The Ark's assistant editor and Strawberry reporter. Reach her at 415-944-3841.*

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