

Council selects its at-large members for Tiburon's new diversity task force

Panel will seek to address systemic racism, inclusion

By **DEIRDRE McCROHAN**
 dmccrohan@thearknewspaper.com

The five residents selected to serve on Tiburon's new Diversity Inclusion Task Force bring a variety of professional and personal experiences to the group's mission of addressing equity issues within the community.

The Tiburon Town Council at its Feb. 3 meeting appointed Tiburon residents Noah Griffin, a public-affairs consultant; Anette Harris, a community leader with experience serving on nonprofit boards; Leela Stake, a public-relations expert with a background in diversity and inclusion; and Anh Sundstrom,

See **DIVERSITY, PAGE 23**



Noah Griffin



Anette Harris



Ruben Kalra



Leela Stake



Anh Sundstrom

Safety upgrades planned for Stewart Drive crosswalk in June

By **DEIRDRE McCROHAN**
 dmccrohan@thearknewspaper.com

A new light-signal system aimed at increasing pedestrian safety is on track to be installed at the Tiburon Boulevard crosswalk at Stewart Drive in June.

Tiburon Town Engineer Steve Palmer confirmed Caltrans, which is responsible for maintaining Tiburon Boulevard as

a state-owned highway, is set to install the new system in four months, well ahead of the five-year timeline Caltrans originally projected in 2018.

Sonora Court resident Broni Hill, who has long advocated for increased safety measures at the crosswalk, shared with The Ark a Jan. 21 email from Tiburon

See **SIGNAL, PAGE 21**

Proposal would double housing at Mallard Pointe

Belvedere leadership takes early look at plan to replace 11 duplexes across from City Hall with 26 apartments, seven duplexes and four single-family homes

By **HANNAH WEIKEL**
 hweikel@thearknewspaper.com

Belvedere residents last week got their first look at a preliminary proposal to redevelop Mallard Pointe — a private community between City Hall and the lagoon — that would double the amount of housing there to 44 units by building an apartment complex, duplexes and single-family homes.

The proposal comes as city officials are grappling with what could be a staggering requirement under the Bay Area's next housing cycle, in which Belvedere may have to make way for 160 new units between 2023 and 2031, up from 16 units in the current eight-year cycle.



on the web

View the preliminary plans via arkn.ws/BelMallard-Pointe.

But while city staff may be eager to welcome new developments to chip away at the looming

See **HOUSING, PAGE 19**



A preliminary proposal for the Mallard Pointe complex in Belvedere would replace the 11 duplexes on private Mallard Road with a 26-unit apartment complex in the inner circle plus seven duplexes and four single-family homes on the lagoon — doubling housing to 44 units.

BELVEDERE LAGOON

TOP: TGP/SUTTON SUZUKI VIA CITY OF BELVEDERE | MIDDLE: FRANCIS GOUGH ARCHITECT VIA CITY OF BELVEDERE | ABOVE: KEVIN HESSEL / THE ARK, APPLE MAPS 2021



Cannell Insurance Group

Keeping You Safe

Keeping you and your family safe during this Holiday Season. This is the perfect time for an insurance review - Please contact us for a Covid-safe appointment. Giving you a Peace of mind into the New Year

Home • Auto • Umbrella • Life • Business • Earthquake • Flood

232 E Blithedale Ave, Suite 206 • Mill Valley, CA
 415.388.7979 • 415.302.2989 cell • 415.388.7980 fax

Housing, *continued from page 1*

housing requirement, the Mallard Pointe proposal elicited cooler reactions from lagoon residents at a Feb. 2 joint special meeting of the Belvedere City Council and Planning Commission.

Some residents said they were concerned the proposed apartment building would be imposing from Community Road and could create more light reflecting on the lagoon. Others worried about the construction schedule and asked how long the development would take to build. Chronic issues with parking in the city and rush-hour traffic on Tiburon Boulevard and Belvedere's two arterial roads were also raised.

At the meeting — a study session with no formal discussion and no scheduled vote — city officials and Mallard Pointe developers stressed the proposal is in preliminary stages, and no formal application has been submitted for the project. They said there would be ample time for community feedback and to adjust the design as needed.

Proposal would double housing units

Built by the Belvedere Land Co. in 1951, Mallard Pointe currently consists of 11 duplexes, for 22 housing units, across three parcels and 2.84 acres along private Mallard Road. The eight duplexes along the lagoon would be replaced with seven duplexes and four single-family homes, while the three duplexes on a residential island between Mallard Road and Community Road would make way for a 26-unit apartment building.

Kent Allen, a member of the Allen family that operates Belvedere Land Co., sold the properties for \$18.2 million in March 2017 to Water's Edge Apartments LP, which through several subsidiaries is owned by the trust of the late San Francisco real-estate magnate Russell B. Flynn.

Developer Bruce Dorfman of Mill Valley-based Thompson Dorfman LLC was hired to lead the redevelopment project. Dorfman has also led projects like Town Center in Corte Madera and The Village at Loch Lomond in San Rafael.

The new units would be a mix of rentals and ownerships. The duplexes would feature two- and three-bedroom designs ranging from 1,264 to 1,736 square feet. The single-family homes would have four bedrooms and would have about 3,000 square feet of living space. All would have off-street parking in attached garages. The architecture would vary between modern-looking structures with flat roofs and more traditional-looking homes with gabled roofs.

The new two-story apartment building



Cottages 4 and 5



Cottage 5



Cottages 7 and 9



Cottage 11

FRANCIS GOUGH ARCHITECT VIA CITY OF BELVEDERE

A preliminary proposal for the Mallard Pointe complex in Belvedere would replace the eight lagoon-front duplexes on private Mallard Road with seven duplexes and four single-family lagoon homes.

would be shingled and reminiscent of Albert Farr's architecture along Beach Road and at Belvedere City Hall.

Architect Francis Gough said the building would have a "timeless and inviting style," adding that it would be "very much part of the public realm."

The lower floor of the apartment building would be a partially exposed subterranean garage with 44 parking spaces. Another 15 spaces would be provided elsewhere on the site. The garage and main building entrances would be on Mallard Road. There would also be a secondary pedestrian entrance along Community Road, Gough said.

The apartment building has the opportunity to provide workforce housing, focused on police and fire personnel who can help during an emergency. It's unclear whether any of the new units would be affordable or low-income housing.

Mallard Road would be widened to make the neighborhood more accessible to fire and emergency personnel, and an existing kayak launch at the site would also be rebuilt with a locking gate.

The Mallard Road lots are mostly flat and within Belvedere's flood zone. Over the years, settlement of the sand and bay mud under the homes has resulted in uneven floors and other maintenance issues, according to the developers.

Because the new homes would be in the federal floodplain, developers would need to comply with Federal Emergency Management Agency flood rules, meaning the base height of the structures would need to be raised a foot above federal flood levels.

Current zoning at the site allows for two-family dwellings, public buildings and utilities, playgrounds and "large residential or community care facilities" but prohibits apartments, according to city zoning documents. It's unclear whether the proposed apartment building would fall under a "large residential facility" or if the site would need to be rezoned.

Neighbors lukewarm on additional housing

Mallard Pointe developers said they have reached out to neighbors and public officials over the past several months and have held some 50 meetings to discuss the plans. The process has been iterative as they get feedback and make alterations to the design.

Dorfman said they are trying to make the site have as little impact on neighbors as possible after hearing feedback asking them not to "bust the envelope" and maintain the accessibility and walkability of the area.

At last week's hearing, residents provided feedback about the design and other elements of the proposal.

Jim and Bethany Hornthal, who live across the lagoon from Mallard Pointe, said they were concerned about the construction timeline and asked if the project would be completed in phases or in "one fell swoop."

Dorfman said the project would likely be built in one phase that would take 18-24 months. He said the single-family homes and duplexes would take more time to construct, so any phasing of the project would come from the apartments being completed quicker.

Susan Cluff, who also lives across the lagoon on Peninsula Road, noted the proposal is the biggest project she's seen in Belvedere. She compared the apartment building to a Walmart and said the development appeared "dense and impactful."

Cluff also said she would have liked to get more notice about the meeting, which she had only learned about the week before.

"More notice is always better. More information is always better," she said.

Rick Fink, who lives on Windward Road, said he was concerned about the apartment's setback from Community Road. He said he was concerned the structure would come across as a massive wall fronting the public street. He also noted he's "not a big fan" of increasing density in the city and would be happier if developers instead improved upon

what already exists at the site.

Ken Johnson, president of the Belvedere Lagoon Property Owners Association, said he was glad the developers were making light reflection on the water one of their top concerns but asked how the team planned to measure and evaluate the impact on neighboring homes.

Another Peninsula Road resident, Jill Barnett, said she was concerned about "quality of life" changes that could come from increasing housing in Belvedere, including impacts on traffic congestion and water use.

"Now you are increasing the number of people in the community. How do you justify all that water that we are supposed to be conserving?" Barnett asked.

She also mentioned that she and others in her neighborhood first heard about the proposal several days earlier and was concerned that not enough notice had been given.

"I don't think this is just a Belvedere project," she said. "It's a community project, and the whole community should be notified."

Current Mallard Pointe residents were largely absent from last week's meeting. Dorfman said all current residents would be either relocated to the owner's other properties or dispersed among Belvedere Land Co. properties. He said they would be welcomed back once construction is finished.

At last week's hearing, city councilmembers and planning commissioners were only allowed to ask questions and provide direction to city staff. Commissioner Larry Stoehr and Councilmember Nancy Kemnitzer were both recused from the discussion because they live within 500 feet of the site.

Mayor James Campbell asked developers about the condition of the existing bulkhead along the lagoon-front properties and if they would need to be replaced as part of the project.

Commissioner Peter Mark also asked the developers to make sure their proposal meets lagoon property-owners association requirements and wouldn't undo efforts to increase capacity of the lagoon if the bulkheads are not replaced.

Dorfman said they had a geotechnical evaluation of the bulkhead, which was determined to be sufficient for the current use but may need some maintenance. The bulkhead is currently made of riprap, which is consistent with other shoreline properties in that area.

Councilmember Jim Lynch asked city staff to continue looking at whether the project would require a rezoning to make way for the apartment building.

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.

bbc burrous brothers
COMPANY

Cleaning & Protection Specialists

"Simply The Best"
Serving Marin Since 1976

call today 435-1588

Stone,
Tile and Grout
Cleaning & Sealing

Carpet, Rug &
Upholstery Services



www.bbc-cleaning.com

R & S

**Non-Star smog testing
for vehicles 2000
& newer**

Scheduled Maintenance • Tune Ups

- Brake repairs • Tires
- Batteries • Alternators
- Water Pumps • Timing Belts

Servicing all major brands including:



1515 Tiburon Blvd. (Next to The Boardwalk Shopping Center) 435-0583