

Eileen Harrington

From: Bryan Marten <bdmarten@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2016 11:57 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: eucalyptus tree as power pole

Albany City Council,

Thank you for your recent statement that "The presence of the cross in the public park is at odds with the inclusive values the City encourages." I wholeheartedly agree.

I am concerned, however, to learn that PG&E is working to re-energize the power line. I live at the base of Albany Hill a few blocks from the cross. I cannot imagine how the power can be turned back on safely given that the energized wire is *attached* to a eucalyptus tree in what the city designated years ago as a "Critical Fire Area". This is not the typical wire going through branches that need to be trimmed. This is a wire using a eucalyptus tree as a power pole!

The wire can be hard to see up high in the tree but here is the photo the East Bay Atheists' site has posted for over a year now which shows it up close.

Middle photo in the top row: <https://eastbayatheists.org/imagesalbanyhill.html>

Direct link: <https://eastbayatheists.org/Resources/ServiceDrop.jpg>

I am requesting PG&E's plan for the support of the wire and asking the city to share the close-up photo with PG&E and get their response.

Lest we forget:

25 years later: Oakland hills ripe for another firestorm

October 20, 2016

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/25-years-later-Oakland-hills-ripe-for-another-9984731.php>

"I go with what the Australians say about eucalyptus — they call them 'gasoline on a stick,'" said Susan Piper, who is still haunted by a searing image from her escape on Oct. 20, 1991: A grove of eucalyptus trees aglow in flame exploded just yards from where she sat in her family van, stuck in traffic with her 9-year-old daughter.

Thank you,

Bryan Marten

Eileen Harrington

From: The Rev. Julie Wakelee-Lynch <rector@st-albans-albany.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2016 5:28 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Cross on Albany Hill

Dear Mayor McQuaid and Members of the Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for the removal of the lighted cross on "Albany Hill." While there may have been a time when such a public display of one sect's religious symbol on public property seemed appropriate, that time has passed.

As the leader of a faith community, I am strongly committed to the separation of church and state. Beyond that, I am very much invested in the work of ensuring that Albany is a place where all people feel safe and welcome.

Albany is not (nor should it be) a "Christian" city, and there should not be religious imagery exclusive to one tradition on city-held land. This is unwelcoming to people of other religious traditions (or those without religious affiliation), and belies the rich diversity of this community.

We all have touchstones to the past that are important and even precious to us. Sometimes, we need to be ready and willing to adapt as times change--to honor the past, but hold it lightly as we live in the present.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,
The Rev. Julie Wakelee-Lynch
Rector, St. Alban's Episcopal Church

--
The Rev. Julie Wakelee-Lynch
Rector, St. Alban's Episcopal Church
1501 Washington Avenue (at the corner of Curtis)
Albany, CA 94706
tel. 510-525-1716
web: www.st-albans-albany.org
email: rector@st-albans-albany.org

Eileen Harrington

From: Cityhall@albanyca.org
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2016 10:40 AM
To: City General Mailbox Account
Subject: Contact the City of Albany

Submission information

Submitter DB ID : 16163
Submitter's language : Default language
IP address : 71.198.175.175
Time to take the survey : 2 min. , 15 sec.
Submission recorded on : 12/15/2016 10:40:05 AM

Survey answers

Your Information:

Name Kirsten
Email Kirsten_mahoney@hotmail.com
Subject Cross on Albany Hill

What can we do for you? Thank you Albany city officials for fighting against the Lion's Club as far as you could go with regards to the cross. I read your statement today and feel proud to call myself a resident of Albany. The world is changing and I feel honored to live in a town that wants to change with it.

Thank you and happy holidays,
Kirsten

Eileen Harrington

From: website@albanyca.org
Sent: Saturday, December 17, 2016 12:03 PM
To: Eileen Harrington
Subject: Advisory BOARD, COMMISSION, COMMITTEE APPLICATION

Submission information

Submitter DB ID : 16172
Submitter's language : Default language
IP address : 108.216.158.235
Time to take the survey : 22 min. , 19 sec.
Submission recorded on : 12/17/2016 12:03:23 PM

Survey answers

Vacancy you are applying for:
Planning & Zoning Commission

Personal Information:

Name Val Joseph Menotti
Home Address 1106 Ordway Street, Albany, CA 94706
Telephone 510.527.5498
Fax Not answered
Preferred Email VMenotti@pacbell.net
Occupation Regional Planning
Business Address BART, 300 Lakeside Drive., 21st Floor, Oakland, CA 94612
Work Phone 510.287.4794
Work Fax Not answered

Please state your qualifications for this Board/Commission/Committee and your objectives if you become a member:

- Education
- Masters' Degree in City & Regional Planning, UC Berkeley
 - Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering, Stanford University

Professional

- Land Use and Transportation Planning professional for 20+ years
- 16 years at San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit, Chief Planning & Development Officer

Volunteer Public Service

- President, Inner Sunset Park Neighbors, San Francisco (1997 - 2000)
- Citizens Advisory Committee, San Francisco County Transportation Authority (1999 - 2004)
- San Francisco County Transportation Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee (2003)
- Albany resident since 2004
- Albany Planning & Zoning Commission (2015-2016)

Objectives

- Improve livability in Albany
- Ensure affordable, quality design of remodeled homes in Albany that balance the needs of neighbors and families
- Carefully balance the vision and goals as expressed by the public in the General Plan in the Commission's decision making
- Enable Albany to meet its share of regional housing needs, while providing alternatives to traffic congestion

Please list past and present community activities you have participated in:

- Albany Planning & Zoning Commission (2015-2016)
- Volunteer, Marin Elementary School Moonlight Auction
- Volunteer, Albany Yes on Measure N1 Campaign (2016)
- Coach, Albany-Berkeley Girls Softball League (2013-14)

By checking this box you verify that the above information is correct:

Yes, the information above is correct

Eileen Harrington

From: Sara Sunstein <info@sarasunstein.com>
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2016 10:22 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Lions Club cross

Hi all.

I'd like to thank Rochelle for her NextDoor postings the last 4-6 weeks. And I appreciate the Council's statement that you'd prefer the cross removed, given that it's on public property and some community members find it intolerable as well as unconstitutional.

I'm one of those community members.

Not being an attorney, I'm not fully up on what an easement is legally, but my understanding is that it's permission to pass on someone else's property, an access issue. So I don't understand how the Lions Club equates access with ownership. And I also wonder about the height involved with an easement? Perhaps that cross is higher than easement rights.

I support you all to do whatever you can to get rid of the cross for once and all. (and find out which PG&E decision-maker is a member of the club or has been influenced by them. Clearly the wiring is dangerous) Please look into all the good information that has been posted on NextDoor from concerned neighbors, atheists and otherwise. Apparently there are tried and true ways to get rid of such heart- and eye-sores.

Thank you.

Sara

P.S. Can't come to Monday night's meeting (I'm dealing with moving, remember?) so I'm sending this email instead.

Sara Sunstein
Ortho-Bionomy®, Somatic therapy
510.526.5414
<http://www.sarasunstein.com>

"As the soft yield of water cleaves obstinate stone, so to yield with life solves the insoluble." Lao Tzu

Please note: If you're emailing about an appointment that is within 24 hours, I may not see it. Please call instead.

Eileen Harrington

From: Bryan Marten <bdmarten@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2016 6:05 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Re: eucalyptus tree as power pole
Attachments: DSC_0492.JPG; DSC_0494.JPG; DSC_0497.JPG; DSC_0498.JPG; DSC_0499.JPG

I took the dog up the hill to check out the cross for myself this afternoon and discovered PG&E has finished the job and it is *much* safer. Maybe even completely up to code, minus concerns about the cross itself falling over (which is still a concern due to the erosion at its concrete base and the haphazard welds holding the plate to the concrete).

The wire used to be connected at the street at a pole and then threaded through eucalyptus trees (attached to one!) to eventually get to the cross. And maybe PG&E said its original plan was to improve safety by merely fortifying the wire but what I saw today they *actually* did is to make a new connection at the street mid-way between 2 poles (see attached photo) with a straight shot to the cross with no extra support. That is a shorter distance than it was before to the pole because it's almost straight perpendicular from the line. I checked where the line to the cross sags and it is pretty low to the ground but not reachable by me so it may meet code but I don't know. I don't know how long the wire is - its unsupported length may or may not be up to code.

In any event, the East Bay Atheists and the city and all who expressed concern about the fire safety represented by having for decades an electrical service using a eucalyptus tree as a pole in a Critical Fire Area (!!!) appear to have caused a huge change for the better for the residents and city of Albany. There may still be issues with the safety of the cross structurally or with the new electrical service distance or height. That should be looked in to by someone knowledgeable in electrical and structural codes but those who have been involved with this effort should know that they have helped make the situation *much* better than it was.

There are also of course serious concerns the council and I and others have expressed with how the cross in the public park goes against the city's statement of inclusion. Those still need to be addressed.

Attached are the photos I took up at the cross. The photo DSC_0492.JPG I took a few months ago showing zoomed in where the wire used to connect to the street at a pole so you can see the difference. The other 4 photos are from today with the new connections.

Bryan Marten

On Wed, Dec 14, 2016 at 11:57 PM, Bryan Marten <bdmarten@gmail.com> wrote:
Albany City Council,

Thank you for your recent statement that "The presence of the cross in the public park is at odds with the inclusive values the City encourages." I wholeheartedly agree.

I am concerned, however, to learn that PG&E is working to re-energize the power line. I live at the base of Albany Hill a few blocks from the cross. I cannot imagine how the power can be turned back on safely given that the energized wire is *attached* to a eucalyptus tree in what the city designated years ago as a "Critical

Fire Area". This is not the typical wire going through branches that need to be trimmed. This is a wire using a eucalyptus tree as a power pole!

The wire can be hard to see up high in the tree but here is the photo the East Bay Atheists' site has posted for over a year now which shows it up close.

Middle photo in the top row: <https://eastbayatheists.org/imagesalbanyhill.html>

Direct link: <https://eastbayatheists.org/Resources/ServiceDrop.jpg>

I am requesting PG&E's plan for the support of the wire and asking the city to share the close-up photo with PG&E and get their response.

Lest we forget:

25 years later: Oakland hills ripe for another firestorm

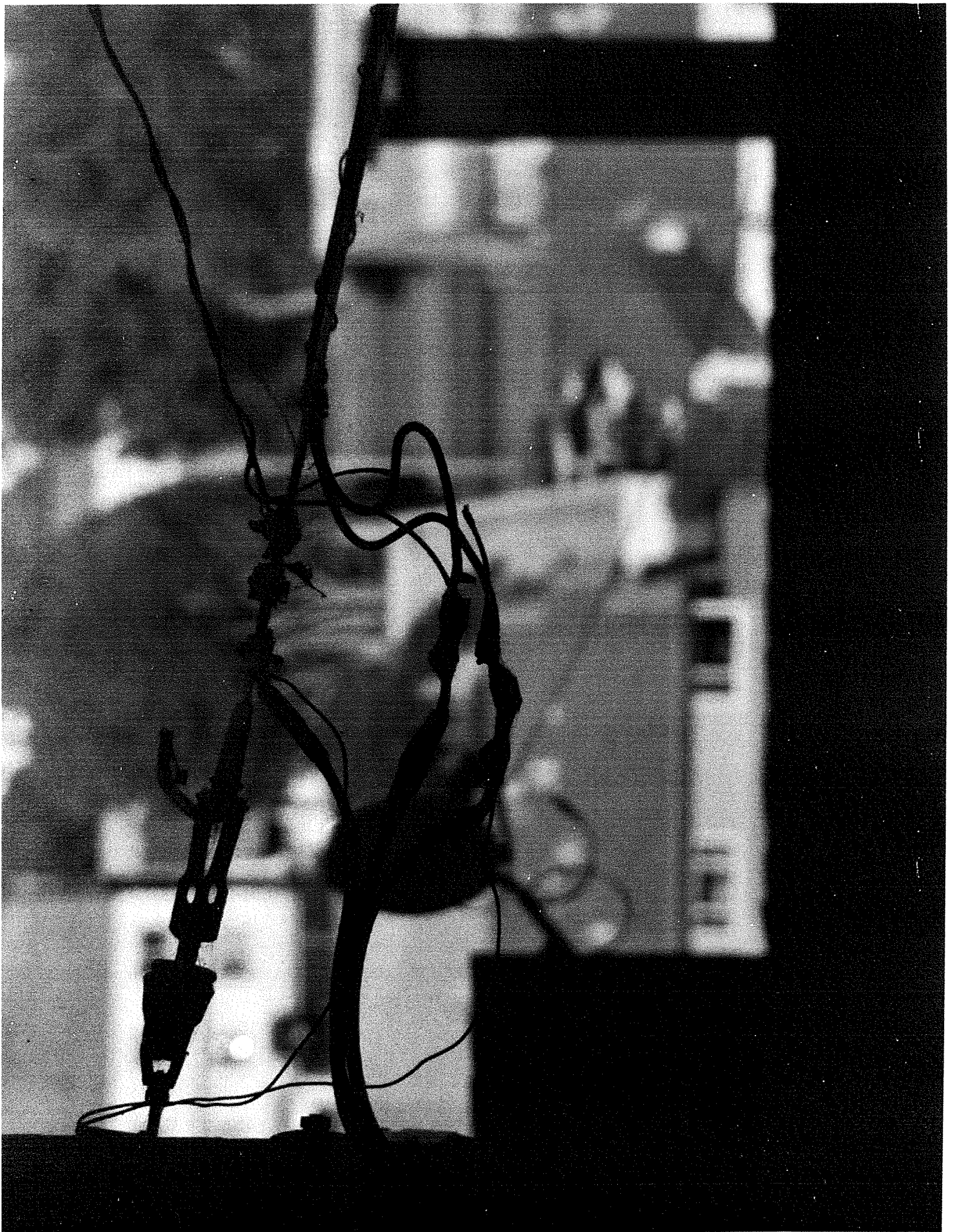
October 20, 2016

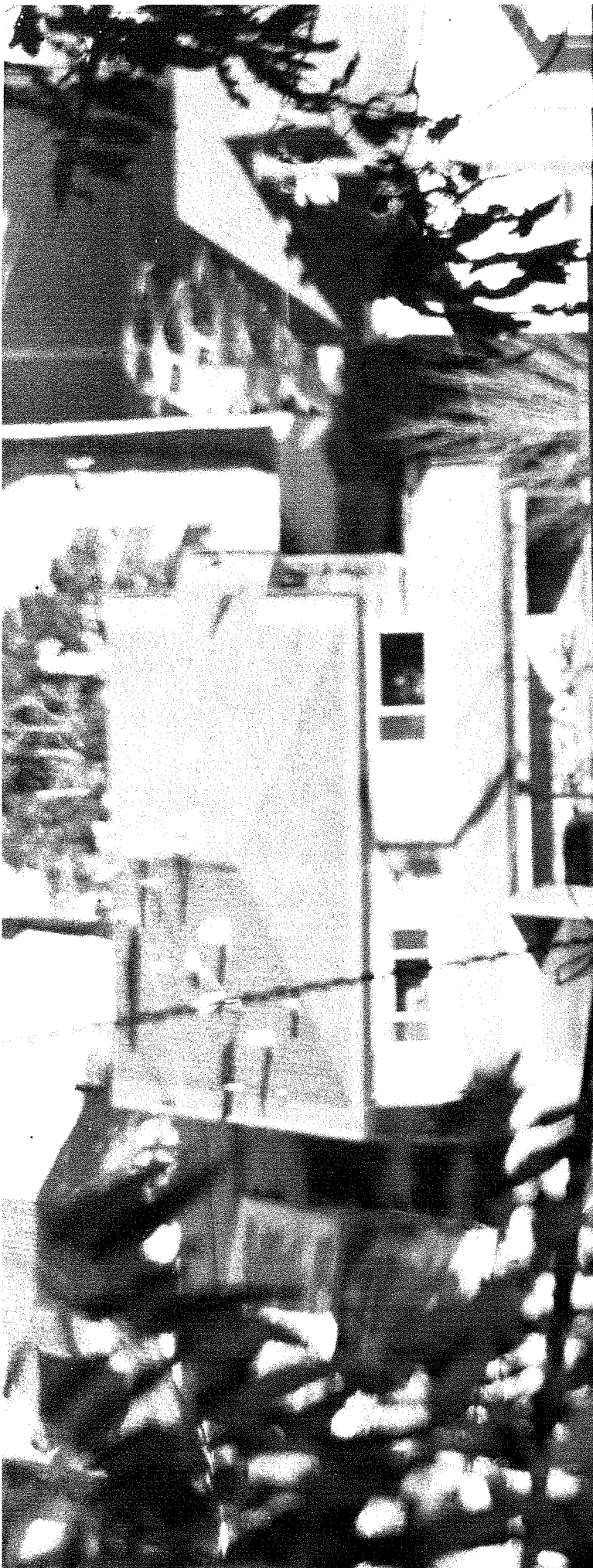
<http://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/25-years-later-Oakland-hills-ripe-for-another-9984731.php>

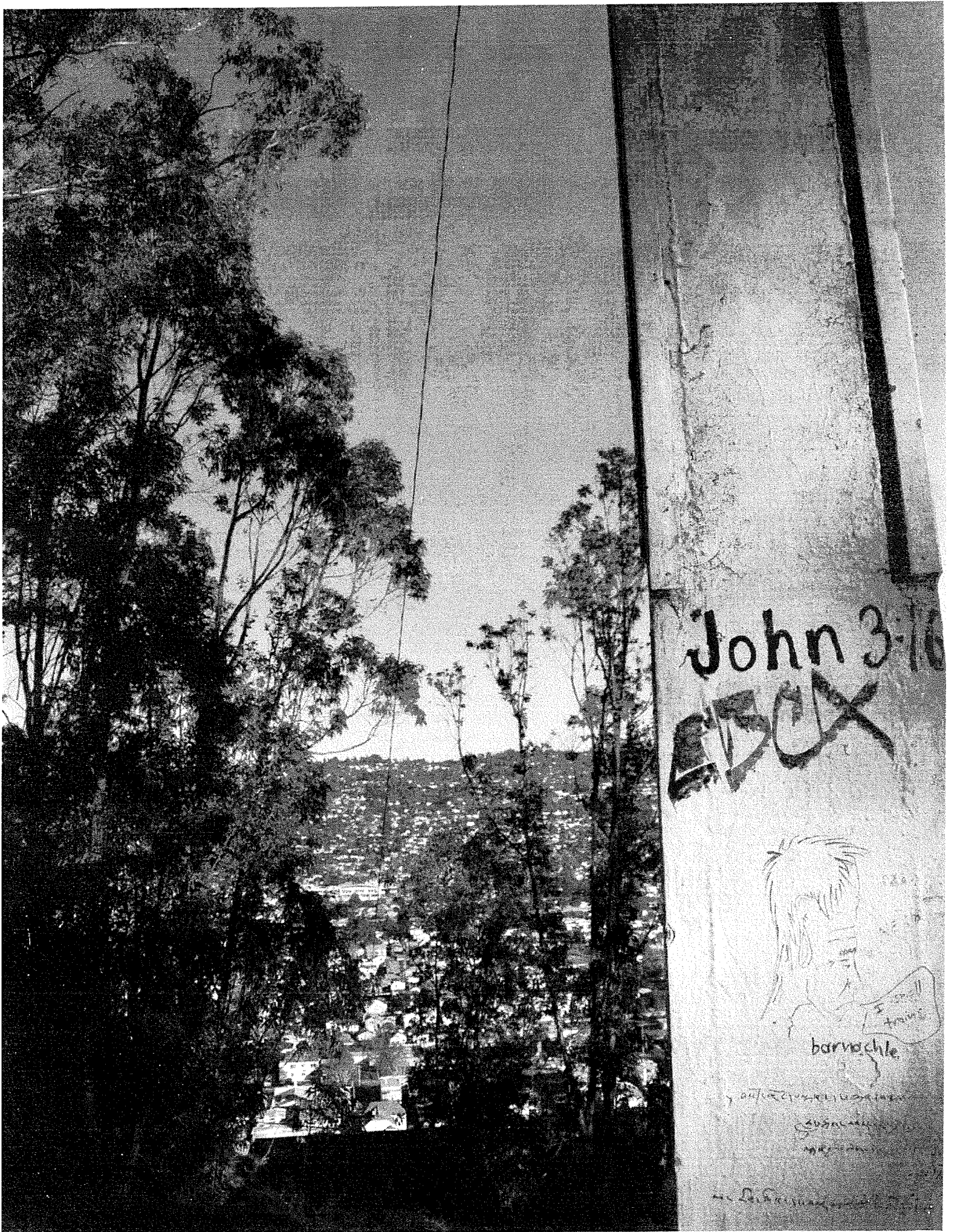
"I go with what the Australians say about eucalyptus — they call them 'gasoline on a stick,'" said Susan Piper, who is still haunted by a searing image from her escape on Oct. 20, 1991: A grove of eucalyptus trees aglow in flame exploded just yards from where she sat in her family van, stuck in traffic with her 9-year-old daughter.

Thank you,

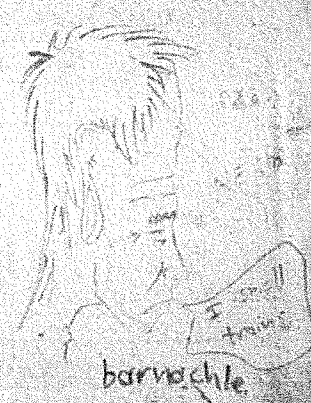
Bryan Marten







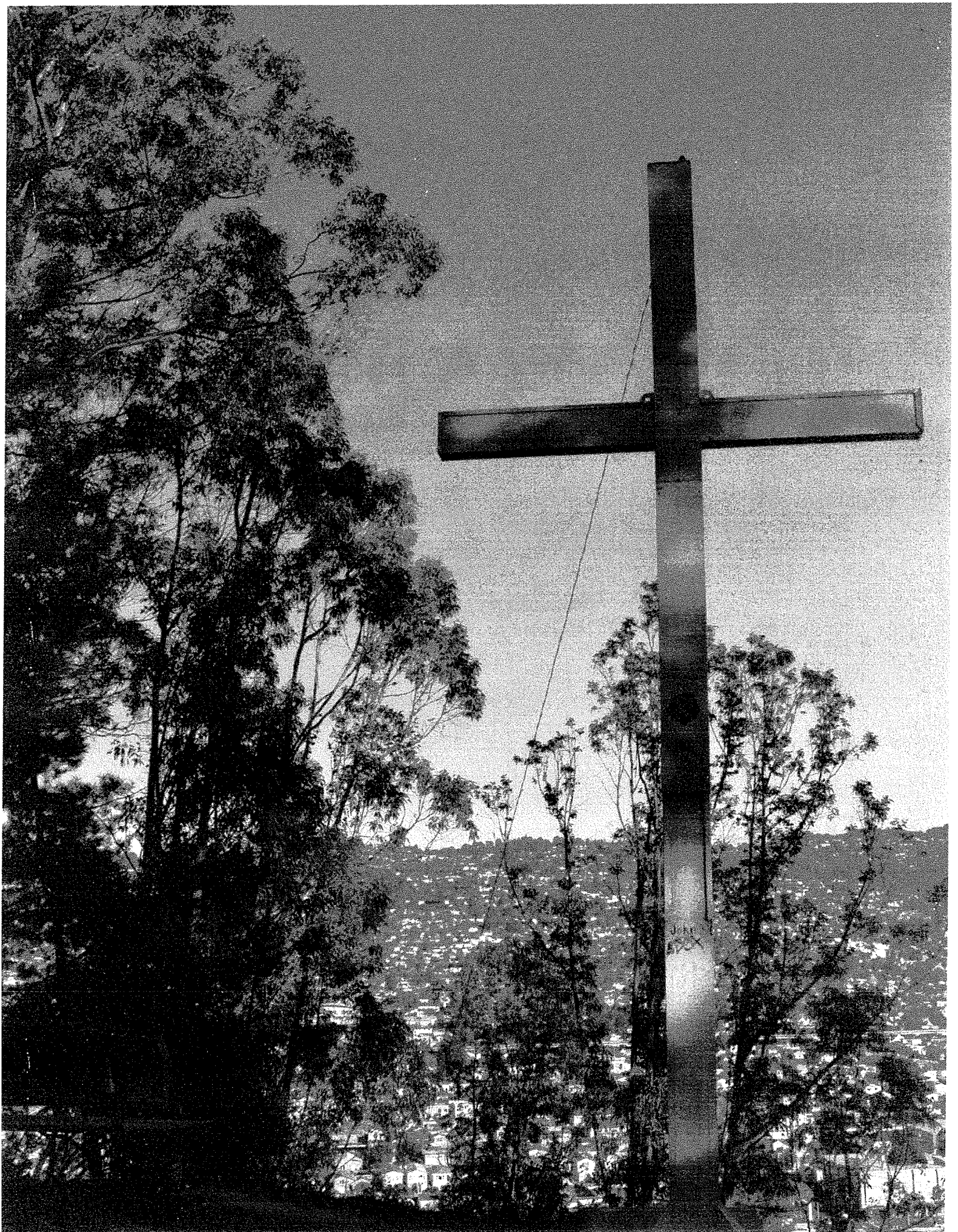
John 3:16

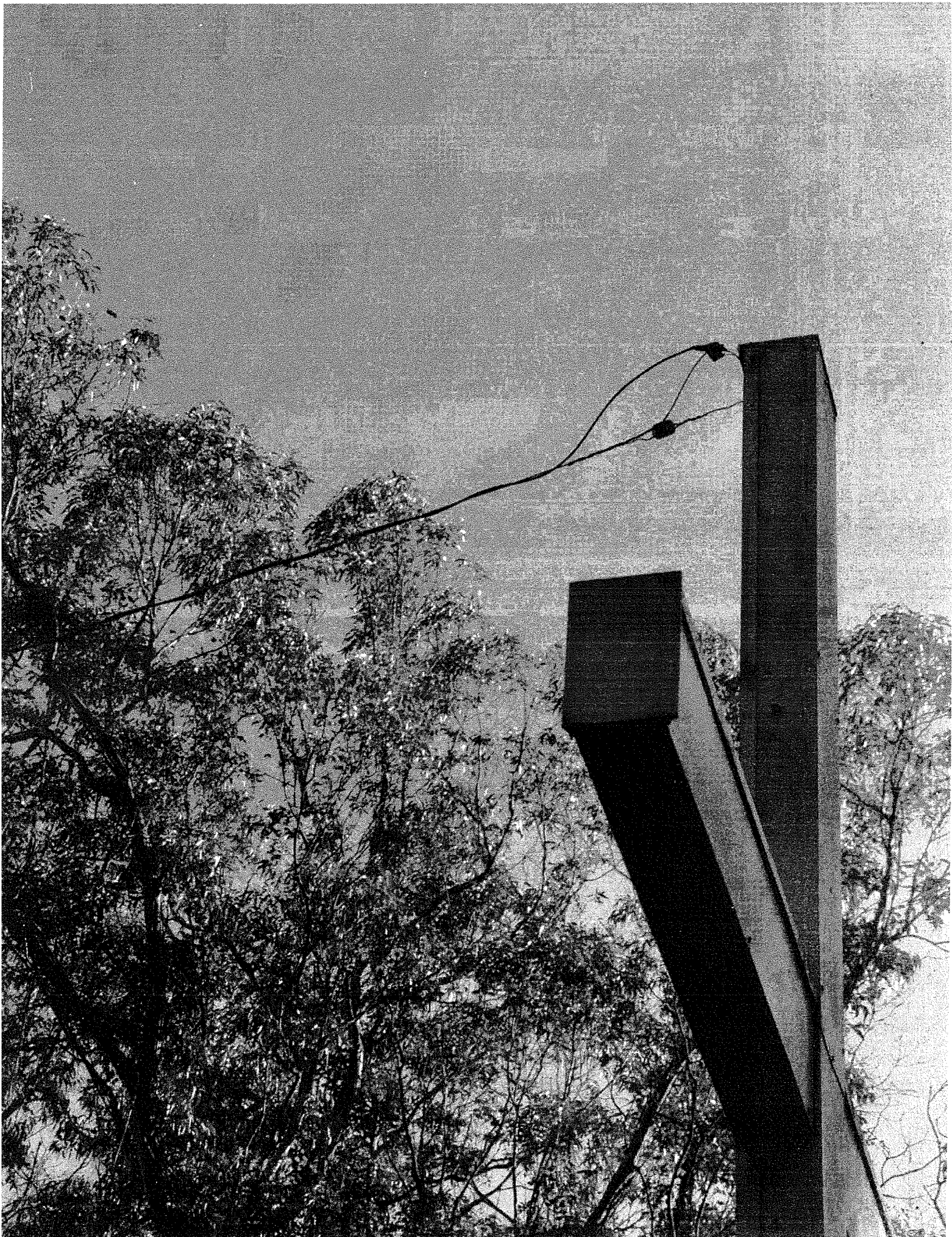


barnacle

auf dem...
aus dem...
...

...





Eileen Harrington

From: Jeffrey Bartlett <jmbartlett@lmi.net>
Sent: Monday, December 19, 2016 9:28 AM
To: citycouncil
Cc: 'David Nicely'
Subject: Lions member opposes Albany Lions action re cross on Albany Hill

Importance: High

Dear City Council:

I am a longtime Albany resident and also a member of the Berkeley Lions Club. As a person affected in two ways by the controversy regarding the cross on Albany Hill, I wish to express my wholehearted support for the Council's position on this issue and my complete opposition to that of the Albany Lions. This is a divisive issue that harks back to an unpleasant time in our history when efforts to force one religious group's beliefs on others were common. The time is long past that we should allow such overt symbols, especially so grandiose and unavoidable. I would like to see the cross removed from Albany Hill so we can end this controversy that threatens the separation of state and church on which our society is based.

I am proud to be a member of the Lions for more than 10 years and a past president of the Berkeley Club. Although I speak for myself here, other members of the Berkeley Club have expressed sentiments in agreement with mine. The Lions are a global service organization that seeks to help people in need regardless of their ethnic or religious nature. I find it unseemly that a local Lions chapter should involve itself in such a reactionary cause, which can only bring disrepute on the greater Lions organization. I urge the Albany Lions to stop this ill-considered action and allow the Council to go ahead with its efforts to remove the cross. There are many worthwhile activities in which the Albany Club can involve itself, and often does. Let's return to such service that brings people together rather than dividing us.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Bartlett

Past President, Berkeley Lions
office 510-528-7055
mobile 510-333-1948
jmbartlett@lmi.net

832 Cerrito St.
Albany, CA 94706

Eileen Harrington

From: sarah watts <sarahellenwatts@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 23, 2016 4:53 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Albany Hill Cross thank you

Dear Albany City Council

I am a citizen of Berkeley, but i'm frequently mistaken for one of Albany (due to my 94706 zip code) - so I received your mailing about the Albany Hill cross. I just want to thank you for your thoughtful response and forthright statement of the value that Albany places on all of it's citizens. I wish you luck in resolving this without litigation.

Just wanted you to know that you have appreciation from someone (just) outside your borders.

Sarah Watts

Eileen Harrington

From: Cityhall@albanyca.org
Sent: Friday, December 23, 2016 3:22 PM
To: City General Mailbox Account
Subject: Contact the City of Albany

Submission information

Submitter DB ID : 16190
Submitter's language : Default language
IP address : 70.228.74.222
Time to take the survey : 1 min. , 37 sec.
Submission recorded on : 12/23/2016 3:22:28 PM

Survey answers

Your Information:

Name Nic KoneffKlatt
Email koneffklatt@gmail.com
Subject Cross Stays up

What can we do for you? I will not vote for a City Council that tears down historic pieces of the city. If that cross goes down so will my votes for any of you on City Council. Stop being such a PC society it is a cross on a hill, get over it.

Eileen Harrington

From: Cityhall@albanyca.org
Sent: Monday, December 26, 2016 1:26 PM
To: City General Mailbox Account
Subject: Contact the City of Albany

Submission information

Submitter DB ID : 16195
Submitter's language : Default language
IP address : 107.204.212.37
Time to take the survey : 3 min. , 14 sec.
Submission recorded on : 12/26/2016 1:26:00 PM

Survey answers

Your Information:

Name ralf langenheim
Email langenheim3@gmail.com
Subject albany hill cross

What can we do for you? I would like as a private citizen of no religious affiliation, and a resident of Albany for more than 10 years, to state that I believe it's OK for the Lions Club to light their cross in the spirit of freedom of religion and for recognition of that land being public. It's overly politically correct and possibly politically wrong to ignore how that land was acquired and the traditions of this city, county, state, and country. Please respond if the concerns of a CITIZEN actually matter, thanks.

Eileen Harrington

From: Cityhall@albanyca.org
Sent: Saturday, December 24, 2016 9:46 PM
To: City General Mailbox Account
Subject: Let Us Know

Submission information

Submitter DB ID : 16191
Submitter's language : Default language
IP address : 99.47.68.35
Time to take the survey : 20 min. , 50 sec.
Submission recorded on : 12/24/2016 9:46:10 PM

Survey answers

Thank you for contacting the City of Albany and doing your part to make our 1.5 square miles a little bit better!

What is the nature of your request?

Service False
Question False
Solution/Idea False
Compliment False
Complaint True

Your request most closely relates to:

Construction Issues
Website
Storm Drain
Landscaping
Park Maintenance
Recreation & Community Services
Sidewalk Repair
City Clerk
City Council
Street Maintenance
Street Sweeping
Urban Forestry
Special Events
Police & Fire
General
Other Albany cross

Please fill out the following fields so that we may contact you in the event we have a question about the information you've provided. This is optional.

Name: Armin Karcher
Address: Not answered
City: Albany
State: CA
Zip: 94706
Phone Number: 5106723410
Email Address: akarcher@lbl.gov
I would like to be contacted by someone from the City Albany.

 [x]
I would NOT like to be contacted by the City of Albany []

Please tell us why you are contacting us today:

I am very concerned about the city's handling of the dispute regarding the cross on Albany hill. I am a Christian citizen of Albany with no strong feelings about the cross itself, but I feel that the way the city is handling this is to the detriment of all the citizens. By claiming the cross needs to be removed in the name of tolerance is in itself an act of intolerance. Claiming the religiously diverse citizenry is not an excuse. Having talked to muslim and Buddhist friends of mine no-one feels threatened by the cross, no-one feels their religious freedom is hampered. Indeed when looking at the complaints it is only the Atheists, exactly the people who claim no religion who feel unhappy about the existence of the cross. I am very concerned when I look at the current political events in the US where a strong backlash against actions claimed to be motivated by tolerance towards minorities but feel like intolerance towards the majority have brought truly intolerant people into power. By acting in exactly the same way you risk alienating many of the people who have quietly enjoyed the cross over the decades, while there may only be a handful of atheist activists who actually feel strongly about removing the cross. If you feel that the non-christian Religions need an opportunity for worship I would be very surprised if the Lions club (or anyone else) would object to use of public lands for worship that does not involve removing the cross. From reading the correspondence from both parties (not having been at all the relevant city council meetings) I can only conclude that the safety concerns have been pushed forward was a pretense to remove power, without asking PG&E about their opinion or giving the Lions Club a specific list of issues they need to fix. If this was truly a safety concern, would you have shut down power to a residence under the same circumstances?
I really hope this fight does not go any further.
I am deeply dismayed about the time, effort and money this has already wasted.

Yours sincerely
Armin Karcher

Eileen Harrington

From: Jesse Ragent <jesseragent@berkeley.net>
Sent: Tuesday, December 27, 2016 8:58 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Thank you and keep up the good work

Dear Council Members,

My wife Alison Moore and I live at 1085 Curtis Street and have lived in Albany for the last 36 years.

We are proud of the substance and tone of your recent letter to the community regarding the cross on Albany Hill. Seeing that there could be a "purported" easement complicates how to resolve this issue, but the principle underlying it could not be simpler— any religious expression on public land that is exclusive to one religion is unacceptable. We thought the presence of the cross was strange when we moved into town in 1980 and still feel very uncomfortable with it.

We applaud your efforts to find a solution that is acceptable to both sides, but please know that you have our strong support for remedying this situation by whatever means are at your disposal.

Jesse Ragent and Alison Moore

Eileen Harrington

From: Cityhall@albanyca.org
Sent: Friday, December 30, 2016 8:13 AM
To: City General Mailbox Account
Subject: Contact the City of Albany

Submission information

Submitter DB ID : 16205
Submitter's language : Default language
IP address : 73.158.11.84
Time to take the survey : 0 min. , 40 sec.
Submission recorded on : 12/30/2016 8:12:42 AM

Survey answers

Your Information:

Name Lorrie Gray
Email lorriegrays28@gmail.com
Subject hillcross

What can we do for you? Hello City of Albany. I just wanted to thank the City for having the courage to stand up for inclusion in connection with addressing the Lions Club refusal to honor other faiths during holiday seasons. Nothing is more important than putting the value of diversity and respect for others first, particularly now. My father, who is no longer living, was an active member and supporter of the Lions Club in San Carlos for many years. He would have been saddened and dismayed that the Lions Club anywhere, would be resisting inclusion much less actively fighting against it through litigation. I must sadly say that despite my father's commitment to the Lions Club , I have lost respect for the organization. Shame on them. Please feel free to publish. Lorrie Gray

Eileen Harrington

From: Cityhall@albanyca.org
Sent: Friday, December 30, 2016 8:49 AM
To: City General Mailbox Account
Subject: Contact the City of Albany

Submission information

Submitter DB ID : 16206
Submitter's language : Default language
IP address : 71.198.185.15
Time to take the survey : 2 min. , 29 sec.
Submission recorded on : 12/30/2016 8:49:27 AM

Survey answers

Your Information:

Name Rosemary Mullarkey
Email mullarkeylcsw@aol.com
Subject Albany Hill Cross

What can we do for you? I would like to say that I feel that the city's letter and proposal to the Lions Club both appear even handed and fair. I acknowledge the great benefit the Lions Club has had on Albany- support for the Senior Center etc..., but feel that it is time to show more support for inclusiveness.

Thank you.

Eileen Harrington

From: Stephen Shaver <stephenshaver@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 30, 2016 11:45 AM
To: citycouncil
Subject: comments on the Albany Hill cross

Dear city council,

I posted a message on NextDoor.com a few weeks back in a discussion thread about the cross on Albany Hill. Here's what I said then:

I live at the base of the hill, and I'm a Christian pastor. I'd love to see the cross go: it bothers me every time I walk through the park. I treasure our pluralistic society and I don't want symbols of my faith imposed on all of us. Not only is it unfair to non-Christians, it harms Christians as well by associating our faith with a kind of triumphalism that at best seeks to dominate the public space and at worst is associated with horrific violence (see Rochelle's other post). I can pray before a cross any time at church: I don't need or want one in a public park. Following Jesus is about living out the good news of God's love, not sticking Christian symbols in other people's faces.

I recently got a note from Bryan Marten, another Albany resident, encouraging me to get in touch with you, and it seemed like a good idea--so I'm reaching out to ask whether I can be helpful to you in any way as you continue to consider how to proceed. I hope you'll maintain your position seeking to find an amicable resolution that replaces the cross with something more appropriate to a public park.

I'm an Episcopal priest, working on a Ph.D. at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley and living at 943 Jackson Street in Albany. I know a number of other progressive Christians in the area, including several other Albany residents, who I think would share a similar perspective.

Thanks for all the work you do on behalf of our community.

Best,
Stephen Shaver
(943 Jackson Street, Albany)

--
The Rev. Stephen R. Shaver
Ph.D. Candidate in Liturgical Studies, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA

Eileen Harrington

From: Cityhall@albanyca.org
Sent: Monday, January 02, 2017 10:47 AM
To: City General Mailbox Account
Subject: Let Us Know

Submission information

Submitter DB ID : 16212
Submitter's language : Default language
IP address : 66.87.69.45
Time to take the survey : 6 min. , 29 sec.
Submission recorded on : 1/2/2017 10:46:39 AM

Survey answers

Thank you for contacting the City of Albany and doing your part to make our 1.5 square miles a little bit better!

What is the nature of your request?

Service False
Question False
Solution/Idea True
Compliment False
Complaint False

Your request most closely relates to:

Construction Issues
Website
Storm Drain
Landscaping
Park Maintenance
Recreation & Community Services
Sidewalk Repair
City Clerk
City Council [x]
Street Maintenance
Street Sweeping
Urban Forestry
Special Events
Police & Fire
General
Other Cross

Please fill out the following fields so that we may contact you in the event we have a question about the information you've provided. This is optional.

Name: Dyana Vukovich
Address: 720 Madison St.
City: Albany
State: CA
Zip: 94706
Phone Number: 510-525-7560
Email Address: dyanahv@earthlink.net
I would like to be contacted by someone from the City Albany.

 []
I would NOT like to be contacted by the City of Albany []

Please tell us why you are contacting us today:

Just wanted to thank you for the stand you have taken regarding the cross on our hill. I was raised in a Christian home and have lived below that cross for close to 25 years. It has always disturbed me, especially in regards to my Muslim and Jewish neighbors, who also live on the hill. I would either like the cross removed or that its location be explicitly dedicated to nonsectarian gatherings.

Thank you for continuing to represent my voice in your proceedings. May the Force be with us in 2017.

Dyana Vukovich