



Stu News Laguna

Laguna Beach's Online Newspaper and Community Forum

Laguna Board of REALTORS® hosts first-ever Housing Faire at Main Beach

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Photos by Mary Hurlbut

Laguna Beach residents looking for information on everything from accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and home improvements to wildfire preparedness congregated at Main Beach last Saturday (June 13) for the inaugural Laguna Housing Faire, which was organized by the Laguna Board of REALTORS® (LBOR).



An attendee chats with Board & Brew vendors during the inaugural Laguna Housing Faire at Main Beach

The free event brought together representatives from the Laguna Beach Police Department, Fire Department, Community Development Department, Code Enforcement, Laguna Beach Unified School District and local businesses to answer questions and provide useful resources to homeowners and residents.

The event was supported by a \$7,500 Housing Opportunity Grant from the National Association of REALTORS®, which funded outreach efforts focused on housing information, market statistics and community resources.

Bob Chapman, a Laguna Board of REALTORS® member and one of the event organizers, said the idea grew out of discussions about how the organization could better connect residents with information about issues affecting their homes and neighborhoods.

“The Laguna Board of REALTORS® has always tried to generate information to homeowners at Laguna Beach about Laguna Beach, so they can make decisions on things that come about as far as policy or issues,” Chapman said. “We’re more of an information provider.”



Booths line Main Beach during the inaugural Laguna Housing Faire on June 13

Unlike many community events, the Housing Faire was not designed as a fundraiser. Instead, organizers wanted to create a place where residents could speak directly with experts and learn more about topics that affect everyday life in Laguna Beach.



Attendees getting information at the LBOR vendor booth

“We just thought it might be time to have an event where we have people come and join us to explain certain aspects of living in Laguna and what you need to know, or what you want to know, and have the experts here to explain and answer those questions,” Chapman said. “It’s just a platform the Laguna Board of REALTORS® is putting out there.”



Laguna Beach Police Department Officers speaking with the public

Mayor Mark Orgill, who attended the event, said the Housing Faire provided residents with direct access to information that can often be difficult to find.

“Through the literature that they have over there, I think they have a lot of important information to share with the community,” Orgill said. “We always get questions regarding community development processes and what’s available, what’s not available. So, I think there’s a lot of information sharing that’s invaluable.”

Orgill said the face-to-face format offered a valuable alternative to searching for answers online, and helped connect residents with the people and departments responsible for housing and development issues.

“The Laguna Board of REALTORS® has always been to provide information,” Orgill said. “This is just a way to face-to-face provide information without having to go to the keyboard and type. You actually get conversations.”



The inaugural Laguna Housing Faire brought city departments, community organizations and local business vendors to Main Beach

He added that the event may also benefit city staff by highlighting the questions residents ask most frequently.

“I think it actually helped community development consolidate some of the questions in such a fashion that we’ll be able to use going forward,” Orgill said.

One of the most common topics discussed during the event involved home improvement projects and accessory dwelling units, commonly known as ADUs.

Chapman, who staffed the Community Development booth and has previously served on the city’s Planning Commission and Design Review Board, said many residents are unsure where to find information about local regulations.

“People are having questions of what they can do on their house, or how do they get the information to answer questions if they want to improve their home or add on to it,” Chapman said. “ADUs are a big topic.”

To help residents navigate the city’s requirements, Community Development staff circulated guides and QR codes linking directly to sections of the municipal code covering topics such as ADUs and residential development.

Wildfire preparedness was another big topic.

Chapman said defensible space requirements are becoming increasingly important for Laguna Beach homeowners, particularly as state and local regulations continue to evolve.

“One of the most important things I think we’re all dealing with is defensible space,” Chapman said. “I think over 85% of Laguna is in a very high wildfire hazard zone, so that qualifies as a homeowner needs to take care of those defensible space requirements.”

Fire Department representatives were on hand to discuss compliance requirements, inspections and ways residents can better protect their homes from wildfire risk.

The event also featured sandwiches from Board & Brew, ice cream from Ms. Debbie Ice Cream and children’s activities provided by Home Depot

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