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Show and Tell at the Library

By Cathy Tyson

“We started this five years ago and we’re really excited about the project,” Barbara Flammang, principal architect from Flammang and Killefer said about the over 30,000 square foot, three story Lafayette Library and Learning Center. “Your city is the most architecturally aware on the planet. It’s easier for us when the client knows exactly what they want and make their expectations very clear,” said Wade Killefer, her partner.

Flammang went on to describe the design elements, “rustic to fit in with traditional Bay Area style, organic, and with respect to the setting. The lower section is clad in stone, heavier at the bottom with a canopy at the top. The 20 foot elevation gain from Golden Gate Boulevard to Mt. Diablo was challenging. But with challenge comes opportunity.”

She continued describing the furniture, carpeting, tile, wall colors, parking, book drop off and much more. One of the unique interior spaces will be the Seaborg garden. It has glass on two sides and a beautiful layering of landscape elements; ginkgo trees and Japanese maples. The floor will have slabs of granite with a subtle fractured effect. “It’s meant to be a calming, richly textured space,” she noted.

A special effort was made to use sustainable, green building materials. A photovoltaic solar panel system, vertical fin walls to reduce interior solar heat gain, recycled teak from Thailand, and all double glazed low-e windows are just a few examples of the many green choices made. Even during construction, approximately 50% to 75% of the waste and debris was reused or recycled and diverted from landfill.

The interior will have a very unique wood truss system, a contemporary interpretation of the old Bay Area post and beam design, light, airy and uplifting. The dynamic system is a proprietary design by a Canadian firm. This will be its first use in the U. S., just one of many cutting edge innovations in the building. Drivers along Mt. Diablo Blvd should see these go up in the next few days.

“We selected plants as close to natives as we could that didn’t require a lot of water,” said Anne Grodin, former Mayor and Lafayette Community Foundation Director.

Oak trees, jasmine, wisteria and lavender are just some of the plant material that will be used.

“Each plaza should smell differently. If you close your eyes and sniff, you should know where you are,” opined Killefer. He got a chuckle when he said, “It’s not too late to get your name on the donor wall.”

“It’s absolutely gorgeous, the only problem is who is going to read at home?” chimed in Brenda Hepler as the meeting was drawing to a close.

In related library news, there will be a sneak peak celebration, “Let’s open doors, open minds,” on Saturday, May 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The current library will host a pancake breakfast, and storytime with Miss Donna, followed by events at Stanley Middle School starting at 10:00 that include a Sega games presentation, free giveaways, live music, great food, the Oakland Zoomobile and much more. Go to www.lafayette-lib.com for more information.



Wade Killefer and Barbara Flammang, Library and Learning Center Architects, with carpet, paint and tile samples that will go in the Children's area

Photo Cathy Tyson