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## ConFire Station 16: Process defeating progress

By Nick Marnell

The Lafayette Design Review Commission approved plans for Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Fire Station 16 in February, and the project next proceeds to the Lafayette Planning and Building department for issuance of a building permit.



"Station 16 is about half the size of a normal fire station for us," Deputy Chief Lewis Broschard told the commission. The rebuilt station will include 2,713 square feet of living quarters for three firefighters plus a 1,100-square-foot apparatus bay.

"The station will look like a ranch-style home, and will look better than what has resided on that spot for the past 20 years," Broschard said, referring to the mobile structure that sat on the site since 1995.

Proposed Station 16 in Lafayette. Photo courtesy ConFire

Broschard explained that because of the small space, the Station 16 apparatus bay can only allow the engines to

back in to the garage, though ConFire prefers a drive-in facility. He said that the apparatus bay is more than just a garage but also serves as a storage area for personal protective gear and decontamination equipment.

The district has scheduled meetings with an energy consultant, as the building has to adhere to the Contra Costa County sustainable energy requirements. The fire station must also receive a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating indicating that the station is green-certified.

The ConFire project manager, Kitchell Northern California, has begun the prequalification of building contractors. In the meantime, the district is drafting its construction and design plans to submit to the city building department. Broschard said that since a fire station is an essential services facility, it must not only be strong enough to respond to community needs but also become the focal point for relief efforts in a major disaster, and so the construction and design requirements are far more rigid than for a single-family home.

Lafayette resident Erling Horn, a member of the ConFire advisory fire commission, implored officials to move quickly on the project. "I urge approval posthaste before the county decides to spend its money someplace else," he said.

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[back](#)

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