

Cyndie Martel

From: Mathew Salter
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 8:30 AM
To: Cyndie Martel; Christa Johnson
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] Town Council March 13, 2025 Agenda Item 9 Town Facilities
Attachments: Town Council letter Ed 031325.pdf

Thanks,

Mathew

Mathew Salter
Town of Ross Council
(415) 828-5800
msalter@townofrossca.gov

From: Dong, Edward <ed@koardevelopment.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 2:26:21 AM
To: C. William Kircher <cwkircher@townofrossca.gov>; Julie McMillan <jmcmillan@townofrossca.gov>; Elizabeth Robbins <erobbins@townofrossca.gov>; Teri Dowling <tdowling@townofrossca.gov>; Mathew Salter <msalter@townofrossca.gov>; konakelley25@gmail.com <konakelley25@gmail.com>; Edward Dong <ed@koardevelopment.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Town Council March 13, 2025 Agenda Item 9 Town Facilities

Ross Town Council
Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers

towncouncil@townofross.org
cwkircher@townofrossca.gov
jmcmillan@townofrossca.gov
erobbins@townofrossca.gov
tdowling@townofrossca.gov
msalter@townofrossca.gov
konakelley25@gmail.com

I was before Town Council four years ago on March 11, 2021 on this same matter of objecting to the closure of the Ross fire station. I represent Ross Citizens for the Responsible Development of Town Facilities (RCRDTF) and we urge you to reconsider Agenda Item 9 based on the new direct redevelopment cost comparable of the San Anselmo fire station. The SA fire station is currently being redeveloped at a budget of \$785/SF for similar and comparable scope to the Ross fire station redevelopment including (i) raising and rebuilding the residential portion to 1' above flood plain, (ii) leaving the apparatus bays intact, and (iii) completing associated site improvements. I have confirmed the scope and budget of the SA redevelopment with the architect and project manager, and the general contractor, dispelling the misleading McGrath over priced budget of

\$1600/SF. Please review my attached letter for more detail. I plan on speaking on this agenda item at the Town Council meeting

Sincerely,

Ed Dong
Ross Resident
Task Force
Ross Citizens for the Responsible Development of Town Facilities (RCRDTF)

Edward Dong

P.O. Box 1127, Ross, CA 94957 | ed@koardevelopment.com | (310) 909-9661

March 13, 2025

Ross Town Council
31 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard
Ross, California 94957
towncouncil@townofross.org

5Re: Ross Town Council March 13, 2025, Agenda Item 9
Ross Fire Station

Dear Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers,

My name is Ed Dong, and my wife and three children have been residents in Ross for 26 years. I addressed Town Council four years ago on March 8, 2021, regarding redevelopment of our fire station. My contention then, as it is now, is that the Council disregarded market pricing for redevelopment of the Ross fire station and instead voted based on a consultant's overpriced construction budget report to support demolition of the Ross fire station and dismantling of the Ross Fire Department.

I have been involved in commercial real estate development and construction for about 50 years. I was literally born in the safety shack on a construction site, so credibly I was born with construction and development boots on the ground.

In commercial development we use a construction metric of \$/SF of building as a yardstick and trend comparison for construction cost considerations. Back in 2021, the McGrath report concluded a construction cost of \$1600/SF to redevelop the Ross fire station, and the Council accepted that budget as infeasible and therefore voted to demolish the fire station and merge Fire Departments.

I was shocked upon reviewing the McGrath budget of \$1600/SF. In response, a group of concerned Ross residents (Ross Citizens for the Responsible Development of Town Facilities (RCRDTF) including several commercial developers coalesced to counter the report with real market and comparable costs to develop a new Ross fire station. We discussed the redevelopment scope at length and met on site at the Ross fire station on March 5, 2021, with Bob Alten, principal of Alten Construction who has built over 2 dozen fire stations and Carl Campos and Greg Barton, principals of LCA Architects who has designed over thirty fire stations in the Bay Area. After walking the site and inspecting the fire station, both Alten and LCA concluded with support of my \$900/SF redevelopment budget for the Ross fire station.

Sample Fire Station Developments Costs

To reiterate budget elements of my March 8, 2021, letter and testimony to Town Council:

Alamo fire station no. 22 was designed by LCA and constructed for \$450/SF
San Pablo fire station no. 70 was designed by LCA and constructed for \$750/SF
San Rafael fire station no. 52 was built by Alten Construction for \$683/SF
San Francisco fire station no. 5 was built by Alten Construction for \$766/SF

Sample Developments Costs (not fire stations, but budget data points for trend consideration)
From my own professional experience, I built:

Los Angeles 25-story luxury high rise with three subterranean levels for \$750/SF (time adjusted)
Beverly Hills 3-story glass building with three subterranean levels for \$700/SF (time adjusted)
Los Angeles 5-story luxury apartment building with three subterranean levels for \$550/SF

San Anselmo Fire Station No. 20 Redevelopment Cost

The most pertinent direct construction budget comparable is the San Anselmo fire station redevelopment that is currently starting construction. The project includes (i) raising and rebuilding the 3,500 SF residential portion to 1' above flood plain, (ii) increasing the building by 900 SF, (iii) leaving the apparatus bays intact, and (iv) completing associated site improvements. I discussed the project with architect and project manager, Jessica Fairchild and Kai Broms and confirmed the budget of \$3,400,000 for the 4,400 SF building, or \$785/SF. The final contract price was selected from six competitive general contractor bids. I further discussed the project budget with Ark Golster, principal of Argo Construction, the awarded contractor. The "\$800/SF" budget includes public works and prevailing wage. He agreed that the Ross fire station would be a very comparable redevelopment scope to the San Anselmo fire station including (i) raising and rebuilding the residential portion to 1' above flood plain, (ii) leaving the apparatus bays intact, and (iii) completing associated site improvements.

In summary, I implore the Town Council to reconsider a feasible and supportable redevelopment plan and budget for our Ross fire station, rather than scrapping the building and losing our Ross Fire Department. I contend that on March 8, 2021, the Town Council made a bad community decision based on a misleading consultant pricing conclusion of \$1600/SF. The San Anselmo fire station redevelopment shows us that a \$900±/SF budget is achievable. I recommend a public/private approach to financing and redevelopment. Town of Ross, Councilmembers, we can do this.

Sincerely,



Ed Dong
Ross Resident
Task Force Member
Ross Citizens for the Responsible Development of Town Facilities (RCRDTF)