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## New parking lot finally in sight for East Enders

By Pippa Fisher



The new parking lot will take the place of the old EBMUD pumping station, located just to the east of Ace Hardware. Photo Pippa Fisher

The east end of Lafayette will be getting a long-awaited new parking lot to be completed by August, helping to address what the city council recognized as a desperate need in that area. But it comes with a price tag.

The city council voted unanimously at the Nov. 27 meeting to allocate up to \$180,000 from the city's parking fund to get the lot next to Ace Hardware finished including the cost of landscaping and irrigation.

The East Bay Municipal Utility District agreed to provide the city with a new 16-space parking lot at the 3305 Mt. Diablo Blvd. location as part of a 2013 land exchange agreement, which enabled EBMUD to build a new pumping station up the street at the intersection of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Mt. Diablo Court.

The agreement included an al-

lowance of \$90,930 (the difference in land values) to be used for the development of the lot. However the EBMUD contractor's bid now comes in at more than four times the allowance amount, leaving the city to contribute \$157,170 plus roughly \$23,000 for landscaping and irrigation with EBMUD contributing an additional \$100,000.

The council heard from two members of the group known as the East End Coalition, an informal group of residents and business owners on the east end of the city. Both speakers expressed the dire need for parking and pointed to the possibility of future discussion around reducing the median by Ace Hardware at some point, to allow access to the new parking lot.

The EEC said it is thrilled to be getting more parking.

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## It's a Wonderful Life starts the season right

By Pippa Fisher



Photos Pippa Fisher

With Santa's arrival on Old Betsy, Lafayette's historic fire truck, it became official – the holidays are well under way in Lafayette. Santa even had a police escort into the Plaza.

A large crowd turned out to visit with the merry man and enjoy the free refreshments and holiday musical entertainment provided by local youth.

Police Chief Eric Christensen was in attendance too with several

of his jolly policemen who had a great time chatting with the crowd and allowing kids to explore a real police car.

After an enthusiastic countdown, the event culminated with the lighting of the tree on the Plaza.

"It feels like we are in the Midwest," commented Orinda resident Lynn Hogan, referring to the community spirit as she watched her daughter perform holiday songs with Lamorinda Academy.



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