



**Public Meetings**

**City Council**

Tuesday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Planning Commission**

Monday, Nov. 5, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**Design Review**

Tuesday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Arts & Science Discovery Center,  
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

**School Board Meetings**

**Acalanes Union High School District**  
Wednesday, Nov. 7, 7 p.m.  
AUHSD Board Room  
1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette  
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

**Lafayette School District**

Wednesday, Nov. 14, 7 p.m.  
Regular Board Meeting  
District Office Board Room  
3477 School St., Lafayette  
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

**City of Lafayette:**

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## Panel examines state of downtown retail in second city-led workshop

By Pippa Fisher



Panel of Lafayette business owners discuss the state of downtown retail Oct. 22. From left: Ford Andrews, Connie Collier, Larry Blodgett and Jennifer Perlmutter. Photo Jeff Heyman/City of Lafayette

Lafayette council members, members of the planning commission and members of the public had the state of downtown retail once again as their focus as a four-

person panel of Lafayette business owners took a look at the pros and cons of doing business in the city.

The hour-long workshop, held before the regular Oct. 22 city

council meeting, was the second such event. On July 23 a packed audience listened as a panel of four commercial real estate experts gave their opinions on how

to attract and support quality businesses in Lafayette.

This second meeting's panel of experts was comprised instead of business owners: Connie Collier of Diablo Foods; Ford Andrews who owns Sideboard; Jennifer Perlmutter who is the founder of the Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery; and Larry Blodgett of Bodgett's Floor Covering, one of Lafayette's oldest retail establishments.

Once again Planning and Building Services Director Niroop Srivatsa moderated the discussion. She started by asking what challenges the panel members face as business operators.

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## Springhill residents talk disaster preparedness on eve of National ShakeOut Day

By Pippa Fisher



Lafayette Police Chief Ben Alldritt supervises as members of city staff, police, fire, Lamorinda CERT and the Emergency Preparedness Commission take part in the National ShakeOut Oct. 18. Photo Jeff Heyman, City of Lafayette

It's a nightmare scenario that no one wants to think about, but the audience heard the message loud and clear at a recent neighborhood meeting: have a plan, be prepared. In the case of a wildfire or large earthquake, residents need to be ready to evacuate.

The well-attended Oct. 17 meeting, arranged by the Springhill Homeowners Association, took place on the eve of the Great ShakeOut – a day when millions of people worldwide drop and cover to practice earthquake drills.

Springhill residents, aware that theirs – like many others within the city – is a neighborhood with one road in and one road out, heard from new Police Chief Ben Alldritt and from Contra Costa Assistant Fire Chief William Pigeon about evacuation plans and the importance of having a “go bag” ready.

Lafayette's director of the Community Emergency Response Team, Duncan Seibert, explained the importance of having food and water ready to go, along with copies of documentation on a thumb drive. Seibert explained that getting documentation together is easy to do now but “very hard to do when it's not there.”

Alldrift shared footage of the Oakland fires and explained there have been many lessons learned about evacuation procedures from those and from last year's Santa Rosa fire.

Heather Tiernan, manager of the Contra Costa County Community Warning System, was on hand to help residents register their cell phones. She emphasized the importance of signing up for CWS alerts in addition to Nixle notifications, explaining that the CWS is used by the sheriff's office when there is a threat to human life or health and when there is an action to take.

This was Alldrift's first presentation of its kind as police chief. He says he is happy to take the message to other groups within the city and acknowledged the success of having CERT, CWS, and ConFire all present at the meeting. He says that while they never know in advance what a disaster might look like, his goal was to get the conversation started.

“Informing people what they can do to prepare their families for the unexpected and advising them on what their local agencies are doing to be prepared makes it

invaluable,” he says.

Alldrift explains that in a large catastrophe, individuals could face delayed response time and may have to look after their fam-

ily and neighbors. “You need a backup plan for water, food and where to meet.”

“Emergency/disaster preparedness is a priority for the city and police department,” says Alldrift, pointing out that the police department under the previous police chief worked tirelessly with the Emergency Preparedness Commission over the last several years to maintain and update city plans. He adds that the feedback he received included the comment that it was nice to know the LPD has a plan coordinated with fire and other departments.

Indeed, the following day LPD joined forces as part of the Great ShakeOut with city staff, ConFire, the emergency preparedness commission and Lamorinda

CERT at the Veterans Memorial Hall to practice procedure.

Alldrift led city staff through the setting up of an emergency operations center and the establishment of an incident command system as they practiced their response to several potential earthquake-related consequences such as flooding, fires, evacuations and downed power lines.

Ironically, the proposed national ShakeOut Day testing of the community warning system was canceled in Lamorinda due to an actual emergency – a gas line fire in Bay Point – in order to avoid any confusion. Residents received notification of that via Nixle.

Residents can sign up for CWS alerts by visiting the website <https://cwsalerts.com/>.

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