



Lafayette's controversial 'Terraces' apartments approved

By Sam Richards, Bay City News Foundation, August 25, 2020

"After 9 1/2 years of plans and revisions, dozens of contentious public meetings, a ballot measure and threats of lawsuits, the controversial 315-unit Terraces of Lafayette apartment project was approved early Tuesday morning by the Lafayette City Council.

The city council approved the project 4 to 1. Vice Mayor Susan Candell dissented due to concerns over the fire evacuation plan, while other council members said they trusted assurances by the Lafayette police and fire departments.

"Council members also were concerned about the city being sued for violating the terms of SB 330, the state Housing Accountability Act, by delaying an approval to yet another hearing.

" "There certainly are legitimate reasons for the city to be asking for additional information, but (developer O'Brien Land Co.) could raise due-process concerns if things were extended," said Rob Hodil, an outside attorney hired by the city for this project."

"The 315-unit Terraces of Lafayette project has been a sort of microcosm of the regional debate about how housing is planned and developed. Project supporters, many from far beyond Lafayette, say this dense residential development, about a mile and a half from the Lafayette BART station, represents the sort of transit-friendly housing called for in regional planning efforts including Plan Bay Area 2050.

"Opponents, including the local 'Save Lafayette' preservation group, said the large development is inconsistent with the city's semi-rural character. Other critics contended the development would foul traffic near key commute routes, would be in an area vulnerable to vegetation fires, and would violate the city's general plan."

Read the full article [here](#). (~ 4 min.)

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