

Cyndie Martel

From: Elizabeth Robbins
Sent: Friday, March 7, 2025 4:17 PM
To: Cyndie Martel; Cyndie Martel
Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Ross Fire Department closure

Another fire station letter.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Joey Buckingham <joey@josefabuckingham.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ross Fire Department closure
Date: February 5, 2025 at 10:01:00 AM PST
To: Josefa Buckingham <joey@josefabuckingham.com>

To Whom it may concern:

In the aftermath of the recent fires in Los Angeles, my concern about the planned closure of the Ross fire station (effective July 2025) has grown exponentially. This decision was reached by the Ross Town Council in 2021 after extensive consideration of resident needs, fire data, construction costs, and analysis of its effect on emergency response times. All citizens had a chance to help steer this decision, and at the time it seemed fiscally responsible given official assurances about fire fighting coverage and emergency response times.

This is a big change coming to our little town, which has until now been assured of having its own engine and emergency staff. We will no longer have a fire engine in Ross, and continued ambulance coverage is not assured indefinitely.

Closing the Ross fire station would reduce the RVFD fire engines from 4 to 3, which seems unwise given the increasing likelihood of wildfires. The LA fires should serve as a real wake-up call. There is a lot of hindsight commentary about budget cuts to LA Fire department before those fires... are we thinking straight here with this move, and is it really too late to reverse this decision?

Our first home was in the "Alphabet Streets" section of Pacific Palisades. My husband and I moved to Ross from there in 1992. Homes in that neighborhood are close together, in the flat section of the town. No one would have ever imagined that area was fire-prone despite the Santa Monica Mountains as its backdrop. However, that home is gone, along with the entire neighborhood. With Mt. Tam and its densely wooded forest at our back, (untouched by fire for as long as I can remember) we are sitting at the base of a tinderbox, just like my old neighborhood was. Furthermore, as we continue to increase density in Ross, with mandated ADU's being permitted only 4' from property lines, we need more fire fighting capacity, not less.

I am also aware that the 2021 assurances about emergency medical response times "being unchanged for 85% of calls" will simply not be proven. A recent Citygate study indicated that response times would change by at least two minutes without our own station. If you have ever waited for an ambulance to come care for a loved one, two minutes is an eternity.

In the past months, The Ross Town Council asked the other member agencies of the Ross Valley Fire Department (RVFD to give Ross, the RVPA and the RVFD time to develop a plan to ensure that Ross, like other communities served by RVFD, continues to have emergency medical responders available to respond rapidly. Unfortunately, officials of the Ross Valley Fire Department did not support this request, and the Board of Directors of the RVFD denied the request to delay the closure of the Ross fire station at their January 8 meeting.

It is very possible that I do not have all of my facts straight, but I would imagine that the citizens of Ross would like to reconsider this decision given recent events, even if it means higher taxes.

I ask the RVFD to take another look at this decision – and for the Ross Town Council to fight for its station. Losing it strikes me as a move we will all come to regret.

Respectfully Submitted,

Josefa Buckingham

Ross Resident, Ross Advisory Design Review member



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