

## **California Courts News Transcript**

**Title: Hollister New Building Community Meeting**

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The San Benito Court has been here in downtown Hollister since 1962, sharing the building with the County 50/50. But the court outgrew the space long ago. Security is also a significant concern.

Hon. Steve Sanders, San Benito Presiding Judge: *"We've been lucky, we haven't had any incidents, but in today's world it's not something you want to bank on."*

So this site was identified by the local Project Advisory Group and the Administrative Office of the Courts as the ideal location for a new courthouse. It's a block away from the old building; 3 acres.

David Moore, Architect: *"The sycamore trees that surround the site, having a full city block with great access, you couldn't ask for a better site."*

Ideas are taking shape, with community members actively involved in the planning.

Hon. Steve Sanders: *"It shows you what you can do when you all come together."*

Gil Solorio, San Benito CEO: *"It is first and foremost a community project. We've recognized that from the very beginning and it is a nod to that point that we decided to have at least two public meetings on this process."*

On this night folks had a chance to inspect a mini model of what the new courthouse might look like, and hear about design concepts.

David Moore: *"What you're going to see tonight, the building, the new courthouse is not 100% fully defined, it's a work in progress."*

It will be a two story steel frame structure, about 41,500 square feet. Security will be a top priority. There'll be three separate levels of circulation: for the public, for judges and staff, and for people in-custody. There'll be three courtrooms, with a jury assembly room that could later be turned into a fourth courtroom. And the vision now is to include lots of glass out front – to convey the transparency of the courts.

Frank Van Rooy: *"Will it cost more to keep it cool?"*

David Moore: *"We've got incredible technology in glass these days with double and even triple pane and low e glasses."*

In fact, it will be a highly energy efficient building. They're even considering a green roof, like the one at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park. On top of the roof would be three inches of soil in trays, with native grasses and plants, which can dramatically reduce air conditioning needs.

David Moore: *"They really have a great value in cooling and insulating ability. A ton of heat gain that goes into the atmosphere comes off of commercial roofs."*

Landscaping could reflect the agricultural nature of area, with rows of cherry trees and other drought tolerant native plantings.

Sharlene Van Rooy, Hollister Downtown Association: *"I love the courtyard bringing in the agricultural history of our community."*

Of course, this community is also well known for earthquakes. There's evidence all over. An active branch of the San Andreas Fault system – the Calaveras Fault - runs right through town. With an abundance of caution, the Hollister Redevelopment Agency hired geologists; they did an extensive seismic analysis of the proposed courthouse location.

David Moore: *"The site has been deemed safe to build on. We have a very good structural engineer that we've worked with for 25 year. We have a great team so no problems here building on the site."*

The new courthouse will be a welcome addition to this community.

Hon Steve Sanders: *"We are so excited to be able to provide a modern secure facility where we can provide access to all."*

Which is scheduled to happen in the fall of 2012. I'm Leanne Kozak reporting from Hollister for California Courts News.

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