

*December 4, 2011*

After 18 months of hard work from a team of construction workers, architects, and engineers as well as anticipation on the part of East Bay citizens who have donated funds, the nearly completed Veteran's Memorial Building in downtown Danville is almost ready to open.

Veterans, senior citizens, Congressman Jerry McNerney and Danville locals showed up Saturday afternoon to check in on the renovation.

"Each time I tour [the Veteran's Building] I see a great deal of progress," said retired Major General Ronald Lowe. "This is a very proud moment."

According to architect Michael Stella, the Veterans Building will hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony in early 2012.

While the project will have taken a little under two years to complete, relatively quickly for a 13,000 square foot, three-floor, renovation project, the history of the building spans that of Danville.

The original building, comprising 6,200 square feet, was built in 1925 for a mere \$18,000. In 2008, Danville purchased the property for \$200,000 and shortly thereafter began to shop around for the right architect to renovate the space.

While 32 architecture firms submitted proposals for the project, in January 2009 San Francisco's Architectural Resources Group was chosen.

"The front portion of the building is the original 1925 entrance," Stella said.

Some of the updates to the new building include an elevator to make it easier to go up to the second floor or down below to the basement; several classrooms on the first floor where senior citizen classes will be held; and an event hall capable of comfortably fitting 250 people that can be configured three different ways depending on the size of an event.

Lee Halverson, the project's treasurer, said much of the funding for the \$8 million renovation came from the community.

"We genuinely appreciate the contributions made by taxpayers and community members that believe in the project," Halverson said.