

# THE MORNING AFTER

*Highlights from the  
Ross Town Council Meeting  
of June 10, 2010*

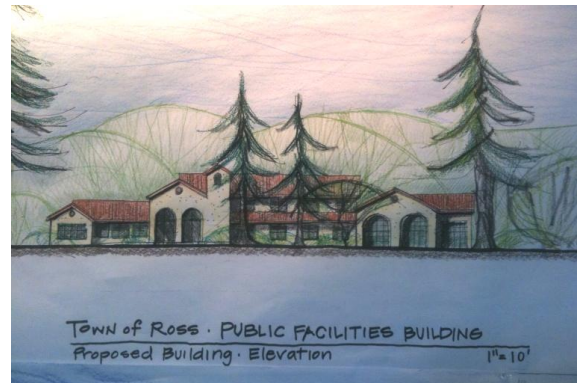
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## **Conceptual Schematic for New Public Facilities Presented**

Council member Bill Cahill presented information he developed this past year on his FY 09-10 Council goal to study public facilities. He reported that the public facilities building, originally constructed in 1927, is in need of major repairs and should be renovated to meet the requirements of a modern public safety facility.

Architect Kathy Strauss presented a conceptual schematic for a new public safety building that would also provide office space for Town Hall staff. The schematic retains the historic character of the existing building, but is meant to be a placeholder while the design and programmatic requirements are further developed. The conceptual design provides approximately 1,500 square feet for town hall staff, 1,400 square feet for the police department, 1,500 square feet for the Ross Valley paramedics, and 8,900 square feet for the fire department. The fire department driveway would be changed to directly enter the Laurel Grove Avenue intersection.



Mark Kelley from Mack5 presented preliminary cost estimates for the new building, which total approximately \$10.2 million. Direct construction costs total \$6.2 million at \$471 per square foot. Soft costs, at \$300 per square foot, total \$4 million.

The Council discussed three financing alternatives for the building. A general obligation bond, which requires 2/3 voter approval, would create a new revenue stream to finance the project. The other options – a lease revenue bond and a lease purchase agreement – do not require voter approval but must be paid back out of the general fund. The Town could also explore a fundraising campaign to obtain private donations for the project.

Council member Cahill presented a design and construction timeline which laid out a plan to have new facilities built by October 2013. He recommended the Town form a citizens' committee to advance the public facilities project and develop a program over the next six months.

## **Lagunitas Road Bridge Construction Project**



The Lagunitas Road Bridge reconstruction project will begin on June 21, and the bridge is scheduled to be closed on July 6. During this period, all cars, pedestrians and bicyclists will need to use Bolinas Avenue or College Avenue in Kentfield to access the west side of Ross. Public Works Director Mel Jarjoura explained that it was not possible to provide limited access across the bridge due to safety concerns, regulatory requirements, a tight construction schedule, and prohibitive costs. The Town is required by state and federal authorities to finish all construction in the creek bed by October 15, before the rainy season commences. The Council awarded the construction project to R.M. Harris Co., Inc. for

\$1,211,088, approximately \$500,000 lower than the engineer's estimate.



## Mayor Rick Strauss' Report

I'd like to congratulate the two newly elected Town Council members, Carla Small and Rupert Russell. They will be sworn in after the County certifies the election, which must be done by July 6 but may occur as soon as June 25. We will schedule a swearing-in ceremony as soon as possible to ensure these new members will be seated for the July 8 Council meeting.

We have very good news from the California Supreme Court, which upheld the Ross Valley flood fee election. After the flood the Council agreed to pursue new funding for flood control projects, and we've worked very long to make this happen. In addition to the flood fee, the Council agreed to implement short and long-term flood control actions, which include installing flood gates, raising buildings above the 100-year flood level, reconstructing the Lagunitas Road Bridge, and completing the Unit 4 project to increase the capacity of the Corte Madera Creek channel and rebuild the fish ladder.

On a sad note, Julie Osterloh, a past member of the Ross Town Council, recently passed away. Julie served on the Council for ten years between 1970-1980.

## Sir Francis Drake Boulevard Public Works Projects in Progress

The Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) completed its waterline replacement project on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard on June 4, ten days ahead of schedule. Public Works Director Mel Jarjoura reported there were few construction problems, no traffic accidents, and minimal delays and inconveniences for motorists. Congratulations and thanks to MMWD for such a speedy and successful project!

Sir Francis Drake Boulevard pedestrian pathway construction is scheduled to take place between mid-July and mid-August. Construction bid documents were released on June 7 and bids will be opened on June 28. The roadway will then be repaved during the last two weeks of August.



## 2010 Ross Street Tree Committee Formed

Resident B.J. Martin introduced the 2010 Street Tree Committee and its goal "to restore the original beauty of the tree canopy that has been the signature look of Ross." The committee will build on the work of the former street tree working group which recommended elms and native oak species for street tree planting. It intends to reestablish the arching canopy by planting single species of disease-resistant trees, while creating an understory of younger trees that will be ready to supplant older trees as they die. The committee will help create policies for planting and maintaining trees in the right of way, and plans to work with the utility companies to establish more aesthetic pruning standards under utility lines. Committee members are Jennifer Leathers, Dennis Untermann, Steven McKinney, Ann Brenner, B.J. Martin, Council member Chris Martin, and Public Works Superintendent Robert Maccario.

## Campout on the Commons

The Town Council unanimously voted to issue a special permit to Edward Dong from the Ross School PTA fund raising campaign to allow an overnight "Campout on the Commons" event for up to 120 participants in the northwest portion of the Ross Common on Friday evening September 10 till Saturday morning September 11. The permit prohibits open fires and requires the event organizers to provide liability insurance and supervision.



## Street Smarts Campaign to Continue

The Council voted to continue placement of temporary Street Smarts signs from mid-June through mid-September. Ten educational signs and five banners will be placed in strategic locations throughout Ross, including Ross School and the Common.

Street Smarts is a traffic education campaign designed to change driver, cyclist and pedestrian behavior and reduce accidents. The program targets five problematic behaviors: speeding, stopping, right-of-way violations, distracted driving, and bicyclist violations and safety. Educational brochures are available at the Ross Police Department and will be distributed to Ross School students at the beginning of the school year.



## Council Members Review Progress on FY 09-10 Goals

The Council reviewed their progress on their Council goals for fiscal year 2009-2010. Mayor Rick Strauss' goal was to continue work on the Town's downtown plan. In July 2009, the Council approved a conceptual schematic for the downtown plan, which included a redesign of the Post office parking lot adjacent to the commercial area. Although the Town budgeted approximately \$250,000 for downtown plan improvements this year, the Council agreed to postpone construction until the Town's other public works projects were completed.

Council member Mike Skall's goal was to review the Town's hillside lot regulations. The Council introduced a Hillside Lot Ordinance at the June meeting which should resolve much of the ambiguity of the existing regulations. The proposed ordinance establishes permitted floor areas as a mandatory requirement and reinstates larger setbacks for hillside lots.

Mayor Pro Tempore Scot Hunter studied the Town's unfunded pension liabilities and recommended the Town strongly consider paying off the unfunded liability once the Council has a better idea what the funding needs will be for the Town's new public building. In the meantime, the unfunded mandate will be listed as a liability on the Town's financial statements.

Council member Chris Martin's goal was to work on flood control projects. Over the past year, Councilmember Martin led the Town's work on a new stormwater runoff ordinance, which was adopted by the Council at the June 10 meeting. The ordinance ensures development projects do not produce any new net increase in peak runoff from the site as compared to pre-project conditions, and adds new design review regulations to reduce impervious surfaces, encourage the use of permeable surfaces, disperse stormwater runoff on site, and store stormwater for reuse or slow release.

## Mayor Commends Outgoing Council Members

Mayor Rick Strauss commended the outstanding service of Council members Bill Cahill and Michael Skall, who attended their final Council meetings. Council member Cahill served on the Council for four years and as Mayor between June 2008 and July 2009. He served on several committees and boards, and completed his Council goals of developing staff job descriptions and performance standards and studying renovation and reconstruction of Town facilities. Council member Mike Skall also served on the Council for four years and represented the Town on numerous boards and commissions, including the Transportation Authority of Marin and the Association of Bay Area Governments. He successfully fulfilled his Council goals of developing emergency preparedness programs and procedures and reviewing and updating the hillside lot ordinance.



*Mayor Rick Strauss reads resolutions commending the outstanding service of Council members Bill Cahill (left) and Mike Skall.*

## Finance Committee Report

Finance Committee Chair Scot Hunter announced that the draft FY 2010-11 budget will be ready for the Council to review at its July meeting. As of April 30, FY 2009-10 revenue was above the forecasted amount and operating expenses were barely over budget, producing a surplus of \$37,000.

Council member Chris Martin suggested designating funds in the FY 2010-11 budget to purchase a camera, monitors and web-streaming computer equipment to produce live video broadcasts of Council meetings and on-line video on demand. He estimated the cost would be \$25,000 for equipment and installation costs.

## New Apprentice Firefighters Introduced

Fire Chief Tom Vallee introduced two new apprentice firefighters. Justin Hanson, who has been with the Ross Fire Department since January, most recently volunteered with the Ross Valley Fire Department. Chris Friscia volunteered with both the Ross Fire Department and the Southern Marin Fire Protection District. Both were selected from large pools of very good applicants, and Ross is fortunate to have them. Justin and Chris live in Marin County.



*Apprentice firefighters Justin Hanson (left) and Chris Friscia*



*Senior Planner Elise Semonian*

## Planning Application Scoreboard

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications considered at last night's Council meeting. For more information on each planning application, you can view staff reports [here](#). The minutes of this meeting will be available on the website at [www.townofross.org](http://www.townofross.org) after approval at the July Council meeting.

Address	Applicant	Approved	Denied	Continued	Withdrawn
29 Poplar Avenue	Allison and Scott Sutherland	X			
90 Laurel Grove Ave.	Steve and Kirsten Polsky	X			
7 Woodside Way	Stephanie and Lee Notowich	X			
59 Winship Avenue	Robert and Carol Momsen			X	
23 Ross Common	Peter Maguire, Melanie Colavito and Christy Stutsman	X			
33 Sir Francis Drake Blvd.	Town of Ross			X	
7 Ross Common	John Lord and Todd Pratum				X

## Upcoming Town Meetings

The next regular Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 8, at 6:30 p.m. Agendas and staff reports are posted in advance of the meetings on the Town's website at [www.townofross.org](http://www.townofross.org).

*The Morning After is published following each regular Council meeting by The Town of Ross and is written by Project Planner Christine O'Rourke and edited by Town Manager Gary Broad with support from Administrative Manager Linda Lopez. The newsletter is not an official record of the meeting's proceedings and does not cover all agenda items. No portion of this newsletter may be copied, reproduced or reprinted without advance written permission from the Town of Ross.*