

THE MORNING AFTER

*Highlights from the
Ross Town Council Meeting
of September 11, 2008*

Volume 2, No. 9

September 12, 2008

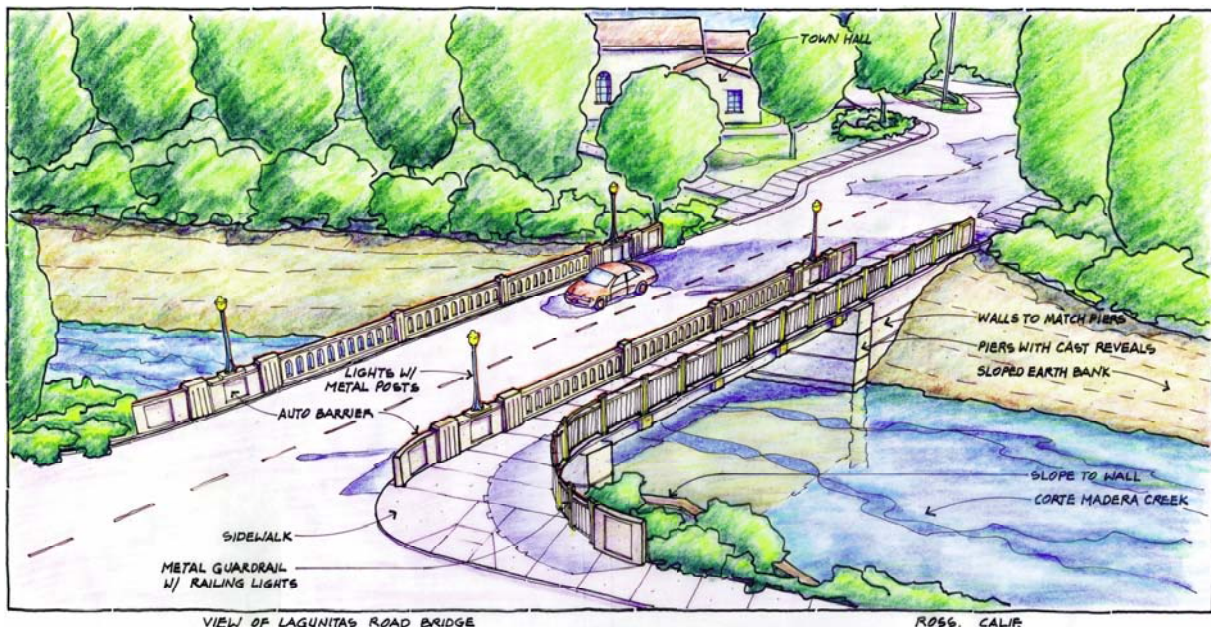


Welcome from Mayor Bill Cahill

At its August workshop, the Council identified five ambitious goals for the coming fiscal year, and each Council member chose to take the lead on one of those goals. We started this practice last year and found it was an exceptionally effective way to ensure real progress was made on each front. Advisory Design Review, for example, was just a gleam in former Council member Diane Durst's eye just one year ago; today, it is a vital and successful part of our planning approval process. Thanks to our goal setting process, we've also made significant progress on our Downtown Plan and emergency preparedness. Each month, we report on our progress during the Council meeting and periodically deliver that update to you through *The Morning After*. We've set the bar high for this year – as you'll see on page two – and we're looking forward to meeting those challenges!

Designs for Lagunitas Bridge Unveiled

URS engineer David Anderson and project architect Don Donaldson unveiled preliminary architectural elevations for the Lagunitas Road Bridge replacement. The new bridge features a walkway separated from the roadway by a crash-resistant, cast concrete barrier to provide safer pedestrian passage. The design echoes the existing bridge, but provides increased traffic lane widths and improved seismic strength. In order to increase storm water flow capacity to 5,400 cubic feet per second, the design eliminates the existing piers in the middle of the creek and raises the bridge deck two feet.



At the urging of the Moya Library/Ross Historical Society board of trustees, the Town will try to incorporate the existing historical light fixtures, known as "electroliers," in the bridge replacement. Because the existing electroliers are too fragile for reinstallation, the Town will explore replicating the light fixtures by casting an original electrolier and custom making new fixtures. The Town expects the new bridge to be constructed during the summer months of 2009 if the necessary state and federal permits can be procured according to schedule.

Mayor Bill Cahill's Report

Congratulations to Senior Planner Elise Semonian on the birth of her son, Peter Semonian. Mother and baby are doing fine, and Elise continues to make cameo appearances in the planning office despite being on maternity leave. The Town has hired Dani Hamilton to fill in for Elise while she is out for the next few months.

The Ross Farmer's Market will continue through September 25th, and I encourage everyone to stop by to pick up some farm fresh produce. Be aware that parking will be limited this Thursday, September 18, as set-up begins for the centennial celebration.



Council Members Discuss 2008-09 Goals

The Town Council discussed implementation of the five Council goals for the 2008-09 fiscal year. Mayor Bill Cahill, who is overseeing personnel matters, reported he had interviewed two potential consultants to review the Town's organizational structure and job functions. Mayor Cahill also presented a draft customer feedback brochure that will be used to gather information from residents and others who use Town services.

Council member Scot Hunter reported he and Town Manager Gary Broad and the new fire and police chiefs had met to develop annual goals for the recently divided departments. This year, one of his goals is to study and provide recommendations for remodeling or reconstruction of the firehouse and public safety offices.

Council member Chris Martin continues to work with the Army Corps of Engineers on the Unit 4 project involving the replacement of the fish ladder, which will most likely be completed in 2011. He will be approaching other Marin jurisdictions to develop additional stormwater regulations in the Ross Valley.

Council member Mike Skall described his goal to continue working on emergency preparedness, with a special emphasis on preparing seniors for disasters and ensuring aid reaches them in the event of an emergency. Finally, Mayor Pro Tempore Rick Strauss reported the Town had selected a surveyor for the downtown area and plans are underway to hire a traffic engineer and planning consultant to develop ideas for the Downtown Plan.



Pedestrian Pathway Projects Receive Funding

The Council awarded a \$30,000 contract for Sir Francis Drake Boulevard pedestrian pathway preliminary engineering and design services to Questa Engineering. Construction is expected to take place in 2009. The Town received a \$197,000 federal grant for the project.

The Council also awarded a \$43,775 contract for the first phase of the Shady Lane Safe Pathway to School Project. McGuire & Hester will construct the pathway section along Shady Lane from

10 Shady Lane to Southwood Avenue at the end of September. The Town received a \$246,000 Transportation Authority of Marin grant for the project.

Council Opposes State Legislature Move to Borrow Town Funds

The Town Council adopted a resolution opposing any state budget decision to seize or borrow local government funds. The resolution follows the state legislature's failure to adopt a balanced budget on July 1, 2008.

Although California voters have repeatedly approved ballot propositions protecting local government funds, the state's fiscal problems have prompted some legislators to consider seizing local government funds to finance the state budget shortfall. Governor Schwarzenegger opposes such a move, declaring it would deepen the state's structural deficit and cripple local government and transportation services.



Governor Schwarzenegger opposes the state legislature's attempts to use local funds to balance the state budget deficit.

The resolution, which will be sent to our State legislators, directs the legislature to "cut up its local government credit cards," stop papering over the state budget deficit with more borrowing, and compromise on a balanced budget.



Council Revisits Anonymous Letter Policy

The Council decided to reverse its previous policy and process anonymous letters in the same manner signed correspondence is handled.

Following a spate of anonymous letters and flyers, which included negative and inaccurate material, Council member Scot Hunter suggested at the June Council meeting that staff be instructed to disregard all anonymous letters in the future, and the Council informally agreed.

The Council subsequently received two well-reasoned arguments from Ross citizens against that policy. Because of public safety and First Amendment rights questions, the Council decided to revise its previous position.

Centennial Celebration Starts Next Week!

The Town is planning a huge centennial celebration on September 19 and 20. There is an adults only dinner and show planned for Friday night, and 1,400 people have already signed up, including many Ross School alumni and former residents coming from all over the country. The deadline to reserve seats is September 15. Bring your own picnic, or order a box dinner directly from Eddies or the local restaurants.

There will be an unforgettable parade down Shady Lane at 10 am on Saturday, followed by a picnic and fun on the Ross Common until 4 p.m. There is no admission fee, but if you'd like to buy lunch or go on rides, you will need to buy tickets. Tickets can be purchased at Café Marmalade, in front of the Post Office next week or at the event. All the details for both the dinner and the daytime event are on the Town's website at www.townofross.org.



Residents should be aware that parking will be very limited around the Ross Common and the Post Office during the centennial events, and there will be a very large increase of trucks and cars setting up from Wednesday, September 17, through Sunday, September 21. There will be handicap parking only along the Common and behind the Post Office during the centennial events due to the large number of elderly people attending. Regular parking will be available at the Marin Art & Garden Center, and shuttles will be running from both the College of Marin and the Marin Art & Garden Center. There will also be several street closures on Saturday for the parade.

We hope residents will embrace the spirit of centennial camaraderie and understand that the extra people, trucks and noise will be here only for a weekend and not return for another hundred years!

Firefighters Promoted

Fire Chief Tom Vallee announced the promotion of firefighters Tim Grasser and Rick Rosencrans. Grasser, a 10-year employee, has been promoted to Captain, while Rosecrans was promoted to Engineer after four years with the Ross Fire Department as a volunteer and then apprentice firefighter.



Many friends, family members, and co-workers were on hand to celebrate these career milestones. Congratulations Tim and Rick – and thanks for your dedicated service to Ross!



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 at <http://www.townofross.org/town-council/current-meeting-reports/>. The minutes of this meeting will be available on the Town website at www.townofross.org after approval at the October Council meeting.

Address	Applicant	Approved	Denied	Continued
104 Laurel Grove Ave.	Hank and Beth Holland			
45 Willow Ave.	Brandon and Genevieve Broll			
3 Upper Ames Ave.	Lionel Conacher and Joan Dea			
7 Woodhaven Rd.	Appeal by Patty and Richard Treadwell			
8 Sir Francis Drake	David and Andrea Millstein			

Finally... The Town Council met in closed session to discuss labor relations negotiations between the Town and the Ross Professional Firefighters Association. No reportable action was taken.

Upcoming Town Council Meeting

In observance of the Yom Kippur holiday on Oct. 9, the next Town Council meeting will be on Thursday, October 16, at 6:30 p.m. Agendas and staff reports are posted in advance of the meeting on the town's website at 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. 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. If you'd like to receive The Morning After and other town information via email, contact Linda Lopez at llopez@townofross.org.