



THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Mayor's Corner



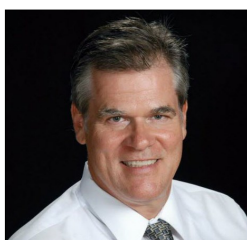
Katie Hoertkorn

We started this week with the 8th Annual Ross Auxiliary Tree Lighting Ceremony on December 4th. It was a wonderful event; the Ross Commons was filled with children drinking hot chocolate, courtesy of Ross Cafe, and confiding their holiday wishes to Santa Claus! Ross School choir, Ross Preschool children & The Branson A Cappella choirs all provided holiday spirit. It was a privilege as Mayor to light the Christmas tree and welcome everyone to the event. Thank you to Ross Auxillary for bringing such warmth cheer to the community!

Welcome to our new Public Works Director, Richard Simonitch. Mr. Simonitch is highly recommended and has over 30 years of public works and engineering experience working in both the private

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Public Works Director/Engineer Hired



Richard Simonitch

Richard Simonitch has joined the Town of Ross as the new Public Works Director/Town Engineer starting December 5th. Richard has over 30 years of experience with the design and management of residential and commercial land development, water resources, and storm water management projects throughout northern California. Richard was born in San Francisco and grew up in Ross where he attended both Ross and St. Anselm School until his family moved away to Contra Costa County.

Richard studied Civil Engineering at San Diego State University, graduating with a Bachelor of Science. He began his career as a junior engineer and computer systems analyst for a small east bay Civil Engineering consulting firm. During his years as a consultant in the private sector, Richard developed his Civil Engineering and Land Surveying skills on the design and construction of various municipal engineering projects including several major residential subdivisions in Contra Costa, Napa, and Solano Counties.

In 2004, Richard became part owner and principal engineer with Creegan and D'Angelo Engineers where he managed the company's branch office in Monterey. With this assignment, Richard also became the contract City Engineer and Public Works Director for the small coastal town of Sand City, California, where his engineering and management skills were key to the successful construction in 2010 of the first full scale municipal desalination plant to provide drinking water under the newly amended State of California water treatment rules.

Richard continued working as contract Public Works Director for Sand City until late 2012, when he left the private sector to take a position with the County of Marin Department of Public Works Land Development Division. During this time, Richard was also appointed Marin County Surveyor, and acting City Surveyor for the Cities of San Rafael and Larkspur.

The Town is very excited to have Richard on board. He can be reached at rsimonitch@townofross.org, or at (415) 453-1453 ext. 115.

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and public sectors. We are delighted to have him join the staff. Speaking of Public Works, the new improvements at Sir Francis Drake and Bolinas intersection are substantially complete. Hopefully the improvements will be well received.

Finally, Dan Winey, a long time invaluable member of the Town of Ross Advisory Design Review Board (ADR), was recently recognized and awarded as the lead architect on the project for Gensler the 2016 Gold American Architectural Prize. To quote from the award: "As the tallest building in China Shanghai Tower, designed by Gensler, has had an immediate and profound impact on the country's perceptions of how a skyscraper can contribute to a city, a country, and a culture. Not only does it rise over Shanghai as a new symbol for its modern emergence on the global stage, but also points the way forward for technical innovation accomplished within the parameters of a Chinese cultural identity. Powerful in form yet delicate in appearance, Shanghai Tower would be a graceful addition to any skyline, but its function, identify, and symbolism are firmly rooted in the needs of its specific site." Way to go Dan!! How many ADR boards have such bragging rights?



I wish everyone Happy Holidays! ■

Discussion of Town-Owned Property at 6 Redwood Drive

The Council discussed and considered two options on the preferred future use of the Town-owned building located at 6 Redwood Drive. The property, which has been used as a rental for workforce housing, was severely damaged by fire in 2015, and has been vacant since. After considering several options at the June 2016 Council meeting, the Council directed staff to further explore the option of repairing the house and renting it, and the option of demolishing the house and converting the land to be part of the Ross Common Park.

Option 1 - Repair the House and Continue Renting: Repairing and returning the use of the building to a single family residence rental could provide more affordable workforce housing in a very expensive rental market. The rental unit could assist in providing net revenue to the Town of approximately \$10,000 to \$20,000 annually.

Option 2 - Build a Natural Playground: Town staff were contacted by members of the community to express their desire in having a natural play area park to be utilized by families with young children. Currently, there are two playgrounds located on the Ross School property adjacent to Ross Commons, but both of these playgrounds are not available for public use during the school day and neither are certified for children under age five. The proposed nature playground would serve children up to about age 10 and be themed based on nature and the redwood trees on-site. The nature based park would have very different elements of play and interaction than the existing playgrounds and would be available to the public during and after school.

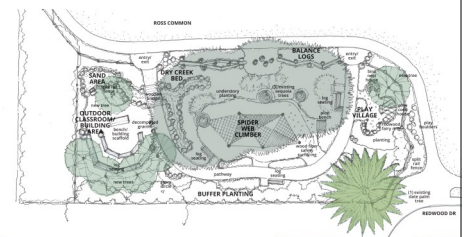
The Council received numerous emails from the community weighing in on these options, and many members of the public were in attendance at the December Council meeting to voice their views. After much deliberation, the Council voted 4-1 to repair the house.

ROSS NATURE PLAY AREA CONCEPT PLAN

Go wild, Ross child! This natural play area is for you.

Located smack in the center of town and right next to the Ross Elementary School and Ross Commons, this 1/2 acre site could provide local families with a place for children to dig in the sand, balance on logs, scramble on rocks, play in the bushes, make mud pies, hide in a bird's nest, climb on ropes, swing in hammocks, run along a path, build with sticks, and play in a dry creek bed.

Built out of natural materials and slipped under the canopy of three existing sequoia trees, this is a space for wonder and imagination—a place where children of all ages can explore and engage in free, unstructured, open-ended play. With plenty of comfortable seating options and an outdoor area for teaching and learning, this natural play area will be an engaging, tactile environment that bolsters children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical health and encourages them to play in nature every day.



Staff and Councilmembers want to thank the many people who provided valuable input in this process.

PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the December Council meeting. Staff reports and audio for the meeting can be found on the [December 8th](#) meeting page. The minutes for this meeting will be available on this page after adoption by the Council at the January Council meeting.

Address: 2 Canyon Road
Applicant: Ben & Patti Shimek
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 137 Bolinas Avenue
Applicant: Kimberly Tully-Sutton
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Marijuana Act Amended

With the passage of the Control, Regulate and Tax Adult Use of Marijuana Act ("AUMA") by the voters on November 8th, the Council adopted an Urgency Ordinance (effective immediately) to amend Code Section 18.40.210 (Medical Marijuana Dispensaries Prohibited) to prohibit all medical and non-medical commercial marijuana activity, to prohibit the outdoor cultivation of marijuana, and to reasonably regulate the indoor cultivation of marijuana as permitted under State law. The Urgency Ordinance will be in place until the regular Ordinance becomes effective following its adoption at the January 2017 Council meeting.

The proposed Ordinance prohibits commercial marijuana activity in all zones, and provides that the Town shall not issue any permit, license, or other entitlement for any activity that requires a State license under the AUMA or the Medical Marijuana Regulation and Safety Act. It also amends the ban on cultivation to provide that indoor cultivation of six or fewer marijuana plants within a single private residence is permitted as authorized by State law.

The staff report is available at <http://www.townofross.org/towncouncil/page/town-council-meeting-173>.



PUBLIC SAFETY

Holiday Safety

We are in the Holiday season, the time of giving. Unfortunately, it is also the time of "taking." Please take extra care during the season to avoid becoming a victim. It has been our experience that criminals take advantage of our good nature and use opportunity to their advantage.

Some thoughts during this season to help keep us safe:

When shopping:

Try to park in well lighted areas. Do not leave packages in sight inside your car, put them in the trunk. Lock your car, even to go into a store for a minute. Never leave your purse, wallet, laptop in plain view in your car.



At home

Package deliveries should be taken inside promptly. Don't mail out cash to friends or relatives as gifts. Be careful about leaving items in cars at night. Lock up.

Credit Card Purchases

Monitor your card statements for fraud. Use only secure sites when ordering online.

***A note about driving! ***

This is a busy time of year and the traffic is congested around the shopping areas. Make sure you plan your travel for heavier traffic and parking difficulties. The weather increases the amount of time you will need. Don't hurry, drive carefully.

Watch out for holiday parties and driving. Be aware of erratic drivers, leave them space and call the police to report them. Please, don't drink and drive.

Have a safe and happy holiday season.

Ross Police Department



Measure K Final Election Results



The Council adopted a resolution certifying the final results of the Municipal Election held November 8th for Measure K - the Public Safety Tax.

We're happy to report we had an impressive turnout at the polls and Measure K passed with almost 79% voting in favor of it. As you may know, Measure K required a two-thirds majority vote to pass and we far exceeded that. Here are the final results from the Marin County Registrar of Voters:

Yes Votes	No Votes
1,097 (78.69%)	297 (21.31%)

A total of 1,463 ballots were cast in Ross which comprised 89.59% of the registered voters (1,633).

The Public Safety tax will take effect on July 1, 2017, and continue for eight years until June 30, 2025.

TOWN HALL HOLIDAY CLOSURE

Town Hall offices of Administration, Building, Public Works, & Planning will be closed **December 23rd through January 2, 2017**. If you have business needs with these departments, please address them before or after the closure. Police and Ross Valley Fire will remain open 24/7. During the holiday closure, if you need an Encroachment Permit, please email public-works@townofross.org, and someone will respond to you. To schedule a Building Inspection, please leave a voicemail message on the Building Inspector's phone line (415-453-1453 ext. 170), and he will return your call. We will reopen for business Tuesday, January 3rd. Happy holidays to everyone!

RECREATION NEWS

Winter Sing

The Ross Preschool students participated in the winter sing at the Ross Commons tree lighting ceremony on December 4th. The preschool students and their parents enjoyed the festivities hosted by the Ross Auxiliary. Thanks to the students for their enthusiastic participation. For more information on the Ross Preschool visit the website at www.therosspreschool.org



Ross Commons Field Closure

The Ross Commons fields will be closed from December 16, 2016 through March 12, 2017. During this time maintenance will be performed, including seeding and topdressing. The annual closure and maintenance of the fields is undertaken to ready the fields for spring, summer and fall activities.

Hoop Season is here!



Ross Recreation hosted a boy's basketball clinic for 2nd through 4th grades on Saturday, December 3. Coaches and players from Redwood High School conducted skill training for the players in our youth basketball program. A Girls clinic for those entered in the Ross Recreation 2nd through 4th grade basketball program will be held on Saturday, December 17 at Redwood High School. Games will begin in January.

Ross Recreation is offering a youth basketball camp over the holiday. The Redwood Giants Hoop Camp will be held December 27 through December 29. The camp is open to boys and girls 2nd grade through 8th grade. Steve Campagno, Redwood High Varsity Basketball coach, conducts the camp.

Winter program registration is ongoing. Visit www.rossrecreation.org for program and registration information. Please note that Ross Recreation will be closed from December 23 through January 2.



ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 2016

Dec 5	8:00	am	Special Council Meeting, Town Hall
Dec 5	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Dec 6	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall (<i>*note new date</i>)
Dec 8	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Dec 23-30	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Christmas holiday

JANUARY 2017

Jan 2	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for New Year's Day
Jan 9	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Jan 10	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
Jan 12	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Jan 16	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
Jan 24	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

FEBRUARY 2017

Feb 6	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Feb 9	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Feb 20	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Presidents Day
Feb 28	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

CONTACT US

Administration	415.453.1453 x105	Public Works	415.453.1453 x106
Building	415.453.1453 x106	Recreation	415.453.6020
Planning	415.453.1453 x121	Ross Valley Fire	415.258.4686
Police	415.453.1453, Option 2	Town Manager	415.453.1453 x107

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