

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Mayor's Corner



Elizabeth Robbins, MD
Mayor

What a night! The first First Friday event, held on May 4, was a huge success. Hundreds of residents strolled for hours through the downtown area, sipping wine, sampling food from local merchants and a food truck, and visiting the shops and galleries, many of which have just recently opened. Children enjoyed face painting, free ice cream cones, and playing on the Common. The event, organized by the newly formed Ross Merchants Association, will occur monthly, on the first Friday of each month. Come join your fellow residents on Friday June 1st for another enjoyable evening!

Nearly 50 people gathered at Town Hall on Tuesday to participate in the first

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Public Right of Way Responsibility

The maintenance responsibilities of the strip of land between your front property line and the pavement (or back of curb, if one exists) is an important consideration to any property owner, and every homeowner or prospective buyer or seller should have at least a basic understanding of their responsibilities and the various terms used when talking about roadways and right of ways.

It is important to understand that all the public right of ways (the actual land that the paved road lies in) were offered at one time or the other to the Town by the original (underlying fee) owner for public street purposes. In most cases the Town accepted the right of ways for maintenance of roads but in some cases the Town rejected the offer. Either way the right of ways that the Town accepted for maintenance are not "owned" by the Town but are held by the Town in the Public Trust for roadway purposes. Except for the truly privately-owned roads like Willow Hill, Pomeroy, and Monte Alegre (to name a few) all public right of ways in Town are either held in the Public Trust by the Town, or owned by the underlying fee owner, their heirs and successors.

Regardless of whether or not the Town maintains the roadway, state and local laws contain provisions requiring that the fronting property owner maintain much of the non-roadway lands located outside of but immediately adjacent to their own property.

California Streets and Highways Code states that the fronting property owner "...shall maintain any sidewalk in such condition that the sidewalk will not endanger persons or property and maintain it in a condition which will not interfere with the public convenience..." and Ross Municipal Code section [12.20.010](#) states that "Any person owning real property in the town shall repair any defective sidewalk, curb, park or parking strip lying in front of or along the side of his property."



With regard to trees and vegetation, Ross Municipal Code section [12.12.010](#) states that "All occupants and owners of property within the town are required to trim, remove or destroy all trees, hedges, plants,

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workshop devoted to defining and clarifying the town's design guidelines for residential properties. The year-long planning process stems from the town's general plan, which recommended creating design guidelines. These won't replace current town ordinances, such as those defining setback requirements, maximum floor-area ratio, and hillside lot regulations. Among other topics, participants discussed the value of the town's small town feel and the relationship with the natural environment. Residents are welcome to review and participate in the process by viewing the Design Guidelines page on the Town website at <https://townofross.org/planning/page/design-guidelines>.



How to best provide management of fire protection services to the community is a current topic being discussed by the Town Council. The Town of Ross's fire department merged with the Ross Valley Fire Department in 2012; besides Ross, this Joint Powers Authority provides services to San Anselmo, Fairfax, and Sleepy Hollow. The current Ross Valley fire chief retired last fall, and the Ross Valley Fire Department is considering whether to hire a new fire chief or to contract with Marin County Fire for fire chief services. This decision would not affect where fire engines are located or how many firefighters are employed. Contracting with Marin County Fire might lead to modest cost savings in future years while providing a full range of executive management services for the Ross Valley Fire Department. ■

Farm Stand Returns to Ross

The Marin Community Farm Stand (MCFS) began its fourth year on the Ross Common on Thursday, May 3rd. The seasonal farmers market will run every Thursday, from 11:30 am to 7:30 pm through October.

The MCFS has been in Marin County since 2003, and represents the cooperative efforts of over 20 Marin Organic Farms from the communities of Bolinas, Inverness, Lagunitas, Nicasio, Point Reyes, San Anselmo and Tomales. They operate a permanent market in West Marin at 6700 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard in Forest Knolls Thursday thru Monday, and are in downtown San Anselmo on Fridays through October.



The Farm Stand features a wide selection of seasonal organic fruit and vegetables, fresh meat and fish, desserts, breads, and many other items from local artisans. To sign up for their weekly e-newsletter, go to www.communityfarmstands.com.

Council Discusses Fire Services

Fire services in Ross are provided by the Ross Valley Fire Department (RVFD), which is a Joint Powers Authority consisting of Ross, Fairfax, San Anselmo, and the Sleepy Hollow Fire Protection District. Councilmembers Brekhus and Kuhl are the representatives on the Board.



Since September 2017, the RVFD Board has been exploring two options to fill the Fire Chief vacancy created by the retirement of Chief Mills: 1) traditional Fire Chief recruitment; and 2) a shared services model whereby Marin County Fire would provide the executive management services to serve as the RVFD Fire Chief. Since September, staff has moved forward on both options with the Fire Chief recruitment and has developed a draft shared services proposal with the County Fire Department for executive management of the department.

At their April meeting, the RVFD Board reviewed both the recruitment results and the shared services proposal, and the majority of the Fire Board members were in favor of pursuing the shared services agreement with Marin County Fire. It was agreed that the presentation re-

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PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the May Council meeting. Staff reports and audio for the meeting can be found on the Town's website [May 10th](#) meeting page. The minutes for this meeting will be posted after adoption by the Council at the June 14, 2018 Council meeting.

Address: 14 Lagunitas Road
Applicant: St. John's Episcopal Church
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 74 Shady Lane
Applicant: Thomas & Lindsey Abramo
Council Action: Continued to June 14 meeting

Address: 14 Brookwood Road
Applicant: Teresa Federer & Peter Levinson
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Kuhl recused)

Address: 11 Circle Drive
Applicant: 11 Circle Drive LLC
Council Action: Continued
Vote (for/against/abstain): 3-0-2 (Robbins/Russell recused)

Fire Services Discussion -

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garding the shared services model should be presented to the respective Councils before a final decision is made by the Fire Board.

Ross's share of the costs associated with either the Marin County Fire shared services or a new Fire Chief's salary and benefits are 23.37%. The Marin County Fire shared services contract is expected to cost the RVFD \$300,000 in the first year with a CPI escalator in future years.

The Council discussed the options and supported the concept of the Marin County Fire shared services model with its comprehensive depth of executive and administrative services being provided to RVFD.

■



Ross First Friday Event

The First Fridays event held in downtown Ross on May 4th was a great success. The Ross Merchants Association sponsored the event and plans to hold the event on the first Friday of every month. The next one is scheduled for Friday, June 1st. Enjoy photos from the May 4th event courtesy of Sally Newson and Police Officer Paul Stromoski.





Public Right-of-Way

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shrubs or vegetation, or parts thereof, which are growing in a manner which obstructs or impairs the free full public use of the sidewalk area or street in front of the premises of such occupant or owner.” Ross Municipal Code continues with section [12.12.015](#) stating that “All occupants and owners of property within the town are required to maintain the section of right-of-way from the property line to the edge of the road pavement.”

There can be many situations that may require some additional site-specific analysis to determine an appropriate course of action. If you have any questions regarding the maintenance of roadways, walkways, or vegetation in front of your home, don't hesitate to contact the Public Works Department. ■

Design Guidelines Update

The Town of Ross is undertaking an exciting General Plan implementation planning project to promote excellent design in new residential development. On February 8, 2018, the Town Council approved the execution of a contract with Winter and Co., a planning and design firm, to prepare Design Guidelines.

Through a public process, Design Guidelines will be developed to clarify the community's design expectations for topics like building scale, site design, building materials and landscaping. Once complete, the Design Guidelines will also provide information, set expectations, and provide guidance to residents, design professionals, and prospective residents.

The process will be iterative and include multiple opportunities for input by the community. Public feedback is desired and encouraged throughout the process, through interactive community workshops, online, and meetings with the Ross Advisory Design Review Group and Town Council.

For more information on the Design Guidelines, please go to <https://townofross.org/planning/page/design-guidelines>.

RECREATION NEWS



Camp Safari, Kinder Camp, Marin Explorers, Sporty Girls, Top Gun Sports and Adventure Camp are all back for another six weeks this summer!

Summer brochure available online!

With additional specialty camps in August, including Marin Theatre Company, LEGO, fishing, and more!



SIGN-UP TODAY ONLINE AT ROSSRECREATION.ORG 415.453.6020

Registration is open for the Ross Recreation summer program. Sign up now!

Register for programs at rossrecreation.org.

Spring Field Hockey Clinics were held in March and April at the Branson School Field. The clinics focused on skill development for middle school age girls and were conducted by coaches from local high schools. The program is a continuation of the field hockey clinic offered last summer through a grant from the U.S. Field Hockey Association.



Clinics will again be offered during the summer in August.

ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY 2018

May 7	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
May 8	7:00	pm	Design Guidelines Community Workshop, Town Hall
May 10	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
May 12	9:00	am	Ross School Garden Tour, Ross Common
May 22	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall
May 28	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Memorial Day

JUNE 2018

Jun 1	5:00	pm	Downtown Ross First Fridays, Ross Common
Jun 11	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Jun 14	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Jun 26	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

JULY 2018

Jul 4	11:00	am	Annual Ross 4th of July Parade and Celebration, Ross Common
Jul 4	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Independence Day
Jul 9	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Jul 12	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Jul 24	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

RECURRING EVENTS

Thursdays, May - October Ross Farm Stand, 11:30 am - 7:30 pm, Ross Common

CONTACT US

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Building & Public Works	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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Visit us at www.townofross.org



We welcome suggestions for future issues. Email llopez@townofross.org

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