

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Mayor's Corner



Beach Kuhl
Mayor

As we begin a new year perhaps we should look ahead at some of the physical upgrades to our community we can expect during it. Already accomplished is the replacement of the sewer line under

the Ross Common. Come spring the grass in the area where trenching was done in the playing fields will be replanted and the dog park area will be seeded. The Council last night approved landscaping installation at the property adjacent to the Common at 6 Redwood Drive where a fire-damaged house was recently removed. The first step will involve removal of the deteriorated ivy-laden fences, to open up the area and expose to view the three beautiful redwoods and palm tree on the property, which are

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6 Redwood Property Landscaping Plan

The Council discussed the proposed landscape improvements to the Town-owned property at 6 Redwood Drive. At the May 10, 2018 Council meeting, four options were presented related to the 6 Redwood Drive property: Option 1 - reconstructing a new house using the old floor plan and elevations; Option 2 - constructing a new structure with a modified roofline and floor plan; Option 3 - entering into a ground lease to private development for residential development; and Option 4 - performing site work and cleanup. The Council discussion included various potential housing options related to Options 1 through 3, and turning the space into passive park space by connecting it to the rest of the Common park. The Council voted to pursue Option 4 with the site plan to be discussed at a future meeting.



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Consistent with Council direction on May 10, 2018, the proposed project is to remove the chain link and 6-foot tall wood fence and the overgrown vegetation that separates the Ross Common from the 6 Redwood Drive site, to open the property up to and incorporate it into the park. The vegetation is considered to be invasive and has grown over and enveloped the chain link and wooden perimeter fence. Mulch and a weed barrier would be placed on the ground over much of the 6 Redwood Drive site and irrigation would be installed to water/maintain the three large redwood trees as recommended by the Town Arborist. A four-foot tall split rail fence is proposed going from the palm tree adjacent to Redwood Drive across the existing drive entry and along the east side of the site. The Council voted at the January 10, 2019 meeting to approve this plan.

Some historic background on the parcel: On June 22, 1911, the Town Council authorized the Town to purchase the 4.36 acre property known as Ross Common which includes the 6 Redwood site from Annie S.E. Worn to be held, owned, and used by the Town as and for a public park. Two houses existed on the property and were transferred to the Town with the sale. One was destroyed many years ago, and the remaining house that produced rental income was severely damaged by fire in February 2015. Turning the 6 Redwood space into passive park space by connecting it to the rest of the Common park follows the original intent of the Town Council 1911 Resolution.

now obscured. Some low split rail fencing will be installed in areas along the path bordering the area, but the central area facing the Common will be left open and mulch will be installed.

Work has already started on rehabilitating the historic Three Bear Hut in Natalie Coffin Greene Park. Private funds have been donated for picnic tables and the adjoining bench seating area which will be suitable for outdoor classes for Ross Recreation and the School. Our Mayor Pro Tem advises that some years ago the hut was the site for graduating Ross School students to gather to sign each other's yearbooks. Maybe that tradition will be renewed.



As you may have noticed the gateway area behind the bus stop at the corner of Lagunitas Road and Sir Francis Drake has been substantially cleaned up and plans are underway to add landscaping. This project has been led by the Ross Property Owners Association, who continue to contribute in so many ways to making our community easy on the eye.

Finally, we expect that sometime this year that construction will begin on the storm drain upgrade project in Bolinas Road and the large-diameter sewer main replacement project will continue down Poplar Avenue. Those projects won't be easy on the eye or convenient while they are underway but are vital upgrades to our community's basic services and, in the case of Poplar Avenue, are done at no cost to the Town.

We continue to welcome input about other improvements we might consider. ■

Employee Recognition Program



Gianfranco Campa

The Town recognized two long-time employees with a token of appreciation for their years of dedicated service. Police Sergeant Gianfranco Campa and Police Officer Paul Stromoski have each served the Town of Ross for 15 years.

Gianfranco Campa was born and raised in Italy and immigrated to the United States in 1990. He settled in the SF Bay Area and began working for the San Francisco Chronicle in 1994, becoming a Circulation Manager. In 2002, Gianfranco changed his career path to law enforcement, something he had been interested in for many years. He was hired by the Marin County Sheriff's Office, working in the Jail from 2002 to 2003. At that time, acting Ross Police Chief Mike Ridgeway, (a Lieutenant from the Marin Sheriff's Office), recruited Gianfranco to come to work at the Ross Police Department. Gianfranco began patrol duties in Ross in 2003, and was promoted to Sergeant in 2010. Gianfranco handles the Police department statistics and Training programs. He has a Bachelor's degree in History from Italy and another Bachelor's degree in Homeland Security. He is married to Nancy and they have three children: Anthony, Franchesca, and Paul. Gianfranco writes history and political articles for Italian online publications. He is avid soccer fan and avid cyclist.

Paul Stromoski is a California native, growing up in Glendale. He went into the military after high school, joining the Army. He was stationed in Germany as a crewman on an anti-tank missile unit. After his four-year stint in the Army, Paul went to UC Davis where he earned a Bachelor's degree in foreign language and linguistics. Paul joined the California State Park Service as a Ranger from 1999 to 2003. In 2003, Paul joined the Ross Police Department. Paul is married to Anna and together they have 3 children; Chantelle age 7, Max and Fiona, 5 year old twins. Paul is an outdoors enthusiast, who enjoys backpacking and camping. His fondest backpacking trip was a five-day outing to the California Lost Coast. He also enjoys reading, but doesn't have much time right now to read with three young children.



Paul Stromoski

Thank you Gianfranco and Paul! The Town is grateful for all that you do!



(The following article on the history of Ross was contributed by the Moya Library/Ross Historical Society.)

Big Changes Proposed for Ross

June 15, 1951 was a busy news day for Ross, with three front page articles in the Independent Journal. In one, the paper noted a large attendance, versus the usual sprinkle of citizens, at the Ross Town Council meeting. It appeared that a discussion of rezoning, along with the matters below, inspired many to witness the proceedings. Another article detailed a petition by 200 residents to install a traffic signal to replace a blinking light at the intersection of Sir Francis Drake and Lagunitas Road. This would make it the first traffic signal in Ross. Not much has changed since. Finally, the Council was reviewing the proposed creation of a new subdivision, Sylvan Acres. Seven lots were proposed along the old railroad grade between Lagunitas Road and Bolinas Avenue. We know it today as the area along Sylvan Lane. The 20,000 square foot parcels were expected to sell for between six and seven thousand dollars. It was further reported that this same stretch had been considered for a highway through Ross, but the Town blocked this by purchasing the old railroad grade across from Ross Common. This would also explain the lack of a bike path here so common on the old rail path in much of Ross and Marin today. This wasn't the first change in the neighborhood. Check out our early Ross parcel map, when the railroad was here, Shady was called Wordsworth and Drake was Red Hill-Ross Landing Road.



Marin Sanitary 2019 Rates



The Council approved the Marin Sanitary Service (MSS) rate increase of 9.60% for 2019. The Town of Ross participates in a Franchisor's Group comprised of San Rafael, Larkspur, portions of Marin County and the Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District.

This year, R3 Consulting Group, Inc., has determined the 9.60% rate increase is appropriate for all ratepayers which include residential homeowners, apartment owners, commercial property owners, and other businesses and tenants. The MSS solid waste service collection, processing, disposal, and recycling service cost in Ross increases from \$36.13 per month in 2018 to \$39.60 per month in 2019, for the 32-gallon cart service. By comparison, the 2019 average rates for the five jurisdictions in our Franchisors Group is \$42.31 per month. The 2018 rates for all other non-Franchise group entities in Marin is \$41.23 and the overall Bay Area is \$36.73 (2019 survey data was not available for the other entities when the R3 report was completed in December).



Rates are increasing industrywide at a higher rate than inflation for a number of reasons. There has been a steep decline in recycling commodities markets in the past three years resulting in reduced revenues for recycling companies and the closure of more than 1,000 recycling buy-back centers throughout the State – the recycling market collapse is being felt across the nation. Compounding the issue is the growing amount of solid waste, recycling, and compostable materials being generated by residents and businesses on a per capita basis. Other issues driving up costs include the



increasing costs of capital and equipment to implement new State standards and requirements, and increasing costs of labor in a constrained labor market. The result is becoming a number of jurisdictions with double-

digit rate increases such as 14% to 19% increases in the Marin communities of Mill Valley, Belvedere, Corte Madera, and Tiburon, 15% in San Francisco to more than 50% in Piedmont, Windsor, and Santa Rosa.



Update on Construction Projects

Ross Common

Rehabilitation of Ross Common turf began over the holiday break with seeding and top-dressing of the Common fields. The Ross Valley Sanitary District (RVSD) project, which impacted Ross Common, has been completed and work is underway to restore the affected areas including the installation of turf and seeding of the dog park.



Ross Valley Sanitary District is responsible for the repair of the impacted area and Town staff will be directing and overseeing landscape contractors to perform the necessary work in the coming months. Work is expected to be completed by March, when the fields are scheduled to reopen.

Ross Valley Sanitary District

The next locations to experience construction impacts from the Ross Valley Sanitation District (RVSD) gravity sewer projects will be on Bolinas Avenue near the St. Anselm Church, and various locations along Shady Lane between Bolinas and Locust, currently scheduled for some time in February-March 2019.



Further construction within the roadways on Poplar and Ross Common between Lagunitas Road and Kentfield is scheduled for the summer of 2019. All of these construction locations will involve open trench excavation, lane closures, and traffic control. The Town Public Works staff will work with the RVSD to ensure that impacts related to traffic delays and noise are minimized as much as possible.

The Ross Valley Sanitation District has posted a webpage with information regarding this project on their website at: <https://www.rvsd.org/242/Ross-Common-Upper-Shady-Lane-Sewer-Impro.>

RECREATION NEWS

The Ross Recreation youth basketball program began practices this week and will begin games on Saturday, January 12 at Bacich and Ross School gymnasiums. The program has 250 boys and girls from kindergarten through fourth grade participating on thirty teams. The emphasis is on skill development and sportsmanship. Practice sessions, led by Jean Marc Schafer and Ross Recreation staff are held on weekdays. During games on Saturdays, parent volunteers serve as team coaches. The program will finish the season on March 9.



Ross Youth Basketball players and parents are invited to attend the California Men's Basketball game against USC on Saturday, February 15. A flyer will be distributed to the teams with registration instructions. Last year two Ross Recreation basketball players were chosen for contests held on the court during time outs. Group pricing for 10 or more is available.

Spring Registration will begin in late January. Sports programs include Lacrosse, Flag Football, T-Ball, Sport Girls, Field Hockey. Class offerings include art, dance, acting, sewing, STEM fundamentals with Legos, and game design and coding and more. Come join the fun and register for a Ross Rec program in the spring!

Register for Ross Recreation programs at www.rossrecreation.org.

ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY 2019

| | | | |
|---------|------|----|--|
| Jan 1 | -- | -- | Town Hall Offices closed for New Year's Day |
| Jan 7 | 7:15 | pm | Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall |
| Jan 10 | 6:00 | pm | Council Meeting, Town Hall |
| Jan 21 | -- | -- | Town Hall Offices closed for Martin Luther King holiday |
| Jan 23* | 7:00 | pm | Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall <i>*note date change</i> |

FEBRUARY 2019

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|--------|------|----|---|
| Feb 11 | 7:15 | pm | Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall |
| Feb 13 | 9:00 | am | Annual Strategic Council Workshop, the Studio, MAGC |
| Feb 14 | 6:00 | pm | Council Meeting, Town Hall |
| Feb 18 | -- | -- | Town Hall Offices closed for Presidents Day |
| Feb 26 | 7:00 | pm | Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall |

MARCH 2019

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|--------|------|----|---|
| Mar 11 | 7:15 | pm | Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall |
| Mar 14 | 6:00 | pm | Council Meeting, Town Hall |
| Mar 26 | 7:00 | pm | Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall |

CONTACT US

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Administration | 415.453.1453 x105 | Public Works Director | 415.453.1453 x115 |
| 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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