



THE MORNING AFTER

Town of Ross Monthly Newsletter
Includes highlights from the
Ross Town Council Meeting of April 11, 2013

Town of Ross

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Construction Penalty Ordinance Updated



A new Ordinance updating Chapter 15.50 Time Limits for Completion of Construction was introduced. The Finance Committee and the Public Works Committee discussed the proposed ordinance at their meetings in February and March and recommended it go to the Council. The Construction Penalty Ordinance (CPO) was last updated in September 2007. The CPO is in place primarily to provide a mechanism to require property owners seeking to improve their properties to complete construction in a reasonable amount of time. The goal is to ensure neighborhood quality of life is maintained and activities associated with construction such as increased noise, traffic and associated im-

pacts are managed in a way to ensure construction is completed in a timely way.

The rationale for updating the ordinance derives from Town experience implementing the CPO. The proposed changes address the following issues:

- The CPO needed language to cover situations where applicants started construction but never finished. The proposed CPO includes provisions that construction penalties run with the land which creates an obligation on the property title and provides an incentive for applicants to not stop a project and never finish construction.
- The proposed CPO gives the building official the ability to issue permits earlier than a nine (9) month lapse between permits if it can be found there would be no adverse impacts associated with this action.
- The penalties per day and the

deposit amounts have been increased to secure more funds up front to encourage applicants to finish their projects on time and address in part, projects that have accrued penalties in excess of original deposits.

- The proposed CPO gives the Town Manager the authority to waive penalties if it is deemed the construction was completed but final inspections by Town staff were delayed due to reasons not the fault of the property owner.

The full text of the ordinance can be viewed on the Town's website at:

http://www.townofross.org/pages/town_council/staff_reports_recent.html.

The Town Council will hold the second reading of the ordinance at the May 9th meeting.

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New Signage Approved for Frederick Allen Park



The Town has received complaints regarding bicyclists riding their

bikes through Fred Allen Park. Specifically, bicyclists are tearing up landscaping, breaking branches on trees and causing damage to a berm in the park.

Staff tried to remedy the issue by placing temporary barricades with signage that asked bicyclists to stay on paths. These temporary barricades were knocked down and the signs damaged.

The Council approved installing up to three permanent signs

(two at both ends of the park on the paved path), and the third downtown as you walk from downtown through the courtyard to the park. The signs will cite Ross Municipal Code Chapter 9.28.160 Vehicles Prohibited.

The Police Chief has indicated violators could be issued citations with fines up to \$50/infraction.

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llopez@townofross.org
to join.



Rupert Russell
Mayor

The Mayor's Report



First, I would like to give a sincere thank you to our Town Manager, Rob Braulik, and the members of the Finance Committee, Katie Hoertkorn and Carla Small, for all their hard work and commitment in reaching resolution on the terms of a new lease for the Post Office. Also thanks for the substantial volunteer time and effort put in by Rich Hoertkorn, who ably supported the Finance Committee (and his wife) with his Post Office leasing expertise. This was a long and arduous process where the U.S. Postal Service, which has been experiencing severe financial difficulties, was seeking deep financial

concessions from the Town. We had to examine seriously for a while the possibility of losing one of the Crown jewels of the Town. A sensible and fair resolution has now been reached and a damaging outcome for both the U.S. Postal Service and the Town of Ross avoided, but we all owe a debt of gratitude to Rob, Carla and the Hoertkorn family.

We had an item on the agenda for this Council meeting that has been one of the most divisive and difficult issues faced by the Town Council since I have been on the Town Council, the location of our ball field. This issue

has provoked deep emotions and been the subject of a number of prior Council meetings. Whatever the ultimate resolution, we cannot make everyone happy, but please be confident that we held a fair hearing and there was plenty of opportunity to weigh in and be heard. Whichever side of the debate you may be on, I can assure you members of the Town Council came to their decision with a heavy heart, knowing this is not an easy decision, but the Council and staff are committed and serious about guarding the best interests of the community we serve.

Parking Fines and Regulations Updated



The Council adopted a Resolution revising the penalty fee schedule for traffic violations. The Town is a member of the Marin Parking Authority (MPA), which manages the parking citations received in Marin County, (except parking citations in San Rafael and Sausalito). The MPA selected a new vendor to handle citation processing and as part of the process,

has requested participating agencies standardize parking fines in compliance with California law. The Marin agencies have agreed on the standardized parking fine schedule and the MPA has requested all participating agencies set these fines in place.

As a result of the above process, an Ordinance was introduced amending Ross Municipal Code Chapter 10.28 Stopping, Standing,

Loading & Parking. The Ordinance will update several parking regulations to be more in line with what other jurisdictions use and are consistent with Town parking systems. The new language will assist in streamlining any future parking legislation and enforcement. The Town Council will hold the second reading of the ordinance at the May 9th

Bolinas Ave Safe Pathways Project Awarded



The Council awarded the construction bid for the Bolinas Avenue Safe Pathways Project to Coastside Concrete. Construction bids for this project were received from five contractors and Coastside Concrete submitted the lowest bid at \$126,351.

The Town of Ross has been working for several years on a plan to make traffic and pedestrian safety improvements to Bolinas Avenue. The project includes construction of raised medians for traffic separation (combined with pedestrian safety

refuge islands, and curb extensions to shorten crosswalks), curb ramp, traffic signage, stripes and pavement markings and replacement of traffic signal heads.

The Town has been working closely with the Town of San Anselmo as Bolinas Avenue is bisected by the two agencies with one half of the street in Ross and the other in San Anselmo. The two towns are part of the Bolinas Avenue Advisory Committee (BAAC) which has met over the past several years to discuss this project and related matters concerning drainage and flooding in

this area. Ross retained the services of the Town of San Anselmo Public Works Department to provide bid assistance, construction inspection and construction management services.

The Council was presented with several project cost options. The one selected will bring the total project budget to nearly \$189,000 using available grant funding from the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) and \$9,000 in Roadway funds. Construction is expected to be completed by this Fall.

Council Approves Permanent Ball Field Location

The Town Council discussed the ball field location on the Ross Common which has been “temporary” since the Ross School completed construction several years ago. The current ball field location has been in place for the past three years and is used for Little League and T-Ball play during the spring and early summer and by residents throughout the year for casual recreational play. The Council approved the current location of the ball field be made permanent.

The Council also discussed a design proposal from a landscape architectural firm for potential future im-

provements to “refurbish the existing field” for little leaguers. After significant discussion the Council took no action on the design proposal. The Council suggested Ross Parks and Recreation Committee meet with Ross Valley Little League Association to discuss potential future ideas for minimal improvements to the existing field. This is planned to be discussed by the council at the next council meeting. Meanwhile Council also asked the Town Manager and Police Chief to consider methods that might address parking and related items on weekends during organized League play.



Council Approves Downtown Sign Program



At the March 14th Council meeting, the Town Council agreed to consider directional only signage for the downtown area of Ross in response to the requests of down-

town merchants. Staff presented sample wording for six directional signs that would guide drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians to the Downtown area, Marin Art & Garden Center, Town Hall, and Phoenix Lake. The Council had asked staff to ensure no signs be located in front of residents property.

The Council adopted a Resolution approving a Downtown Sign Program which includes the installation of directional signs in various locations in the Town.

The sign locations in Town approved are as follows:

- 1) SFD Southbound
- 2) SFD Northbound
- 3) SFD in front of Fire Station
- 4) SFD in front of MAGC
- 5) Lagunitas/Sylvan Lane
- 6) Allen Park

The range of costs is \$200 to \$315 per sign which does not include installation of the pole hardware required to mount the signs.

Town Reaches Agreement with Post Office

The Town is happy to report they have reached a mutually satisfactory agreement with the United States Postal Service (USPS) for a new Ross Post Office lease. The Town Council had previously authorized the Town Manager to negotiate ease terms with the

Post Office’s real estate brokerage firm CBRE/Cassidy Turley. The term of the new Post Office lease is for five years with the USPS option to terminate after two years, and will provide comparable lease income as the current lease provides. The new lease begins August 1, 2013.



Ross Post Office



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, visit www.townofross.org/pages/town_council/staff_reports.html. The minutes of this meeting will be available on the website at www.townofross.org after approval at the May 2013 Council meeting.

Address	Applicant	Council Action	Vote (for/against/abstain)
6 Woodside Way	Dan Rosenthal	Approved	3-0-2 (Russell & Hoertkorn abstained)



ROSS GARDEN TOUR

Please mark your calendars for the Ross Garden Tour on Saturday, May 11. This important fundraiser for Fine Arts programs at Ross School is a lovely community tradition that continues into its 17th year. Garden Tour tickets are \$40 when purchased online, and \$50 when purchased on the day of the event. A delicious lunch, provided by Woodlands Market, is available to \$10. Please order your tickets here: www.rossgardentour.org. For the second year in a row, the Garden Tour will be based at Ross School. Guests can park in College of Marin's Lot #15 on Kent Avenue. Shuttles will leave the lot continuously beginning at 8:30 a.m. to visit the gardens. This year's tour is a 3-mile loop, and walkers and cyclists are welcome. Please join **Beyond the Garden Gate** on May 11th to enjoy five beautiful gardens while supporting a worthy cause.

What's Next...

- The Advisory Design Review Group will meet on Tuesday, April 23, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.
- The Public Works Committee will meet on Thursday, April 25, 2013 at 8:00 a.m.
- The Town Council will hold a FY 2014 Budget Workshop on Tuesday, April 30, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Marin Art & Garden Center, Multipurpose Room.
- The next regular Town Council meeting will be held on May 9, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. Agendas and staff reports are posted in advance of the meeting on the Town's website at www.townofross.org. All meetings are held at Town Hall unless indicated otherwise. You may email Council members by accessing the website at www.townofross.org/pages/contact_email_council.html.
- SAVE THE DATE - Every Thursday beginning June 27th through August 15th, Marin Art & Garden Center will host a series of free summer concerts which will include bluegrass, country, jazz and pop music. For more info, please visit the MAGC website at www.magc.org.

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