

THE MORNING AFTER

*Highlights from the
Ross Town Council Meeting
of May 14, 2009*

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*Town Manager
Gary Broad*

Meet Me at the Farmers Market

It's back! The Ross Valley Farmers Market will re-open in downtown Ross on Thursday, May 28th from 3 to 7 p.m. This year the market features an earlier opening date, earlier hours and an exciting array of new and returning vendors. The organic fruit and vegetables from Ibarra Cruz Organic Farms will be complemented by organic fruit from Olson Family Farms. Other expected vendors include nursery products, honey, brioche and crepes, ice cream, waffles, fresh pasta, muffins, olive oil, stuffed olives, dim sum, empanadas and fruit and savory pies and much, much more! Walk, bike or jog on down to see and be seen and support this local event.

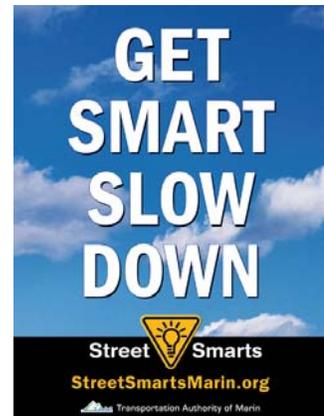
Street Smarts Program Discussed

Deborah Cole from Parisi Associates presented Street Smarts, a new traffic education campaign supported by the Transportation Authority of Marin and local jurisdictions in Marin County. The program uses outdoor advertising and community outreach to change driver, cyclist and pedestrian behavior and reduce accidents.

The Street Smarts program was piloted in Marin in Mill Valley, Larkspur and Corte Madera in 2008 to tremendous success, said Cole. It targets five problematic behaviors: speeding, stopping, right-of-way violations, distracted driving, and bicyclist violations and safety.

If enacted in Ross, program organizers would work with the Police Department, Town staff, the Council and Safe Routes to School representatives to identify hot spots where the five behaviors occur most frequently. Signs would be placed at the hot spots, which typically include areas around schools and streets where speeding is a problem. In Ross, signs might include 2' x 1 1/2' color signs and streetlight banners in the downtown area. Signs would be put up for six weeks at the beginning of the school year and again in the spring.

The Council asked Cole to work with staff to identify proposed sign types and locations for Council consideration at a future meeting.



Street Smarts signs could be posted in select town locations this fall.



New Website Unveiled

Administrative Assistant Linda Lopez and website designer Kristen McDonnell showed off the Town's new website, which went live last week. The website features beautiful new photography, lots of well-organized information and many new features. On the homepage, website visitors can check the community calendar, view frequently requested documents in the resource center, provide customer service feedback, and subscribe to the Town email list. A site map and a search function make it easier to locate information.

Much of the website information has been expanded. The police and fire department pages now contain personnel pictures and bios. Frequently Asked Question pages are located in the public works, planning, building and police drop-down menus. The website also contains agendas, staff reports and minutes for the Town Council and Advisory Design Review Group, and makes it easy to email staff, council members and ADR members.

Residents with ideas or comments about the website should [contact Linda Lopez](#). Community organizations are encouraged to submit event dates for the community calendar.



Mayor Bill Cahill's Report

My theme for this month's report is how thankful I am for all the fantastic contributions of community members to the town. For its size, I do not know of another town or city that has as much community involvement as ours. It is one of the reasons I like living here so much and why I am very proud to be a part of this community.

Last Thursday the Ross Community Survey committee presented a summary of survey results to the community. Special thanks go to committee members: Wendy Battey, Ann Brush, Ken Fineman, Carla Small and Stan and Karen Stern. They have put in countless hours on this project with no involvement by the Town Council or the Town's staff. The survey information will be invaluable when the Town Council sets its priorities for the next fiscal year.

As many residents recognize, our staff is not always able to discover every maintenance problem around Town. It is very helpful when members of the community provide information about maintenance needs. Special thanks this month go to Erika Rosenbaum, for letting us know about fallen trees over the footpath to Phoenix Lake, and Michael Baum, who informed us about graffiti. Please continue to provide the Town with this kind of information so the Town may serve residents most effectively.

Lastly on a sad note, Daniel Oberti died earlier this month. As many of you may know, Daniel, a sculptor by profession, maintained our Bufano bear for years and was hoping to reproduce the electroliers for the Lagunitas Bridge.

New Traffic Laws Considered

The Council voted to introduce Ordinance No. 616 to exempt bicycles from left turn restrictions from Bolinas Avenue onto Shady Lane, prohibit U-turns on Redwood Drive and delete restrictions prohibiting left turns from Bolinas Avenue onto San Anselmo Avenue.

The Bicycle Coalition of Marin requested the Town to consider posting a sign on Bolinas Avenue to notify cyclists about the exemption. Police Chief Jim Reis explained that while cyclists are expected to obey all traffic laws, he did not believe the intent of the original ordinance was to apply the left turn restriction to bicycles. The u-turn prohibition on Redwood Drive would apply between the corner of Ross Common and 12 Redwood Drive. Finally, the left-turn prohibition from Bolinas Avenue onto San Anselmo Avenue is obsolete, as the restriction has not been posted nor enforced in many years.



Housing Element Programs Discussed

The Council discussed programs proposed in the Town's draft Housing Element 2009-2014 to meet the Town's regional housing need allocation. The Town has been allocated a total of 27 new housing units for the 2007-2014 planning period with the following affordability breakdown: 8 units for very low income households; 6 for low income; 5 for moderate income, and 8 for above moderate income.

The Council discussed proposed programs to increase second unit production, including creating new development standards that would allow the Council to review and permit second units up to 1,200

square feet. A second proposal was to offer a living area bonus of up to 500 square feet to property owners who voluntarily deed-restrict their second units to be affordable to very low income households.

The Council also discussed rezoning the St. Anselm's parking lot to allow multi-family housing on the site. A number of incentives were considered to facilitate development of very low income units, including a floor area ratio bonus, an exception to the restriction for two-story development, and dedication of a portion of the adjacent town-owned land. Mayor Cahill and Council member Chris Martin recused themselves from discussion of the St. Anselm site.

The Council agreed to continue discussion of the housing element to the June meeting. Community members are encouraged to review the draft housing element on the Town's website.

Council Adopts New Staff Review Process

The Town Council adopted a job description, performance review criteria and evaluation process for the Town Manager position prepared by human resources consultant, Patti Divella. The new evaluation process provides a clear and objective way to measure performance against specific success criteria. The criteria include the Town Manager's ability to: respond to community needs; provide stewardship of community assets; educate, inform and communicate to town residents; provide excellent and uniform customer service; provide sound financial oversight; support and inform council in their elected role; set clear goals and direction for staff and measure their performance; align systems and practices with the strategies, goals and values of the town; and attract and retain quality staff. New job descriptions were prepared for all Town Hall staff and an evaluation process instituted.

The Council scheduled the Town Manager evaluation for a closed session at the June 11 meeting. Community members are welcome to submit comments to Mayor Cahill or other Council members. Mayor Cahill said the new evaluation process will be a huge improvement over the existing unstructured and informal process.

Ross School Report

Ross School Board President Dan Bernhard and member Ken Fineman requested a joint public meeting of the Ross School Board and the Town Council to resolve several outstanding issues. The Council agreed to schedule a joint meeting the week of June 8th, but asked the school board to first comply with an earlier request for additional information, including a detailed grading and drainage plan for the stage and seating area.



Resident Diane Rudden asked for an architectural rendering of the proposed stage design, and the Council agreed to post a rendering on the Town website once received from the school. The final location of the ball field needs to be resolved for the school to finalize its architectural plans.

Council Amends Municipal Code

The Council adopted an ordinance to allow up to 2,100 square feet of residential development in the Community Cultural District with conditional use permit approval. Residential units are limited to a maximum of 700 square feet, and may be configured in single family, duplex, or triple development. The new ordinance would allow the Marin Art & Garden Center to build employee housing on their property. The site is one of several affordable housing sites designated in the town's housing element.

In a separate action, the Council agreed to introduce Ordinance No. 615 to amend Municipal Code Chapter 2.28.030, Disaster Council Membership and Chapter 2.28.040 Disaster Council Powers and Duties. The ordinance permits the Mayor to designate a chair and an assistant director, and establishes three-year terms for Disaster Council members. The ordinance also specifically includes representatives of the Ross School and the Ross Property Owners Association as potential members. Finally, the ordinance proposes the Disaster Council meet quarterly and provide a quarterly report at a regular Town Council meeting.



News from the Public Works Department

On May 2, the Town hosted a workshop inviting residents to walk the proposed Sir Francis Drake Boulevard pathway with the Town’s consultants from Questa Engineering. The discussion focused on loss of parking, hedges, trees, and pathway material. Questa is revising the plan, and an additional public workshop has been tentatively calendared for Saturday, May 30, at 9:30 a.m. The Town received a \$200,000 federal grant for the project.

*Public Works
Director
Mel Jarjoura*

Plans for the second half of the Shady Lane pathway are complete and will go out to bid on May 18. The Town received a grant for \$247,000 for the pathway, though the town engineer estimates total project cost will be closer to \$300,000 due to the higher cost of installing decomposed granite with a binder.



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 website at www.townofross.org after approval at the June Council meeting.

Senior Planner Elise Semonian

Address	Applicant	Approved	Modified Approval	Denied	Continued
29 Poplar Avenue	Robert and Rebecca Kerstetter				
10 Lagunitas Road	Linda and Jon Gruber				
6 Fernhill Ave.	Doreen and Frank Malin				
191 Lagunitas Road	Paris and Martha Royo				
54 Baywood Avenue	Ross and Ligia Parmenter				
18 Canyon Road	Douglas Abrams				

Upcoming Town Council Meeting

The next regular Council meeting is on Thursday, June 11, at 6:30 p.m. Agendas and staff reports are posted in advance of the meetings 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 with support from Linda Lopez. 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 llopez@townofross.org.