

# THE MORNING AFTER

## TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 10 | Issue 8 | August 2016

### Mayor's Corner



Katie Hoertkorn

At our July meeting, the Council re-opened the discussion on whether the Town should regulate short-term vacation rentals, such as those found on the AIRBNB, VRBO, and Homeaway

webhosting platforms. The Council concluded that more community input is needed and Town staff will begin eliciting community input through a variety of methods, such as a Town-wide email survey/poll and a follow-up workshop/discussion.

In the May 2016 edition of the Morning After, I announced that the Town's staff will begin reviewing the Town's regulations to reflect the current values of the Town, the intent of the regulations, and how to make them more clear. Since May, the Council has already amended

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### Ross Valley Fire Department Reminder

Fire season is well underway in California, and the Ross Valley Fire Department (RVFD) would like to ensure that all residents in their jurisdiction are aware of the importance of roadway clearance and defensible space around their homes.



#### Roadway Clearance

RVFD operates specialized fire apparatus that helps navigate the narrow streets and hills of our community. Even with their state-of-the-art fire engines, they depend on roadways that are clear of obstructions and overgrown vegetation to access your neighborhood safely and quickly during emergencies. Cooperation and involvement from homeowners in each hillside neighborhood is critical to prevent obstructions like illegally parked vehicles and overgrown vegetation that can impede their access and your safe escape in the event of a wildfire. Your survival during a fast spreading wildfire may depend on vegetation clearance work finished months earlier. Maintain fire engine access to your home by clearing vegetation 10' from the sides of roads and driveways and 14' vertically.

#### Defensible Space

Ross Valley hillsides, while beautiful, are an ideal environment for a devastating wildland fire. With the onset of summer months comes the drying and curing of our lands. As temperatures peak, humidity drops and the summer winds blow, the potential for wildland fires increase. Despite the efforts of the fire service, many homes are lost each year due to wildland urban interface fires. It is imperative that you prepare now to protect your home from such occurrences. Create a "clean" zone with few or no combustibles within 30 feet of your home. Create a fuel-reduction zone from 30'-100' (or to your property line, if closer) to slow the spread of an approaching wildfire.

See Town of Ross Municipal Codes [12.12.010](#), [12.12.016](#), [12.12.020](#), and [12.12.030](#) for further details.

The RVFD is currently checking each neighborhood and confirming compliance. Please direct any questions to Captain Oscar Arenas at [oarenas@rossvalleyfire.org](mailto:oarenas@rossvalleyfire.org) or (415) 258-4686 ext. 36. ■

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two very important chapters of the zoning regulations (Exceptions to Basements and Attics and the Minor Exceptions) and will be considering amendments to how nonconforming structures, will be treated at the August meeting.

Hard to believe that the Summer is almost over - School starts session on August 18, the Ross Preschool starts on September 7, and Recreation Fall Program registration begins the week of August 15. Mark your calendars for our Town Dinner on September 30th which will be held this year on the Ross Commons.



The coming months will see several upgrades to the infrastructure in the Town – the Sir Francis Drake/Bolinas intersection and pedestrian improvements are to begin in August, much of Lagunitas Road is to be slurry sealed, and the Sanitary District is planning significant sewer repairs beginning this Fall including along Shady Lane and along other roadways. We will look to keep you informed with these projects as they proceed.

While I really enjoy meeting residents at the Post Office prior to Council meetings, I will not be able to meet with you there the next couple of months due to an unexpected medical leave until mid-October. In the meantime, I look forward to hearing from you by email at [khoertkorn@gmail.com](mailto:khoertkorn@gmail.com). ■

### Call 811 Before Digging

This August 11th, Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) reminds residential and business customers to call 811 to have underground utility lines marked prior to any digging project. Every three minutes in the United States, an underground utility line is damaged during a digging project. Accidental dig-ins can happen anywhere a buried utility line is laid - from a residential backyard to a major construction site. A call to 811 connects homeowners and excavating contractors to Underground Service Alert (USA). This **free** service notifies utility companies about any type of excavation project. A professional locator is dispatched to the dig site to mark the approximate locations of all underground lines with paint, flags or both. Once your site has been marked, it is safe to begin digging around the marked areas. No matter the type of project - installing a mailbox, putting in a fence, planting trees or shrubbery, building a patio or deck, or excavating a new garden area, call 811 several days prior to digging to have your site properly marked. For more information about 811 and safe digging practices, visit [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com).



### Good Neighbor Reminder

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Out on  
a Limb

Ross' mystique lies in the beauty of its natural resources: the trees, hillsides, ridgelines and meandering creeks. These features have shaped the growth of Ross and affect how we experience the community. They provide habitat for wildlife, privacy between neighbors, and create scenic vistas around every bend. That is why in 2015, the Town Council updated its tree protection regulations to ensure the protection of the ambiance and beauty derived from the Town's arboreal canopy (trees).

We know that understanding zoning regulations is sometimes like reading a foreign language, so the following will summarize when a Tree Permit is required pursuant to Chapter 12.24, Planting, Alteration, Removal, or Maintenance of Trees, of the Ross Municipal Code:

- 1. Alteration, pruning, maintenance, and removal of all tree's greater than 1 inch in diameter when located in the public right-of-way.

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## PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the August Council meeting. Staff reports and audio for the meeting can be found on the August 11th meeting page. The minutes for this meeting will be available on this page after adoption by the Council at the September Council meeting.

**Address:** 1 Southwood Avenue

**Applicant:**

**Council Action:** *Continued to September*

## Good Neighbor Reminder

*Continued from Page 2*

2. Alteration or removal of any trees greater than 6 inches in diameter when located on a vacant or unimproved lot.
3. Altering, trimming, and/or pruning of more than 25% of the existing tree canopy when the tree is 8 inches or greater in diameter.
4. Removal of a tree when the tree is 8 inches or greater in diameter.



If a Tree Permit is required, then tree replacement or the payment of an in-lieu fee will be required. Replacement trees should be of native species, unless otherwise approved by the Town. The Town Council or the Town staff may also reduce the amount of replacement trees, if it can be determined

that the aesthetic value of the community would not be negatively impacted.

For more information regarding the Town's regulations regarding trees, please contact Planning Manager Heidi Scoble, at 415-453-1453 Ext. 121 or via email at [hscoble@townofross.org](mailto:hscoble@townofross.org). ■

## PUBLIC SAFETY



### Back to School Safety

Believe it or not, kids will be headed back to school soon. Now is a good time to remind children and parents how to safely return to school. Whether your children are walking, being driven, or riding a bicycle, there are a few tips to ensure they are as safe as possible.



### If kids are walking:

- Map out a safe route to school and walk it with your child for a few days so they become familiar with the route.
- Make sure your child crosses at intersections where there is a crossing guard. Have children wear bright clothing that can be seen by drivers.

### Riding or driving in the car:

- Everyone wears their seat belt and use age-appropriate child care/booster seat. If you have a teenage driver, remind them of safe driving, use of seat belts and cell phone restrictions.

### On a bicycle:

- Make sure they wear a helmet.
- Teach them to ride in the same directions as traffic, on the right side of the road. Explain the "rules of the road" and to obey all traffic signs and signals.

**Tips for driving in a school zone** (especially during drop-off and dismissal times):

**Slow down** - The simplest thing any driver can do when there are new driving hazards is slow down.

**Allow More Time** - As a new school year begins allow yourself more time to get where you are going until you can figure out the effects of increased traffic.

**Learn the Rules** - Schools usually have places for parents to drop off and pick up children. If you are driving your child to school learn where these areas are and follow the procedures. Never block pick up and drop off areas.

**Yield to Pedestrians** - Remember to yield to children/parents in crosswalks as they have the right-of-way.

**Carpool** - If at all possible carpool with other parents to pick up and drop off children.

**Talk with Teen Drivers.** Remind your teen drivers about the importance of being extra careful in and around school zones.

**Be safe and enjoy the school year.** ■





## Save the Date!

### Annual Town Dinner



The annual Ross Town Dinner is scheduled for Friday, September 30th from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. This year, the dinner returns to the

Ross Common where it was originally held. Ross Common Street will be closed from Lagunitas Road to Redwood Drive where tables and chairs will be set up for dining. This annual event draws 500+ members of the Ross community to dine potluck style with their neighbors under the stars. As always, the Town provides tables, chairs, linens, and music entertainment. Tables will be available to reserve for large parties. Ross Recreation will be overseeing the event. Watch for further information to be sent to the Ross community via email in the coming weeks. If you are not already on the Town's email list, please email [llopez@townofross.org](mailto:llopez@townofross.org), to join so you don't miss out on this beloved event.

## RECREATION NEWS

*Continued*

This year the summer program was expanded to include new camps in mountain biking, cooking and fishing. The response to these new programs was very positive and Ross Recreation will continue to expand the late summer program options next year.



### Fishing Camp at Loch Lomond Marina

Registration for the popular Ross Recreation youth soccer program is currently open. The program includes skill development and games and will run from September through mid-November.



### Youth Soccer at Ross Commons

New programs for the Fall include a hiking program led by a local naturalist incorporating visits to areas throughout Marin including the Point Reyes National Seashore and Samuel P. Taylor Park.

Registration for the Fall programs including those held at Ross and Bacich schools, will begin on August 15th. The Ross Recreation Fall brochure will be available in PDF form on the Ross Recreation website in late August.

Register at [www.rossrecreation.org](http://www.rossrecreation.org)

## RECREATION NEWS

The Ross Recreation Department has promoted **Maya Zorn** to the position of Recreation Specialist. Maya will join Audrey Hildebrand in supervising the daily program operations including registration and youth sports.



*Maya Zorn  
Recreation Specialist*

We are pleased to announce that **Glenda Davidson** has joined the staff of the Ross Preschool. Glenda was formerly the Director of the St. Rita's Preschool in San Rafael. She will serve as lead teacher for our pre-K program. Glenda has nineteen years of experience teaching three to five year old students and is a welcome addition to the Ross Preschool staff.



*Glenda Davidson  
Preschool Teacher*

# ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## AUGUST 2016

Aug 11 6:00 pm Council Meeting, Town Hall  
 Aug 23 7:00 pm Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

## SEPTEMBER 2016

Sep 5 -- -- Town Hall offices closed for Labor Day  
 Sep 8 6:00 pm Council Meeting, Town Hall  
 Sep 13 6:00 pm Recreation Advisory Committee, Town Hall  
 Sep 27 7:00 pm Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall  
 Sep 30 5:00 pm Annual Ross Town Dinner, Ross Common

## OCTOBER 2016

Oct 13 6:00 pm Council Meeting, Town Hall  
 Oct 25 7:00 pm Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

## RECURRING EVENTS

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

## 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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Visit us at [www.townofross.org](http://www.townofross.org)



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