

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS NEWSLETTER

Volume 14 | Issue 11 | November 2020

Mayor's Corner



Julie McMillan
Mayor

Last night, we reviewed Ross' Report on Climate Change. Our Town has reduced greenhouse gases by 28% (2005-18), above the county-wide average, but there's still so much more to do. (If you haven't already, watch David Attenborough's brilliant film [A Life the On Our Planet](#).) Each of us can also help:

- 1) **Recycle:** Paper, cans, bottles, and plastics in recycle bins; food scraps and yard waste in your green can or compost; plastic bags in grocery store bins
- 2) **Reuse:** Refillable containers
- 3) **Reduce:** Buy only what you need (food waste is the third biggest emitter of greenhouse gases; e.g., local Marin nonprofit [ExtraFood.org](#) has eliminated

Continued on Page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

2. Outdoor Dining in Ross
3. Planning Results
3. Winter Preparedness
4. Climate Change in Ross
4. Recreation
5. Calendar

Modernizing Town Facilities Update

The Town of Ross has been analyzing facilities and options to upgrade and modernize the public safety building, which has fallen into disrepair and obsolescence. The public safety building currently houses police, fire, and medical personnel and equipment on Sir Francis Drake Blvd. The building was originally constructed in 1927 and has been modified over the years. These changes include connection of two former houses for floor space, construction of new apparatus bays to accommodate larger vehicles, and the placement of a large equipment shelter and portable sleeping quarters trailer. While the building has served the community well for close to a century, the time has come to rebuild and modernize the Town's facilities. More information on the project, including background studies and the August 13th Town Council staff report, can be found on the [Town's webpage](#).



On October 29, 2020, in partnership with its outreach and engagement consultant, MIG, the Town of Ross hosted an online community workshop to discuss the future of the facilities. In addition to several members of Town staff and the full Town Council, the workshop was attended by approximately 50 members of the public. During the workshop, Ross Town Manager Joe Chinn and Ross Valley Fire District Chief Jason Weber provided background information on the project and discussed the various technical studies that have been prepared. After some informal polling and a brief question and answer period, participants were distributed into three breakout discussion groups. The conversations were framed around four discussion questions:

1. *What is your vision for the new Civic Center Building?*
2. *How important is it to keep a fire station in Ross?*
3. *How willing are you to pay for this?*
4. *How important is having paramedic services stationed in Ross?*

Following the breakout discussions, the workshop group reassembled and a volunteer from each breakout room provided a summary of the conversation. A debrief report as well as video of the full workshop, including each of the breakout sessions, is available on the [Town's webpage](#). Based on the questions and comments heard during the work-

Continued on Page 3

- over 333,000 pounds of methane by donating over 4MM pounds of food)
- 4) Eat more plants: Livestock produce [14.5% of greenhouse gas emissions](#)
 - 5) Eat local: Buy from farmer's markets, and/or grow your produce
 - 6) Practice climate smart gardening
 - 7) Lower your water usage
 - 8) Install solar panels: This year, Ross has issued 31 solar panel permits so far, compared to 16 last year
 - 9) Drive an electric vehicle: Marin County has over 7,000 EVs (about 4% of registered vehicles), second to Santa Clara County
 - 10) Get your power from Marin Clean Energy (MCE): 77.6% of Ross residents already do

Switching topics, October's outdoor dining was a huge success, thanks to residents, staff, Ross Auxiliary, and Ross' charming restaurants!

And two weeks ago approximately 50 residents joined a community workshop to begin discussing [how to address our Town's obsolete facilities for Fire, Police, Paramedics and Administrative staff](#). We thank everyone for participating. Please look for FAQs soon, followed by a questionnaire to give your feedback.

Finally, Marin COVID-19 cases have been increasing in the last week, and it is expected that Marin will move to a more restricted tier next week. Please keep wearing your masks and be safe over the holidays.

Happy Thanksgiving! ■

Locals Enjoy Outdoor Dining in Downtown Ross

On October 16-17, Downtown Ross restaurants got a boost of support from residents as Redwood Drive at Ross Common was closed to traffic to allow tables and chairs in the street for dining outside. Restaurants Crown & Crumpet, Marche Aux Fleurs, Tony Tutto's, Trattoria Fresco, and Village Corner all participated and the turnout was a success. The restaurants greatly appreciated the support they received.

Thank you to Ross Auxiliary for providing the table centerpiece lights and helping with cleanup after the event. A big thank you to staff Recreation Manager Gretchen Castets, Planning & Building Director Patrick Streeter, Public Works Director Rich Simonitch, Police Chief Erik Masterson and the Ross Police Department, Senior Maintenance Worker Anthony Alcozer, and Maintenance Worker Zack Baker for all their excellent work in ensuring the event was a success while still following the County's health order COVID guidelines.



PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the November Council meeting. Staff reports and video for the meeting can be found on the Town's website [November 12th](#) meeting page. The minutes for this meeting will be posted after adoption by the Council at the December 10, 2020 Council meeting.

Address: 5 Madera Avenue
Owner: Ann & Chuck Stevens
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (McMillan recused)

Address: 34 Poplar Avenue
Owner: Jeff & Cassie Shouger
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 3-2-0 (Brekhus/McMillan opposed)

Address: 105 Bolinas Avenue
Owner: Roger & Melissa Dickerson
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0



Winter Preparedness

Now that Fall has arrived, rainy weather may not be that far off. Property owners are reminded once again what can be done now to prepare for the rainy season.

1) Leaves are the main reason a drainage catch basin or culvert becomes plugged and causes localized flooding. Rake leaves off any sidewalk, path, ditch or gutter around your property and place them in your recycle container. Do not rake them in piles and leave them in the street. The street sweeper is not equipped to pick up large volumes of piled leaves.



2) If you have an open ditch, gutter, or other waterway crossing over or along your property you are responsible for keeping it clean and keeping the flow line at its required depth. If you change the grade of a swale passing over your property you could cause yourself and your neighbors to flood unnecessarily. Also, if you have a culvert or drainage pipe under your property, it may be your responsibility to keep it clean and repair or replace it as necessary. Contact [Town Engineer Rich Simonitch](#) if you have a question about an underground pipeline that runs through your yard.

3) If you live in the hills it is very important that you keep the edge of the roadway in front of your property clean and free of leaves and dirt. This debris and build up can cause the water to cross over the roadway and wash out the bank. Also, the dirt and leaves wash down to the Town drainage system and cause major blockages.

4) If you live along the creeks, property owners are responsible for maintaining the creek bank and channel. Remove any dead brush, downed branches, and debris from the creek entirely. If you have a dead or dying tree along the creek where it may fall during a storm, please obtain a tree removal permit at Town Hall to get it removed. This is the time of year to inspect the creek bank and channel behind your home. Are there sections of your bank that have eroded, collapsed and fallen into the creek channel? If you see potential problems you should hire an expert to evaluate the health and condition of your creek bank. It's helpful to take photos of your creek bank a few times a year so you have a record of what it should look like for comparison, and it's especially important to check after a major storm.

Contact the [Public Works Department](#) if you have any questions.

Town Facilities - *continued from Page 1*

shop, the project team is preparing a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) resource, which will be sent in a townwide email next week.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the workshop. Even if you were unable to attend there are still many ways to get involved. Make sure to sign up to the Town's e-mail notification list to hear about upcoming public meetings and keep an eye on your inbox and PO Box for a community questionnaire that will be circulated in a few weeks. And of course, you are always welcome to call or e-mail staff directly to ask questions or provide your thoughts.

Further presentation and discussion of this important issue will occur at upcoming Town Council meetings with the Council being informed by community input, deciding on a final scope for the project, specifically, which facilities to rebuild. Once that determination is made, the project will move into the design and environmental review phase with the financing component to follow certification of the environmental review and approval of the design. The website project page will continue to be updated as the project progresses.

■



Climate Change in Ross



In 2018, the Town Council passed a resolution to support actions to reduce carbon emissions and work toward a climate resilient future. Last night, the Council heard a summary of programs and achievements related to addressing climate change in the Town of Ross.

In recent years the Town has:

- Streamlined permitting of rooftop solar systems and electric vehicle (EV) charging stations
- Installed an EV charging station at Town Hall with another at the Post Office planned
- Purchased an electric vehicle to conduct all Building Department site visits



In September of 2018, the Town Council directed staff to opt-in to a program to replace our street lights with highly efficient LED lights at no cost to the Town. Additionally, the Town has used grant funds to purchase reusable water bottles and shopping bags for community members.

[Marin Clean Energy \(MCE\)](#) is a not-for-profit agency which offers electricity supplied from clean, renewable sources such as solar, wind, bioenergy, geothermal, and hydroelectric. As of October 2020, within the Town of Ross there is a 77.6% participation rate in MCE service. Just over 5% of these accounts are in the Deep Green program, meaning 100% of the energy is provided by solar and wind power. The Town of Ross municipal account was upgraded to Deep Green in 2017.

A recent study of County-wide Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions shows a 28% reduction in Ross since 2005. Provided the trend continues, this puts the Town past our Climate Action Plan's 2020 emissions reduction target. While these statistics are encouraging, there is still much to be done to combat climate change. Check out this month's Mayor's Corner for ways in which we can all contribute.

RECREATION NEWS



We have entered our fourth and final session of the 2020 year. We have openings in some of our classes and some holiday camps with limited space. Holly Salamun will be offering both a Thanksgiving week holiday camp running 11/23-11/25 and two weeks of Winter Break/Holiday Camp

running the weeks of 12/21 & 12/28. Space is limited to 14 children so please sign-up soon to secure a spot or e-mail us with any questions. We are happy to offer a pro-rated amount if you can't attend all days. We have also begun to offer adult tennis and are looking to add a class due to its success. If you are interested in virtual programs, there is space left in our virtual chess class and we just added a new virtual scratch coding class with Lucas Leonardo!



As we enter the cold/flu season, we ask that you make sure to keep your child home if they aren't feeling well, have a fever, runny nose, etc. The best chance we have to keep our programs running is by everyone looking out for each other's health and safety and taking the necessary precautions. We are

so grateful to the Ross community for having their kids show up with masks every day and an overall commitment to following the State guidelines.

The weather is changing and we will continue to run all of our programs outdoors as much as possible. We will have the option to use the Ross School gym as a back-up for rainy days but only when it's not being used by the school. If we do move into the gym on a rainy day, the instructors will do low impact activities.

The Ross Recreation Team wishes all of you a wonderful and safe Thanksgiving. Although this year has brought a great deal of challenges, there is still so much to be thankful for and we are so very grateful to all of you for putting your trust in our department.

ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2020

Nov 11	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Veterans Day
Nov 12	6:00	pm	Council Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Nov 17	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Nov 26-27	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Thanksgiving holiday

DECEMBER 2020

Dec 7	7:00	pm	Ross Property Owners Assn (<i>for Zoom invite, contact jeffkoblick@comcast.net</i>)
Dec 10	6:00	pm	Council Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Dec 15	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Dec 24-31	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for the holidays

JANUARY 2021

Jan 1	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for New Year's Day
Jan 11	7:00	pm	Ross Property Owners Assn (<i>for Zoom invite, contact jeffkoblick@comcast.net</i>)
Jan 14	6:00	pm	Council Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Jan 18	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday
Jan 19	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)

CONTACT US

Administration - llopez@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x105	Police	415-453-1453, Opt. 2
Building - breher@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x106	Public Works Director - rsimonitch@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x115
Bldg Inspection Hotline - erobbe@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x170	Recreation - rossrec@rossrecreation.org	415-453-6020
Planning/Building Director - pstreeter@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x121	Ross Valley Fire Dept	415-258-4686
Planner - mweintraub@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x116	Town Manager - jchinn@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x107

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 320, Ross, CA 94957
 Street Address: 31 Sir Francis Drake Blvd, Ross, CA 94957

Visit us at www.townofross.org



Email

We welcome suggestions for future issues. Email

llopez@townofross.org

The Morning After is published by the Town of Ross. No portion of this newsletter may be copied, reproduced or reprinted without advance written permission from the Town of Ross. For questions, please contact Linda Lopez at llopez@townofross.org.