

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS NEWSLETTER

Volume 16 | Issue 4 | April 2022

Mayor's Corner



Elizabeth Robbins
Mayor

Is there room in Ross for 111 more homes? Despite an ongoing drought and a paucity of buildable lots, Ross must comply with a state mandate to address the housing shortage by creating 111 new housing units over the next 8 years. The consequences for non-compliance with the state's housing requirement are substantial, including steep fines, loss of grant funding eligibility and legal challenges. If housing isn't constructed, the Town's ability to regulate size and density of development will be severely restricted. New state laws have virtually eliminated local control over residential developments. Towns don't have options other than to plan for the additional housing units.

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Council Returns to In-Person Meetings



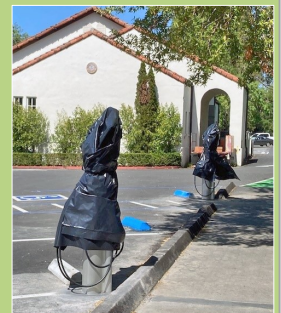
The Town Council and staff held their first in-person public Council meeting in Town Hall on April 14th after holding Council meetings remotely for the past two years due to the Covid pandemic. The return marks the first time the Council Chambers has been wired to provide live video as well as the Zoom option for any members of the public who wish to participate in the meeting remotely.

The past two years have seen record numbers of public participation in the virtual Council meetings held on Zoom. These record numbers could never have happened in Town Hall which has a maximum capacity of 48 persons. The Zoom option the past two years, though not ideal, did allow for public engagement on an unprecedented level.

As we cautiously move forward out of the pandemic, the public now has the option of attending a Council meeting in person or watching live remotely through Zoom. We will continue to follow the State and County's Health Order guidelines and hope residents do as well so we all remain safe and healthy.

Post Office Public EV Charging Stations

Last October, the Town Council approved the installation of two new EV charging stations in the Post Office parking lot for public use. The installation was completed on March 16, 2022 and last night the Council voted to approve staff's recommendation of the pricing plan and the electricity rate charged to end-users. Users will be charged \$0.30/kWh to charge their electric vehicles. This rate is based on current electricity costs, maintenance and cloud service fees, station provider fees, and some capital cost recovery. The Town Manager can adjust these rates as more information becomes available about how often the stations are being used. The EV station chargers will be activated by Public Works staff on Monday, April 18 2022. Any questions, please contact the Public Works Director (rsimonitch@townofross.org).



Mayor's Corner - continued from Page 1

The number of housing units required, called the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) is assigned by a government council, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). ABAG has determined that the county and Marin's cities and towns must build a combined total of 14,210 new housing units by 2031. Ross's share of 111 new housing units is a 6-fold increase over the 18 new units assigned during the previous 8-year cycle.

The Town of Ross must demonstrate that it has an adequate inventory of viable sites for the 111 new housing units, which are distributed over four affordability levels: very low, low, moderate, and above moderate income. Ross currently has 884 developed parcels but just a handful of undeveloped lots. Accessory dwelling units (small 2nd dwellings) can be included in the required 111 units. Senate Bill 9 allows some property owners to divide their lot into two parcels, with up to 3-4 units per new parcel. Rezoning in some areas within the Town might be considered to create new housing sites.



The town has hired a consultant to help identify possible housing sites and obtain certification from the state, which must occur by April 15, 2023. The next steps and a timeline will be discussed at the budget workshop on April 28. There will be multiple opportunities for community input throughout the process, including special meetings, a public hearing, an online survey, and multiple council meetings. Information about the process will be posted on the town's website. ■

Housing Element Project Informational Mailer Coming Soon!

The Town's Housing Element Update Consultant and Town staff are preparing the first of three mailers that will be sent out town wide to raise awareness of the project, the process, and keep community members informed of status and key dates. The first mailer will provide information and a link to frequently asked questions with answers about the Housing Element Update, the process, upcoming events, and how to get involved.

Greater Ross Valley Shaded Fuel Break Planning Project



The Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority and its partner fire agencies, cities and towns are partnering to create a shaded fuel break along the wildland urban interface that runs through

the entire Ross Valley. This strategically located fuel break, along with home hardening, defensible space around homes and evacuation route improvements will increase the safety of the residents of the Ross Valley. A shaded fuel break is where flammable vegetation is modified. In forested areas, ladder fuels and woody understory vegetation are thinned by removing dead and dying shrubs, limbing of trees, and other vegetation trimming and removal. Vegetation will be spatially separated so that a ground fire will not burn too hot with increased wildfire intensity. In grasslands, vegetation will generally remain, but encroaching shrubs and trees may be limbed, thinned, or removed. For more information, maps and a recording of the community meeting for this project, please follow this [link](#).

PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the April 14 Council meeting. Staff reports and video for the meetings can be found on the Town's [April 14th](#) website page. The minutes for the meeting will be posted on this page after adoption by the Council.

Address: 30 Walnut Avenue
Applicant: Marney & Chris Solle
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Ride and Drive Clean Marin

ELECTRIFY YOUR RIDE

The Town of Ross is partnering with Ride and Drive Clean California and Drive Clean Bay Area to promote "Electrify Your Ride" events to help residents choose the right vehicle to meet their needs.



Passenger vehicles in Marin account for 40% of the county's GHG emissions. Statewide, passenger vehicles account for 28% of emissions. Passenger vehicles also consume 35% of all petroleum products in the U.S. and tailpipe emissions are a major source of air pollution in the Bay Area resulting in worsening of asthma, bronchitis and cardiovascular disease, and other health impacts. You can replace your gas-powered car with an Electric Vehicle (EV) or get out of the car completely and ride an E-bike for some or all of your transportation needs. If you charge your EV or ebike using rooftop solar or other renewable energy sources like the MCE Deep Green option, you can make your transportation carbon-free. Also, your ebike creates less wear and tear on our roadways.

Sign up for a Drive Clean Bay Area webinar through [Electrify Your Ride](#) to learn EV basics like charging at home and on the road, incentives, and total cost of ownership. You'll have the chance to ask the questions you've always wondered about EVs.

June Election Update



The June 7, 2022 Ross General Municipal Election will have two Council seats and a Measure on the ballot put to the voters of Ross.

Town Council Seats: The filing period to qualify for a Council seat closed on March 11th. The following three residents filed nomination papers and are confirmed candidates for the June election:

Julie McMillan
Elizabeth Robbins
Nicholas Skewes-Cox

Measure: Also on the ballot in June will be Measure I, the renewal of the Ross Valley Paramedic Authority (RVPA) Special Tax for Paramedic Services. The RVPA is an 8-member joint powers authority (JPA) established in 1982 for the purpose of delivering Fire Department paramedic services and ambulance transport services in the Ross Valley. The primary funding mechanism for the RVPA is the special tax. This taxation funding source has been in place since the inception of the RVPA. Every four years, the citizens who reside within the member communities of the RVPA service area vote to fund the tax for a four-year period. The current tax expires June 30, 2023.



Voter Information: The deadline to register to vote in the June 2022 election is May 23, 2022. Click on the links below to register or to check your voter status.

[Register to Vote](#) | [Check your Registration Status](#)

The Voter's Choice Act is coming to Marin County starting with the June 7, 2022 Election.



What is the Voter's Choice Act? The Voter's Choice Act is a law that allows counties to offer voters more choices for how, when, and where they vote. Now, all active registered voters are automatically mailed a ballot, early voting is expanded for more days, and voters may vote in-person at a regional vote center.

What is a Vote Center? Voters may vote in-person at ANY vote center in Marin County. Vote centers are replacing neighborhood polling places and will be open at least 3 or more days before Election Day with more services. Please note Ross will not have a polling place. For a list of Marin County Vote Center locations and hours click [here](#).



SAVE THE DATE!

On **Wednesday May 25th** 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Ross Ready, Age Friendly Ross, the Town of Ross, the Ross Property Owners Association, and the Marin Center for Independent Living will host a free **Disaster Preparedness Planning** event for Ross residents at MAGC. Look for a post card in the mail in early May announcing this event and letting you know how to register online. Questions? Please contact Gretchen Castets at gcastets@townofross.org.

Candidates Night for Ross Town Council Election

(Hosted by Ross Property Owners Association)

Wednesday, May 4, 2022
7:00 - 8:30 PM

Marin Art & Garden Center
Livermore Room

AGE FRIENDLY CORNER

Tips to live long and well in Ross



Now that the weather is sunny and warm, it's a great time to think about exercising outdoors. Maybe you like walking around beautiful Ross neighborhoods or in the hills above

Ross, or maybe you like riding your bike. Following are two excellent YouTube videos produced by the National Institutes for Health – one is on safely exercising outdoors and one is about bicycle safety tips. Enjoy this beautiful weather.

<https://youtu.be/4qlzesDNir8>

<https://youtu.be/InfZGAH9VcM>

For more information:

[Safety Tips for Exercising Outdoors for Older Adults | National Institute on Aging \(nih.gov\)](#)

RECREATION NEWS

“Children more than ever, need opportunities to be in their bodies in the world – jumping rope, bicycling, stream hopping and fort building. It’s this engagement between limbs of the body and bones of the earth where true balance and centeredness emerge.” ~ David Sobel

Happy Earth Day from the Ross Recreation Department! Recreation is a place for fun, of course, but it plays an equally important role of getting community members, of all ages, outside and engaged with the world and people around them. It is in this space, that we find connection with our neighbors and the land that we live on. Our greatest goal, is to foster a love for being outside and encouraging environmental stewardship with our programs and classes.



Speaking of getting outside, our spring session just began and summer break is just around the corner! Although the spring session has started, we are always happy to pro-rate the cost and get you enrolled. We have space in Sandrick’s Sports Early Release on Wednesdays, Hip Hop, Academic Chess, Friday FUN-day with Holly at Phoenix

Lake, Lacrosse with Coach Schafer and Tball with Coach Dan.

The Ross Recreation Summer Camps are LIVE! Our camps dates are June 13-August 12 (9am -1pm), and are one week sessions. We have camps for children ages 4.5 - 15 years old. We have limited space available in Top Gun, Sporty Girl, Holly Hoppin’ Nature Camp, Ross Bears Kinder Camp and a few others. See our website at www.rossrecreation.org for a full list of camps, or contact us with any questions



(rossrec@rossrecreation.org). We look forward to hearing from you and having tons of fun this summer!

ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 2022

Apr 14	6:00	pm	Town Council Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)
Apr 16	10:30-12:30pm		Ross Auxiliary Spring Fling
Apr 19	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Apr 28	9:00	am	Special Council Meeting - Annual Budget Workshop (Town Hall & Zoom)

MAY 2022

May 4	7:00	pm	Candidates Night, Marin Art & Garden Center Livermore Room
May 9	6:00	pm	Ross Property Owners Assn (<i>Zoom link, contact jeffkoblick@comcast.net</i>)
May 7	5:00	pm	Ross Auxiliary Spring Dinner Fundraiser - Click here to purchase tickets
May 12	6:00	pm	Town Council Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)
May 14	4:30	pm	RPOA's Live on the Common Event
May 17	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
May 25	9:30	am	Disaster Preparedness Planning Event, MAGC (<i>see Page 4 for details</i>)
May 30	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Memorial Day

JUNE 2022

Jun 7	7:00-8	pm	Election Day - Marin County Vote Center Locations
Jun 16*	6:00	pm	Town Council Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom) <i>*note date change</i>
Jun 21	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)

CONTACT US

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- llopez@townofross.org		- rpata@townofross.org	
Building Department	415-453-1453 x106	Public Works Director	415-453-1453 x115
- breher@townofross.org		- rsimonitch@townofross.org	
Bldg Inspection Hotline	415-453-1453 x170	Recreation Department	415-453-6020
- erobbe@townofross.org		- rossrec@rossrecreation.org	
Planning/Building Director	415-453-1453 x121	Ross Valley Fire Dept	415-258-4686
- dwoltering@townofross.org		Town Manager	415-453-1453 x107
Planner	415-453-1453 x116	- cjohnson@townofross.org	
- mweintraub@townofross.org			

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Email

We welcome suggestions for future issues. Email

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