

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 9 | Issue 4 | April 2015

Mayor's Corner



Elizabeth Brekhus

Last night we said goodbye to Senior Planner Elise Semonian, whose last day is Friday, April 10th. We also recognized and thanked Public Works employee Buzz Doughty, upon his retirement. The Town has hired Leann Taagepera to serve as Interim Planner, who was also introduced last night. Since Leann is only available on a part-time basis, the Town will seek to hire an additional part-time temporary planner, so the Planning Office is covered five days a week. The Town will soon begin recruiting for a permanent full-time Planner.

A special Council meeting will be held on Thursday, April 23rd to interview and select a recruitment firm to oversee the hiring of a permanent Town Manager. The Council's annual budget workshop is

Continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

2. Celebrate Arbor Day
3. Planning
3. Interim Planner Hired
3. Police
4. Medical Marijuana Banned
4. Recreation
5. Calendar

Flood Control Update



2005.

Following the destructive 2005 flood, which threatened lives and flooded homes, businesses, schools, fire stations, police stations, and other public facilities, as well as causing over \$100 million in property damage, then-Supervisor Hal Brown responded to pleas from all our communities and proposed an integrated, watershed-wide program to reduce or eliminate the risk of flooding in Ross Valley.

Marin County Supervisor Katie Rice and former Council member Chris Martin briefed the Council on flood control. They cited that for over 100 hundred years the Town of Ross and other Ross Valley communities have been afflicted by devastating floods. Since 1950, flood flows have been recorded in calendar years 1951, 1955, 1958, 1967, 1969, 1970, 1982, 1983, 1986, 1994, and

Continued on page 4

Town Bids Farewell to Two Staff

The Council recognized former employee Buzz Doughty upon his retirement, and outgoing employee Elise Semonian, for their years of service to the Town.

Buzz Doughty

Buzz worked in the Public Works Department as a Maintenance Worker for eight years. He was a familiar face in town, often seen mowing the lawn, trimming hedges, raking leaves, sweeping, digging ditches, and doing whatever else was needed. His job consisted of hard, physical labor, eight-hours a day. Buzz carried out his duties in his quiet, unassuming way, and never complained. He was an extremely hard-



Buzz Doughty

Continued on page 2



Mayor's Corner - continued from page 1

set for Wednesday, April 29th at the Marin Art & Garden Center. The public is welcome to attend.

The windows replacement and repair project in Town Hall is almost complete. The project included replacing all the windows in the Council chambers, one window in the conference room, and repairing all the rest of the windows in the building.

The landscaping outside Town Hall and the Public Safety building is nearly completed. This was part of the Sir Francis Drake/Lagunitas Road Intersection Project. The new landscaping installed includes drought tolerant plants.



The Governor recently issued an executive order mandating cutbacks in water usage, so it is especially important that we all continue to conserve water whenever possible.

The Ross School PTA recently held their auction and raised an estimated \$270,000 for the Ross School. Well done, and congratulations to the PTA and all residents who volunteered and contributed to make the auction a success. ■

Town Bids Farewell to Two Staff

Continued from page 1

working employee and a joy to work with, and he is most definitely missed. The Town thanks him for his excellent work, we are sad to see him go, and wish him all the best in his retirement!

Elise Semonian

Elise has been Senior Planner in the Planning Department for eight years. She is leaving Ross to become the Planning Director for the Town of San Anselmo. Being the only employee in the Ross Planning Department, Elise has faced many workload challenges. During her eight years, she has brought approximately 99 planning applications before the Council,



amended numerous zoning ordinances including Hillside Lot Regulations and Basements and Attics, oversaw the Advisory Design Review Group meetings since their inception, updated the draft Housing Element, the Hazard Mitigation Plan, and provided guidance with Flood Maps and Elevation regulations, just to name a few. Her knowledge of Planning is extensive and many Ross residents have benefited from it, and will miss her expertise and guidance. The Town wishes her all the best in her new position, and thanks her for a job well-done! ■

Celebrate Arbor Day April 24th

The first Arbor Day took place on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska, and was the brainchild of Julius Sterling Morton. Morton felt that Nebraska's landscape and economy would benefit from the wide-scale planting of trees. He set an example by planting orchards, shade trees and wind



breaks on his own farm and urged his neighbors to follow suit. Nebraska's first Arbor Day was a great success with more than one million trees planted. In the years following that first Arbor Day, Morton's idea spread beyond Nebraska with Kansas, Tennessee, Minnesota and Ohio all proclaiming their own Arbor Days. Today all 50 states celebrate Arbor Day although the dates may vary in keeping with the local climate. At the federal level, in 1970, President Nixon proclaimed the last Friday in April as National Arbor Day and it is now celebrated throughout the world.

The Council passed a resolution supporting Arbor Day and encourages residents to celebrate by planting and caring for trees, and supporting efforts to protect our trees for future generations to come. Also, the Town has been designated a Tree City USA for the past three years, so Ross continues to celebrate our trees every day including Arbor Day. We hope you do too.

PLANNING RESULTS



Elise Semonian

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the April Council meeting. Staff reports and audio for the meeting can be found on the [April 9th](#) meeting page. The minutes for this meeting will be available on this page after adoption by the Council at the May Council meeting.

Address: 14 Norwood Avenue
Applicant: Mark & Molly Gamble
Council Action: Approved Retaining Wall
Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Robbins recused)

Address: 6 Chestnut Avenue
Applicant: John & Cristina Scarborough
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Kuhl recused)

Address: 14 Madrona Avenue
Applicant: Michael & Erika Rosenbaum
Council Action: Continued
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 83 Laurel Grove Avenue
Applicant: John & Kary Chendo
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 3 & 5 Ross Common
Applicant: John Lord & Alain Pinel Realtors
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 63 Laurel Grove Avenue
Applicant: Brad Oldenbrook
Council Action: Continued
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 128 Winding Way
Applicant: Norman & Mette Hardie
Council Action: Approved; Stairs continued
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 34 Poplar Avenue
Applicant: Dante & Mouna Ghilotti
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 32 Allen Avenue
Applicant: Courtney Lynch
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Interim Planner Hired



Leann Taagepera
Interim Planner

The Town has hired Leann Taagepera to serve as Interim Town Planner in the Planning Department. Leann is the sole proprietor of a CA Certified Small Business and Certified Women-Owned Business. She provides CEQA/NEPA-related services to both public and private sector clients as both a prime consultant and a sub-

consultant. She is a planner with over 20 years of experience in city planning, preservation planning, and CEQA and NEPA environmental analyses and document preparation. Leann holds a Master of Urban and Regional Planning, Land Use and Law Specialization, from UC Irvine, and a B.A. in Environmental Studies, City Planning Emphasis, from UC Santa Barbara.

Leann will serve as Interim Planner until a permanent Town Planner is hired. Her schedule will be Monday, Wednesday and Thursdays from 10:00 - 3:00 p.m. (with a break for lunch). She can be reached via email at planning@townofross.org, or by phone at (415) 453-1453 ext. 121. Since Leann is on a part-time schedule, residents are encouraged to schedule an appointment with her first before coming to Town Hall. Once a permanent planner is hired, the planner's schedule will resume to full-time. ■

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ross School Drop-off

The Police Dept has received some complaints about the Ross School drop-off, especially in the mornings. It appears that some parents are parking their cars on Lagunitas



and then going into the school. The white zone fronting the school is marked "No Parking" drop-off only.

Please pull forward as far as possible and drop-off your student. Do not use this area to go into the school. The Police officers will be warning drivers not to park in the drop-off area. Thanks for your help and cooperation. ■



Ordinance Bans Medical Marijuana Dispensaries



The Council adopted an interim Ordinance that would ban Medical Marijuana dispensaries in Ross. At the March 12th meeting, the Town Council directed the Town Attorney to prepare an ordinance to clarify that medical marijuana dispensaries are not a permitted use within any zone in the Town of Ross. The interim ordinance goes into effect immediately while permanent regulations are publicly noticed and prepared. The interim ordinance will be in effect for 45 days and will need to be extended after a public hearing at the May meeting when the permanent ordinance will be introduced. ■

Recreation News

Check out upcoming Spring offerings from the Ross Recreation Department. Register NOW to try something new!



Kids on Camera Physical Comedy for Stage & Film Mondays April 15-May 18, 2:45pm - 5:00pm, 5 weeks, ages 6 - 10, Ross School Green Room

Golf Lessons

San Geronimo Golf Course
Adult - Learning the Swing & The Short Game.
Little Swingers (5-7 years)
Beg. Golf Jr. (8-13 years)
Saturday/Sundays April 24th through May 17th

Il Fornaio - Cooking from the EMILIA-ROMAGNA region Monday May 4, 10am-noon.

Bicycle Maintenance, Bike Safety & Riding Skills.
Tuesday May 5 & 6, 4:00pm-5:00pm, Breaking Away Bike Shop

Register at rossrecreation.org.

Flood Control Update - *Continued from page 1*

Supervisor Brown was able to galvanize community support with the passage of the watershed storm drainage fee.

The drainage fee along with State and Federal grants are the sources for funding the County's Ross Valley Flood Protection and Watershed Program. The Program consists of over 180 proposed measures, including creating detention basins, replacing bridges, and creek channel enhancements. These measures have been developed over several years with input from the public, engineering experts, county and local staff, environmental specialists, and community leaders and members.

Martin noted that the effective leadership and perseverance of Supervisor Katie Rice moved forward the two of the most critical projects of the Ross Valley Flood Protection Program. Both projects are in the Town of Ross. These projects are U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Corte Madera Creek Unit #4 and the Phoenix Lake Detention Basin.

One month ago, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced that it received \$400,000 in the Federal budget for environmental review and other pre-construction planning related to the Unit 4 project. This project includes removing the outmoded fish ladder near Lagunitas Road Bridge, which impedes creek flow, and replacing it with a more natural way for fish to travel. The project will also modify the downstream concrete channel to increase capacity. Project costs are estimated to be \$15 million and it may be completed by 2020, depending on funding at the Federal level.

The Phoenix Lake project involves modifying the reservoir, dam, spillway, and outlet to increase water supply for MMWD and to reduce flooding by using the lake as a detention basin during large storms. A number of required studies are being completed, including sediment and soil testing, geotechnical analysis for the California Division of Dams, a hydrologic study of the long-term yield of Phoenix Lake, a study of the in-stream flow of Ross creek, and baseline studies for both the Lake and Ross Creek. The Phoenix Lake Detention project is scheduled to be completed in 2017. The Unit 4, Phoenix Lake Detention Basin, and other Ross Valley Flood Protection projects will receive environmental and public review prior to implementation. Please visit <http://marinwatersheds.org/rossvalleywatershed-org/index.html> to keep informed or attend the public meetings. ■

ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 2015

Apr 4	2:00	pm	Spring Fling, Ross Common
Apr 9	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 14	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
April 23	6:00	pm	Special Council Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 28	6:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 29	8:30	am	Special Council Meeting - Budget Workshop, MAGC Multipurpose Room

MAY 2015

May 12	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
May 14	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
May 21	6:00	pm	Special Council Meeting - Budget Public Hearing, Town Hall
May 25	--	--	Town Hall offices closed Memorial Day
May 26	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

JUNE 2015

June 9	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
June 11	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
June 23	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

JULY 2015

July 3	--	--	Town Hall offices closed Independence Day Holiday
July 4	11:00	am	Annual 4th of July Parade & Celebration, Ross Common
July 9	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
July 14	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
July 28	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall



C O N T A C T U S	Mailing Address:	Street Address:
	P.O. Box 320	31 Sir Francis Drake Blvd
	Ross, CA 94957	Ross, CA 94957
	Administration	415.453.1453 x105
	Building	415.453.1453 x106
	Planning	415.453.1453 x121
	Police	415.453.1453, option 2
	Public Works	415.453.1453 x106
	Recreation	415.453.6020
	Ross Valley Fire	415.258.4686
Town Manager	415.453.1453 x107	
	www.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 llopez@townofross.org