

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Mayor's Corner



Elizabeth Brekhus

The Town Council has begun discussing the hiring of an Interim Town Manager and a permanent Town Manager at Town Council meetings. Our current

Manager, Rob Braulik, as was reported in the media, is taking a City Manager position in the East Bay. The hiring of a Town Manager is one of the most important decisions a Council can make. Thus it is expected the Council will spend a considerable amount of time and effort on this matter in the coming months.

In addition, as you know, the Town has reorganized the Ross Recreation Department as a town department to provide quality recreation services to the community. The Town Council appointed

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Council Considers Short-Term Rentals

As the popularity of hosting platform websites (such as Airbnb) grows, cities across the country are attempting to address the issues associated with short-term vacation rentals in residential neighborhoods. At the request of the Finance Committee, the Town Attorney prepared a summary of regulatory options for the Council's consideration. The goal of the report was to obtain Council consensus on whether or not to regulate short-term residential rentals and, if so, what methods should be used.



In many California cities, short-term rentals are illegal by default because such uses are expressly allowed by or do not fall within the residential use permitted by the local zoning code. Some cities have elected to allow short-term residential rentals subject to some type of business regulatory permit. The permits are often referred to as a "vacation rental permit," or "short term residential rental permit." Other jurisdictions opt to regulate vacation rentals through a use permit (e.g., Sonoma County, Laguna Beach). San Francisco takes a slightly different approach by requiring residents to register with the Planning Department. Violations of the San Francisco ordinance are enforced through administrative penalties, and if there are multiple violations, the Department removes the unit from the registry for one year.

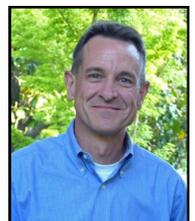
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Interim Town Manager - Next Step

The Council discussed the options for hiring an interim and permanent Town Manager, to replace outgoing Town Manager Rob Braulik. An Interim Town Manager will be contracted to begin before Mr. Braulik's departure at the end of March, and will remain until a permanent Town Manager is hired. The Council directed staff to bring recruitment firm information to them at a future meeting to determine if a recruitment firm would be selected to oversee the process of hiring a permanent Town Manager.



Rob Braulik
Town Manager



Mayor's Corner - continued from page 1

the Ross Recreation Advisory Committee (consisting of John Chendo, Jennifer Coan, Glenn Greenberg, Brent Koonce, Albert Stoll and Beth Sutro) to provide guidance and ideas to the Town Recreation Manager, Mike Armstrong, on programs and activities. The Ross Recreation Department runs two preschools, all recreation programs for children and adults, and this year, the department will take over two important Town special events, the Town Dinner and the 4th of July parade, to ensure these events continue in the Town. The Department welcomes (and desperately needs) volunteers for those special events, so please let the Ross Recreation Department or me know if you are interested in helping.



Long time Ross employee, Buzz Doughty, has given notice of his retirement with the Town. Buzz worked for the Town for 8 years; prior to becoming an employee, he was a contractor for the Town assisting the Public Works department. I want to thank Buzz for his many years of dedicated service to the Town. ■

Council Discusses Short-Term Rentals -

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Most of the ordinances reviewed also require the hosts to pay the same transit occupancy taxes that hotels do. San Francisco requires, and San Jose allows, the hosting platforms, such as Airbnb, to collect and

remit transient occupancy taxes. The Ross Municipal Code does not contain a transient occupancy or hotel tax. It would require majority voter approval to adopt such a tax. The key policy questions the Council considered were:

- Should short-term vacation rentals be prohibited as a matter of zoning?
- Should short-term vacation rentals be treated as an accessory use or home occupation for residential properties (single-family, multifamily)?
- What are the key regulatory concerns with short-term vacation rentals?
- If allowed, should the Town regulate short-term vacation rentals as a land use or as a business regulation? What level of control and monitoring does the Town desire to have over short-term rentals?

After discussion, the Council determined there did not seem to be many short-term rentals, or problems associated with rentals, to warrant Town regulation at this time. ■

MCEP Launches Sustainability Tracker

The Marin Climate and Energy Partnership (MCEP) has launched a new interactive sustainability tracker illustrating progress being made by local jurisdictions, residents, and businesses in Marin County toward reducing emissions and increasing sustainable practices. "The Marin Sustainability Tracker" includes twelve metrics gauging a community's level of consumption and implementation of sustainability measures related to energy, waste, transportation, water and greenhouse gas reductions.



"We're thrilled to provide this tool and we hope it inspires people to take more action to meet our communities' sustainability goals," said Cory Bytof, MCEP Chair, "The [Marin Sustainability Tracker](#) shows, for example, that household energy use has hardly dropped at all since 2005. So, while Marin County and local jurisdictions have some excellent, early progress on other measures such as reducing the amount of waste sent to our landfills, we still have a way to go on residential energy consumption. This interactive map is a fun and engaging way to track progress and to create some friendly competition between Marin communities as we continue to work together to create a more healthy and sustainable Marin."

The Marin Sustainability Tracker is available at www.marintracker.org. For more information on MCEP, visit their website at www.marinclimate.org. ■

PLANNING RESULTS



Elise Semonian

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the February Council meeting. For more information on each planning application, click [here](#). The minutes for this meeting will be available at www.townofross.org after adoption at the March 2015 Council meeting.

An audio file of this meeting will be posted on the [website](#) the day after the meeting.

Address: 7 Quail Ridge

Applicant: Mark McLaughlin

Council Action: Approved

Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 8 Hill Road

Applicant: Julian & Geoff Nichol

Council Action: Approved

Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Downtown Use Permits Amended



A new ordinance was introduced amending the downtown Local Service Commercial (C-L) District use permit. The General Government Committee, at its December 22, 2014 meeting, expressed interest in presenting to Council the idea of modifying the C-L District zoning regulations to allow retail uses that were allowed by right prior to 1985, be allowed by right again. The proposed amendment would eliminate the use permit requirement for certain offices not located in first-story space fronting the street (i.e., on the 2nd floor or back units) and other retail uses that are unlikely to have significant impacts to the community. Accordingly, the proposed amendment would make the following uses allowed in the downtown district permitted by right: food, clothing, drug, variety and stationery stores; retail bakeries; appliance, radio and television sales and service shops; photo, art supply, flower and gift shops, retail nursery, pet and garden supply shops (when enclosed within buildings); laundry and cleaning services with no on-site dry cleaning or laundry facilities; shoe sales and repair; medical and dental offices, real estate and insurance offices, architect offices, and engineers and attorneys (provided such offices are not located on ground-level space fronting the street).

The proposed amendment would also add a requirement that a massage establishment obtain a use permit in order to locate in the C-L District. Amendments to the California Massage Therapy Act went into effect on January 1, 2015. This state law restored the power of cities and counties to adopt and enforce local ordinances that govern zoning, business licensing, or reasonable health and safety requirements for establishments or businesses of a certified massage therapist or practitioner. The Ordinance is scheduled to be adopted at the March Council meeting and will go into effect 30 days after that. See full staff report and ordinance on the website [Staff Reports](#) page. ■

Recreation News



Spring Registration is Open.

New spring offerings include [Golf](#) for youth and adults, [Bike Maintenance and Safety](#), [Spanish](#) & [Chima Engineering](#) (Legos)!

Select Winter classes at Ross School are still open for registration.

Classes include [Kids on Camera](#), [Tennis](#), [Legos](#), [Spanish](#), [Mandarin Chinese](#), [Doodlebug](#) wheel throwing, Sewing and Art classes, Carpentry class, [Il Fornaio Adult Cooking](#), [Introduction to Good Manners](#) and more!



The Ski Bus is here! First trip is scheduled for March 1st to Sugar Bowl. Visit our web page and click on the link to the Ski Bus to register your family.

Try something new!

Register online at: www.RossRecreation.org

Mike, Sue Eda and Maya.



Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Carbon monoxide alarms are proving their worth. The Novato Fire District has responded to several Carbon Monoxide (CO) incidents in recent months that has left its residents and emergency personnel thankful for CO alarms. Carbon monoxide is called the invisible killer because you cannot see it or smell it. This poisonous gas can come from many sources, including cars, malfunctioning fuel-burning appliances, and engine-powered equipment. The only way to detect CO is with a working CO alarm.



CO Alarms

- CO alarms should be installed outside each sleeping area. Install alarms on every level of the home. It's best to use interconnected alarms - when one sounds, all CO alarms in the home sound.
- Test CO alarms at least once a month and replace battery as needed.
- Know the sounds the CO alarm makes. It will sound if CO is detected. It will make a different sound if the battery is low or if it is time to get a new CO alarm.
- If the CO alarm sounds, get to fresh air immediately and then call 9-1-1.

Prevent CO Poisoning

- Do not run a fueled engine indoors, even if garage doors are open. When warming a vehicle, move it out of the garage. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not blocked.
- Clear all debris from dryer, furnace, stove and fireplace vents.
- A generator should be used outdoors, in a well-ventilated location away from windows, doors, and vent openings.
- Gas or charcoal grills can produce CO. Only use them outside.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys inspected by a professional every year before cold weather sets in.
- Open the damper when using the fireplace for adequate ventilation.
- Never use your oven or stove to heat your home. ■



PUBLIC SAFETY



Parking Permit Process

Ross parking permits are available to Ross residents for a \$20 fee.

- The limit is four parking permits per residence.
- Permits are for one year from the date of issuance.
- They should be hung from the rear view mirror and may be moved to another vehicle if necessary.
- The permits are only for the street of issuance.

Please note that the Parking Permits are only valid for the street of issuance, not in other permit parking areas in Town. The Parking Permit does not alleviate the driver from obeying all other parking regulations in the Town of Ross.

The Ross Police Department will not issue citations to residents displaying the old type permits (laminated paper), but will ask them to obtain a new permit to replace the old type. ■

NEW ADR MEMBERS APPOINTED

The Council appointed three new members to the Advisory Design Review Group (ADR), and reappointed five current ADR members to serve another two-year term. The five current members (Peter Nelson, Chris Neumann, Dan Winey, Eric Soifer, Mark Kruttschnitt) had applied for reappointment. New appointees are Stephen Sutro (architect), Josefa Buckingham (architect & former ADR member), and Norman Hardie (non-design professional). The Advisory Design Review Group now consists of ten members. Senior Planner Elise Semonian will develop a schedule so that five members attend each meeting, including at least three design professionals.

ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2015

Feb 2	6:00	pm	Bolinas Avenue Neighborhood Meeting, Town Hall
Feb 10	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
Feb 12	6:00	pm	Regular Council Meeting, Town Hall
Feb 16	--	--	Town Hall offices closed President's Day
Feb 24	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

MARCH 2015

Mar 10	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
Mar 12	6:00	pm	Regular Council Meeting, Town Hall
Mar 24	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

APRIL 2015

Apr 9	6:00	pm	Regular Council Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 14	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 28	6:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 29	9:00	am	Special Council Meeting - Budget Workshop, MAGC

MAY 2015

May 12	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
May 14	6:00	pm	Regular 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



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	

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