



**Seacliff  
Improvement  
Association  
Fall 2023**

## **2023 Seacliff Notes and News**

Emily Chorba, SIA President

Happy Holidays SIA Members,

### ***We're hosting a Candidate Forum!***

For previous elections for Second District Supervisor, and our county sheriff, our association hosted a candidates' forum so residents could hear from and learn about each candidate in person. Our neighbor, Zach Friend, has decided not to run for a third term so we are once again hosting a Candidates' Forum.

Save the Date: February 19th (President's Day)

Time: 6:30 to 8 pm

Where: The Aptos Grange

More details will be included in the upcoming newsletter issued in early February when you may RSVP to attend.

### ***Membership Survey***

Thank you to the 118 members who completed our 2023 SIA Membership Survey.

The purpose of the survey is to ensure that the association is focusing on the activities and issues that are most important to our members. Our recent survey shows that our efforts do indeed mirror what you care about most. Respondents indicated the current activities that are most important include: keeping our community informed via the newsletter and website, communicating our interests to local government, and ensuring our neighborhood landscape remains beautiful.

From the survey we again learned that attending quarterly member meetings is more likely to happen if we have a compelling topic or activity that affects our Seacliff community. With so much happening around us, we will plan meetings with speakers and presentations addressing your priorities and issues.

### ***Bill Reddington***

We are sad to report our board member, Bill Reddington, passed unexpectedly in September due to a heart condition. He was very involved from the start by attending the Ice Cream Social and walking with his wife Lura in the July 4th parade with us. He was a wonderful board participant and person. In his honor, SIA contributed to the charity of his choice, Central California Food Bank.



## County Sales Tax Measure

**Zach Friend**  
Second District Supervisor  
County of Santa Cruz

Recently, the Board of Supervisors voted to send a proposed sales tax to the voters in the upcoming March election. What is the purpose of the proposed tax, how will the revenue be spent and how much will it bring it? Following is an overview.

What would voters be considering?

On the March 5, 2024 ballot, voters will be asked to consider a one-half cent sales tax measure. The funds will go directly to the County (all of the funds stay local) and would be collected on all consumer taxable goods and services. The County's sales tax rate of 9.00 percent is equal to the lowest rate among the five local jurisdictions, unincorporated Santa Cruz County and Cities of: Watsonville, Scotts Valley, Santa Cruz, and Capitola. With recent successful ballot measures, the Cities of Watsonville and Scotts Valley are both at the statutory cap of 9.75 percent. The City of Santa Cruz is currently at 9.25 percent, and the City of Capitola is equal to the County at 9.00 percent. Voters would be considering increasing the current unincorporated rate from 9.00 to 9.50 percent.

Why is the new tax being proposed?

Our County is unique in that more than half the population lives in the unincorporated area. Places like the San Lorenzo Valley, Live Oak, Aptos, Corralitos, and more rely on the County for traditional municipal services such as road maintenance, law enforcement, parks, and building permits. In reality, the County is the largest "city" in Santa Cruz County. Simultaneously, the County is responsible for providing countywide services for all residents including public health and safety net support services, district attorney and public defender services, and conducting elections. The County serves a greater proportion of the county population than all our peer counties and higher proportion than the statewide averages.

Over the past several years, natural disasters resulting from climate change, housing affordability driving away essential frontline workers, increasing homelessness, and a challenging economic environment impacting the County's ability to improve critical infrastructure, like roads and parks, are straining the County's limited financial resources.

Due to historic state allocation models for public funds, Santa Cruz County only receives about \$550 per resident in property and sales taxes. For comparison, Santa Clara County gets almost \$11,000 per resident from property tax revenue, compared to only \$463 for Santa Cruz County. Drilling down on this a bit more, we often receive questions about property taxes (given the high amounts people pay on local assessed value) and how much of your property tax dollar stays locally.

Under this Prop. 13 formula, the County of Santa Cruz retains some of the lowest amounts of property taxes of any other County in the state. Only 13 percent of your property tax dollars end up back with County government to fund our local services. As mentioned above, approximately

50 percent of residents live in the unincorporated county (compared to about 4.5 percent or so in Santa Clara County).

This low recovery amount has significant impacts on how the County provides services. As you can imagine, counties that are able to retain higher amounts under their Prop. 13 formula have more money available for roads and services without needing new funding streams to backfill these needs. If the Prop. 13 formula were to change in the state at some point in the future, unincorporated residents could see significant improvements to services and infrastructure without increased taxes - by simply having more of your local property tax dollars stay with local County government. As Prop. 13 was approved by voters as a state constitutional amendment, any changes to the formulation and distribution cannot occur at the local level. In the meantime, local governments with challenging tax distributions like this often turn to local sales tax measures as they have complete local control over the funds and it's a relatively stable income source for providing services.

How would the tax revenue be spent?

As part of the approval for the item going before the voters, the Board of Supervisors adopted a spending framework for how the tax revenue would be spent. Here is an overview:

- ◆ Housing and Essential Workforce Retention - (\$1 million) Address the acute housing crisis, ensuring frontline workers can afford to live in the community, with funds to support housing plans and predevelopment costs on County campuses and other potential housing sites.
- ◆ Countywide Homeless Services - (\$1 million) Tackle homelessness with a focus on year-round, 24-hour navigation centers and other services distributed across Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and unincorporated areas.
- ◆ Climate Resiliency and County Parks - (\$1 million) Enhance the County's response to climate change with funds for wildfire, flood and emergency response, prevention programs, and disaster recovery services. Additionally, support maintaining and improving neighborhood parks.
- ◆ Road Repair and Infrastructure Projects - (\$1 million) Address pressing infrastructure needs, including street repairs, potholes, and failing public facilities, to ensure safe and efficient transportation networks and government service centers.
- ◆ Other Essential County Services - Address current challenges and emerging community needs, including mental health services for children and vulnerable populations, and invest in improved public safety.

How much would the tax bring into the County?

If approved, the half-cent sales tax is estimated to generate \$10,000,000 annually. In the first year, it's estimated to generate approximately \$7.5 million.

As always, you are welcome to call me at 454-2200 with any questions about this or any other County-related issue. I am also maintaining regular updates on social media via Facebook at [www.facebook.com/supervisorfriend](http://www.facebook.com/supervisorfriend)

## Seacliff State Beach News

Jordan Burgess, the Deputy District Superintendent for the Santa Cruz District of California State Parks

As we close out the year, I find myself reflecting on the unbelievable challenges our local community has faced, both with nervous anticipation of what this winter may bring, and with a profound sense of appreciation for the collaboration and determination I've witnessed in the recovery efforts from last winter.

We are often defined by how we respond and react to adversity, and resilience is about facing difficulties and emerging stronger. I couldn't be more proud or appreciative of the efforts made by our incredible State Parks staff responding to storm damages to ensure Seacliff State Beach was open and accessible to the public. Similarly, I couldn't be more proud or more appreciative of the private-public partnerships, including volunteer clean-up days and financial support, that developed to enhance the recovery efforts.

Because of generous contributions to the Seacliff Recovery Fund, administered by the Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks, we were able to address immediate repairs to the Moosehead Trail earlier this year. A second phase of work has commenced on both Moosehead and Beachgate Trails this month. We recognize the importance of our parks and open spaces to the local community and are thrilled to be able to make these needed repairs to encourage continued use. Work is being performed by Santa Cruz Mountains Trail Stewardship in partnership with the Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks and is expected to be completed soon. As we celebrate these improvements, I ask that you respect the trail closure signs to allow work to occur and the improvements to properly cure and settle - thank you in advance for your cooperation.



Information on how to give a tax-deductible contribution to the Seacliff State Beach Recovery Fund can be found at: <https://thatsmypark.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/thatsmypark/donation.jsp?campaign=158> . This funding provides direct support to Seacliff State Beach and the ongoing work.

Aside from the storm damage, there are a lot of really great things happening in your local State Parks. To stay current with your District State Parks, sign up for our monthly emails: <https://parks.us8.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=24d3498860121a8aba3fe8edd&id=bb8bee2456>

Thank you for your continued support of the State Park System. I send warm wishes of holiday cheer to you and yours.

# Seacliff Merchants News

Charlie Wilcox

The Seacliff Business Partners, merchant association thanks all who took part in the October Annual Seacliff Street Fair. The experience eclipsed expectations and showcased our community. The Seacliff Improvement Association's support and involvement is key to the good times! Thanks to all attendees and special thanks to the volunteer organizers Mary Cody, Dan Holdren, Kelly Dillon, Marta Strock and the SIA Board.

Looking forward, merchants are reviewing the upcoming projects affecting Seacliff Village including Segments 11, and 12 of the Rail Trail and the Highway 1 shoulder improvements with the auxiliary and bus-on-shoulder lane installation. We are hopeful that the attention

directed at Seacliff with this investment will also realize the opportunity to address long-standing local economic needs. Specifically, we are addressing the Seacliff Village Plan public safety concerns around traffic calming and the open drainage channel running from the rail corridor and the ditch behind Marianne's, as well as parking and the Seacliff streetscape beautification project. We are actively commenting on the EIR process for these projects as well as directly requesting action from the assigned agencies. The requests reflect our desire to safely manage the increased activity inherent in the planned developments and benefit quality of life in Seacliff Village. In the near future, we will be seeking expressions of support from community members and organizations to have these neglected infrastructure needs addressed.



*Open drainage behind Marianne's*



*Forrest and Lucianna out strolling*

## Joining the 2<sup>nd</sup> District Team

**Forrest Revere**

As the newest member on Supervisor Friend's team, working on behalf of our community and District 2, I wanted to extend a thank you to the Seacliff Improvement Association for the warm welcome. I began my service with the Department of Public Works, now the Community Development and Infrastructure Department, as an Engineering Tech with the Stormwater Management division right in the middle of our 2016/17 winter storms. I conducted plan checks for building and discretionary applications and later transitioned into a role serving both Stormwater Management and Sanitation. During the CZU Fires and Atmospheric Rain Events I acted as the Deputy for

Operations working alongside our partnering response agencies to support the County response to these emergency events.

On a more personnel note, I live in our unincorporated area of the County with my wife, Laura, and 7-month-old daughter, Lucianna. We own our home, managing roughly 2.5 acres with a dog and several chickens. I look forward to working in this new role supporting our community needs. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns, [forrest.revere@santacruzcountyca.gov](mailto:forrest.revere@santacruzcountyca.gov) or 831-454-2200.

# Tracking the Rail Trail through Seacliff

Johanna Lighthill

Two segments of the rail trail, 11 and 12, pass through Seacliff, connecting us to Capitola and Aptos Villages. We will be significantly impacted by their construction and eventual passage through our community. Segment 11 is currently under environmental review with comments due on December 15<sup>th</sup>. Following is some trail background with Segment 11 details.

Over 10 years ago, trail planners invited the community to participate in the development of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Master Plan. Segments established across the county are currently in various stages of development including designation of two designs: the Ultimate Trail, with the trail adjacent to the tracks; and the Interim Trail, with the trail in place of the tracks. Because our county is obligated to preserve the option of future rail service, environmental reviews (EIRs) consider the Interim Trail as temporary, and the first of three phases that remove track and install a trail in its place. If or when a rail project is approved, the Interim trail is removed and track is installed with the Ultimate Trail built next to it. Comparisons between the Ultimate trail, the Interim with reconfiguration phases are provided in EIRs. The Ultimate trail path is mostly an 8 ft wide with fencing or retaining walls, required to separate trail users from the tracks. The Interim trail requires no fencing.

The Ultimate trail configuration of Segment 11 from 47th Avenue to State Park Drive does not include passage over the Capitola Trestle because a new bridge would be required and considered if or when a rail project is approved. Until then, trail users would travel through Capitola Village using existing streets and sidewalks. This Ultimate segment includes 6 viaducts and 12,893 linear ft of retaining wall, up to 16 ft in height. The Interim trail passes over the Capitola Trestle and existing bridges and requiring 1,270 ft of retaining wall, up to 5 ft in height.

There are significant and unavoidable impacts to Seacliff listed in the EIR including the adverse effect on scenic vistas through the removal of 803 mature trees for the Ultimate trail and 288 for the Interim, inconsistent with county tree removal policy with an adverse effect on Monarch butterflies that conflict with ordinances protecting trees. The parklet at the corner of the Mar Vista crossing would be removed to make way for the Ultimate trail and most trees along Poplar Street here would be removed.

Currently, there are at least 75 homes and apartment buildings directly adjacent to the rail line that will lose resident access to the Ultimate trail, due to the required fencing dividing the trail from their homes. Many who walk the corridor through Seacliff have wondered how a trail will fit alongside the tracks. Because the width of some of the Ultimate trail is less than the minimum 8 ft required of a Caltrans Class 1 bikeway there is a potential for user conflicts in these constrained sections. These are just a few of the issues addressed in the report. For more information, visit the Project's website: <https://dpw.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/Home/TransportationRoads/CoastalRailTrail.aspx>

You can read the Draft EIR for Segment 11: [https://dpw.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/Portals/19/pdfs/RailTrail/Schematic-Design-Plans/RTS1011\\_DEIR\\_with\\_Appendices.pdf](https://dpw.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/Portals/19/pdfs/RailTrail/Schematic-Design-Plans/RTS1011_DEIR_with_Appendices.pdf)

Public Comments related to the adequacy the EIR are due *December 15th* may be sent to: [RailTrail@santacruzcountyca.gov](mailto:RailTrail@santacruzcountyca.gov)



## Seacliff Improvement Association 2023 Treasurer's Report

	<u>YTD</u>
Ending Balance from 2022	\$26,542.02
<b>INCOME:</b>	
Membership Dues	\$4,200.00
General Donations	\$2,827.39
Cantine Meeting	\$1,240.00
Account Interest	\$9.59
<b>TOTAL INCOME:</b>	<b>\$8,276.98</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>	
Beachgate Trail Expenses	\$95.00
Cantine Meeting	\$1,671.35
Insurance	\$514.00
PayPal Transfer Fee	\$2.65
Membership Meetings Expenses	\$404.00
Membership Mailings	\$615.53
Mini Park	\$4,801.56
Newsletter	\$3,072.09
Post Box Annual Rental	\$194.00
Seacliff Street Fair	\$348.98
Website Hosting, Security and Admin	\$350.00
Zoom Annual Subscription	\$149.90
Bill Reddington Memorial Donation	\$105.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$12,324.06</b>
<b>ENDING BALANCE:</b>	<b>\$22,494.94</b>
<b>Beachgate Trail Fund:</b>	<b>\$5615.62</b>

### Welcome New Members!

Margaret Mathes  
Kathryn McCullough  
Stella Moreno  
Sandy and Connie Simon

**We thank all 333  
member households and  
friends for your continued support.**

To learn more about the association visit:

<http://www.seacliffimprovement.org/>

Our membership meets quarterly, and our board of directors meets on the second Tuesday of the month. Contact us if you wish to attend our meeting: [info@seacliffimprovement.org](mailto:info@seacliffimprovement.org)

Report neighborhood concerns:

<https://www.dpw.santacruzcounty.us/ReportProblem.aspx#> where you can file a report and download the My Santa Cruz County app.

## Welcome Jivan to our SIA Board of Directors!

The association board is pleased to welcome Jivan Dhaliwal to the SIA board. Jivan has dedicated her career to education for the past 37 years, first as a middle school math teacher and later as the department chair at Aptos Junior High School and district math coach before being appointed as the Math Coordinator for the Santa Clara County Office of Education. She then served as an administrator in the Campbell Union High School District. Currently, Jivan is the Curriculum and Instruction Director in the Aromas San Juan Unified School District.

Jivan served on the Santa Cruz Symphony Board, loves music and supporting local visual and performing arts. With a passion for travel, she enjoys living in Seacliff with her husband, Gary, and we are very excited she is joining the SIA Board of Directors.



Jivan Dhaliwal with her husband, Gary Tardiff

**Seacliff Improvement Association**

**PO Box 533**

**Aptos, CA 95001-0533**



***Share your newsletter with a neighbor and invite them to join!***

Membership Application/Renewal-Newsletter

Annual Dues are \$20.00 (January– December)

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Seacliff Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address if different: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number(s): ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address (for newsletters and bulletins only):

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Email 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Select Payment Method:

Zelle to: [info@seacliffimprovement.org](mailto:info@seacliffimprovement.org)     Check to the: Seacliff Improvement Association

PayPal from the link on our homepage: <https://seacliffimprovement.org/>

How did you hear about us?    Invitation Letter from Us    Nextdoor    Someone told you about us

Complimentary Newsletter    Membership Renewal    Our website

Please include your check and mail to: Seacliff Improvement Association, P.O. Box 533, Aptos, CA 95001

