

Seacliff Improvement Association

Winter 2014



Join us for our 1st Quarter Membership Gathering:

Meeting at the Med



Tuesday, March 11th, 2014 - 7 pm

The Seacliff Improvement Association is hosting a meet and greet at
The Mediterranean, 265 Center Street.



Zach and Patrick Love Seacliff!

Beginning his second year as our Second District Supervisor, Zach Friend will, along with his analyst, Patrick Mulhearn, share the latest Seacliff, Aptos and County-wide information on issues important to our members.

(Must be 21 to attend)

Soft Drinks and munchies will be provided.
Parking is limited so get your carpool together and mark your calendar *now*.
We look forward to seeing you!

This edition of the Seacliff Improvement Association newsletter has been mailed to over 1,300 Seacliff Residents!

The Association works for you:

- Publishing informative quarterly newsletters
- Hosting membership meetings about important Seacliff issues
- Sending email alerts informing you about local government developments that impact Seacliff
- Improving our Seacliff neighborhood that ultimately helps increase your property values and makes Seacliff a great place to live

See the last page of the newsletter for our membership application.

Membership is open to all Seacliff residents.

We hope you enjoy this publication and consider joining today!



CSAs - Another Road to Improvements

Zach Friend
Second District Supervisor
County of Santa Cruz

A simple walk through Seacliff will show that the condition of our local roads is deteriorating. The County recently completed an analysis of our local roads to determine just how bad it is. On a scale of zero (a failed road) to 100 (new road) the average Pavement Condition Index of Santa Cruz

County roads is 55. This means that our roads are generally defined as being in “poor condition” by this state measurement index. The deferred maintenance for Santa Cruz County roads is estimated to be approximately \$180 million over the next five years. With state and federal funding for road repairs drastically cut over the last decade and local funding mechanisms unable to keep pace with the growing need (only 13 cents of our local property tax dollar comes back to the County), how do we address this problem?

One option is through expanding County Service Areas (CSAs). These are small neighborhood or rural roadway benefit assessment areas that raise funds to build, maintain and repair roads specific to your neighborhood. The CSAs are self-initiated and are set up under Prop. 218 and require a mail ballot procedure and majority of the returned votes. This is a way to ensure that your specific local road is addressed.

Residents organize to form the service area and determine the benefit assessment rate that they wish to assess themselves to finance a specific service, such as road maintenance. One of the major reasons to form a CSA is to provide an effective mechanism to collect benefit assessments from all property owners in an area that benefits from the specific services provided. The annual benefit assessment appears on each parcel's property tax bill. All of Seacliff could form a CSA or just the residents of a specific street or set of streets. Here are the steps:

1. An application and petition is obtained from (and submitted to) the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). Generally, it is recommended that at least 2/3 of the affected property owners desire the formation of the service areas; having the initial support of a large portion of the residents will help to ensure smooth operation of the service area in the future.
2. County Public Works researches the area and prepares a map and legal description of the proposed service area. This step can be performed by a private consulting engineer if the residents desire to do so.
3. The map, description, application, and initial deposit are submitted to LAFCO. LAFCO reviews the proposed boundaries of the CSA to determine that all parcels that will benefit from the CSA are included and any that won't benefit are excluded. LAFCO will advertise and hold a public hearing to determine the final CSA boundary.
4. Public Works submits the LAFCO-approved boundary to the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. The Board will advertise and set a date for a public hearing on the formation of the service area. After the hearing the service area is approved or the process terminated. Concurrent with the CSA formation, Public Works will request the Board of Supervisors to initiate the benefit assessment rate proceedings in accordance with Proposition 218 ballot proceedings. In other words, a mailed ballot will be sent to the affected property owners to set the initial rate and formation.
5. Public Works submits the map and description as approved by the County Board of Supervisors to LAFCO for the State Board of Equalization and LAFCO records the service area and forwards the necessary information and the filing fee to the State Board of Equalization (SBE). After filing with the SBE, the formation process is complete.



Neighbors up the hill on Viewpoint Road in Aptos formed a County Service Area and used their funds to repave the entire street.

Once a year, the CSA must hold a meeting to establish benefit assessment rates and a work program. Based on the property owners wishes, the Board of Supervisors then sets the rates and approves an annual budget for the CSA. The benefit assessments are collected on the regular property tax bill in December and April each year.

While no one likes the idea of additional property taxes, one key advantage of this process is that these taxes stay in your neighborhood or even your street (depending upon size of the CSA). In other words, your assessment will specifically lead to the repair and maintenance of your own road and/or neighborhood roads.

Additional local control, through your own CSA board, helps ensure funds are spent on what residents decide for themselves. Questions? My office would be happy to discuss more about this process. Give us a call at 454-2200.

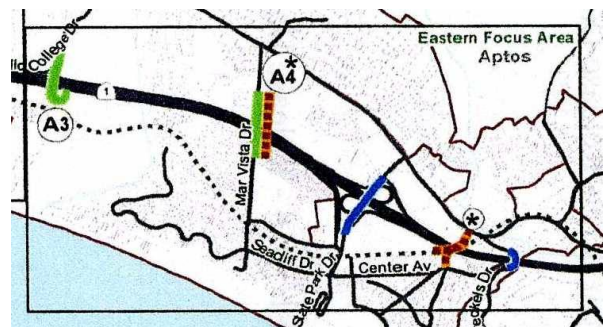
Sustainable Santa Cruz County Update

Will Roblin

Last month, Sustainable Santa Cruz County (previously-known as the Transit Corridors Plan for Sustainable Communities in Santa Cruz County) presented a preliminary view of transportation and zoning changes to area planning commissioners, members of the Regional Transportation Commission, the City of Santa Cruz and an advisory group that includes delegates from neighborhood associations like ours. The goal of the plan is to establish a community-based vision for a more sustainable way-of-life in Live Oak, Soquel, and Aptos. The plan will integrate land use and transportation policies in a way that protects environmental resources, supports economic growth, and increases access to opportunity for residents.

Collected from input gathered at three public workshops conducted last year, residents' ideas and suggestions have now been incorporated into the plan. Neighborhood maps are now overlaid with existing zoning and with conceptual changes including new streets, property rezoning, and expansion of the county General Plan Land Use Designations to meet the project goals.

Aptos has been identified as a Traffic Study focus area that encompasses Cabrillo College to Trout Gulch Road along both sides of Highway 1 and Soquel Drive. There are no plans for land use zoning changes here. The current draft plan includes two new potential highway crossings at Cabrillo College and Mar Vista Drive along with the pedestrian and bicycle bridge proposed previously. It also includes plans to use an existing crossing at the railroad bridge over the highway at the east end of North Avenue and Aptos Wharf Road for pedestrian and bicycle access. These concepts will receive more complete review in June. The Sustainable Santa Cruz County study is set to complete its work in 2015. Read more about it at: <http://transitcorridorsplan.org/>



Plans include new crossings for bicycles and pedestrians near Cabrillo College, at Mar Vista Drive and the current rail bridge from Seacliff to Aptos Village.

The Latest on the Downtown Seacliff Undergrounding and Streetscaping

Rebecca Downing

After resolving issues with the bidding contractor, the downtown village utility undergrounding project is once again proceeding. It was delayed through the second half of 2013 after two rounds of contract bidding yielded unacceptable results. The utilities have now applied to the Regional Transportation Commission for easements to work under the rail line along State Park Drive and, after consulting with Iowa Pacific, the RTC board will hopefully vote to approve them. This may take two to three months but the utilities hope they can proceed on the undergrounding while waiting for this approval.

AT&T expects their piece of the undergrounding to take 6-8 weeks but PG&E expects to work through 2014. PG&E is also working with the Santa Cruz County Department of Public Works to coordinate undergrounding work with the upcoming streetscaping project. Things like power lines for the streetlights, etc. need to be in place for the streetscaping to proceed.

Streetscape Update

The Santa Cruz County Department of Public Works has been planning a beautification of downtown Seacliff for over ten years. There have been many challenges with the project but most of them have been overcome with just a few remaining to be resolved. Part of the project is on land owned by California State Parks and must be approved, including easements, before the work can begin. After working with the county to resolve issues with design elements, State Parks now has the final draft plan for their piece of the streetscape plan. Once they approve it, and complete a property assessment, the project can begin.

There will also be one final public meeting to finalize plant selection. The project landscape design firm has created a suggested palette of plants that will be suitable for the site. Plants, including drought tolerant natives, will be chosen so that, once established, they will require little water and maintenance. We will announce the meeting date for this meeting later this year.

Park for Seacliff Imminent

Kate Minott, Santa Cruz County Parks Commissioner

A ground-breaking for the construction of the long anticipated neighborhood park in Seacliff is likely this summer, according to Sheryl Bailey, the Park's Project Manager with the Santa Cruz County Department of Public Works, Parks Division. During the latter part of 2013, Sheryl and her design team incorporated a list of changes requested by the Santa Cruz County Planning Department and other reviewing agencies.

In January, the neighborhood park plans were re-submitted to the Planning Department. The review by the Planning Department should take about 30 days and no additional issues are anticipated to further stall construction of the park. This is very good news for Seacliff.

The neighborhood park has been on the drawing board since 2007, when the County purchased the 1.25-acre site from South County Housing Corporation, the nonprofit organization that has recently completed building the Canterbury Park townhomes adjacent to the park.

Phase I of the Park's construction will include installation of a playground for young children; a picnic table area; a permanent turf lawn; a portion of the park's walkway; drought-tolerant landscaping; and a temporary restroom. A new sidewalk will connect the corner of Searidge Road to the Canterbury Lane-McGregor Road intersection.

Private donations will be needed to complete the park's Phase II installation of the permanent restroom, skateable art piece and the corner amphitheater,

Tax deductible donations for the "McGregor Neighborhood Park" may be made through the nonprofit, Friends of Santa Cruz County Parks (FSCCoP), 979-17th Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95062. As president of this organization, I am happy to provide information about park donations. You can write to me at: kate.minott@icloud.com. For general information about FSCCoP, visit: http://www.scparks.com/pdfs/friends_web.pdf



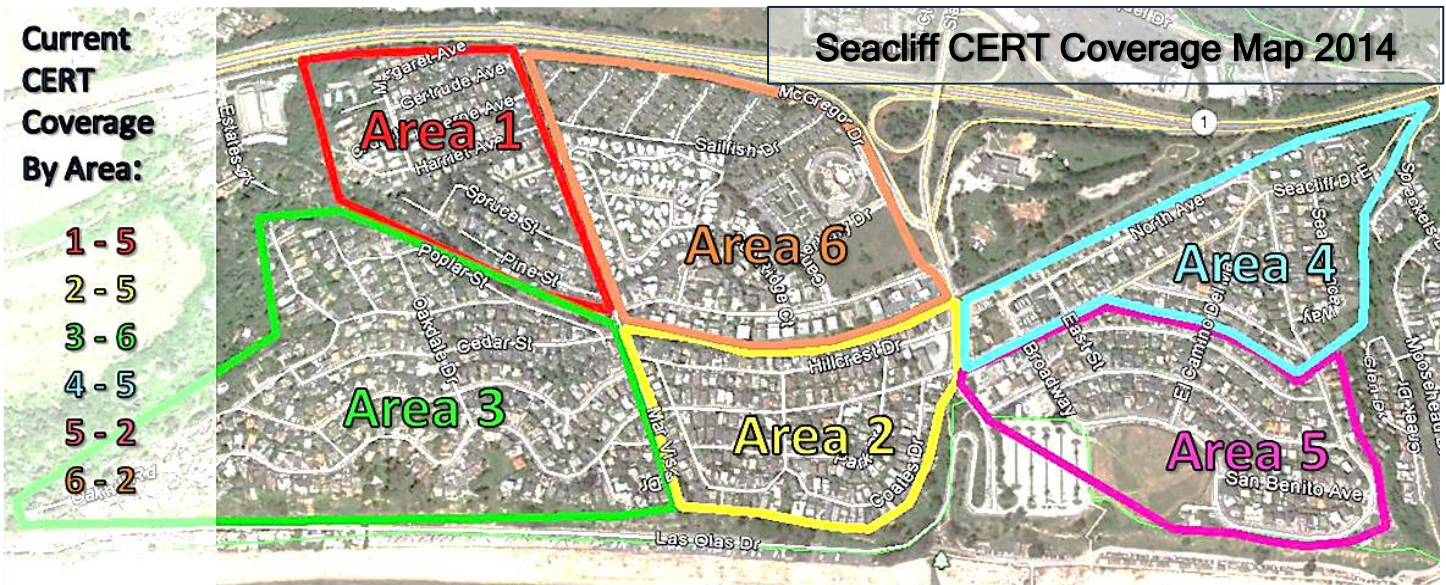
Seacliff CERT now 5 years Old and Growing!

Mary Edmund

The CERT Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their community. CERT trains volunteers in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team

organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members may assist others in their neighborhood following an event when professional responders are not immediately available. Training lasts about 20 hours, divided over 6 evenings. The training increases one's ability to safely help themselves, family and neighbors in the event of a crisis such as an earthquake, wildfire or severe storm.

Seacliff CERT was formed 5 years ago when members from the SIA Board of Directors took the certification training. Since then it has grown to 25 residents who are divided into 6 regions based on their home addresses:



Our goal is to provide communication to Seacliff residents by gathering information about the event from outside the community and sharing those facts within the community. We meet quarterly to build cohesion and provide refresher discussions.

We still need more trained individuals to evolve into a full CERT response group. Make a resolution to support your community this year. Contact Mary Edmund, CERT Coordinator at: medmund4@gmail.com for more information about joining Seacliff CERT.

All this sunshine can't last forever so get your garden ready now!

Remember... our Beautification Awards will start again in May. Twelve members of the Beautification Committee nominate homes throughout Seacliff that they feel have improved or continue to enhance our neighborhood. The committee then votes for their four favorites and the winners receive a \$25 gift certificate to Hidden Gardens Nursery and our award sign in their front yard.

We give four awards in June and, then again, four awards in August.

If you wish to nominate a home, please write to:

info@seacliffimprovement.org so we may include it.

Hopefully, we will get some rain and winter weather so our gardens will burst forth when they are supposed to!

Happy gardening!



Local Contacts

Have a Concern?	Contact	Contact Information
Noise	Santa Cruz County Sheriff	24 hour non-emergency: 471-1121
Abandoned Vehicle Please provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Color • Make and model • License plate number • How long it has been since it was last moved, if known 	Santa Cruz County Sheriff	http://www.scsheriff.com/Home/AbandonedVehicles.aspx 454-3139
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car Blocking the street • Parking in a no parking zone • Non-injury accidents 	California Highway Patrol	796-2160
Animal Control/Barking	Santa Cruz Animal Shelter	http://www.scanimalshelter.org/complaint_process
Code Compliance	Santa Cruz County Planning Department	http://www.sccoplanning.com/PlanningHome/CodeCompliance.aspx
Graffiti	Graffiti Hotline	427-0462

Seacliff Community Contacts

Santa Cruz County Offices	2nd District Supervisor, Zach Friend	454-2200
Aptos/LaSelva Fire District	Fire Chief, Jeff Terpstra	685-6690
Sheriff's Sub-Station Rancho Del Mar Center	Sergeant Ian Patrick	662-0690
Seacliff State Beach	Park Office	685-6442 or 685-6500
Aptos Chamber of Commerce	Executive Directors: John and Karen Hibble	688-1467



Seacliff Improvement Association
 TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2013
 January 1, 2013 thru December 31, 2013

BEGINNING CASH BALANCE
 (1/1/2013) \$24,026.62

INCOME:	
Donations	1,190.00
Membership	8,763.13
Human Race - Net	1,630.25
Other Income(Dog Parade)	79.17
TOTAL INCOME	11,662.55

EXPENSES:	
Web Host and Design	982.88
Newsletter Publishing	1,901.07
Postage	884.71
Upper Bluff Maintenance	21.59
Mini-Park Maintenance	2,111.50
Mar Vista/Park Strip Maintenance	160.00
Insurance Expense	563.00
Annual Dinner (Net)	1,175.03
Beautification Awards	175.00
Other Expenses	632.42
TOTAL EXPENSES	8,607.20

ENDING CASH BALANCE \$27,081.97

Dust off those shoes and get ready for the Human Race

Deb Murray

The association will participate again in the HUMAN RACE on Saturday, May 10, 2014. This is our **ONLY** fundraising event of the year. Mark your calendar now!

Our fundraising goal in 2014 is \$2,500 and if each of us donates \$10 or more, we will easily reach it. The money will be used for our activities and events including improving and maintaining our many Seacliff gardens.

The nearly five-mile run/walk will take place along West Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz. This race is a fun opportunity for our Seacliff community to come together to support our good works.

Remember, our target is \$2,500 or more!

To participate in the Human Race or to donate money to pledge, please contact me at: 465-4526 or by email at: dmurray@cruzio.com

Thank you for your support!



Many Seacliff neighbors have joined Nextdoor, a private social network for neighbors to build community connections. Aptos has several neighborhoods, including Seacliff, that have joined together to share information including:

- Neighborhood Events
- Babysitter recommendations
- Free Lemons
- Sharing a Beach Walk
- Seacliff Coyote Sightings

To learn more or join visit:
<https://nextdoor.com/>

Welcome New Members!

Linda Hovis
 Searidge Partners, LLC

We thank all 338 member households for your continued support!

To learn more or join the Seacliff Improvement Association visit:
<http://www.seacliffimprovement.org/>

Check out our Newsletter Archive:
<http://www.seacliffimprovement.org/sample-page/newsletters/newsletter-archive/>

Write to us at: info@seacliffimprovement.org

Seacliff Improvement Association
PO Box 533
Aptos, CA 95001-0533

Seacliff Improvement Association

Membership Application/Renewal

Annual Dues are \$20.00 (January—December)

Name(s): _____

Seacliff Address: _____

Mailing Address if different: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone Number: (_____) _____

E-mail Address (for SIA alerts & notification): _____

Please send my Quarterly Newsletter via E-mail: (check here)

The SIA does not give out membership lists or phone numbers except to a fellow member for valid membership purposes. If this policy does not provide sufficient privacy, please check one of the two choices following:

Consult me before giving out my address or phone number to any SIA member

Or

Do not give out my address or phone number to any SIA member

Please sign me up to volunteer for:

Annual Fundraiser

Maintaining Gardens

Community Emergency Response Team

Beautification Committee

=====✂=====✂=====✂=====✂=====

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