

Seacliff Improvement Association

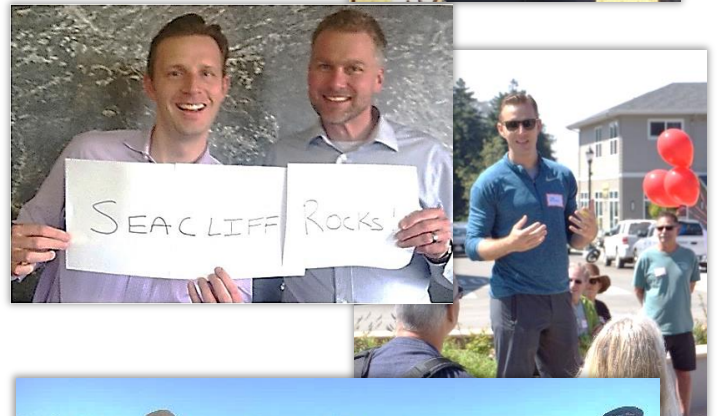
Fall 2024

Happy Trails, Zach!

As Santa Cruz County Second District Supervisor and Seacliff neighbor, Zach Friend, completes his term in office this year, the Seacliff Improvement Association offers him and his amazing staff, Allyson Violante, Forrest Revere, Kieren Kelly, and Patrick Mulhearn our heartfelt gratitude for their service and many accomplishments during Zach's three terms! He has set a high bar for his successors with his strategic vision, collaborations, and policies that improved our county and will help residents for years to come. While he worked at county, state and national levels on these achievements, Zach was always available to listen to local residents and participate in neighborhood events. For our association that included:

- ★ Serving as a judge in our 2012 Dog Parade even before taking office!
- ★ Hosting his first of many Seacliff community meetings at The Med, that later included, Sheriff Jim Hart and County Assistant CAO Matt Machado
- ★ Securing funding for Seacliff Village County Park and hosting our Seacliff Ice Cream Socials
- ★ Procuring broadband capability in the long-awaited Seacliff undergrounding project
- ★ Worked toward final funding of the Mar Vista bike and pedestrian bridge
- ★ Collaborated with stakeholders to ensure passage of Measure D in 2016 to repair Seacliff roads
- ★ Coordinated with multiple agencies in 2017 for the emergency replacement of the storm drain running through downtown Seacliff
- ★ Celebrated with our association at annual dinners including our 70th anniversary in 2018!
- ★ Strolled to Aptos Village with us in 2019
- ★ Zoomed into action in 2020 hosting informative community COVID meetings
- ★ Did we mention the SIA pizza parties?

The Seacliff Improvement Association wishes the best for Zach and his family as he steps into his next adventure!





District Improvements Coming This Year

**Zach Friend
Second District Supervisor**

As we enter the final month of the term there are a few exciting projects that are either just underway or will be underway soon that may be of interest to the district. Investments in local parks, telecommunications and community spaces - some funded through the voter-approved Measure K and others

privately or through partnerships - will all bring improvements to our community. Following is an overview of some of what is planned in the coming months in our district.

Hidden Beach

Hidden Beach Park is a gem in our community and, in the last few years, through a partnership that included private funding, community donations and County funding, we were able to significantly update and improve the play equipment at the park and increase accessibility. The remaining element was to construct a permanent restroom at the park to replace the single portable one and County Parks secured a grant for this from the California Coastal Conservancy. The grant covers preparation of the final plans and purchasing and installing a prefabricated restroom that includes flushing toilets and hand-washing sinks. The restroom will be installed soon and provide a wonderful new amenity for visitors to the park and beach. At the most recent Board of Supervisors meeting, we approved the final elements with installation planned by the end of February.

Aptos Village

The Aptos Village project continues with the next phase and includes three mixed-use buildings, consisting of seven structures located on both sides of Aptos Village Way. Each building will have a commercial ground floor with residential condominiums above. There will be 29 residential units for rent and roughly 15,000 square feet of commercial space built. It is heading toward the final elements of construction and is expected to open in early Spring of 2025.

Rio Del Mar Esplanade

The open lot on the Esplanade, which was purchased by the County, is expected to become a more holistic community space by the coming summer. The County Parks Department plans to create a community hub and host outdoor events such as food trucks, neighborhood gatherings and opportunities for vendors to showcase their items and also plan to incorporate the space into their list of locations for summer movie nights. The Parks Department will collaborate with local vendors, restaurants and other potential retailers to coordinate positive community activities. The property will be improved with non-permanent structures such as string lights, tables and games such as a concrete play table or bean bag toss as some potential examples. Parks also plans to generate income by making the space reservable for community events and by hiring a vendor to rent beach-oriented activity equipment or sell beach supplies during the times it is not used by other vendors or reserved.

Polo Grounds

Last year, we secured \$50,000 to completely rebuild one of the baseball fields at Polo Grounds. Our wonderful County Parks crew performed much of the work to replace the field that had not seen meaningful upgrades in years. The field includes new turf, new infield and pitcher's mound, a new warning track, new outfield fence and more. Through Measure K funding additional baseball field improvements and soccer field improvements are underway. Replacing the soccer field area will provide a great option for youth and adult leagues that use the field. Everything should be completed by the spring leagues.

Pinto Lake

Similar to the Polo Grounds soccer area, the fields at Pinto Lake are important gathering and recreation spaces for south county residents. The soccer fields are also showing signs of wear and could use upgrades. Additionally, there are limited options for families to sit and watch their kids play in a youth league. In this year's budget we are working to also redo the Pinto Lake soccer fields and add some small bleachers. Additionally, we are working with community partners on a skate feature at Pinto Lake that will offer a new south county option for skating!

Rio Del Mar Elementary Park

We have set aside funding for the replacement of the playground equipment and resurface the park adjacent to Rio Del Mar Elementary. This project would be in partnership with the Pajaro Valley Unified School District who are graciously sharing the costs of the park improvements with the County. While the entirety of the funds haven't quite been secured, it is anticipated that these upgrades will be made next summer.

Aptos Cell Tower

The new cell tower between Highway 1 and Aptos High School has officially come online, improving safety at the school and communications capabilities throughout the Highway 1, Freedom/Soquel corridor. Coverage and capacity both for the high school and surrounding neighborhood will increase and will extend toward Freedom Lake.

Freedom Lake

One project that I have been particularly interested in completing is a restoration project for Freedom Lake located next to Scott Park. It would be a multi-pronged process of vegetation management and then water remediation work with annual maintenance in partnership with local nonprofits. If you haven't been to the area, it is a beautiful and serene spot in south county that, when restored, would afford another important outdoor access opportunity for our community. This year we secured funding to begin this process and we are working to secure additional funding this year to complete the restoration process and return this amenity to the community.

This is a brief overview of just some of the exciting projects underway or happening soon. As always, I appreciate any feedback you may have on parks needs in our district or any other County issue. I'm maintaining regular updates on social media at www.facebook.com/supervisorfriend and you can always call me at 454-2200.

Seacliff State Beach Committee Report


Adele Eberhart and Rebecca Downing



Seacliff Beach committee reviews landscape element resilience options.

The association has formed a committee to represent the interests of our neighborhood and the wider community as California State Parks develops plans for the future of Seacliff State Beach. Our goals are to protect our beloved beach and preserve beach accessibility, day parking at both beach and bluff levels, and the open bluff field pathway walking access with potential expansion of the native species sanctuary gardens.

We have met three times this year, most recently to review the offerings in the Seacliff Resilience Landscape Element Survey that ended in November. After asking what visitors enjoy most at Seacliff and New Brighton State Beaches, strategies and methods for increasing coastal resilience were presented along with survey questions requesting opinions about them as they relate to each visitor's enjoyment of beach activities. Adaptions reaching from clifftops to offshore sections of the beaches were defined along with their purpose, advantages and disadvantages, and associated installation factors as shown below in the Seawall description:



Back Beach: Seawall

A concrete structure built along a portion of the coast, between the ocean and assets to be protected

PURPOSE
Reduce the risk of coastal flooding and erosion

ADVANTAGES

- Prevents shoreline and cliff erosion by wave action
- Provide protection of upland assets from wave action
- Has narrow footprint along shore

DISADVANTAGES

- Removes sediment source from coastal processes
- Scouring at the base of the wall can take place and eventually erode the remaining beach
- Alters patterns of sand movement along the shore
- Disrupts the natural ecosystem of the shoreline
- Fixes the shoreline location, eliminating natural variation over time

STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY
>>> High




CONSTRUCTION COST
>>> High

ADAPTABILITY
>

HAZARD REDUCTION
>>> High

ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT
>

REGULATORY FEASIBILITY
>



Seacliff State Beach Resilience Resources:

[Seacliff Resilience Website](#)

[Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks](#)

[Seacliff State Beach](#)

[California Coastal Conservancy Award for Seacliff State Beach Living Shoreline Planning Project](#)

One of the methods included in the Seacliff Resilience Landscape Element Survey.

The working group will meet again in January as we continue to focus on the committee's current goals. We will inform association members of any upcoming opportunities for participation in the planning process in 2025. We can always use more volunteers to help! Please contact us via email at: info@seacliffimprovement.org if you have questions or wish to participate.

Seacliff 2024 Pedestrian Survey and Aptos Village Stroll Survey Report

Rebecca Downing

One of the tenets of the Seacliff Improvement Association is to work with local government agencies to improve infrastructure for our community. This includes safe passage throughout our Seacliff neighborhood and to the rest of Aptos.

This summer we conducted a [survey](#) of our members and other Aptos residents to determine the interest in and need for safe pedestrian passage to Aptos Village. This follows an identical survey we conducted in 2017 that prompted our community stroll to the newly installed Aptos Village Green in 2019. Our goal was to support new and existing village businesses, bring attention to the challenges of walking to Aptos Village from surrounding neighborhoods, and demonstrate the importance of creating safe passages for pedestrians throughout Aptos.

The Village has grown since 2019 but not much has improved for pedestrians and, not surprisingly, respondents to our 2024 survey overwhelmingly expressed a desire to be able to walk and cycle safely from the surrounding areas into Aptos Village. Of the 304 respondents, 45% stated they traveled on foot or on a bicycle, an increase of 5% from our 2017 survey. The main hazards they encountered along the way can be remedied by road safety improvements to some of these routes when the Watsonville-Santa Cruz Multimodal Corridor Program is completed. For more information about the elements of this project, visit:

<https://www.soqueldrivebufferedproject.com/>

Two months after the [Aptos Village Stroll](#) the association hosted in August, we surveyed participants who registered for a post stroll survey to learn more about their opinions of the event. Most participated in the stroll because of safety concerns and to support the community, and they learned more about safety issues, the need for improvements, and transit options. Participants appreciated visits with representatives from the attending local agencies and enjoyed their participation at the stroll.

Prior to the stroll, almost half the respondents knew how to report walking/cycling hazards. Most are now more likely to report them using the link/QR code on the business card distributed at the stroll. Participants did not think it was very safe to walk or cycle in Aptos but have not changed their behavior since the stroll, even though almost half have been hit by or had a narrow escape with a vehicle. Everyone said vehicle speeding impacted their choices to walk or cycle and they would walk more if there were:

- Lower speed limits for vehicles
- Sidewalks
- Separated Bike lanes
- Roundabouts
- Crosswalks and flashing crosswalks at busy locations
- Pathways away from streets so people can move about without walking next to roads



Many have asked if we plan to host another stroll next year. The board is considering this along with other ideas for association activities in 2025. All of our projects require volunteers and we need more members to help us. We also need a Secretary on the board. If you are interested in participating, either by joining our board of directors or volunteering your time and talents, please contact us at: info@seacliffimprovement.org

Rail and Trail Update

Johanna Lighthill

The rail corridor has become a complicated and contentious issue. It's hard to get through the news or a media post without the subject coming up and, with so many comments, recognizing fact from opinion becomes a challenge. Hopefully, this summary of where we are, how we got here, how future plans could affect those living in Seacliff, will provide some clarity and opportunities for your participation.

In 2012, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, [SCCRTC](#), purchased the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, [SCBRL](#), for transportation purposes and the public envisioned a bike and pedestrian trail on the corridor. The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail, [MBSST](#), Master Plan included a multi-use trail adjacent to the tracks along the corridor. Approved in 2014, the project was divided into segments to be developed separately as funding became available. The SCCRTC also completed several passenger rail [studies](#) in 2015, 2019, and in 2021. The SCCRTC determined that passenger rail was a "preferred option" for the corridor.

Trail designs are currently in various stages of development. Seacliff includes [Segment 11](#) that begins in Capitola and continues to State Park Drive where [Segment 12](#) begins, travelling through Aptos Village to Rio Del Mar Boulevard. The SCCRTC is also currently studying high-capacity passenger rail service between Santa Cruz and Pajaro. The first task of the Zero Emission Passenger Rail and Trail Project [ZEPRT](#), is the Concept Report that defines the rail project including initial potential alignments, station locations, ridership estimates and preliminary cost estimates. The project also includes trail segments 13-20, spanning from Rio Del Mar Boulevard to Watsonville. The SCCRTC is now hosting an [online open house](#) that provides updates about conceptual alignments, potential station locations and amenities, quiet zones, funding, and more. Public comments are encouraged and are due by **December 20th**.

The study has identified challenges including fitting both rail and trail within the corridor. Near Seacliff, one plan for the Cabrillo Station along McGregor Drive may require shifting track alignment and/or elevating it. These changes could have significant impacts on Seacliff residents. In Aptos Village, parking in front of the Bay View Hotel and surrounding businesses will be significantly impacted to accommodate both rail and trail projects. A rail station in Aptos Village is proposed along Soquel Drive near the bus stop. The community has suggested various station locations and you may indicate any preferences via a questionnaire in the virtual open house.

Many share concerns about traffic, noise, safety, environmental impacts, and the potential costs of the project. Some of these issues may be addressed in the current report. If continuation is approved by the SCCRTC, the project will proceed with preliminary engineering and environmental documentation. Public engagement is essential to help guide future planning decisions.

To learn more about the project and to submit comments:

- Attend the upcoming [Informational Community Session](#) on December 16th and ask questions about grade crossings, noise impacts, and quiet zones.
- Visit the virtual [online open house](#) project overview, participate in the survey and submit comments, including trail alignments affecting Seacliff by December 20th.
- Submit comments or questions about the Project via email: zeprt@scrtc.org



Seacliff Merchants Association News

The Seacliff merchant's association, aka Seacliff Business Partners, was very happy with the participation and turnout in the Annual Seacliff Street Fair. Great music with local Steven Graves as well as the Joint Chiefs, excellent raffle prizes, a range of vendors, food and strong attendance were blessed with clear weather. This event continues to grow, and we enjoy the opportunity to highlight the Seacliff community each year and our thanks to our community for their support of all of our members.

We want to take this opportunity to thank the Seacliff Improvement Association for their support and involvement in pulling this event together. Thanks to all attendees and special thanks to the volunteer organizers Mary Cody, Marta Strock, Dan Holdren, Kelly Dillon, the SBP members and the SIA Board.



Have You Renewed for 2025?

If you received an email requesting payment of your 2025 dues of \$25, please use this [membership form](#) to renew. You can also renew [on our website](#). We have been able to make some noticeable improvements around our neighborhood this year thanks to your generosity and support. If you have an idea for a Seacliff improvement, please include it with your payment or send it to us at:

info@seacliffimprovement.org

Seacliff Improvement Association 2024 Treasurer's Report

Welcome New Members!

Margaret Mathes
Kathryn McCullough
Stella Moreno
Sandy and Connie Simon

**We thank all 281
member households for your
continued support.**

	YTD
Ending Balance from Dec 2023	\$22,940.13
INCOME:	
Membership Dues	\$4,912.71
General Donations	\$2,648.44
Annual Dinner	\$2,141.50
Beachgate Trail Donations	\$100.00
Wells Fargo Account Interest	\$2.05
America Walks Grant	\$1,500.01
TOTAL INCOME:	\$11,304.71

EXPENSES:	
Annual Dinner	\$2,055.87
Aptos Village Stroll	\$1,418.60
Beachgate Trail Expenses	\$1,045.00
Insurance	\$414.00
Membership Meetings Expenses	\$30.44
Membership Reimbursement	\$100.00
Mini Park	\$1,301.18
Newsletter	\$3,597.63
Nonprofit registration fees	\$20.00
Post Box Annual Rental	\$200.00
Seacliff Street Fair	\$404.78
Website Hosting, Security and Admin	\$1,778.64
Zoom Annual Subscription	\$159.90
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$12,526.04

ENDING CASH BALANCE: \$21,718.80

Beachgate Trail YTD Balance: \$2,878.42

Bylaw Changes Pass

The association approved changes to our bylaws to allow for online voting and to eliminate association assessments to read:

ARTICLE V - DIRECTORS

SECTION 2. Limitations of Directors. Individual Directors are not empowered to take public stands on community issues proclaiming representation of the Association's Board of Directors unless prior concurrence has been agreed upon by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. Before the expenditure of corporate funds or the incurring of any obligation in excess of \$2,500.00 in any single transaction shall be valid; such action of the Board must be approved by a majority vote at a general membership meeting or conducted online.

ARTICLE VIII - DUES AND ASSESSMENTS

SECTION 1. Entrance Fees. No entrance fee shall be charged for membership in the Association.

SECTION 2. Dues. Annual dues in such amount as shall be determined by the Board of Directors and approved by the general membership shall be payable by the members. Dues shall be payable at the beginning of the calendar year and failure to pay same within 60 days shall cause the member to lose good standing as provided in Article III, Section 6 hereof.

Learn more about the association including our bylaws, activities, and newsletter archive:
[Seacliff Improvement Association](#)

Our membership meets quarterly, and our board of directors meets on the second Tuesday of the month. All are welcome to join us. Contact us if you wish to attend: info@seacliffimprovement.org

Note: This is the last printed issue of the newsletter. Thanks for switching to online viewing saving trees and our dues!