

MINUTES  
Inverness Ridge Association Board Meeting  
July 10, 2021  
Via Zoom

Present: Ron Bennett, Sydne Bortel, Ken Drexler (for the road repaving discussion), Leah Light, Tamia Marg (for Firesafe discussion), Julie Merk, Michael Ongerth, Tim Stanton, Marcus Thygeson, David Wilson, Patty Wimpfheimer

Absent: Joe Burgess (honorary member 2021), Chris Eckert, Jennifer Howard

Minutes of May 8

Approved.

Treasurer's Report (as per Patty Wimpfheimer's email)

The balance as of May 7, 2021, was \$10,879.21. Income from May 7 to July 1 was \$1,776.29 (\$528.00 dues, \$1248.25 chipping fees, \$0.04 interest) with PayPal fees of \$8.75 the only expense. As of July 1, our balance is \$12,655.50. These figures do not reflect IGS chipping fees.

Firewise

David Wilson and Tamia Marg reported on the status of our Measure C project to clear roadside vegetation along evacuation routes. At this time 12 owners have given permission for work to proceed on their properties. However, the form used to obtain permission is quite onerous for homeowners in that it leaves them liable for damages due to actions of the county or by subcontractors, a potential issue for insurance because homeowners would not in fact have been responsible for the damage. One property owner has declined to sign the form. Similar issues have been raised by other groups and a new form has now been provided which does not have this problem. Those property owners who have already signed will be contacted and asked to sign the new permission form. Jordan Reiser has indicated that he will be responsible for obtaining permission to work on national park lands. It also appears that property owners on Lower Dover and outer Douglas will be amenable to having work done on their lots. The county has had some timing problems so work on the project won't actually begin until August. The good news is that it is now clear which parcels on Sunnyside are most in need of work and where signatures are most crucial. Messages to people who have signed and those who have yet to give permission will be sent by David Wilson, working with Jennifer Howard. Future projects for which we might apply for Measure C funds should include Drake's View Drive where trees are leaning into the roadway, causing potential sightline and emergency vehicle access issues. David Wilson zoomed yesterday with other Firesafe Marin leaders and learned that San Rafael has passed an ordinance that requires ornamentals (e.g., junipers, Italian cypress, bamboo) be removed within two weeks of notification by the fire department. In terms of escape routes, it doesn't matter whether a tree is flammable or not if it obstructs the passage of emergency

vehicles and the fire department will take appropriate steps to correct the problem even without owner approval.

### Paving Task Force

Ken Drexler reported that the 10-page paving plan will be sent to owners and residents via email as soon as the county approves a revised version. The plan details what is recommended, why it is recommended, and how the work will be funded. Tim Stanton added that the Paving Task Force has discussed holding a community meeting via Zoom. A subcommittee is planning this meeting that will hopefully take place sometime at the end of July or the beginning of August. Small meetings in living rooms sometime after the Zoom meeting will provide an opportunity for more discussion. The process for bringing the petition to a ballot measure will begin. We need signatures from 70% of the assessor-registered owners (who are not necessarily in residence). Ken Drexler noted that this is a county rule rather than a state regulation. Voting on the ballot measure, in contrast, is only for those registered to vote in our road division. Sydne Bortel asked whether the 70% figure refers to the number of parcels or to the number of persons listed with the county as owners and it was made clear that it is the latter that is relevant for us. Because county records sometimes say “et al.” without enumerating all property owners for a given parcel, names of some owners have to be tracked down using detective work!

### PRERAB

Mike Ongerth reported that our roads are getting “ragged” and that was a problem not just at the bottom of Drake’s View Drive. He plans to paint areas of the road to highlight those that are in trouble. Further deterioration is expected during the summer, especially for curves because they are subject to greater degradation that accelerates over time. He suggests driving to the upper part of Vision Road, Sterling, and Rannoch in Inverness; these are in Private Road Division 2 that has just finished a repaving project with conditions similar to ours. This would enable people to see a finished product that is similar to what we can anticipate. PRERAB still needs to decide whether to patch potholes this summer, but this is unlikely. Weed whipping by Inverness Garden Service has been completed and a bill has submitted to county. Little additional work, if any, will be done before the fall unless there is an emergency. Ditch clearing will be needed in the fall. The roads are in pretty good condition, especially the dirt roads, because we have had so little rain.

### Chipping

Tim Stanton noted that a chipping day sponsored by Measure C is coming up next week. There has been some confusion as to size of piles to be picked up, with emails specifying a size smaller than originally stated by Firesafe Marin; it is unclear what will actually happen—whether pretty much everything by the roadside will be chipped or not. There has also been confusion about registering for the Measure C chipping day. Some people have been told no registration is possible until the October chipping but it is not clear whether this is because the scheduled chipping day is full up or whether there is just a communication issue.

Michael Ongerth recommended that we tentatively add a September date for a second IRA-sponsored chipping event because the amount of material that needs to be cleared dictates that we should have another day. Ongerth raised particular concerns given the pile size issues. Julie Merk requested that no more chips be left on Douglas because there are already three piles there. Firesafe's next scheduled chipping day for us will take place on October 11th. Michael moved that we tentatively schedule a second IRA sponsored chipping day the week after Labor Day and that the final decision be made by email poll after we see the outcome of the Marin Firesafe chipping day this coming week; this motion was seconded and carried.

### Signage

The question of wording for possible new signage at the top of Drake's View Drive was revisited. The issues have to do with whether we want to post a sign there to try to restrict parking to enable fire department use for turning around, what the wording would be if so, whether trying to restrict parking to local residents was practical, whether we could enforce any parking restrictions we might want to impose, whether the sign would actually govern behavior of local residents and others who use the road, and how we might provide for alternative parking for access to the trails at the top of the ridge. There was consensus that issues of fire safety and parking both needed to be resolved and no action was taken. Possible alternative parking locations will be explored before proceeding further. Tim Stanton noted that parking in the two spaces at the top of the road seems to be reduced in recent weeks. This may be because the park has reopened, providing easier access and parking options.

Consensus was reached about a sign to replace the one we used to have at the bottom of Drake's View Drive. A motion was passed to have the sign read "Private Road" (line 1) "Residents and Guests Only" (line 2) and to place the sign at the site where North Marin Water District had its sign about the construction of the new water tank, i.e., up somewhat from the bottom of the road. This was deemed a good location because it will not obscure views of Sir Francis Drake as people head down the road. A second motion supported the design of the sign proposed by Ron Bennett. The sign will have boards for lettering that are 2 x 8 x 48 inches with rustic 4 x 8 posts and will be modeled after those at the Ahwahnee Lodge in Yosemite with bluestone at the base. At the May Board meeting it was also moved to include a removable sign that indicated red flag days. However, at today's meeting it was noted that people who live in the area know when red flag days occur and those who are not local may not even be aware what red flag days are. It was also noted that no provision had been made for who might be responsible for the notification process on a day-to-day basis. Someone suggested that we could post such a sign at the start of fire season and simply leave it up for the duration. Tim Stanton suggested that we defer a decision on red flag day alerts until a future meeting. David Wilson said that Firesafe could provide a red flag day signs if we wanted one and that it could be used in conjunction with the Firewise sign already in place.

### New Business

Tim Stanton reported that he had received emails from concerned residents about increasing foot and vehicle traffic in our neighborhood, said traffic ostensibly involving nonresidents. There has been some minor vandalism. With more airbnb activity, the question is whether the Inverness

Ridge Association can take steps to advise landlords about what they might do to inform tenants about neighborhood mores and emergency procedures. Michael Ongerth noted that he had prepared a one-page document for use with tenants of his cottage and volunteered to fine tune this to include information about emergency routes and phone numbers, speed limits, parking, etc. Julie Merk suggested that it might be possible to work directly with airbnb about these issues, especially if there were reports of repeat problems with particular landlords. Tim Stanton said that he knew of no such repeat complaints but had only heard about individual instances of problematic behavior. David Wilson specifically addressed the issue of loud parties that violate local norms. Sydne Bortel suggested that we compile a list of owners who rent and specifically ask them to post information, but we do not have such a list and would need to create one by researching ads and also checking county records if these were available. The county should have occupancy tax records but these may not be public. Tim Stanton will ask Sherry Stanton whether she has a list of renters. Mike Ongerth noted that persons other than renters need to be kept informed about practices and procedures on our hill—e.g., children and friends of owners who use homes on an occasional basis.

### Next Meeting

Date: September 11, 2021

Place: Light residence or Zoom session, depending on COVID status