

MINUTES
Inverness Ridge Association General Meeting
January 23, 2021
Via Zoom

[**Note:** a video recording of this meeting is available online at:
https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/9_hX74Kx1U1vbkaalnXM7-4QRuNC0V6nbZQ2cH7X8s3X5gK3JFpwQo4hD7l6dvFU._7fadZKow5_kxHBf
Access Passcode: #IRAonline2021]

Introduction: Tim Stanton

Tim Stanton welcomed the approximately 75 IRA members who had joined the meeting via Zoom, extending a special welcome to new residents who had joined our hillside community in 2020. New residents were invited to wave to us on screen and to send messages via chat with their names and local addresses. Tim also introduced Brandon Barragan who is Education and Diversity Outreach Coordinator at PRNSA and who ably assisted us with the technical details involved in taking the general meeting online. Tim then referred participants to the IRA website, noting that there is information available there about IRA, PRERAB (our road advisory board), fire safety, and highlighting members of the IRA board and PRERAB.

Treasurer's Report: Patty Wimpfheimer

As of November 14, 2020, the balance was \$7,111.49. Total income through January 22 was \$1,592.72 (\$550.00 in checks for dues, \$1042.67 via PayPal for dues, \$0.05 interest earned). Expenses were Square Space (\$72.00) plus \$33.83 billed by PayPal but not deducted as of this date. The current balance as of January 22 was \$8,632.21. [**Note:** Details for making payments via Paypal can be found on the IRA website Welcome page.]

Announcements: Jennifer Howard

- NMWD began construction of the 125K gallon concrete water tank at the top of Drakes View Drive in April of 2020. The scheduled completion was originally December of 2020, but they are not quite done. There was at least one delay due to Covid, and the current expected completion is to be sometime in February. The contractor has recently removed the board forms and the photo is a nice shot of the concrete. Work remaining includes staining the tank exterior, painting exterior components and site grading.
- We have had no problems with the road from the heavy equipment involved in the construction. We did have a lot of stress over the summer from sub-contractors that were smoking on site. However, there was no significant disruption from the construction other than the impact to the immediate neighbors who have at times put up with noisy crews and heavy equipment. We are very grateful to Wynne Furth and her family for their tolerance, their time and their considerable compromises that allowed the construction to go forward.

- Many residents participated in the chipper days in 2020 as we all worked to create defensible space. As Patti reported earlier, Firesafe Marin conducted a free curbside chipping program with Measure C funding. The Inverness Ridge Association also conducted and subsidized a chipping program with significant participation. In 2021 IRA is planning to continue our own program as the Firesafe Marin program is limited and we want to help facilitate defensible space throughout our community. Details will be shared later this spring.
- The approximately 125 cone-shaped burn piles on the Inverness Ridge Trail between Sunnyside and DVD are gone. Those piles sat there for a few years, making us all nervous that the park was going to attempt a controlled burn. Thanks to the persistence of PRE residents, Bonnie and Maury Wolohan, the piles were not burned as planned but chipped. The Park Service, under the supervision of the Fire Management Officer Greg Jones, hired a crew that brought in a chipper on tracks and they managed to chip it all in three days after planning for 10! We cannot thank Bonnie and Maury enough for insisting that burning this close to our homes was a bad idea and for facilitating this great outcome.

PRERAB Update: Randy Merk

Randy explained that our roads belong to us as property owners and are not maintained by Marin County. We have 15 private roads, totaling about six miles, with 46% paved and 54% unpaved. The only road used by all residents is Drake's View Drive. Funds for annual maintenance, about \$60,000, come from our annual property taxes. Of this amount, the breakdown is about 36% maintenance and repair of dirt roads, 34% maintenance and repair of paved roads, 30% vegetation management for fire prevention and sightline preservation, and 1% miscellaneous. Randy noted that if we are able to move forward with the road repaving project, the percentage of the budget for repair and maintenance of paved roads should decrease, leaving more for other items in the future. Scheduling of road maintenance work requires attention to weather conditions. For the 2020-21 year, the following work has been done or is projected. Drainage improvement, ditch clearance, and inspection and repair of culverts takes place just before the rainy season (done). Dirt road sections with wash-boarding and deep potholes are scraped and graded early in the rainy season because the road surface needs moisture to bind (done). Potholes on paved roads are fixed after the rainy season; repaving requires heat/dry conditions. Weeds are cut and road edges are firescaped after the spring growing season in late June or July. A list of road problems and contact persons was presented. The list is as follows:

- In the event of a downed power line on the road, call 911 and PGE (or other appropriate utility).
- Call 911 in the event of a downed tree blocking the road. The fire department will make the road passable for emergency vehicles and evacuations. Tree removal/clean-up is the responsibility of the homeowner.
- Call a PRERAB member to report (a) drain blockage, standing water, or flooding; (b) landslides or newly eroded road edges; (c) a downed tree with the road still passable; or (d) safety issues such as new potholes or gullies, impaired sight lines, hazardous trees, etc. A list of PRERAB members may be found on the IRA website.

Paving Task Force Update: Ken Drexler

Ken gave a brief description of the status of the private roads in Paradise Ranch Estates. First off, they are old and deteriorating. Drakes View was last paved in 1993 and the road surface is now almost 28 years old. (It was predicted to last only 15 years.) In March 2018, the leaders of the Inverness Ridge Association and of the Road Advisory Board, Tim Stanton and Mike Ongerth, named five owners and residents in Paradise Ranch Estates to a “Paving Task Force” and asked it to propose on how to deal with our aging paved roads. The members of the Task Force are Tim and Mike plus John Levy, Ron Bennett, Julie Merk, Jennifer Howard and Ken. Randy Merk has worked with us on cost estimates.

The Task Force has met 21 times and has prepared its recommendation for repaving of Drakes View, the road we all use to get to our homes, plus short portions of other roads in Paradise Ranch Estates. The only missing item is an estimate of the cost of the work. (The figures we have from ILS Associates, the engineering firm we have worked with, are 18 months old.) Once we have updated cost figures – which are expected in the next month or so – the Task Force will be distributing the Project Plan to all Paradise Ranch Estates residents via email, snail mail, and hand delivery; we will then have a Zoom meeting to explain the rationale for the plan. Residents and owners are invited to send questions once they have read the Project Plan so that these can be addressed either individually or at the Zoom meeting.

After the Project Plan has been distributed, the Task Force will contact all residents in Paradise Ranch Estates to ask for their support of the Plan and a petition to the County asking it to set an election to approve a parcel tax pay for the work. (The County requires that this petition be signed by 70 percent of the owners in Paradise Ranch Estates.)

Once the petition is presented to the County and approved (a process that takes several weeks), an election will be held using a mail-in ballots. If two-thirds of those who vote (voters are people registered to vote at PRE addresses) approve, the project will proceed through a public bid process and the paving. The plan will require us to take out a 10-year loan from the County, to be repaid by a new parcel tax. A public bid process expected to take about 3-4 months will occur after a favorable vote and actual work would be expected to begin about 1.5 months later.

Firewise Committee Update: David Wilson and Tamia Anderson

David reminded us that the 1995 Vision fire consumed 40 homes, that the Woodward fire came perilously close to residential areas, and that we have only a 20% chance predicted for a normal rainfall in 2021. In the past, we have had money from dues and matching funds for managing defensible space, chipping programs, and managing buffer zones with park properties. Our vegetation management surcharge has lapsed but because of County Measure C, passed in the spring of 2020, we will be assessed about \$200/year per parcel for county-wide vegetation management. The goal is for us to have sufficiently well-developed projects to present to the county for Measure C (Marin Wildfire Protection Authority) funding. We are also a Fire Wise community, potentially important for insurance purposes and making us eligible for third-party grants.

Tamia described the aftermath of the 1995 Vision fire: regrowth after fire damage, pitch canker

and drought negatively impacting the health of trees, considerable vegetation near our escape routes. Maintaining our escape routes is a priority for emergency vehicles and evacuation safety. Work has been carried out by PRNS and PGE to improve the vegetation situation along Sunnyside but more needs to be done. At this time, we have received word from Jordan Reeser of Marin Fire that a proposal to carry out vegetation management along roadsides has been tentatively approved for Measure C funding, but specifics about scope, timing, and funding arrangements are at this time unknown. Permission from landowners will be needed for some of this work but hopefully will be forthcoming—having clearance and management done through external funding sources is a boon as such work can cost in the neighborhood of \$50,000/acre!

Nominations and election of IRA Board members: Leah Light

Our By-Laws specify that we should have a minimum of 9 board members and a maximum of 16. At present we have five continuing board members who were elected in 2020 for two-year terms: Chris Eckert, Jennifer Howard, Michael Ongerth, Marcus Thygesen, David Wilson. Seven board members were elected in 2019 and their terms are up: Ron Bennett, Sydne Bortel, Helen Chapman, Leah Light, Julie Merk, Tim Stanton, Jon Wurtzel. Helen Chapman, who also served as our treasurer, is retiring from the board to spend more time with her grandchildren. We are grateful for her service and envious of the pleasures of being with grandkids! The names of the remaining six members elected in 2019 were placed in nomination and the nomination was seconded. In addition, Patti Wimpfheimer, who has recently begun to keep track of our finances and will continue on as our treasurer, was nominated and her nomination was also duly seconded. These seven nominees were elected for two-year terms.

Emergency procedures: Jennifer Howard

Jennifer Howard showed a video that explained how to open the lock in place at the end of Sunnyside that guards the fire road leading to the Limantour Road. The trick is to enter the 0911 code and to push up before pulling down! The emergency route from Douglas to Laurel is marked but that route is on private property and residents were reminded not to use that route except in the case of actual emergencies. It is also possible to get to Sir Frances Drake Boulevard from Douglas at #7 but that route is not marked and should not be used except in emergency situations.