

SEACLIFF IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Quarterly Newsletter - Summer 2009

Upcoming Events:

Sat. October 3, 2009

Monte Festival

1:00 pm. to 10:00 pm, Activities & Fireworks, Seacliff State Beach
<http://www.monte-foundation.com/>

Sat. October 17 , 2009

SIA Annual Banquet Dinner

6:00 pm

The SIA Annual Membership Banquet Dinner will be held at the Seascape Golf Course Clubhouse.

Save the date!.



Summer in Seacliff

From the cool foggy mornings to the warm late afternoons there is certainly summer in the air in Seacliff! A number of our SIA members and other fellow Seacliff neighbors, kicked off the summer in fine fashion, participating in Aptos' "World's Shortest Parade". If you missed it this year, be sure to check it out next year! Come join us!

In this issue we have more about the ongoing push by the county to rezone a portion of the "Poor Clares" property for "High Density" housing. We join with our Seacliff neighbors in protesting and fighting against this, as it would severely impact Seacliff.

On a lighter note, we are pleased to present our Seacliff Beautification Awards showcasing those who have worked hard on their homes and yards and help make Seacliff a wonderful place to live and vacation.

Do look inside for more Seacliff happenings!

Welcome To Our New Members!

Please extend a warm welcome to:

Bruce Brinkman, Tom and Priscilla Fisher, Robert Fitzgerald & Suzanne Haley, Sandy Henn, Wendi Knapp & Thamh Ly, Audrey and Jacob Miller, Ralph and Maureen Porras, Janet A. Schmetz

We are looking forward to seeing you at our meetings and events!

Letter to the County Board of Supervisors —Niki Derby

On June 25th, twenty-four Seacliff residents joined me in sending this letter to the Supervisors regarding the rezoning of the Poor Clares property. We put up a good fight, but the supervisors need to know the history of Seacliff community involvement and why this issue is not finished. So many of you contributed to the effort, and we thank you so much! Much more will need to be done once it goes to the Coastal Commission . . . we'll keep you informed. Below are the letter's main points:

Community Involvement

The Seacliff community is very aware of how fortunate we are to live in this particular spot in Santa Cruz County, and this is why we take the California Coastal Commission's mission so seriously. We want to protect, conserve, restore, and enhance the local environment of the California coastline and ensure prudent use by us for future generations.

The Seacliff community has been actively involved in proposed projects for many years.

- In 1988, the community opposed the project "Wingspread," which was finally defeated.
- The proposed strip mall on McGregor in 1998 resulted in the Seacliff Village Plan outlined below.
- Beginning in 1999, the community rallied behind the Seacliff group, Seacliff Needs A Park. After years of intensive work, a 1-1/4 acre park was approved by the Board. Although less than the 3-acre park hoped for, we look forward to working with County staff in the coming years to realize this much-needed park.
- In 2000-2001, the community opposed the Marine Sanctuary Center on the bluff above Seacliff State Beach. We believe our opposition factored in a Santa Cruz site being selected.

Throughout our recent history, we thought the Board of Supervisors supported our vision of conserving and protecting our village. That is why the Board approved the Seacliff Village Plan!

Total Cost

Some of you expressed concern about County monies being budgeted to further Dominican's plans for this property. We are too! The \$25,000 is not needed! You, the County, have already spent much more than that in developing the Seacliff Village Plan. The Seacliff Village Plan was prepared by the community and Planning Department staff to establish land use, circulation, and design standards for the Seacliff Village Plan Area.

- In 1999, Planning Department staff met bi-weekly with a 25-member citizen committee to discuss the village plan process and to get their recommendations.
- In September, October, November, 1999 and in January 13 and 14, 2000, staff held community meetings to discuss the Seacliff Village Plan.
- In May, 2001, after a presentation by staff, the Board approved the draft plan in concept.
- Staff time used to present final plan to Coastal Commission.
- Staff time used to make Coastal Commission's suggested modifications.
- In May 2003, Board approved Seacliff Village Plan.
- In July 2003, Coastal Commission certified the Plan.

Countless hours spent by County staff over a five-year period must have had a high price tag. Only you have the authority to be fiscally responsible and ask, "What was the total cost"?

In addition, in 2003, the Board approved \$164,788 for Bowman and Williams to develop the Seacliff Streetscape Plan. Landscape architect, Michael Arnone, developed an extensive streetscape plan for our village. Two or three community meetings were held by Public Works to present the streetscape plan. To date, nothing has been done.

Conclusion

- Community Involvement: I am sure you realize from what you have experienced over the last four months that this issue is not over. The Seacliff community cares deeply about protecting this little village from arbitrary development. We want to save Poor Clares for the “right” kind of development.
- It is short-sighted on your part to not see the potential value of Poor Clares to facilitate visitor influx into the Aptos area, bringing tourist dollars to local businesses. Yes, it may take a few years, but with your action, it will be lost forever.
- Just last week, the Coastal Commission approved a boutique hotel in the village. The owner/developer was required to follow the Seacliff Village Plan and County protocol. He had meetings with Seacliff residents and followed the Planning Department’s rules and requirements. Why did he have to follow the County process and you did not?
- Cost: Another \$25,000 will be added to the already high cost of developing the Seacliff Village Plan. Many of us feel this has been a waste of County dollars and all our years of involvement, if you can arbitrarily change the Seacliff Village Plan without the proper community meetings/input. Why did we fight for years to see that this area was protected for residents and visitors alike?

In conclusion, we hope you can understand why this issue is not finished, and why Seacliff residents will continue to fight to preserve our village for future generations.

Poor Clares Rezoning Update —Bill Eaton

A group of Seacliff residents calling themselves “Save Our Seacliff” has retained attorney Bill Parkin to challenge the rezoning of the Poor Clares property. The primary objection to this rezoning proposal revolves around the amount of traffic that will be generated, especially at the intersection of State Park and Sea Ridge, and the loss of future visitor accommodations for Seacliff. From the outset, the Board of Supervisors was expected to approve the rezoning of 4 acres for high density housing. While they are required to plan for housing, there is no specific requirement that it be located at the Poor Clares site.

Unexpectedly, the Supervisors increased the number of units from 80 to 100, added a “senior housing” restriction and dropped the rezoning of the 5 acres for a medical building, although the latter will likely be back for future approval. These changes weren’t contemplated in the environmental work leading up to the rezoning vote. So this omission calls into question the relevance and validity of the environmental work already done. Additionally, the traffic report critique that our neighborhood paid for highlights very substantial deficiencies contained in the traffic report obtained by the County. So there are real, well founded, objections that will get presented as part of a judicial review of the whole rezoning process.

What about the acceptability of senior housing? My answer is why would we accept senior housing without valid environmental work and the configuration of the buildings? That is even more important since the number of possible units has increased from 80 to 100. Our attorney feels that the senior housing restriction is discriminatory and, therefore, would ultimately be unenforceable. The units then revert to being unrestricted units.

No one is saying that affordable housing should not be built. But, this location was identified as an ideal spot for visitor accommodations and the County recently sacrificed another site designated as visitor accommodations for affordable housing. Oddly, the County cited the availability of future visitor services at the Poor Clares property as the rationale for the other site being converted to affordable housing. So the affordable debate just obscures the really substantial problems inherent with this location and the County’s disregard for the future of Seacliff Village. We need affordable housing, but we need a good economic base in Seacliff, which is based mostly on tourism and services. People who live here need not only housing, but jobs as well.

Meanwhile we have presented our objections, including detailed ones relating to traffic, so as to preserve our right to seek judicial review. Our lawyer filed the necessary papers to start that process on July 17, 2009. The case is very strong because we got an early start in identifying the truly valid defects and inadequacies of the rezoning proposal.

Now we are soliciting money from the neighborhood to fund the challenge. This effort is very worthwhile because we are still in a position to win something better for our neighborhood. I hope you will choose to support this effort by sending in a check payable to Seacliff Improvement Association.

SIA President's Letter (Summer 2009) —Mona Daniels

This has been on busy year for the Seacliff Improvement Association and it's not over yet!

As a result the SIA Newsletter has several very important news articles for you. I encourage you to read it through and get involved with your neighborhood. Already this year we have been involved with the Flea Market, Cement Ship Festival and the Fourth of July Parade. Your organization also maintains the Seacliff Gardens, the Mini-Park garden and is heavily involved with the upper bluff native plant restoration in Seacliff State Park. SIA supports C.E.R.T. (emergency training preparedness), graffiti abatement and our own SIA beautification awards.

The SIA website is undergoing an update thanks to Ken Dawes, the Web Mechanic. Having a Paypal account in the near future will facilitate annual dues payment. Convenient links to other area web sites are also contemplated.

The splinter group S.O.S. (Save Our Seacliff) has challenged the rezoning of the Poor Clares property. SIA will provide some funding for this effort after an overwhelming 13:1 vote of the membership to do so. The detrimental effect of traffic generated as a result the rezoning is the obvious and primary issue.

It is my privilege to serve our organization and I encourage you to get involved, also. No one can do everything but everyone can do something. What can you contribute to the betterment of our neighborhood and community at large? We'd love the hear from you.



Seacliff Cert —Mary Edmund

Be prepared to help your family and neighbors in the event of a disaster. SIA is organizing Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). CERT is designed to help neighborhoods prepare for effective disaster/emergency response through training and pre-planning. Classes are scheduled this fall, 3 hours one day a week for 6 weeks. If we have 10 people interested we may have our own Seacliff class! Please, contact Mary Edmund at phone: 475-2633 or email: medmund4@yahoo.com for more information.

St. John's Moves into Seacliff —Ray Wolfe

The Episcopal Church of St. John's has moved into their new site at the corner of Canterbury & McGregor. Many walked from the old site on Depot Hill in Capitola to the new Seacliff location bringing their parish cross, pulpit bible and 120 years of memories. Their first Sunday service was on the 21st of June with an Open House with hot dogs, chips and potato salad. They are now all moved in to their offices, hospitality and worship spaces, stop by.

St. John's mission foundation is to be a welcoming, inclusive community that looks to the life and ministry of Jesus to better understand and enter into the heart of God. Their motto is "All are Welcome in This Place".

Sunday services are at 8 9 and 11 a.m. Daily evening prayer is at 5:30 pm

For more information visit <http://www.sjlife.org/>



Mini-Park Update —Johanna Lighthill

We still need help! Summer has arrived and weed growth has slowed, but our little park could still use some TLC! Able hands are needed to occasionally to weed, prune, and water. If you can spare an hour or two each month, and would like to join us oceanside, please email me at jjmmlight@comcast.net. I'll notify you of upcoming volunteer opportunities. Afraid of commitment? No worries. Come when you can and we'll be happy to see you! With enough interest, we hope to add more plantings in the fall.

"Many hands make light work." —John Heywood

June Beautification Awards —Niki Derby

The first of this year's awards were given out in June. The committee will pick four more winners in August. Winners receive a \$25 gift certificate from Hidden Gardens Nursery and a "beautification" sign in their front yard. If you know of a home that deserves the award, you can send your nomination to me at nikiderby@baymoon.com. Happy gardening everyone!



Therese and Alex Seibert, with son, Lucas 527 Cedar – After buying their home in 2004 and moving from San Francisco, they realized that the house was in need of a major renovation. Take a look at the "before" and "after" pictures! They were sure they wanted a "green" remodel and Boa Constructor (Buildingnaturally.com), the building contractor, was just the company to do it. They used as much of the existing wood as possible, recycled wood from an old house in Pescadero, or used sustainable harvested wood. Insulation is cotton (made from old blue jeans). Full solar takes care of their electric and hot water needs. They used all local materials and workers, instead of shopping the internet. Great job, Seiberts!



Betty Waite 206 Oakdale – This has been a family home for at least 35 years. Betty purchased the home from her parents 3-1/2 years ago, moving from Scotts Valley. The front yard was nothing but ivy and a dilapidated fence. Just look at it now . . . grass, flowers, waterfall and stream, trees, and a new fence. New slate steps and a full drip system complete the remodel, much done by Betty, with help on the bigger projects.

Mary & Steven Gibbs Seacliff Drive, bordering State Park upper bluff. Neighbors along this area took it upon themselves to beautify the border across from their homes. Years ago, Sally Boggini started it all by planting an area across from her house. Over the years, other neighbors have participated by extending the planting area or helping water. Mary and Steve bought their home in 2005, and shortly after continued to expand the flower/plant border. Each year, they dug up the weeds and planted a larger area. Mary says she's finally finished extending the area. Now she'll spend her time maintaining the long strip that she has created. The street is heavily traveled, so it's a pleasure for all to see – both residents and visitors alike!



Theresa Martinelli-Jones 336 Hillcrest Theresa bought this little cottage about 12 years ago from her mother. She commutes over the hill or works from home, but any spare time is spent in her garden. This tiny front yard now has rugosa roses (great for our coastal area), alstroemeria (Peruvian lily), and much more. On a personal note, take a look at the petunias on her front porch. I drive by her home quite often and even in winter, the petunias are fantastic. I asked her secret. That pot of petunias is four years old; she uses Safer organic spray, Osmocote fertilizer and it's on a drip watering system. She must have another secret, because most petunias don't look that good in winter! Theresa, tell us, please!

**The 13th ANNUAL
SEACLIFF FLEA MARKET
May 16th, 2009
Sponsored by the
Seacliff Improvement Association**

A BIG THANK YOU to all of the volunteers who worked to support our MOST IMPORTANT COMMUNITY FUND-RAISER the Annual Seacliff Flea Market (held May 16, 2009).

This year we had sales of \$2,319.50 which was comparable to the prior year despite less merchandise to sell this year. Many Seacliff neighbors stopped by to thank us for our efforts!

Special thanks to my co-chairs Steve Gibbs and Bill Eaton for their work on every stage of the FM process (collection of donations, setup, selling and tear down), and to our treasurer, Lou Wolfe--- for collecting and counting the money we earned! Mona Daniels --- a big thank you for all of your help too!!

See you next year, June 19th, 2010!
Warm regards,
Deb Murray
Seacliff Flea Market, Co-chair

**Your Next Episode of
“The Undergrounding”
—John Horvath**



Each episode of a television soap opera brings a little bit of news, usually bad. Each SIA newsletter brings a little bit of news regarding the Seacliff Village wire undergrounding project. But unlike in a soap opera, the news here is good.

The Seacliff Village undergrounding project includes about thirteen utility poles along State Park Drive and the alley behind Center Avenue. In my last article Ellen Pirie provided the following update: *“Real property staff is preparing paperwork to officially offer the (Center Avenue alley) property owners nominal values for access rights. They hope this process will be completed within two months (March '08). If there are property owners not willing to deal with the County, then it will take longer. Also, a meeting was held last month (December '08) at Seacliff Inn and was attended by three property owners.”*

Since that time, Santa Cruz County has succeeded in obtaining the required access rights from the Center Avenue alley property owners. Signed documents were received by AT&T, the “trenching agent” for this project. In that capacity, AT&T’s engineering right-of-way group is collecting preliminary trench designs, called “trench packages”, from PG&E and Comcast that they will combine with their own design and put out for bids.

So hang in there. The wheels of government may be turning slowly, but they really ARE turning.

A Note from Your Editor:

Due to Space limitations, the SIA Treasurer’s Report has been omitted from the print version of the SIA newsletter. The report will be available in the emailed and online version of the newsletter Please visit our website, www.seacliffimprovement.org, to download the Summer 2009 pdf version of the newsletter. We apologize for the inconvenience.



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**Aptos Chamber Annual Dinner
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Cocktails, Appetizers and silent auction**

**September 25th 6:00pm
at the Seascape Resort
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Community Contacts

Sheriff's Sub-Station Rancho Del Mar Center	Sergeant Robin Mitchell	662-0690
Abandoned Vehicle Program (vehicles abandoned on street over 72 hrs.)	Abandoned Vehicle Abatement Desk (need location, color, make, model & license plate)	454-3139
Aptos/LaSelva Fire District	Fire Chief, Tom Crosser	685-6690
Santa Cruz County Offices 701 Ocean St., Santa Cruz, 95060	2nd District Supervisor, Ellen Pirie	454-2200
California State Parks	Sector Superintendent, Pajaro Coast Sector - Kirk Lingenfelter Seacliff Supervising Ranger - Kevin Best (dogs off-leash, dead animals, etc.) Seacliff Park Maintenance Worker II - Jeffrey Long	429-2881 685-6442 475-0164
Aptos Chamber of Commerce	Executive Director, John Hibble Executive Director, Karen Hibble	688-1467
Graffiti Abatement Project	Sara Winterburn	427-0462

TREASURER'S REPORT		2nd QUARTER 2009	30-Jun-09	
By Lou Wolfe				
OPENING CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE				\$5,226.87
REVENUE:				
	Interest		0.71	
	Donations		55.00	
	Memberships		615.00	
	Advertising		120.00	
	Flea Market Gross amount		2,319.00	
	Cement Ship Festival Gross		527.40	
	TOTAL			\$8,864.98
EXPENSES:				
	Flea Market Expenses		(821.56)	
	Printing		(343.46)	
	Postage		(74.69)	
	Liability Insurance		(1,232.25)	
	Miscellaneous Expenses		(270.00)	
	Wittmer/Parken Legal Fees		(2,000.00)	
	Beautification Awards		(100.00)	
	Upper Bluff		(81.39)	
	Traffic Report		(1,360.00)	
	Cement Ship Table rental		(75.00)	
	Save Our Seacliff Buttons		(191.00)	
	TOTAL			(6,549.35)
ENDING CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE				\$2,315.63
SAVINGS BALANCE @ 3.10% MAT: 2/09		Balance @1.15	Mat: 11/20/09	\$14,649.78
TOTAL CASH ON HAND				\$16,965.41
MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM FOUNDATION GRANT				
Receivable				
	Bal Receivable (Prior Year)			\$331.10
	Grant of 9/14/07			3,000.00
EXPENSES				
	Deposit Paid for Plants			(1,500.00)
	Central Coast Wilds Remainder contr.			(\$1,500.00)
	Signs for Test Plot			(\$25.94)
	Top Soil New Planting area		1/4 acre	(\$109.08)
	Grant Balance at 6/30/09			\$136.68
Accounts Payable at		6/30/2009		
	County Parks Contribution			\$816.00
	Other Accounts Payable			0
	Total Payable			\$816.00

Seacliff Improvement Association

Membership/Renewal Application

Annual Dues are \$15.00 (January–December)

Name(s): _____

Seacliff Address: _____

Mailing Address if different: _____

Telephone Number: _____

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

Please send my Quarterly Newsletter by E-mail:

The SIA does not give out membership lists or phone numbers except to a fellow member for valid membership purposes agreed on by the SIA Board. However, if this policy does not provide sufficient privacy, please check either of the two choices following:

- Do not give out my address or phone number to any SIA member
- Consult me before giving out my address or phone number to any SIA member

Please sign me up to volunteer for:

- Annual Flea Market Donations/Setup/Sales
- Maintaining Gardens
- Event Planning & Setup
- SIA Communications Committee
- Seacliff Beach Upper Bluff Restoration
- Utilities Undergrounding Committee

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