



Town of Fairfax Open Space Committee Meeting

Tuesday, December 5, 2023 | 7:00 p.m.
In-person at the Fairfax Women's Club
46 Park Road, Fairfax, CA 94930



Fairfax Open Space Members

Susan Pascal Beran, Chair
Jack Judkins, Vice Chair
Michael Ardito, Co-Secretary
Ruth Horn, Co-Secretary
Christine Kelly, Treasurer

Geoff Bolt
Teddy Catrini
Heather Duplaisir
Joe Franaszek
Corina Karr, Youth Member (ex officio)

Preamble / Land Acknowledgement

The Fairfax Open Space Committee acknowledges that we are located on the un-ceded ancestral lands of the Coast Miwok people of present-day Marin County. We honor with gratitude the land itself and all of its ancestors: past, present and emerging.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

1. **Call to Order at 7 p.m. / Roll Call / Approval of Agenda / Appointment of Timekeeper for this meeting** – Chair Susan Pascal Beran called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Members Present: All members present and quorum achieved.

Guests included: Fairfax Town Council Liaison Chance Cutrano; Former Fairfax Mayor Frank Egger;; Former Fairfax Town Council Member John Reed; Former FOSC Member Pamela Meigs; Former FOSC Member Linda Novy; Former FOSC Member Jane Richardson Mack; Myron Walters; Michelle Simonson.

2. **Wall Property status, fundraising and meetings**— (discussion and possible actions). The Marin Open Space Trust (MOST) almost has a web page ready to launch regarding the fundraising for the Wall property. The fundraiser with FOSC is scheduled for Saturday night, January 20, 2024 at Deer Park Villa. Susan Pascal Beran provided the draft of a flyer/fact sheet about the Wall property that has a labyrinth logo that represents the labyrinth near the top of the Wall property. Wall property neighbor Myron Walters reported that there is a white Mercedes driving the fire road and off-road on the Wall property around the peak daily creating damage. There are also e-bikes creating additional damage. Town Council Member Chance Cutrano indicated Town officials are aware of this situation and have requested that this damaging behavior stop. Jack Judkins moved and Heather Duplaisir seconded the motion to empower the Acquisition Subcommittee and the Outreach & Fundraising Subcommittee to be able to meet and make time-critical decisions on behalf of the full FOSC and communicate with Bill Long and MOST during the December holidays and early January prior to the January 20 fundraising event.
3. **Status of 615 Oak Manor Drive and Special Subcommittee Update** (discussion and possible action). Former Fairfax Mayor Frank noted a number of issues related to the property around 615 Oak Manor Drive. These issues included: (a) a 1991 court-ordered agreement settling litigation between the Town and the Fairfax Hills development where the parties agreed to specific limits on the property's development; (b) a five year period specified for developer Leighton Hills of the Fairfax Hills Development to secure the subdivision of 50 acres of the property, providing notice to potential buyers of the limitations of the agreement; (c) the geotechnical study of the land has not been available for any of the current discussions of the land there; (d) residents of the land around 615 Oak Manor Drive report that the land is unstable, as demonstrated by the two houses that slid off their foundation there in the 1980s.

4. **Creation of Friends of Fairfax Open Space Membership and Fundraiser** (discussion and possible action). Christine Kelly provided an outline about the “Friends of FOSC Membership” donation levels:
 - **Skyline Member** is \$834 per month or a one-time donation of \$10,000 receives the benefits of Trail & Members plus an appreciation dinner with FOSC. Donations over \$30,00 also receive a tree planted in their name with a memorial plaque beside it.
 - **Mountain Member** is a \$250 per month or a one-time donation of \$3,000 and receives the benefits of Trail Members plus a guided tour of the Wall property by a FOSC member.
 - **Trail Member** is a \$50 per month or a one-time donation of \$600. The donor receives a 5 percent discount from participating local businesses and receives appreciation mention in a FOSC newsletter.

Michael Ardito mentioned he thinks lower levels of donations should be available for those not as wealthy but still desiring to help FOSC and raise funds for open space.
5. **Maintenance of Fairfax Trails and Possible Expansion of FOSC Duties** (discussion and possible actions) – John Reed, former Fairfax Town Councilmember, provided two handouts. One was a summary of the San Anselmo “Stairs, Lanes, and Trails” program involving 37 or 88 known “routes” in the Town of San Anselmo for residents. San Anselmo received a one-time grant of \$66,000 for the trail maintenance program. The other hand-out was from the Town of Fairfax Volunteers (now dissolved) web page that provides information about the Fairfax Trails Awareness Project. About 20 years ago the Fairfax Volunteers took on the project to rejuvenate and maintain about 130 historic pedestrian trails, many of which have been neglected or which have blocked or limited access. Some Measure A funds have been appropriated by Fairfax for this purpose. John Reed expressed his willingness to contribute his time and experience for this project in Fairfax. FOSC passed a motion to inform the Fairfax Town Council that FOSC is willing to take on the responsibility of trail maintenance formerly a task with the now-defunct Fairfax Volunteers.
6. **Comments on Priority Conservation Area Framework Reform** – Jack Judkins (discussion and possible action). Jack has reached out to Town Councilmember Lisel Blash, the liaison to Association of Bay Area Governments regarding this matter. This agenda discussion item is being postponed to a future meeting.
7. **Elliott Nature Preserve: The Response to Comments Report from Marin County Parks and Open Space** – Geoff Bolt (discussion and possible actions). Geoff Bolt reported that when the 38.5 acres was designated by the Town in 1972 that the property was too much for Fairfax to maintain and was given to Marin County for that purpose. However, there was a condition that the Town could take it back this critical habitat. Former FOSC member and Elliott Nature Preserve neighbor Linda Novy reported that there is illegal night-time bike riding in the Preserve and that rules need to be enforced. Some of the proposed and accepted changes will convert the Preserve to a regional park with the two bridges becoming multi-use. However, e-bikes typically don’t stay within the six miles per hour limit. FOSC and other entities may need to reach out to the bicycle organizations to ask members to not ride there illegally.
8. **Treasurer’s Report**— (discussion and possible action). Christine Kelly mentioned that FOSC needs access to the PayPal donation information.
9. **FOSC Outreach, Holiday Craft Faire, Merchandise, Storage of Materials, Bio-Blitzes and Nature Walks** – discussion and possible actions. The Fairfax Holiday Crafts Faire is this Saturday, December 9 and a FOSC booth duty sheet was passed around for sign-ups.
10. **Reports from FOSC Committees / Subcommittees** (discussions, possible actions and reassignments): **Acquisitions, Governance, Stewardship, Community Outreach & Fundraising; Measure A.**
11. **Reports of activities from partner agencies** such as San Anselmo Open Space Committee (SAOSC); Marin County Parks and Open Space; Marin Conservation League’s Parks and Open Space Committee; Together Bay Area; One Tam; Friends of Corte Madera Creek; FOSC representatives (updates and discussion). It was reported that SAOSC has received sizeable donations to save the Upper Hawthorne Canyon as open space.

12. **Approval of FOSC Minutes from Previous 2023 Meetings** (discussion and possible action). The FOSC meeting minutes from Sept. 26, 2023 were approved for finalization and submission to Town officials for filing and posting on the FOSC portion of the website. Susan Pascal Beran indicated that the Town does have drone footage of the Wall property as a notation to the draft minutes from the November 28, 2023 FOSC meeting.
13. **FOSC Meeting on Tuesday, January 23, 2023; quorum check and agenda items** (discussion and possible action): Michael Ardito said it appears there will be a quorum for the January 23 meeting.
14. **FOSC Member Reports on Non-Agenda Items** (no discussions or actions)
15. **Appreciations and Adjournment.** Adjournment was at 9:12 p.m.

This meeting notice was posted in accordance with Government Code section 54954.2(a)(1) on or before December 1, 2023.