



Town of Fairfax Open Space Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 28, 2024 | 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
Joe Franaszek
John Reed
Corina Karr, Youth Member (ex officio)
Maria Pastor, Youth Member (ex officio)

Minutes

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 at 6 p.m. at Fairfax Women's Club

FOSC Members gathered at 6 p.m. for potluck dinner honoring our high school members graduating in June. FOSC held a group photo session circa 6:30 p.m. (wearing FOSC swag/attire/new "retro" ball caps) with Fairfax Town photographer Stephanie Mohan

REGULAR AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order at 7:05 p.m. / Roll Call** (all FOSC members present) / **Approval of Agenda / Appointment of Timekeeper for this meeting** (Teddy Catrini) – Chair Susan Pascal Beran
Guests included: Town Council Liaison Chance Cutrano; Pamela Meigs (former FOSC member); Town Planning Commissioner Cindy Swift; Marc Lubomirski; Kristi Dommen
- 2. Open Time for Public Expressions**
(The public is welcome to address the Committee at this time on matters not on the agenda. Please be advised that pursuant to Government Code 54954.2, the Committee is not permitted to take action on any matter not on the agenda, unless it determines that an emergency exists, or that the need to take action arose following posting of the agenda. Each speaker is limited to three minutes and a spokesperson for an organization is limited to five minutes.) Some attendees expressed appreciation that FOSC has acquired and is using a portable speaker and microphone system.
- 3. Receive updates about Wall Property** (FOSC Acquisitions Subcommittee reports and discussion). Things look positive as there has been much community support for acquisition of the Wall property. We learned that the California Coastal Commission has listed the award of a \$500,000 grant for Wall property acquisition on its Consent Calendar for its June 6, 2024 meeting.
- 4. Receive updates about 615 Oak Manor Drive Property** (FOSC Special Subcommittee and discussion). Joe Franaszek was contacted by representatives of the current owner of the 615 Oak Manor Drive property. They explored the options available to the owner who needed to pay off the property's debts yet to preserve as much of the property as possible for open space. This discussion included assessing whether there were any entities who could help preserve and maintain the land as open space. In that connection, Bill Long of Marin Open Space Trust (MOST) had proposed some ways the open space could be preserved. Joe Franaszek and Bill Long were contacted by the Trust for Public Lands regarding the Subcommittee's recommendation that the owner reach out to TPL for possible funding for open space preservation for part of this property.

5. **Receive update about Pine Mountain Tunnel Road** (requested community agenda item). This is reportedly a concrete pipe rather than a tunnel near Sky Oaks. There may be an easement issue about a Marin Municipal Water District bridge nearby, a gate that may not be locked, but a “no trespassing” sign. There is a creek that flows during the rainy season from the MMWD through land that is adjacent to the Elliott Nature Preserve / Cascade Open Space, including property FOSC had arranged for the County to manage. There was a question about whether the MMWD’s efforts to reinforce and replace its watershed pipes might cut off water ending in the creek, affecting the natural habitat of the surrounding open space land. The FOSC Trails Subcommittee will meet and report back at the June meeting of FOSC.
6. **Receive Treasurer’s Report – Christine Kelly** (discussion). There is about \$100,000 in Measure A funds for acquisition of the Wall property in that portion of the Town’s FOSC account. In addition, FOSC has about \$70,000 in the FOSC operating account. We still need to determine how much has been earned for FOSC thru the Pay Pal account.
7. **Receive Reports from Bio-Blitz on April 27** – Susan Pascal Beran reported that there were about two dozen attendees for the recent Bio-Blitz. The guest artist, Nathalie Worthington, completed a scenic painting from the Wall property that was subsequently raffled off by FOSC at the Fairfax Festival / Ecofest.
8. **Plans for FOSC Participation in Fairfax Festival / Ecofest on June 8-9, 2024.** FOSC will provide a Wall property campaign narrative to Geoff Bolt to be used during the Fairfax parade entry. A sign-up sheet was passed around for FOSC information table set-up and duty at the Ecofest.
9. **Receive Reports from FOSC Committees and Subcommittees Spokespersons: Acquisitions; Governance; Stewardship; Community Outreach & Fundraising; Trails; Measure A;** (discussions, reassignments and next steps). *The Trails Subcommittee Report:* Geoff Bolt and Joe Franaszek went up to the Elliott Nature Preserve and found that PG&E had cut some trees, with some wires hanging down that could pose a public hazard. Two trees came down which took out some electricity for a while. In another matter, John Reed reported there are paper copies of Fairfax trails. Regarding the *Measure A Subcommittee Report* for fiscal year 2024-25, approximately \$70,000 of new funds was available for use by the Town for Measure A purposes (Parks and Open Space). FOSC urged that the Town’s Measure A Committee devote all of those new funds to acquisition of the Wall property. Instead, the Town’s committee approved the allocation of the unspent \$100,000 in Measure A funds that FOSC had “held over” from previous fiscal years for the acquisition. But the Town’s committee declined to use any of the new \$70,000 the Town would receive in FY 2024-25 for Wall Property acquisition or for any of the FOSC operations. However, from the \$70,000 in new Measure A funds, the Town Measure A Committee recommended that \$50,000 go to “Wall Property Rehabilitation / Maintenance” if the land is acquired by the Town, as well as \$6,300 of Measure A funds to be added to the \$43,700 “hold over” funds that exist for “Maintenance / Repair Pedestrian Trail Improvements,” for a total of \$50,000 available for trails in the coming fiscal year. In regards, to the *Community Outreach and Fundraising*, Susan Pascal Beran mentioned a possible film for showing: “Harmony in the Basin”. Regarding a silent auction in advance of the FOSC 20th anniversary celebration, Christine Kelly volunteered to help.
10. **Receive Reports of Activities from FOSC Representatives for 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 (discussions and next steps). SAOSC: Michael Ardito reported that Fairfax Mayor Barbara Coler represented Fairfax and he represented FOSC at the San Anselmo dedication / celebration of the Upper Hawthorne Canyon Open Space acquisition that was held on Thursday evening, May 23. The Town of Fairfax and FOSC had donated \$12,000 of its funds for this open space acquisition that borders Fairfax open space. Also, SAOSC will be holding its annual fundraiser event on Saturday night, June 22. Regarding the *Marin Conservation League*, Michael Ardito attended the 90th anniversary celebration and annual meeting of MCL on Friday evening, April 26. The keynote speaker was David Smith, Superintendent of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (part of *One Tam*). Michael Ardito

represented FOSC at this year's annual *Together Bay Area* (Open Space) conference held at a new venue, The Gateway Pavilion, at Fort Mason in San Francisco on Wednesday, May 8. One of the keynote speakers was Secretary Wade Crowfoot of the California State Department of Natural Resources. From the conference, Michael Ardito handed out to FOSC members some fact sheets about California Governor Newsom's "30 x 30" Executive Order (N-82-20) about conserving 30 percent of our lands and coastal waters by 2030. Michael Ardito participated in the conference's Marin County field trip on May 9 at the Bothin Marsh (Richardson Bay) in Mill Valley. (At Bothin Marsh, he became reacquainted with one of his former students in the late 1970s who is now an employee of the Marin Municipal Water District.)

11. **Receive FOSC Minutes from Several 2023 and 2024 Meetings for Approval:** Michael Ardito had resubmitted the draft FOSC minutes from the March 26, 2024 meeting which were approved with some minor language revisions from Jack Judkins and a spelling correction from Susan Pascal Beran.
12. **FOSC Meeting on June 25, 2024; quorum check and agenda items:** Michael Ardito (discussion). It appears there will be a quorum of FOSC members for the June 25 meeting. This is the last meeting for youth member Corina Karr who will be leaving soon after high school graduation for Tulane University in New Orleans.
13. **FOSC Member Reports on Non-Agenda Items** (no discussions). Michael Ardito distributed a sympathy card for Mimi Newton, former FOSC chair, as her father passed recently.
14. **Appreciations and Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.