



FAIRFAX TOWN COUNCIL MEETING STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE October 16, 2024
PREPARED FOR Mayor and Town Council
PREPARED BY Heather Abrams, Town Manager
SUBJECT Discussion on Naming Options for the 100-Acre Open Space Property (Commonly Known as the Wall Property)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Town Council discuss potential names for the 100-acre property and/or names for significant features within the 100-acre property currently known as the "Wall Property".

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Fairfax recently acquired the 100-acre property known informally as the "Wall Property." This property is now preserved as open space through collaborative efforts between the Town, Marin Open Space Trust (MOST), the County of Marin, the California Coastal Conservancy, the Fairfax community, and other generous groups. The Mayor and Members of the Town Council have asked to discuss potential names for the property, and/or features within the property, i.e. trails, meadows, overlooks, etc. Among the suggested names are options that honor the original owners, celebrate local history, or recognize Indigenous peoples. The Council is encouraged to provide input and suggest additional names during the discussion.

BACKGROUND

The acquisition of the "Wall Property" was a significant step in preserving open space in the Town of Fairfax. The property has long been valued for its scenic and environmental importance. In 2024, the Town, working with MOST, successfully acquired the property with \$2.9 million in funding from various sources, including grants from the California Coastal Conservancy of \$500,000, Marin County's Measure A program of \$1 million, the Town's Measure A funds of \$100,000, and private donors who provided large and small donations.

The property, known for its natural beauty and role in community open space, is now ready for a formal name. Because of the collaborative effort to preserve the property for open space, the Council may wish to consider several names for significant features on the property, such as distinct trails, meadows, or overlooks, in order to honor the many contributors. This process is a chance to engage the Council in a discussion that considers the property's historical significance and community values.

DISCUSSION

Several naming options may be considered, including but not limited to the following:

1. **The Wall Open Space** – This name would recognize the family of Doris and C. Allen Wall, who previously owned the land. A donation from their daughter, Diana Wall, helped to close the fundraising gap.

2. **Diane Bright's Gift** – This option reflects a tribute by Ted Bright, longtime supporter of open space funding, treasurer and member of the Fairfax Open Space Committee (FOSC), to his late wife, Diane Bright, a long-time Fairfax resident, whose love for the town is commemorated on a bench on the property with a plaque that reads:

*In memory of Diane Bright - Long time friend and Fairfax Resident
12/27/41 - 7/3/23
Diane and Ted Bright Welcome All to Diane's Magnificent View of Fairfax and Beyond
In Gratitude, A Gift of the Town of Fairfax*

3. **A Tribal Name** – The council subcommittee could consult with the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria and Coastal Miwok tribes to consider a name that honors Indigenous peoples.
4. **Jewel of Fairfax** – This name highlights the property's value as a prized community asset, often referred to as a "jewel" in local discussions.
5. **Naming Individual Trailheads, Meadows, Overlooks, or other features of the property** – Another option is to select different names for individual features on the property. For example, Council could name each trailhead entrance to the property, allowing the opportunity to honor multiple individuals or themes. One trailhead could be named "Diane Bright's Trail," another "Wall Family Trail," and a meadow or overlook could receive a name chosen in consultation with the Graton Rancheria and Coastal Miwok tribes. This approach would create unique identifiers while recognizing various contributions and histories.

Councilmembers may wish and are encouraged to suggest additional names during the discussion. No formal decision or action is requested following this discussion.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

No formal outreach has been conducted specifically for the naming process at this time. However, the community has been involved throughout the acquisition process through public meetings, newsletters, and fundraising events. The Council may consider further community input be solicited if the Council directs staff to move forward with a formal naming selection.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this discussion item.

OPTIONS

The Council may choose to direct staff to work with the council subcommittee, Mayor Coler and Councilmember Cutrano, to:

1. Determine a number of sites on the property to be named.
2. Consider conducting community outreach.
3. Return at a later date with a formal recommendation for the name(s).

ATTACHMENTS

None.