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August 29, 2012

## A WORD FROM THE TOWN MANAGER



### Downtown Circulation & Parking

In May of 2011, the Council received a report from Downtown Committee members Mayor Fraser and Councilmember Collins. The report was based on an extensive community outreach process about how to revitalize our downtown and contained several recommendations. One was the

formation of a Marketing and Communications Task Force to develop a branding message and communications strategy to bolster the downtown. Some brilliant [local volunteers](#) stepped forward for that task and have already produced some great results, which I described last month. Check out that [article here](#) if you would like a refresher on those efforts.

The 2011 report also recommended an analysis of circulation and parking in the downtown, defined as the commercial areas east of Mar West Street. This was in response to the recurring theme heard from the community about their downtown experiences, and in particular, their frustration over parking availability and cost. Despite the large number of downtown spaces, (1,608, most privately owned), the complaint at every meeting was about the perceived lack of parking, or at least of parking people feel is both reasonably priced and well located. Indeed, whether real or perceived, Tiburon does seem to have an unfriendly parking reputation both locally and throughout Marin. Clearly, parking is an issue that needs to be addressed.

The circulation and parking analysis was commissioned and conducted by the well-regarded firm of Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates Inc.; it is just now available. At over 100 pages, the report provides a trove of data, analysis and ideas about how our downtown circulation and parking might be improved with both small tweaks and bigger changes, short-term and long-range. Some of the easier recommendations to adopt include reclaiming more curb space for street parking, changing some short-term spaces

to longer term, improving navigational signage and more and better-located bike parking. One of the long-range ideas involves reconfiguration of the existing Tiburon Boulevard traffic lanes to increase parking and make the street more pedestrian friendly. One of the key recommendations of the study regards the management of street parking, which is the subject I focus on here today.

## **Parking Management**

The Town asked what, if anything, the consultants might recommend to improve the downtown parking situation, especially for residents wanting to use the area for services or entertainment. Their conclusion? That residents in particular, but visitors as well, would be better served with a managed parking environment including metered parking. They believe this approach, when coupled with an affordable resident parking permit system, would free up parking, increase turnover of spaces and make it work better for all concerned.

Before I go any further, please be assured this is only a consultants' recommendation - fascinating food for thought for the Council and the public and recommended by a knowledgeable source - but just an idea to explore. Any action on the report's many recommendations would only happen if there were extensive public input, a general belief that proposed changes would be beneficial, and substantial public support for such action.

Why do the consultants think meters would improve parking? We all know the free street parking downtown is routinely unavailable unless one is experiencing exceptional parking karma in their moment of need. The Town's 140 on-street downtown spaces are limited to a two-hour stay, with a small number being even shorter term. These time limits exist to reduce the likelihood that the spaces will be taken up by multiple-hour parkers, like employees or ferry commuters, and to encourage turnover. Probably everyone would agree that street parking should be used for shorter visits to the downtown, not all-day parkers.

It turns out the current two-hour limitation results in quite a few problems, is inefficient to enforce and is a poor way to limit longer stays as the system is fairly easily "gamed". The consultants found evidence of people wiping away enforcement marks on tires, shuffling cars slightly or otherwise finding ways to circumvent the two-hour limit. For law-abiding citizens, there is no way to extend a stay beyond two hours, so those coming downtown, say, for lunch and a little shopping, run the risk of a ticket if they linger. I can assure you those receiving tickets are not grateful for the free two hours they received that day or any other day; they are miffed at getting a ticket.

According to the consultants, meters would encourage

parking turnover while simultaneously inhibiting misuse of the system. A parking management system would help distribute parking demand, since today's sophisticated multi-space meters can be programmed to have cheaper perimeter parking with more expensive parking (for those lacking permits) in the downtown core. They can also have progressive rates that are very modest for the first few hours (or free with a permit), but then increase for additional hours, encouraging turnover but allowing those who want to lunch and shop an option to stay longer. Some models even allow the purchase of more time using a cell phone. Nelson\Nygaard believes with this type of meter and permit program, residents and visitors alike will be more likely to find street parking available when they seek it. They also recommend any net revenue from the program be recycled back into the downtown for improvements, including potentially subsidizing parking for residents on the street or in the private lots.

Parking ideas are just part of the study. The report is rich with information and analysis and has many specific recommendations for the Town's consideration. For instance, in their circulation recommendations, the consultants urge consideration of a traffic round-about at Mar West Street, and possibly another one at Beach Road.

Please be assured there is no push to adopt any particular idea the consultants have offered, indeed, they are only now coming to light and require much airing. Every recommendation has both a public policy and cost/benefit aspect to consider; some may be easily supported and implemented while others may never make the grade.

My advice: let's all explore what the consultants have to say with an open and inquisitive mind. Sometimes breakthroughs happen in ways we least expect, and it's possible this is one of those occasions. Or, maybe not. In any event, the Nelson\Nygaard consultants will make a presentation of [their report](#) to the Town Council at its meeting on September 19 at 7:30 p.m. If this is of interest to you, please come down to hear it. It's pretty fascinating stuff - and I've only scratched the surface with this article.

Sincerely,



Peggy Curran

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Public Works!

In addition to regular infrastructure and park maintenance



work, each year the Public Works staff undertakes a variety of targeted improvements and repairs to keep the Town functioning well and looking good. A recent example is the rock seawall restoration next to the Ferry Plaza and Shoreline Park.

Usually there are one or two significant undertakings as well, such as road reconstructions. This year there are four major projects on our construction landscape, one nearing completion and three others just getting underway. Together they will enhance the beauty and safety of our community, improve pedestrian access, provide safer and more reliable utilities, and establish a new locale for our peninsula's joint recreation programs. Here they are:

### **Del Mar Undergrounding**

Members of this assessment district are itching to see the end of their long journey--the undergrounding of their utility lines. The Town's portion of this project, the joint trench and service lateral construction phase, is now within a few of weeks of completion. It has gone smoothly and is within budget. The next phase is up to the utility companies. They have to pull wires and complete the physical conversion from overhead to underground service. Once that is complete, the utility poles come down. Comcast has already started its work. PG&E will start within the next two months and may take approximately three months to complete. AT&T will start after PG&E has completed its work. We expect the poles to come down sometime early 2013. We want to be invited to the neighborhood party when that happens!

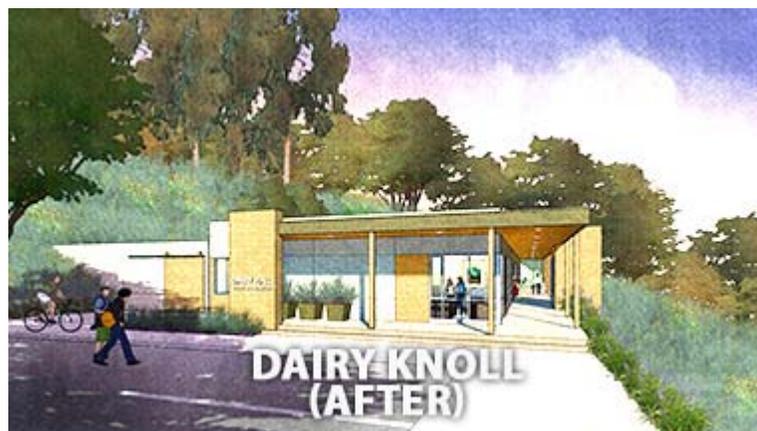
### **Del Mar Neighborhood Repaving**

The roads within the Del Mar Undergrounding District have been due for major resurfacing for some time now, but work was held off until the trench excavation could be completed. Now that we are at that point, the next step is roadway reconstruction, which will provide a significant improvement to the neighborhood. We are currently seeking bids from contractors and anticipate construction in early October. Weather permitting, the work will be completed by December.

### **Dairy Knoll Peninsula Recreation Center**

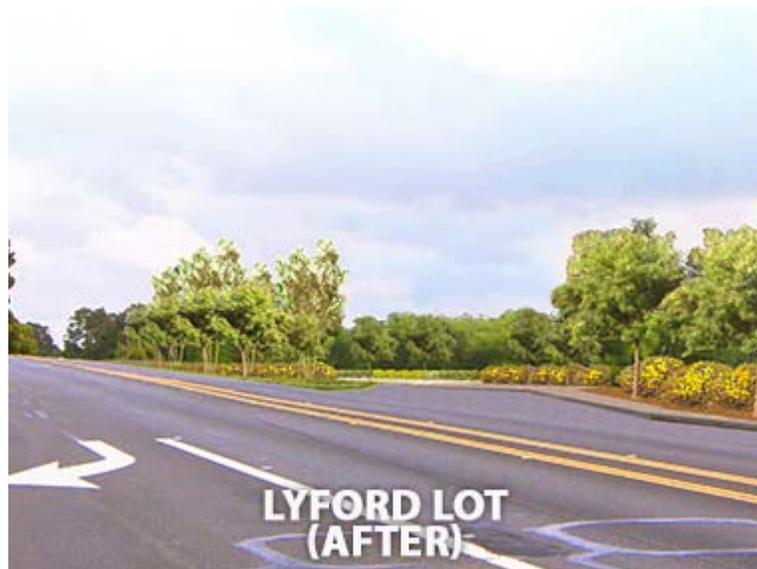
Breeding hawks delayed the start of this project by two months, but our contractors are finally on their way. They are making great progress fortifying the hillside parcel for the foundation of the new 4,800 square-foot building. Work will begin on the utility connections and the new parking lot shortly. Once that is completed, we should see the foundation being poured and the start of construction of the

new facility by the end of October. Opening of the building for public use is anticipated in the first half of 2013.



### **Lyford Drive Multi-Modal Parking Lot**

The dirt shoulder along Tiburon Boulevard just east of Lyford Drive, the one that typically has 40+ parked vehicles, is in the process of disappearing. In its place will be a long, narrow paved lot separated from the Boulevard by a planted median. The change will make the area safer, as the new lot will have one point of entry and one exit and thus eliminate the many turning motions parkers now use to head or back into spaces. It will also beautify the area, replacing the visual of a row of vehicles on dirt with one dominated by a landscaped median. Weather permitting, the 48-car space parking lot will be completed by the end of the year.



Given the project's proximity to Reed School, some of our readers may be wondering why we elected to start this project just when school was getting back into session. The answer is simple: we had to. Due to the extensive approval process with the State of California (which owns and operates Tiburon Boulevard) and a deadline for a Transportation Authority of Marin-funded grant that finances a significant portion of the project, the Town had no choice. However, we are working closely with our contractor, the school district, and law enforcement to mitigate impacts and inconvenience and ensure safety during construction.

During this extremely busy time, we thank you in advance for your understanding, cooperation, and support as we continue to improve our community.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Nguyen, P.E.  
Director of Public Works/Town Engineer

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## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### **FRIDAY NIGHTS ON MAIN**

6 until 9 p.m.  
Main Street  
June 22 through Sept. 14



Friday Nights on Main (FNOM) winds down another season with three more nights (August 31), and special events such as Oktoberfest on September 7, and the Fireman's Ball on September 14.

Music will be featured at the last two events. The Karl Lebhertz band will provide the "oompah" at Oktoberfest and the Fireman's Ball will rock with the "Fundamentals".

This is the best time of year to enjoy the beautiful Fall weather and dine al fresco. Come join the celebration of Friday Nights on Main with food and fun for all ages.

For more information, contact the Tiburon Peninsula Chamber of Commerce at 435-5633.

### **BELVEDERE-TIBURON OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Tuesday, September 11,  
1 p.m.  
San Geronimo Golf Course



You are invited to play in the 17th annual Belvedere-Tiburon Open Golf Tournament. This year's proceeds will benefit the Belvedere-Tiburon Community Recreation Program. The day includes lunch, dinner, awards, prizes and more. Come join the fun and support a good cause!

Contact Belvedere City Staff at 435-8383, or Police Chief Tricia Seyler, 435-3266, for more information.

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## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### **APPLY TO BECOME A MASTER GARDENER**

The Tiburon Peninsula is home to many active Marin Master Gardeners. We would love to have some local resident

trainees who will help us on our local projects once they have graduated.

Training sessions are held on Thursdays and will start up again in January 2013 through May 2013. Applications are available online at [www.marinmg.org](http://www.marinmg.org).



Learn more at the next information session on Thursday, September 6 at the Marin Art and Garden Center in Ross (Livermore Room, 30 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard) at 6 p.m.

Call 473-4204 for more information.

Sincerely,

James Campbell  
Marin Master Gardener

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## Bel-Tib Library Community Calendar

For the scoop on events and meetings sponsored by local not-for-profit community and government organizations on the Tiburon Peninsula, visit the Belvedere-Tiburon Library's excellent [community calendar](#).



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## Council and Commission Meetings



**Town Council:** First and third Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. (September 5 and September 19).

**Design Review Board:** First and third Thursdays at 7 p.m. (September 6; September 20 is cancelled).

**Planning Commission:** Second and fourth Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. (September 12 and September 26).

**Heritage & Arts Commission:** Fourth Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall Conference Room (September 25).

**Parks, Open Space and Trails Commission:** Third Tuesday every other month at 6 p.m. (next meeting is September 18).

Unless stated otherwise, all meetings are held in the Town Council Chambers located at 1505 Tiburon Boulevard, Tiburon CA 94920.

Sincerely,

Town Staff  
Town of Tiburon  
435-7373

Editor: Diane Crane Iacopi

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