

City Manager's Weekly Update

October 9, 2015

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Aloha for ADU Ordinance

We received a phone call from a City of Honolulu planner this week thanking us for our Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance. The planner stated that after many years trying to solve illegal units they reviewed many different municipal ordinances and decided to pattern their new ordinance after the City of Santa Cruz's ADU Ordinance. They were impressed about our effort in encouraging such housing in the zoning code. He wanted to call long distance to thank us personally. Aloha!

Welcome New Senior Plans Examiner - We are pleased to announce that we have filled the last of our vacant Senior Plans Examiner positions. John McLucas started on October 1. John is a registered structural engineer, which will allow us to offer a more broad range of professional plan review in house. He is a Santa Cruz resident and has been running his engineering firm here for the last 15 years. John, in his role as professional Engineer, has been involved with improvements to our Fire stations and the University Town Center. One of his recent projects is the Twin Lakes education center, currently under construction. With three in house plans examiners we are able to increase plan check turnaround times and send fewer plans out for review by consultants.

Holy Cross-Old High School

The Building Official met with Holy Cross representatives and signed off their final inspection. The structural repairs and upgrades are complete.

Project Updates

716 Darwin. Last June, Planning Staff administratively approved a Design Permit for a three-story 15 unit apartment complex on the east side of Darwin, across the street from Staff of Life. Last week our department received an application for the building permit. The developer, Doug Ross, expects to break ground by Thanksgiving.

Five Guys Burgers. Also last week our department received a Building Permit application for ground floor tenant improvements at 1101 Pacific Avenue, the former downtown location of *Taqueria Vallerta*. The improvements will facilitate the operation of a *Five Guys Burgers and Fries* restaurant. Five Guys is a hamburger chain that started in the Washington DC area in 1986. According to its website there are currently 1,000 restaurants across the United States and Canada with another 1,500 in the development stage. The improvements include: swapping the locations of the existing front door and front patio area, installing three new outdoor metal tables with umbrellas, installing two halo illuminated wall signs on the Cathcart Street and Pacific Avenue building frontages, and interior improvements to create a dining area,

a kitchen, food prep areas, and restrooms. A Minor Modification and a Sign Permit are currently being processed administratively to evaluate the proposed exterior improvements. The applicant hopes to open the business in the first part of December. Samantha Haschert is the planner working on the planning applications.

Coastview Inn. This week, the Zoning Administrator approved Coastal and Design Permits for a fairly significant remodel and addition to this hotel located at 301 Beach Street (across Westbrook from the *La Bahia* complex). While the room-count only increases by five, from 32 to 37, the overall project adds 12,500 square feet in two additional floors with many of the existing rooms getting enlarged. Architecturally, this 1950's auto court will be of Spanish Colonial design and will complement the recently approved *La Bahia* project. The three street frontages surrounding the site will receive significant upgrades to the curb, gutters and sidewalk, including a bulb out with landscaping and a crosswalk at the corner of First and Westbrook Streets. The applicant reached out to neighbors early on in the process. At the hearing four business/property owners spoke in support, including the owners of the *Beach Street Inn and Suites* and the *Casa Blanca Inn*.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Civic Auditorium

This Saturday the Civic is hosting the Santa Cruz Symphony with their season opening concert, *Inventing America*. There will be a pre-concert reception with live music, wonderful desserts and specialty drinks outside in front of the Civic Auditorium at 6:30pm with the Maestro speaking at 6:45pm.



New Software Installation Begins

Many of the Recreation staff spent this week in training on the newly purchased Registration/Facility Reservation software. Although there is still lots more work to be done over the next months before we go live to the public in January, staff is super excited with this new system. It is a vast improvement over our previous system and will provide many more services to our customers. A special thank you to IT and Karen Adams for ongoing support of this project!

Open Streets

Cosponsored by the City of Santa Cruz, Open Streets will be held this Sunday from 9am to 2pm on “closed to cars” West Cliff Drive. The theme for this year is Explore the Coast and the event will include play equipment, free activities and live music along with information booths and much more!

PUBLIC WORKS

Resource Recovery

Waste Reduction staff has placed six of our new mixed recycling signs in City trash enclosures to help curb contamination issues. Signs are in English and Spanish with photos of acceptable materials. Smaller versions have been distributed to downtown food businesses to post in their kitchens.



Santa Cruz Garage Sale weekend is this weekend Oct 10 and 11. There are 75+ sales listed on the garage sale treasure map:

www.cityofsantacruz.com/garagesales .

Waste reduction staff is preparing “Don’t Sleep in Dumpsters” information packets to be distributed to homeless services providers in the community.

Collections

Our hand sweeper picked up 1.45 tons of illegal dumping this week.



Route drivers, supervisors, and waste reduction specialist worked to clean up a problem business. It took four people a half hour to clean and they disposed of 13 yards of trash Tuesday (10-6) only to have one of the businesses leave their trash on the ground on Wednesday (10-7). They will continue to work with the business to correct the problem.

Traffic Engineering

Transportation Manager Jim Burr presented an overview of the City's parking at a special City Council parking study session on Tuesday night, Oct. 6. This session was in preparation for next week's public Planning Commission and Downtown Commission Parking Forum on Oct. 15.

Community Relations/Outreach

Working with Fire Chief Frawley, we are firming up El Nino prep community outreach plans. There may be a resolution declaring El Nino Preparation Week, a citywide postcard mailing, PSAs, ads and a community meeting at the Civic to include various station presentations and a sandbag-making workshop.

The first El Nino press release was distributed: [City of Santa Cruz Prepares for El Niño.](#)

[Two other press releases were distributed this week:](#)

- [City of Santa Cruz Begins West Levee Parkway Improvements Week of Oct. 12](#)
- [Customize Your Shopping at Santa Cruz Garage Sale Weekend](#)

Operations

Staff is continuing to work on pre-winter emergency response.

Facilities

Staff facilitated sidewalk repair in front of Fire Administration.





Maintenance crews have continued to work on cleaning the city sidewalks six days a week.

WATER

This week, our reservoir measured in at 72% of capacity. As you may recall, our goal was to end the “dry” season (normally May 1-October 31) with Loch Lomond at 58%. So you can imagine how pleased we are to be so far ahead of goal, going into another winter where the weather is anyone’s guess. While scientists and meteorologists agree that this is an El Nino year temperature-wise, they’re still on the fence about what that will mean for rainfall for the Central Coast, which means the jury is still out on what an El Nino year may mean for our water supply.

But given that our water supply is in significantly better shape right now than expected, and that we’re in the home-stretch of transitioning from our “dry” season to our “wet” season, we believe it’s time to lift rationing penalties and move our community back into voluntary rationing. Why? Well besides the state of the reservoir, our community has consistently far surpassed the rationing goal of 20-25% and most of the overages we’re seeing on accounts now are due to underground leaks. It seems a shame to continue to threaten the community with penalties when they’ve consistently shown that they “get it” and is doing more than their share to save water. If we don’t get rain this year than we’ll likely have to move back into rationing during the dry season, but for now we believe lifting penalties is the right thing to do for our community.



Speaking of our reservoir, if you haven't had a chance to visit Loch Lomond this year during their monthly public tours, this is your last month to do so. Water resources rangers will host their final tour on Saturday, October 31, and it should be a good one. Laird Henkel, a senior environmental scientist with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (and former park aid at Loch Lomond in 1995!) will join the tour to talk about, and help identify, local birds. Costumes are encouraged!