



## San Anselmo News

Debra Stutsman, Town Manager  
[dstutsman@ci.san-anselmo.ca.us](mailto:dstutsman@ci.san-anselmo.ca.us)

January 4, 2008

### Winter Preparedness

Town employees have been working hard to ensure that the Town is prepared for predicted heavy winter storms. The following actions were taken to advise citizens of the early January storms:

- Flyers hand carried to merchants on San Anselmo Avenue advising them of the weather service predictions of heavy winter rains.
- Email alert sent to the addresses on the Town Manager's newsletter email list.
- Telephone alert sent to all merchants regarding storms.
- Sand and bags available at the dead end portion of Sunny Hills Drive, near the tennis courts (across from Round Table Pizza).
- Links to National Weather Service, Winter Preparedness tips on Town's website at [www.townofsananselmo.org](http://www.townofsananselmo.org).
- Creek water level monitoring equipment in place at Bridge Street and actual creek levels available for public viewing 24 hours/day at [www.rossvalleyfire.org/sa\\_creek.html](http://www.rossvalleyfire.org/sa_creek.html).
- AM Radio Station 1610 updated with storm information.
- 24-hour information line (258-4632) updated with storm information.

Town staff is on call 24 hours a day to respond to any storm-related emergency. When winter storms are predicted, stay tuned to local news broadcasts. San Anselmo specific information can be found on the website at [www.townofsananselmo.org](http://www.townofsananselmo.org)

### Workshop on Lot Coverage/Floor Area Ratio Scheduled

The Town Council has scheduled a workshop to discuss in detail a possible ordinance to potentially reduce the maximum floor area of homes in San Anselmo below the 150 mean sea level elevation through a Combined Lot Coverage and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Ordinance.

At present the size of these homes is partially managed by a 35% lot coverage maximum. Lot coverage measures the footprint of all structures on the lot, but does not include the area of an upper floor if it is within the first floor's footprint on the lot. Adding a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) would set an additional maximum for the square footage of each floor of an individual dwelling.

For the last year, the Council has been discussing and receiving public input on proposed changes to the Town's Zoning Ordinance, as recommended by a subcommittee of Planning Commissioners and Councilmembers. The discussions thus far have centered around a combination of the ratio of a structure's floor area to the size of the lot and the total amount of lot coverage by a structure.

The intent of the proposed ordinance is to ensure that homes built in San Anselmo reflect the character of our small town, while still allowing property owners to accommodate their growing families.

The public is invited to attend the workshop to learn more about the concepts of lot coverage and floor area ratio. The Council will also hear public input on the topic.

**The workshop will be held on Saturday, February 2, 2008, in the Town Council Chambers from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. All interested persons are encouraged to attend.**

## **Flood Committee meeting**

The next Flood Committee meeting will be held on Monday, January 14, 2008, in the Town Hall Conference Room at 525 San Anselmo Avenue. Among other agenda items, the Committee will hear a presentation from Jack Curley, County Engineer working for Flood Zone 9, of which San Anselmo is a member.

## **Potential Impact of New Construction Codes**

The State of California has mandated that effective January 1, 2008 all cities and towns in the state must enforce the 2007 editions of the California Construction Codes. These were recently adopted by the San Anselmo Town Council with some amendments. The Town Council is only allowed to make amendments that are more stringent than the published codes.

The new California Codes are based upon the International Building Code, which is a combination of all the codes across the United States, so the new codes are very different from those used for many years by licensed contractors, architects, and designers.

A major change is the requirement that only a licensed design professional (engineer or architect) may design any structural work unless the work meets the very limited criteria for “conventional construction.” Something that appears as minor framing, such as installing a new window or door or opening a wall to create a pass-through from the kitchen to the dining room, may now need to be designed by an engineer or architect.

In addition to the major structural code changes, there are significant architectural changes for most required building dimensions and materials. The changes to the previous code are numerous and we recommend that homeowners contact a licensed design professional for assistance before applying for a building permit unless they are very familiar with the new codes and can demonstrate their work is conventional construction.

A listing of the specific 2007 editions of all the California Codes (Building, Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, Energy, Elevator Safety, Historical, Fire, Building Conservation) and the Town’s amendments can be found on the Town’s website under the Planning and Building Department, Building Division. A copy of the new building code will be available for public use at the Town Library in approximately one week. Copies may be purchased directly from the ICC at [www.iccsafe.org](http://www.iccsafe.org) or (800) 786-4452.

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January 11, 2008

### Town Council meeting actions

At the Town Council meeting of Tuesday, January 8, the Town Council took the following action:

- Appointed Patricia Swensen to the Historical Commission and Linda Hoch, Barbara Dwyer and Leonard Charles to the Open Space Committee.
- Awarded the Downtown Fire Station 19 Flood Recovery and Improvement Project to the low bidder, SEB Construction, Inc., of Berkeley, in the amount of \$1,295,000.
- Directed staff to return with financing contract for the Fire Station Project, in the form of a 15 year municipal lease in the amount of \$1.7 million.
- Approved the project for drainage improvements at Elm Avenue and San Anselmo Avenue and awarded the contract to Maggiora Ghilotti in the amount of \$43,343.

The next Town Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 22, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers, 525 San Anselmo Avenue. The agenda and staff reports for the meetings are posted the Friday before the meeting on the Town's website at <http://www.townofsananselmo.org/meetings/index.htm> and are available for viewing at the Library, Police Station and Town Hall.

### Storm Wrapup

Creek Monitoring Equipment: Just prior to last Friday's big storm, the new Creek Water Level Monitoring chart was available on the Ross Valley Fire website at [http://www.rossvalleyfire.org/sa\\_creek.html](http://www.rossvalleyfire.org/sa_creek.html). The data produced by the gauge and the resulting chart were extremely helpful to our emergency responders in quickly assessing the threat of flooding.

The website chart is equally helpful to many residents who wish to keep a close eye on the creek. In fact, during Friday's storm it was popular beyond our wildest dreams! At the height of the storm, the website was swamped with too many hits and went down. We are now working to move the site to an outside host with more bandwidth so we can be assured that this valuable tool will remain working during periods of extremely high use. The creek monitoring equipment is also gathering important data on rainfall that will be used as we continue to work to reduce the risk of flooding in the Ross Valley.

Many thanks to the people who worked so hard to get the Creek Gauge hardware and software installed and operational and up on the website, including Jimmy Kulpa and Jeff Schuyler, Firefighter Scott Porter, Fire Chief Roger Meagor and Flood Committee member Dick Stutsman.

PG&E Outage Information: Another very unfortunate result of last Friday's storm was many, many extended power outages in San Anselmo and across Marin. A number of San Anselmo residents called the Police Department for updates on the power outage situation over that weekend. Unfortunately, PG&E was so overwhelmed with the number of outages that it was some time before they were able to get back to us with an assessment of when residents might expect relief.

We are working closely with PG&E's Government Relations Representative in the North Bay to improve communications. We want to ensure that when we are again faced with power outages that Town officials receive periodic updates that we can pass on to affected residents.

## **Little Lingua: Spanish For Preschoolers**

Are you looking to expose your child to Spanish at a young age? Then Little Lingua: Spanish for Preschoolers is exactly what you are looking for! The San Anselmo Recreation Department is now offering classes for preschoolers ages 2-5. Sign-ups will be taken for these classes beginning the week of January 14<sup>th</sup>. For more information call 258-4680 or visit us online at <http://www.townofsananselmo.org/recreation/index.htm>. Hurry because there are only limited spots available for these very popular classes!

## **Stay N' Play Sports Camp**

Interested in being part of something new, fun, and exciting? Starting on February 4<sup>th</sup> there is going to be a new Stay N' Play sports camp for all 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders! It is going to take place right on the campus of Wade Thomas. You can sign up for one or two days (or both) on Monday and Wednesday. Sessions last for four weeks with a different sport picked for each session. To find out more information about the camp, you can contact San Anselmo Recreation at 258-4680 or visit us on-line at <http://www.townofsananselmo.org/recreation/index.htm>. Hurry to become a part of something exciting and new!

## **Important Sandbag Information**

Sand and bags continue to be available on Sunny Hills Drive next to the tennis courts. Please bring your own shovel.

There is a certain technique to filling and placing sandbags. They should be filled with sand no more than 1/2 full with the top of the bag folded down on the underside. For more information, go to [http://www.oc.ca.gov/pfrd/programs/el\\_nino/SandBagUse.html](http://www.oc.ca.gov/pfrd/programs/el_nino/SandBagUse.html) or pick the information up at Town Hall.

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January 18, 2008

### **Downtown Workshop Summary**

At the Town Council meeting of Tuesday, January 22, the Town Council will hear a presentation from consultant Jeff Baird, who facilitated the three recent Downtown Workshops regarding a planning vision and policy direction for the area of San Anselmo Avenue between Ross and Bolinas Avenues.

Baird will present to the Council a summary of the numerous ideas that came out of the three workshops. The Town Council will hear the summary presentation, receive comments from the audience and provide direction to staff on next steps. The public is encouraged to attend. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. and will be held in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

### **Softball Signups**

San Anselmo Recreation is now taking registration for the upcoming Girls Softball season. The league is divided into four groups:

- Junior Minors (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade)
- Minors (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Majors (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Seniors (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade).

Sign ups will be ongoing until Thursday, January 24<sup>th</sup>. There will be a special registration day on Saturday, January 19<sup>th</sup> at the San Anselmo Recreation Department from 10:00am-1:00pm. For more information please contact Chris Thoennes at 258-4643.

### **Measure G Monitoring Committee – Volunteers Needed**

The Town Council announces several openings on the Town's Measure G Monitoring Committee. The Committee is responsible to monitor the implementation of the Town's road maintenance program for improvements to San Anselmo's streets and storm drains.

Measure G funds, which were approved by the voters in 1995, are almost completely expended, but the Town continues to put funds in the Road Maintenance account each year to ensure that work on the Town's streets and storm drains continues. The Monitoring Committee continues to monitor those expenditures.

The Committee is composed of two Councilmembers and six members of the public, with a range of skills, knowledge, and experience in finance (preferably public finance), engineering and/or construction (preferably road or storm drainage projects), public relations and communication, and familiarity with various aspects of the San Anselmo community.

The committee meets as needed, but no less than annually. Terms are for four years.

Persons interested in applying for the Measure G Monitoring Committee should contact Joan Vermont at 258-4691 for an application and further information or go to <http://www.townofsananselmo.org/committees/index.htm>.

## **Reminder on Sandbags**

Sand and bags continue to be available on Sunny Hills Drive next to the tennis courts. Please bring your own shovel.

There is a certain technique to filling and placing sandbags. They should be filled with sand no more than 1/2 full with the top of the bag folded down on the underside. For more information, go to <http://www.oc.ca.gov/pfrd/programs/elnino/SandBagUse.html> or pick the information up at Town Hall.

## **Highway 101 Greenbrae/Twin Cities Corridor Improvement Project**

The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) is having a public open house/workshop to present preliminary alternatives recommended for the Highway 101 Greenbrae/Twin Cities Corridor Improvement Project.

Participants will review and provide input on the preliminary alternatives recommended for consideration, receive the latest information on traffic studies within the corridor and learn about the project study process and schedule.

The Workshop will be held on Saturday, January 26, 2008, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (morning session) and 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Participants may attend either session. The workshop will be held at Redwood High School in the Cafeteria, 395 Doherty Drive, Larkspur.

## **Book Babies**

The San Anselmo Library presents Book Babies. Stories and songs for children ages 0 – 3 will be presented on Mondays at 10 a.m. on the following dates:

- January 28
- February 4
- February 11
- February 25

Please note that there will be no Book Babies on Monday, January 21 or Monday, February 18, due to the Martin Luther King and President's Day holidays.

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January 25, 2008

### **Workshop on Lot Coverage/Floor Area Ratio**

The Town Council has scheduled a workshop to discuss in detail a possible ordinance to potentially reduce the maximum floor area of homes in San Anselmo below the 150 mean sea level elevation through a Combined Lot Coverage and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Ordinance.

At present the size of these homes is partially managed by a 35% lot coverage maximum. Lot coverage measures the footprint of all structures on the lot, but does not include the area of an upper floor if it is within the first floor's footprint on the lot. Adding a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) would set an additional maximum for the square footage of each floor of an individual dwelling.

For the last year, the Council has been discussing and receiving public input on proposed changes to the Town's Zoning Ordinance, as recommended by a subcommittee of Planning Commissioners and Councilmembers. The discussions thus far have centered around a combination of the ratio of a structure's floor area to the size of the lot and the total amount of lot coverage by a structure.

The intent of the proposed ordinance is to ensure that homes built in San Anselmo reflect the character of our small town, while still allowing property owners to accommodate their growing families.

The public is invited to attend the workshop to learn more about the concepts of lot coverage and floor area ratio. The Council will also hear public input on the topic.

**The workshop will be held on Saturday, February 2, 2008, in the Town Council Chambers from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. All interested persons are encouraged to attend.**

### **Sharing Services Subcommittee**

The Sharing Services Subcommittee, charged with exploring ways of reducing costs through sharing services in San Anselmo and Fairfax, met on Thursday, January 17, in Fairfax.

The Subcommittee approved a draft Request for Proposal (RFP) for a study regarding the possibility of sharing dispatch and records management services between the two Police Departments. The Subcommittee plans to review proposals that are received at its next meeting, scheduled for Thursday, March 6, 2008 in the second floor Conference Room in the San Anselmo Town Hall.

Also on the agenda was a discussion on the possibility of sharing engineering services between the two Towns. Staff will return with a financial analysis and draft job description at the next meeting.

## **Town Council News**

At the meeting of Tuesday, January 22, the Town Council took the following actions:

- Approved contract with Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) for a Safe Pathway to School project for public sidewalk work for Brookside School on Butterfield Road and improvements for St. Anselm's and Wade Thomas Schools at the Sequoia Drive/Red Hill Avenue and Ross Avenue/Sir Francis Drake Blvd. intersections.
- Approved the municipal lease papers for financing the Flood Recovery and Improvement Project at Fire Station 19, 777 San Anselmo Avenue.
- Appointed the following Councilmembers to committee assignments:  
Ford Greene – League of California Cities (North Bay Division), Economic Opportunity Subcommittee, and Marin Telecommunications Authority Alternate  
Judy House – Measure G Monitoring Committee
- Heard a presentation on affordable housing and its role in a sustainable future, by Lamar Turner and Katie Crecilius.
- Received the summary results of three Downtown Workshops held to gather community input regarding the area of San Anselmo Avenue between Bolinas and Ross Avenues and provide direction to staff on next steps. Council directed staff to meet with the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee to review ideas submitted at the meeting regarding next steps. This item will be back on the March 11, 2008, agenda for further action.
- Appointed members to the following Boards/Commissions/Committees:  
Planning Commission – Daniel Krebs, Daniel Harris  
Quality of Life Commission – Jon Elam  
Board of Review – Arnie Scher, Jo Julin

## **Wireless Internet Comes to the Library**

The San Anselmo Library is now set up with wireless internet service. Patrons who wish to use their wireless-ready laptops in the Library will find that the system is installed and working. We're happy to be able to provide this service to our Library patrons.

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