

Belvedere E-Newsletter



CITY OF BELVEDERE, CALIFORNIA

November 25, 2013

From the City Manager

Mary Neilan



Zoning Code Revision Proposed

Ever since 2009 when FEMA issued new Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) maps that placed hundreds of Belvedere properties in a 100-year flood zone, residents have been working with the City to understand the impacts and mitigate them if possible.

Properties in the SFHA must comply with development regulations that come into play if an existing home undergoes “substantial improvement” (a renovation project with a cost that exceeds 50% of the current market value of the structure being improved) or new construction (such as a demo and rebuild). Along with additional floodproofing and other structural requirements, these projects must be elevated above what FEMA determines to be the level of flooding likely to occur during a 100-year flood event (Base Flood Elevation or BFE). How much a home in this category would need to be raised varies depending on the lot’s current elevation.

Over the last few years, affected property owners have had to limit their improvement projects to renovations that do not exceed 50% of the structure’s current market value, or have had to design a home that elevates the living space to meet FEMA requirements (garage and storage can go underneath), without exceeding existing height limits. Elevating the floor of a home without allowing the ceiling to be raised severely limits the options for property owners on low lying lots.

The Planning Commission recently took the first step to remedy this situation in the R1-L Zone (Lagoon) by recommending the City Council amend the City’s Zoning Ordinance to measure height from BFE (FEMA designation) plus one foot of freeboard (safety factor), and establish an Absolute Maximum Height in that zone of 28ft from grade. This would allow those homeowners on the lowest lying lots to meet the elevation requirement and still construct a two-story home with 22ft of living space, if they wish.

The next step is for the City Council to consider the Commission’s recommendation. If they agree with the proposed Zoning Code amendment, staff will prepare the environmental analysis and bring a draft ordinance to the City Council in the Spring.

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From the City Manager

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Pension Report Available

The current and future cost of pensions provided to public employees has been an ongoing topic in cities up and down the state for several years. Many studies have been done that attempt to summarize the issues, but given the complexity of the topic, often result in more questions than answers.

At their last meeting, the City Council was presented with an outstanding report on the subject authored by Vice Mayor Bob McCaskill that clearly explains how the pension system is structured, the benefits it provides, the cost to the City, and the City's options going forward. Interested residents can access the report entitled "A Better Understanding of Belvedere's Pension Costs and Obligations" on the City's website at: <http://www.cityofbelvedere.org/DocumentCenter/View/1760>



LANDMARKS
**Holiday
Art & Craft Sale**
Saturday, December 7th
10 to 4
In the Cottage at the
Art & Garden Center Cottage
841 Tiburon Blvd.
Benefiting our Landmarks & Local Artists

This popular holiday fair includes art and crafts from local artists (including our famous Landmarks pear brandy!)

No charge. Free cider for all who shop, and fun door prizes. Twenty percent of all sales benefit the Belvedere-Tiburon Landmarks.

For further information call Leslie @847-4209 or Pam @ 435-1853.

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St. John's Ross Proudly Presents the 27th Annual...



Tour de
NOËL
Opening Hearts and Homes for the Holidays

**Saturday, December 14, 2013
9 AM to 4 PM**

Tickets available online at
www.stjohnsross.org/tour
or call 415-456-1102

Four Beautiful homes decorated for the Holidays

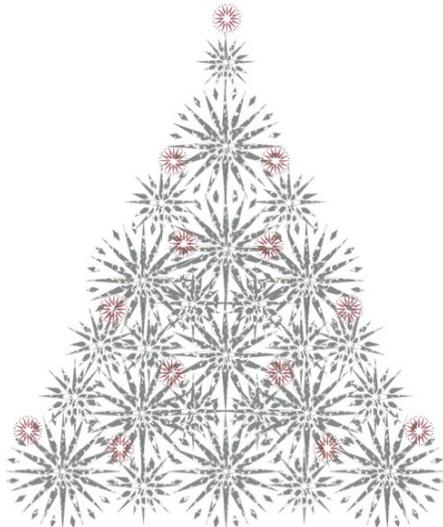
St. John's invites the community to the Tour de Noël House Tour that opens homes and hearts for the Holidays, and supports charities helping those in need in Marin County and beyond. Please join us for lunch and a Christmas Boutique with lots of one-of-a-kinds gifts and goodies!

100% of the net proceeds support over 14 charities in Marin County and beyond, including Gilead House, the Canal Alliance, A Home Away from Homelessness, Family Service Agency of Marin, Homeward Bound of Marin, and the Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance.

Also, don't miss our performance of Truman Capote's heartwarming classic "A Christmas Memory" **Friday, December 13, at 7pm.** www.stjohnsross.org/memory

TIBURON

Holiday Festival



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

A day long holiday party in Tiburon!

With breathtaking views of the city skyline, Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco Bay, and Angel Island, only a Scrooge would dare miss this memorable San Francisco Bay Area holiday event!

For more information or to make gingerbread house decorating reservations, call 415 435 5633 or email tibcc@sbcglobal.net.

Saturday, December 7, Noon to 7 PM

Find the perfect holiday gift!

2 pm to 6 pm: Professional Photos with Santa

See Santa arrive on Main Street in a fire truck at 2pm. Then, visit with Santa and have a family portrait taken by a professional photographer. 46 Main Street.

Noon to 4pm: Ornament Decorating with Santa's Elves

122 Main Street, Ark Row, \$5.

2pm to 6 pm: Chestnuts & Hot Mulled Wine & Cider

Ark Row

2 pm to 4 pm: Bells Bell Choir

Hear the unique sounds of this distinguished bell choir performing holiday favorites - and perhaps a Beatles song or two. Corner of Main Street & Ark Row.

2:30, 3:30 and 4:30 pm: Gingerbread House Decorating

Guaymas Restaurant, 5 Main Street. Please book early as this event sells out. \$35.

4:30 - 6:30 pm: The Merrie Olde Christmas Carolers

Traditional Christmas carols performed in Dickensian costume by members of the San Francisco Opera Chorus. Starting at the Boardwalk Shopping Center, this merrie band of carolers will stroll downtown, ending at Fountain Plaza at 6 pm for the tree lighting ceremony.

6 pm: Tree Lighting Ceremony

Traditional tree lighting ceremony with a special performance by The Merrie Olde Christmas Carolers. See downtown Tiburon lit up like never before! Fountain Plaza.



Belvedere-Tiburon Recreation Presents...

Breakfast with Santa

Saturday, December 14th

9am to 10:30am

Belvedere Community Center

\$15 per person

Please call (415) 435-4355 for reservations.

**HAPPY
THANKSGIVING!**



**From, the City of
Belvedere**



Blackie’s Garden



Blackie’s Garden in full bloom

Blackie’s Garden is colorful public garden located near the parking lot of Blackie’s Pasture, maintained by volunteers and funded by the Tiburon Peninsula Foundation, the Belvedere Community Foundation, the Town of Tiburon and the City of Belvedere. Prior to the Garden’s development in the 1990’s, the space next to the parking lot was often described as “mud hole in

the winter and dust bowl in the summer.” A group of volunteers, calling themselves Blackie’s Brigade, sought to enhance the desolate area with a garden and began gathering funding. After hearing of the project in 1995, local Master Gardener Harvey Rogers became involved and brought in the support of a large group of volunteers including other Master Gardeners and local gardening enthusiasts. Together, they developed a theme for the garden using native plants that emphasized the natural environment and water conservation.

Today, Blackie’s Garden is home to over 2500 native plants, with a variety of color and long bloom times. Plant markers identify the different species and a pedestal is regularly updated by Harvey Rogers with information and educational material. Rogers and other volunteers continue to provide a wide range of support to keep the garden a beautiful place in the community.

Once the rainy season begins and new planting can be properly supported, Rogers intends on adding 15 Aloe Johnson Hybrids to the garden. These plants will bloom red and orange for nine to ten months of the year. Please stop by and enjoy the garden!



Rogers working in Blackie’s Garden