

BCPUD PIPELINE



SUMMER 2014

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In Brief...

Water Supply Update

Bolinas residents are amazing! While the rest of the state seems to be falling short of Governor Brown's request for a 20% reduction in water use necessitated by the on-going drought, our community is not. The town has been averaging about 100 gallons a day per household for the last several months, which is *less than* the mandatory rationing amount imposed in 2009. The BCPUD is extremely grateful for your efforts as you are enabling us to manage our precious and scarce water supply as efficiently as possible.

Please keep up your good work as we progress through the Summer; your efforts will be vital to a successful Fall season prior to the next rainy season. Thank you so much!

Water or Sewer-
Related emergency?
Call 868-1224
(24 hours)

A Decision for the Bolinas Community: Do We Want To Save Terrace Avenue at Surfer's Overlook?

This is the question Supervisor Steve Kinsey posed at a meeting held on May 31, 2014 in the Terrace Avenue neighborhood to discuss the future of Terrace Avenue at Surfer's Overlook. The meeting was organized by representatives of the BCPUD and of the Bolinas Fire Protection District ("BFPD"); at the direction of the Boards of Directors of these districts, the representatives formed a local "Working Group" several years ago to assess the options available for stabilizing the road at this location. The Working Group subsequently formed a partnership with a team of representatives from the County of Marin, led by Supervisor Kinsey, to collaborate on this effort and to jointly pay for the preparation of two geotechnical studies of the bluff and a conceptual design for a stabilization project. The Working Group then evaluated the permits that will be required to install such a project and the likely permitting, design and construction costs.

The May 31st meeting was held to update the property owners most directly affected by the potential collapse of Surfer's Overlook (those who live on Terrace Avenue or one of its side streets, Park, Hillside, Rafael, Marin, Canyon or Ocean Avenue) and to seek their participation in implementing a solution. As the meeting attendees were told, the bluff below Terrace Avenue at Surfer's Overlook will continue to erode and geo-structural engineers have estimated that the road could be compromised/closed within the next three to five years. It is possible to stabilize the bluff and the road above via (1) a replacement of the existing road-level retaining walls (which should preserve the road for at least 10 to 15 years and "buy time" for the next project) and (2) the installation of a sculpted-concrete/soil nail bluff stabilization structure (which should preserve the entire bluff and road above for 50 years or more). As will be detailed below, timely attention and financial participation in the solution by the Bolinas community is essential to preserving the bluff, road, and nearby properties.

Supervisor Kinsey noted that in 2012 the County of Marin recognized and met its responsibility to provide access to homeowners along Terrace Avenue when it spent approximately \$1.3 million to repair the enormous slide at Overlook Road. As such, although the County may be able to contribute a small amount of funds to the Surfer's Overlook repair,





most of the funds will have to be raised locally given the enormous backlog of needs elsewhere in the County's 400 mile road system. That said, the County of Marin has continued to work in partnership with the Working Group (and devote considerable staff time) to identify a solution and the County shared the cost of the geologic and geotechnical analyses of the bluff below Surfer's Overlook at a cost of just under \$115,000 (paid on a 50-50 cost-share basis by the BCPUD and BFPD, on the one hand, and the County of Marin on the other hand). *If you are interested in reviewing either or both of these analyses, please contact the BCPUD at (415) 868-1224 or e-mail the General Manager at jblackman@bcpud.org.*

Similarly Jack Siedman, president of the BCPUD Board of Directors, told the meeting attendees that the BCPUD relocated its high pressure water lines away from Surfer's Overlook in 2013 at a cost of more than \$500,000 in order to ensure the reliability of the community's water supply given the unstable bluff below. The BCPUD also has developed a conceptual design to relocate the sewer line at this location at an estimated cost of nearly \$300,000. As a utility district, the BCPUD's first priority is to ensure safe and reliable water and wastewater services to its customers and regrettably it cannot contribute very much more in the way of funding to stabilize the bluff below Surfer's Overlook; however, the BCPUD remains committed to providing substantial leadership on behalf of the community to implement and pay for a solution.

As the bluff below Terrace Avenue at Surfer's Overlook continues to erode, engineers estimate that the road could become impassable by vehicles within the next three to five years and the stability of nearby properties is threatened. If Terrace Avenue at Surfer's Overlook is closed, Mesa Road will be the only vehicle access between the Firehouse and the downtown and Horseshoe Hill areas, as well, there will only be one way in and out of town for the residences above and west of Surfer's Overlook, including the Big Mesa and outer Mesa Road.

Unfortunately, the cost of a bluff stabilization solution is significant. The estimate to replace the existing road-level retaining walls at Surfer's Overlook ("Road-Level Retaining Wall Replacement Project") is estimated to be \$500,000 (for design, permitting and construction); the good news is that the permit requirements are relatively minor as this is a repair to an existing structure. The cost to stabilize the bluff below Surfer's Overlook with a sculpted concrete/soil nail bluff stabilization structure ("Bluff Stabilization Project") is estimated to be \$6 million (for design, permitting and construction) and the permit requirements are substantial. In fact, the estimated cost to prepare and obtain the substantial number of permits needed from multiple agencies for the Bluff Stabilization Project is at least \$200,000 (which is included in the \$6 million cost estimate).

At this point in time, the BCPUD, BFPD and County of Marin are reaching out to the community – first, to the immediate stakeholders, and next to the broader community. **The agencies plan to sponsor a community meeting at either the Bolinas Community Center or the Firehouse Public Meeting room to discuss whether and how to save Terrace Avenue at the end of the summer or beginning of fall this year, so please watch mail boxes for your invitation and then please come and attend this important meeting!** All of the foregoing information will be presented and the agencies will seek to transition the bluff stabilization project to private management/stakeholders/participants, with the BCPUD, BFPD and County of Marin continuing to provide a leadership role. The agencies are working hard now to identify a core group of local people willing to volunteer and cultivate community support for saving Terrace Avenue as well as lead the fundraising necessary to hire a Project Manager who will: work with the BCPUD, BFPD and County of Marin to apply for and obtain the permits and funds needed; coordinate with the County of Marin to schedule and install the Road-Level Retaining Wall Replacement Project as soon as possible; and manage the effort to install the Bluff Stabilization Project.

If you are interested in serving your community in this important effort, please send an e-mail expressing your interest to jblackman@bcpud.org.