

Fountaingrove II Gazette

Volume V, Issue 4

Summer 2008

Extensive Firebreak Work in 2008

For 2008, the OSMA Board increased its fire safety budget, opting to spend additional funds to expand firebreaks and treat for vegetation re-growth. Additionally, for the first time the OSMA began seriously studying the issue of dead and dying trees in open space.

A working strategy and detailed documentation has been put together with thanks to dozens of hours of devoted volunteer work by Dennis Searles, other Fire & Safety Team members and Fountaingrove II residents. Significant time was spent on the project by Kim Nielsen-Glynn and Dan Cummins who participated in numerous walks of the firebreaks to plan the work, identify, mark and strategize how to manage over 200 dead trees in or adjacent to the firebreaks. Dennis has prepared a detailed listing of the trees and their locations which will be presented to the City for procurement of the required permit for removal any trees. Although the Board has approved the removal of several trees, no work will be done until after the fire season has passed and the City has issued a permit.



Earlier this year, the Board approved widening portions of the interior open space island firebreak within the Vistara development. Some work has been completed and will continue, as well as further widening of another interior firebreak in the Siena development between Parker Hill and Crown Hill.

The OSMA Board has also been working on determining exact locations of property boundaries, particularly where high fire risk invasives such as Scotch broom have been thriving, so as to remove such dangers. Much of that brush has since been removed, or is targeted for future removal. Plans to make Fountaingrove II even more fire safe include removal of small Douglas Firs, which become a fuel ladder to less explosive trees such as Oak and Madrone.

The Board continues to address the preservation of our unique endangered native plant life and forest animals while directing work in the firebreaks and open space, as is required by the governing legal documents establishing the Open Space Management Association. Much has been done, but more work is needed, and energetic residents are encouraged to join in the continuing efforts to maintain the beautiful Fountaingrove area in both an environmental and fire safe manner, as is our legal mandate.

OSMA Annual Meeting Announced

The Annual Meeting of the Open Space Maintenance Association (OSMA) will take place on Wednesday, October 22nd at 6:30 at the Fountaingrove Club. All homeowners are welcome and encouraged to attend this gathering of residents to hear news of Fountaingrove II and to elect two new Board members. Current President Jeff Schween will conduct the meeting, and the new budget will be presented by Treasurer JPaul Dumont.

Come learn about the projects undertaken this year. Ask questions, meet neighbors, get involved.

Become a Part of a Team

Did you know there are lots of opportunities for you to make an impact in our neighborhood? There are several teams/committees helping to improve Fountaingrove II. If you're interested, contact Focus Real Estate & Investments and join one of these great groups: Landscape Team, Finance Committee, Fire & Safety Committee, Hospitality Team.

Volunteering your time and expertise is always a rewarding, worthwhile experience.

Landscaping News

The OSMA Landscaping Committee is as busy as ever. The major fall project they are tackling is re-landscaping the Sage Hill / Rincon Ridge Drive area which has never had irrigation until now.

Also on tap is replacement of many plants that have died in all areas of Fountaingrove II. The committee has spent many hours walking several of our interior streets as well as along the parkway specifying plants to be placed into empty flagged holes.

The committee has refined its working plant list, making a concerted effort to include mostly California native plants that require little or no water, and plants that complement our beautiful native surroundings.

Board Votes for More Natives

This fall, California Flora Nursery in Fulton will be propagating 100 of our rare native Rincon Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos stanfordiana* var. *repens*) and 100 of the rare Rincon Ridge Ceanothus (*Ceanothus confusus*) for planting in our landscape a year from now.

Both of these natives are species the OSMA is legally required to protect and preserve, however, local nurseries do not grow them. The Landscape Committee recommended to the Board that the OSMA contract with Cal Flora for the propagation because it is otherwise impossible to specify their planting in our landscapes. Both species are low growing, evergreen, require no summer water, and provide erosion control as well as wildlife benefits.



Fire Study Underway

In 2004, the OSMA contracted with the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services/Fire Division to create a Fire Assessment Plan for Fountaingrove II. The resulting plan outlined several recommendations for fuel reduction in our open space, indicating areas that posed a more severe threat and which should be treated soonest. Most of the recommendations, which included widening the 30' firebreaks to 100', have been completed.



Recently, the Board decided it was time for an update of the original Fire Assessment Plan, and approved having the same Vegetation Specialist from Sonoma Fire review OSMA's present status and update the original plan to identify priorities that should be addressed today.

This summer, this Fire Specialist toured some of our open space, reviewing our most recent firebreak work, and he was impressed with OSMA's progress. Soon, he will be making a more in depth study, offering new suggestions for fuel reduction work to keep us current with fire-safe theories and techniques.

Fountaingrove Parkway Changes Coming...Or Maybe Not

During this past year the City of Santa Rosa proposed making several alterations along Fountaingrove Parkway and had a \$500,000 budget with which to make some of those changes.

One proposed alteration was to pour concrete to block access across several streets along Fountaingrove Parkway. The OSMA Board, Fire & Safety Team, and many Fountaingrove II residents voiced their strong disagreement with this plan expressing concerns about access in case of fire or other emergencies. The Fire Department echoed those concerns, and the City has since agreed not pour any concrete to block traffic movement.

Recently, the Joint Fountaingrove Safety Committee, comprised of members of the Ranch Master Association and Fountaingrove II communities, met with Jason Nutt, City Traffic and Gary Negri, Santa Rosa Police, to hear an update on the proposed parkway alterations.

Jason Nutt is trying to bring closure to the Parkway Safety Review begun years ago which included the May 2005 Traffic Safety Report. The good news is that traffic accidents are down due, in no small part, to the excellent job the Santa Rosa Police are doing with traffic enforcement. This effort has resulted in a slight reduction in speeds for the entire parkway this past year.

However, due to the recent City budget problems, much of the original \$500,000 allocated to the Fountaingrove Safety Reserve Fund has been returned to the General Fund. Of the remaining funds, \$150,000 must be allocated to a traffic light at Newgate Court when the new fire station is built at that site. Just \$64,000 is remaining in the fund and that will be used, in part, to proceed with alterations at Long Leaf Drive and Altruria Drive. Left turn access will be blocked using plastic paddles and ceramic buttons before year end.

At the meeting, the City Traffic Department reported they are not planning to proceed with their proposed lane closures for Sedgemoore Drive, Day-

break Court and lower Hadley Hill Drive, as there have been no serious accidents, and residents expressed strong opposition to the plan.

The City also reported they will try to keep the posted speed at 35 MPH where it exists because of the roadway's poor design and inadequate sight conditions. State legislative changes could help or hinder this objective. Interestingly, the uphill speed continues to be about 2 MPH faster than the downhill speeds.

At this time, there are no further funds for traffic lights or other improvements, although the City has requested the developer of the proposed Retirement and Care Lodge to allocate \$250,000 to place a stop light at lower Thomas Lake Harris Drive.

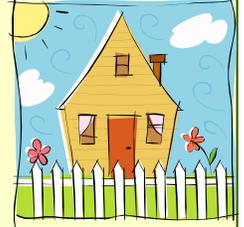


Jason Nutt acknowledged that Fountaingrove II residents favored a traffic light at Rincon Ridge and Hadley Hill Drives, and that it will be the next priority if and when funds become available. Following that priority is moving the large electrical box at Daybreak Court, and possibly a light at Parker Hill Drive. Reducing the parkway from two lanes to one to reduce speed is still a viable option.

Jason Nutt plans to prepare a report to present to the City Council with his parkway recommendations in November. We have had a productive working relationship with the Traffic Department, and it would be in our neighborhood's best interest to have several homeowners attend this meeting to ensure that no uninformed loose cannon try to pull off track what we have worked hard to accomplish with the City. Fountaingrove II will undoubtedly fare better if we are well-represented at the meeting than give those in attendance the impression that FGII does not care about the results and will accept any outcome with benign concurrence.

If you are interested in hearing of the exact date and time of the meeting (probably November 18th), send your email or phone number to Dennis Searles at dennis@bpfinance.com / 528-6636 or Kim Nielsen-Glynn at glynn@sonic.net / 544-7871.

Are you a new homeowner or OSMA volunteer?



If so, watch for your invitation to our first Hospitality Social presented by the Hospitality Team coming on November 9th. The Hospitality Team is a brand new addition to our volunteer army. Its job will be to welcome new homeowners and provide them with information relating to OSMA, Architectural Review Committees, etc. The team also hopes to make the Hospitality Social an annual event thanking all volunteers and welcoming new residents.

Want to be a part of the Hospitality Team? Our next meeting is September 29th. Contact Focus Real Estate & Investments for more information.

Irrigation Problems Solved!

For years the extensive OSMA landscaped areas have been plagued with various irrigation problems. Some problems seemed almost impossible to diagnose and correct. However, with dogged determination, Board member Dan Cummins has helped our contractors finally get to the bottom of all of these ongoing problems. We are so pleased that every one of our landscape planting areas are getting the water they need in these hot, dry summers. Thanks, Dan!

New Board Member

Earlier this year, Randy Rufenacht resigned from the OSMA Board for personal reasons, leaving a vacancy. Former Board member Kim Nielsen-Glynn was subsequently appointed to replace Randy and serve the remainder of his term.

Is Your Landscape Fire Safe?

Fire safe landscapes reduce the chance of ignition. If ignited, they should minimize the heat generated and the ability to transmit fire to structures - yours and your neighbors. Fire safe landscapes are created by designing and maintaining a landscape where there is horizontal and vertical separation between plants to minimize transmission. Look at your landscape - do you see opportunities for a fire to use your plants as a ladder? Choose plants that do not encourage ignition. It is important to understand, though, that there are no fire safe plants. All plants will burn in the right conditions. Ensure your plants are properly irrigated and remove dead leaves, branches and other flammable debris. Include hardscape materials like brick, stone walls, swimming pools, concrete patios, etc. These can act as a fuel break and help slow down or change the path of an approaching fire.

Make sure to pull or cut weeds before seed heads mature. At the same time, do not remove vegetation to the bare soil, as this can destabilize slopes creating erosion and mudslide problems. Remove stacks of construction materials, yard waste and debris piles - and don't pile them at the edge of your property abutting the open space.

Having a Garage Sale? Lost a Pet?

We all appreciate low-tech, inexpensive solutions to today's problems. Taping a poster to a neighborhood lamppost seems like a great way to communicate your information - and it is. But if you plan on putting up a sign, please use a tape that is easily removed (by you) and remove the sign within a reasonable timeframe. Thank you!



Looking for a New Look for Your Yard?

There are plenty of beautiful California native plants that can do the job! Listed below is just a partial list of recommended plants for Fountaingrove II homeowners. These plants thrive in our dry summers (some will need some summer water) and don't need a lot of maintenance. What's more, you'll be attracting lots of birds and animals because you'll be providing some of their native food and shelter sources.

Partial List of Native Plants Recommended for Your Yard

Trees

Acer macrophyllum (Big Leaf Maple)

***Aesculus californica* (California Buckeye)**

Quercus agrifolia (Coast Live Oak)

Quercus douglasii (Blue Oak)

Quercus kelloggii (California Black Oak)

Quercus lobata (Valley Oak)

Quercus wislizenii (Interior Live Oak)



Shrubs

Arctostaphylos conescens var. *sonomensis* (Sonoma Manzanita)

Arctostaphylos glandulosa (Eastwood Manzanita)

Arctostaphylos stanfordiana var. *repens* (Rincon Manzanita)

***Calycanthus occidentalis* (Spice Bush)**

Ceanothus confusus (Rincon Ridge Ceanothus)

Ceanothus foliosus (Wavy Leaf Ceanothus)

Ceanothus 'Frosty Blue'

Ceanothus griseus 'Louis Edmunds'

Ceanothus thrysiflorus 'Skylark'

Cercis occidentalis (Western Redbud)

Dendromecon rigida (Bush Poppy)

Eriogonum fasciculatum (Common Buckwheat)

Garrya elliptica (Silktassel)



Mahonia aquifolium (Oregon Grape)

Mimulus aurantiacus (Sticky Monkey Flower)

Myrica californica (Coffeeberry)

Ribes sanguineum (Red Flowering Currant)

***Heteromeles arbutifolia* (Toyon)**



Groundcovers & Perennials

Mahonia repens (Creeping Mahonia)

***Monardella villosa* (Coyote Mint)**

Epilobium / *Zauschneria californica* (California Fuchsia)

Eriophyllum lanatum (Woolly Sunflower)

Eschscholzia californica (California Poppy)

***Helianthella californica* (California Sunflower)**

Iris douglasiana (Mountain Iris)



Architectural Review Committees Update

As you may know, Fountaingrove II is comprised of almost 600 homes. The OSMA open space and landscaped properties encompass the entire area. However, the Architectural Review Committees, the governing bodies that enforce CC&R regulations, are divided into three separate areas within Fountaingrove II.

The eastern portion of Fountaingrove II has had a functional ARC for many years. Fountaingrove II West and the Summit do not have functional committees, but there are several homeowners who are working to change that. If you are interested in helping to establish the West and Summit Architectural Review Committees, please contact Focus Real Estate & Investments for more information.

Got These Plants? Yank 'Em Out!

The OSMA has a long list of plants that are banned from planting in home landscapes. Most are not permitted because they easily spread, crowding out natives, becoming a nuisance. Every year the OSMA spends time and money removing such invasives from our open space.

But some are also pyrophytes - plants that ignite readily and burn intensely. If you have any of these prohibited plants, please try to remove them soon, particularly these banned pyrophytes: Pampas Grass, Fountain Grass, Scotch or Spanish Broom, Eucalyptus and Acacia.

Thank You to Our Volunteers for 2008!

Fire & Safety Team

Don Allcock
Dave Lichtenstern
Max Bridges
Trudy Moss
Bill Mulert
Roy Thylin
Caroline Zambok

Finance Team

Stacy Magill
Bill Mulert
Dick Muzzio
Roy Thylin

Hospitality Team

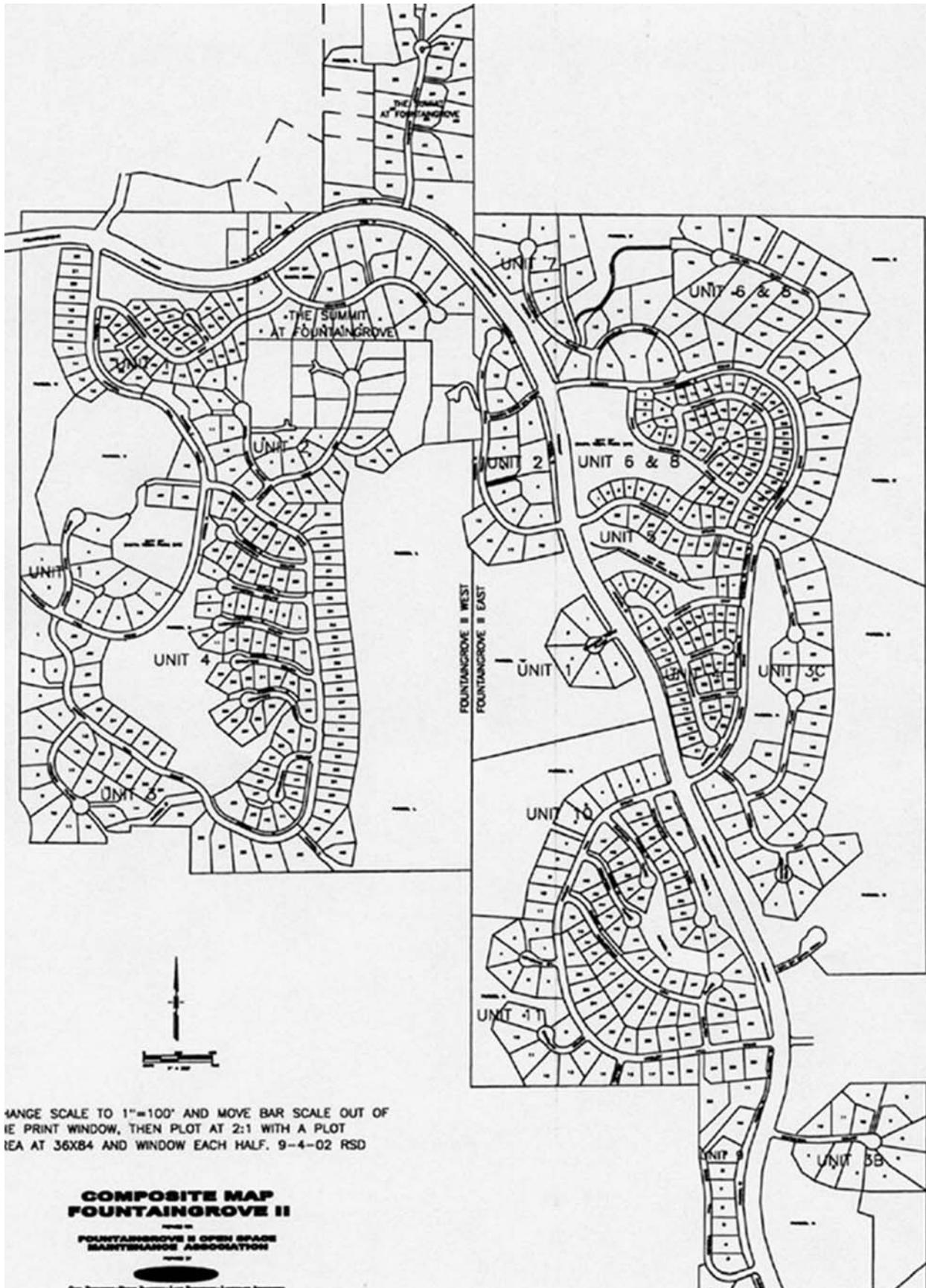
Camille Fanucci
Judy Farless
John Torres

Landscape Committee

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Dee Dee Bridges
Felis Domingues
Camille Fanucci
Bruce McConnell
Anne Mitchell
Loretta Mulert
Jeanne Searles
Leslie Traverso



Fountaingrove II - Map of Homes and Open Space



The Fountaingrove II Gazette

The Fountaingrove II Gazette is published quarterly by the Fountaingrove II OSMA. Any submission information/requests may be directed to the OSMA Board through its property management company:

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Get timely and important neighborhood update notification. Your name and e-mail address will not be shared with anyone else, and it will be hidden in group e-mails.

Simply send an e-mail with your name to: editor@fountaingrove2.com and state that you want to be on the update list.

Contacts

See a problem? A dead tree in open space? A broken irrigation pipe?
Contact Focus Real Estate & Investments at 544-9443.

2008 OSMA Board: Jeff Schween (2007-08), Dennis Searles (2008-09), Dan Cummins (2007-08), JPaul Dumont (2008-09), Kim Nielsen-Glynn (2008-09). OSMA Board meetings are usually held at 3:30 on the third Wednesday of the month at Focus Real Estate & Investments at 3936 Mayette Ave. Call 544-9443 to confirm.

Looking for Native Plants?

The California Native Plant Society's Annual California Native Plant Sale takes place Saturday, October 11th at the Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building from 9:00-1:00.

Trees, shrubs, perennials, bulbs and seeds as well as note cards, books, posters and t-shirts will be available for purchase. Have a question? Expert gardeners will be there to give you an answer.

Visit Our Web Site: www.fountaingrove2.com

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