

To: Mayor and Ross Town Council
From: Gary Broad, Town Manager
Re: Special Permit for First Friday Fiesta
Date: June 7, 2007

I. Project Summary

The Town Council consideration of issuing a special permit to allow the use of the Ross Common for a “First Friday Block Party” on the first Friday of every month.

II. Discussion

The Town has received a request from Kathleen Mahoney to allow a monthly community gathering in Ross, called “First Friday Block Party” on the first Friday of every month, at least in the good weather months. The attached email from Ms. Mahoney and flyer further describe the event.

Staff believes taking advantage of the Ross Common for periodic gatherings of Ross residents is a great idea. We applaud Ms. Mahoney for her efforts at organizing this community event. We do see four pertinent issues relative to this event:

- **Special Permit Requirement**

Section 9.28.170 and 9.28.180 of the Ross Municipal Code are attached. The code requires that any recreational activity by an organization with more than twenty-five members receive a special permit from the Town. It further provides that no permit will be issued for a gathering in excess of fifty persons.

Staff supports the issuance of a special permit for these monthly events, which have already met with such success to grow beyond twenty-five people. If this event further increases in popularity, the Town Council will need to consider how to address the current code limits of fifty persons.

- **Alcohol**

Event organizers and Chief Barry Heying have been in communication regarding the event and Alcohol and Beverage Control requirements related to serving alcohol in a public location. At this point, Chief Heying indicates that he is comfortable with the event, provided the “First Friday Gang” does not provide Sangria, or any alcohol. As he stated in an email to me, “The laws regulating alcohol sales, use and consumption are applicable to places open to the public. If the event organizers provide alcohol or facilitate its consumption by serving donated or “community” wine, sangria or keg beer, then a permit (ABC) would be required.” This still allows individual participants to bring their own alcohol to the event.

- Garbage

Post-event clean-up is an issue we deal with from all Ross Common events. Staff would suggest that the “First Friday Block Party” be approved with a requirement that the event organizers be responsible for ensuring that the area is cleaned up after the event concludes.

- Other Items

Early plans for the “First Friday Block Party” included other proposed activities, such as a fire pit. With the elimination of the sangria as discussed above, staff is comfortable with the event as proposed. If the organizers would like to expand the scope of the event, they should first contact staff to verify that there are no issues with the expanded activities.

Finally, staff is not aware of any conflict between this use and other use of Ross Common, we do want to ensure that the same area is not being used by multiple groups at the same time. The event organizers should coordinate through Ross Recreation on the dates they want to use the Common and the area involved to insure no overlap in Common usage.

III. Recommendation

Staff recommends that a special permit be issued to the “First Friday Block Party” with the requirements suggested above related to the special permit, alcohol, garbage, Ross Common activities and coordination. Staff would also ask the organizers to include the Town on their email list...both so we can be aware of when activity will be occurring at the Common and so we might be able to stop by for some “conversation and camaraderie.”