

APPROVED MINUTES 2020 05-26
Conservation Committee
Special Zoom meeting Agenda
1:00 pm

Present: Chiariello, DeStaebler, Heiple, Murphy, Plunder, Stromeyer, Walz

Also Present: John Richards, Council liaison; Alex Kawaja, student representative; Rita Comes, Majda Jones

Absent: Magill

1. Call to Order 1:00 via Zoom
2. Zoom instructions – raise hand to speak, unmute when called on.
3. Oral communications
 - a. Open Space Acquisition Committee will meet via Zoom this Thursday 5/28 at 7pm. Chiariello reports she will be meeting with Young and Dennis about progress of survey for adding road remnant to frog Pond Open space before that meeting.
4. *Minutes for April 2020 approved with correction:* The fire clearing along Los Trancos Road that went well was in conjunction with the Lost Trancos Water District, not the Blue Oaks HOA. The previous Blue Oaks clearing more than a decade ago had been contentious with overly aggressive work proceeding with little concern for habitat. It became so disputatious that CC member Paul Heiple was banned from Blue Oaks property by then HOA land manager Osterling.
5. Old Business
 - a. Oversight of Significant Town Owned Properties. Priorities revised anticipating decreased available Town funding. Next year's budget request – assume minimal funding, 5 year plans – hopefully reasonable resumption of funding 2021-2. *Committee agrees that this year's PW expenditures should be focused on weed control, and other restoration work can be delayed.*
 - i. Resuming projects as restrictions ease -Coordination with Public works about resumed maintenance of Open Spaces. We must adapt to the fact that Young has a very full plate and cannot respond quickly to requests.
 - ii. SpringDown – Mechanically mowed since last meeting. Recommended other small items still pending.
 - iii. Town Center – Go Native has begun working there again.
 - iv. Frog Pond – No work done so far. Murphy is in continued discussion with Young and Dennis about how to meet all required State and Town requirements to hire privately funded gardening firm to do needed work.
 - v. Triangle Park – Regular maintenance resumed. About 10% of recommended restoration remains to be done, mostly clearing at northern end around large oak.
 - vi. Ford Field – deStaebler reports that the field needs selective mowing asap. Harding grass is now along the path and blooming. Blooming Thistles along the access road need whacking asap. Another large patch of thistles are by the Giant Sequoia. Tall Poison Hemlock is new to this area where Tree of Heaven was persistent for years. Cutting it before it seeds should stop it from spreading. Tree of Heaven finally not seen thanks to repeated eradication work by Magill and Walz.
 - vii. Rosottis Field deStaebler reports work has been done here and area looks generally good. There are some Thistles along the creek side of the parking lot which should be removed before they spread more widely.
 - b. Label trees Town Center – Walz has materials but not put up.
 - c. Milkweed – Gibson Anderson reports that mowing knocked down all but a few flags near pond at Spring Down and no milkweed can be seen. The ones we planted near Jeremy's window at Town Center are not visibly re-sprouting and all but 3 flags have disappeared. The plants not put on Town owned space were distributed to neighbors to plant. No Monarch has been seen yet this year in PV.
 - d. Tip of the Month – Magill absent.
 - e. What's blooming now – Walz will coordinate with Magill to choose.

- f. Kudos – as windup to Stick it to your Thistles
 - g. Changes heritage shrubs – in Planning hands
 - h. Stick it to your Thistles virtual community event has participation from a small but enthusiastic group who shared photos.
 - i. Rodenticides – Chiariello shared short videos of red shouldered hawk feeding fledglings in her nest. She suggests we do a community event asking folks to share their methods of non toxic rodent control. Majda Jones suggests we solicit similar videos from residents. Our approach should be positive and focus on how interesting and valuable the predators are; the anti-rodenticide message can be gentle. *Committee unanimously approved a virtual community event on local raptors and the threat of rodenticides.* Chiariello, Murphy and Plunder will design and coordinate with Chinn.
 - j. Annual Report to Council Murphy gave via Zoom on 5/13. PP presentation previously shared with members.
6. New business
- a. What are our Singing Frogs doing now? *Committee unanimously approves a project for ongoing education of the community about the Singing Frogs that make Frog Pond Open space so special.* Heiple shared photos he has taken locally of the small frogs. Murphy and Heiple will create and coordinate with Chinn for design/distribution. Rita Combs suggests we incorporate PV students studying at home during shelter-in-place and make a simple lesson plan to guide students to find information we could incorporate into the educational materials.
 - b. Another Community building viral event? Rodent proofing? See 5.i and 6.a above
 - c. Budget to be discussed and approved at June meeting.
 - d. SOD blitz – see Appendix A. Virtual this year – requires on line training and registration before can pick up materials.
7. Adjournment at 2:30
8. Next meeting June 23, 1:00 pm Virtual most likely

APPENDIX A

PENINSULA SOD BLITZ 2020

Citizen Science responds to the Coronavirus Outbreak

ONLINE TRAINING + IN-PERSON PACKET PICKUP/RETURN

Due to the statewide “Shelter-in-Place” order, the SOD Blitz organizers have decided not to cancel the Blitz, but to redesign it, so that it's safe for everyone to participate in! The SOD Blitzes have become a tradition for many, while providing key information to help save our oaks from a devastating disease. The presence of new SOD strains is alarming and the SOD blitzes are the best, if not the only, program to intercept them before they spread. The SOD Blitz organizers feel that it is important to provide a sense of continuity in our daily lives amidst this crisis, by providing you with the option to participate in a safe, healthy and tremendously useful activity.

Please visit www.portolavalley.net/sodblitz2020 to complete the online training and registration before collecting the sampling materials at the SOD Blitz Stations.

Pickup Packets Starting: Saturday, May 30th 10:00 am

Return Packets by: Tuesday, June 2nd 10:00 am

PLEASE NOTE - two pickup/return locations to comply with shelter-in-place order:

* **Portola Valley:** SOD Blitz Station will be located on the Historic Schoolhouse porch, 765 Portola Road, Portola ValleY

* **Woodside:** SOD Blitz Station will be located between Independence Hall and Town Hall, look for the signs out in front.

APPENDIX B

Link to Chris Field article in NYT re wildfires

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/14/opinion/wildfires-coronavirus.html?searchResultPosition=4>