



TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY

Bicycle, Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee Meeting

Wednesday 2nd September 2020

8:15 AM Online with ZOOM – usually at the Schoolhouse

765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028

Bicycle, Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

1 Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Ed Holland called the meeting to order at 8:20 am.

Gary Hanes, Angela Hey, Ed Holland (Chair), Kevin Welch and Kenny Cheung were present. Also in attendance were Howard Young (Town Public Works Director), Craig Hughes (Town Council member) and Gary Nielsen (Police Commissioner). San Mateo County Sheriff's representative Andy Hui (who had reported to Howard that he could only stay for a minute) called in on the phone.

In addition, residents from Willowbrook attended – Jeff Morgan (110 Willowbrook), Jim Green (120 Willowbrook), Joan and Philip Leighton (130 Willowbrook), Ted and Caren Sykes (by phone), Denise Lautmann (150 Willowbrook) and Leigh Pyle.

2 Oral Communications – Resident and Open Committee Comments

Ed reported that a boy scout, Griffin Murphy, had written to the Almanac News editor about crosswalks and bike lane safety.

3 Approve Minutes from the August 5th 2020 meeting

The minutes of the August 5th 2020 meeting were approved, proposed by Kevin, seconded by Ed.

4 Sheriff's Report

Sergeant Andy Hui called in. There are no monthly reports because of wildfires.

He'd been assigned to the County Emergency Operations for wildfire for 2 weeks, working 16+ hour days. He and others have been working on preplanning evacuations and setting up a local aid center in Pescadero. He is working with Zonehaven (<https://www.zonehaven.com/>) to divide evacuation zones into smaller regions. He wants to have a plan that works for the town, with zones as few as 6 houses in some cases.

Ed asked how the zones would be communicated to the town. Andy said they are still working on it – he said he's always available by email.

5 Special Meeting to Discuss: Day Visitor Overflow Parking Associated with MROSD and Town Trails

The purpose of the meeting was to give residents on Willowbrook the opportunity to share their thoughts about parking in their neighborhood by hikers on Windy Hill Preserve and Coal Mine Ridge trails.

Howard provided background information. He reported on actions taken during the COVID-19 pandemic to manage car parking on Willowbrook. Initially, parking was restricted as the town had put out temporary no parking signs on Willowbrook. Then cars parked further down Willowbrook and on other streets. Howard also noted there was also construction parking on Willowbrook. Howard had counted vehicles and visited Willowbrook with Don Bullard, Woodside Fire District Fire Marshall, who said there was room for a fire truck.

5.1 Issues Noted at Willowbrook and Alpine Roads

Jim Green, representing residents of 120, 130 and 140 Willowbrook noted 4 problems:

1. Congestion at the Alpine and Willowbrook junction
2. Residents on both sides of the street find that their driveways or mailboxes are blocked by parked cars. He suggested that parking be restricted to the north side of the street where there are odd-numbered houses – that side of the street has fewer driveways. The horse trail on the south side needs space. Residents knew there would be hikers when they bought houses so they want to welcome hikers and are not against some parking on Willowbrook.
3. The Willowbrook hill at Alpine provides a fast descent for cyclists. When exiting the driveway at 130, if a large vehicle is parked above the driveway it is difficult to see a descending cyclist. Jim Green noted it doesn't happen often, but he would like a one car space above his driveway to improve visibility.
4. At 165 Willowbrook – a resident put trash cans on the street where there is an island in the middle of the road where the street is narrower –

Leigh Pyle – seconded everything that Jim reported. She liked to welcome hikers to the neighborhood.

Denise Lautmann noted that trash cans in the street at 165 Willowbrook to slow traffic was a safety issue. After speaking with a resident, she noted that the cans are now in the street less often.

Jeff Morgan from 110 Willowbrook said traffic around Alpine and Willowbrook has been crowded recently, particularly on weekends. He thought it was an issue that the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) needs to address. Parking by a fire hydrant, fast cyclists, no room for horses on the trail, cars failing to stop at the stop sign and many more cars than usual are all safety concerns.

5.2 Issues Noted at Nearby Streets

Ed noted that the effect of the town's temporary no parking signs had been to cause parking near Corte Madera School on Alpine and at other locations not normally used by Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) visitors. Angela noted that over 40 cars had been parked on Willowbrook at weekends and Ed explained the committee's car counts during June and July.

5.3 Influencing Factors, Short Term and Long Term. Potential Measures

5.3.1 Curb Painting Near Even-numbered Driveway Exits Where Cyclists Have Speed

Jim Green wants the curb painted for one car space above his driveway so he can see cyclists coming downhill. Red curb paint adjacent to a driveway is the only action Denise feels is warranted. She noted that many years ago, in discussions with the town, the community didn't want a red curb the whole way down Willowbrook. She wants to welcome people.

Kevin also noted that there are fast cyclists in other parts of Portola Valley (e.g. on Alpine). He would like the committee to do something about speeding cyclists. Denise said there's a week-day peloton ride that speeds down Willowbrook. Painting on the uphill side of driveways at 130, 140 and 150 would help residents see the cyclists.

Craig asked Howard what steps would be needed to be taken to paint the curbs red. Howard said marking one space near a driveway is a personal matter. If there is red striping along longer stretches of curb, then Howard mentioned that one has to look at the impact of shifting cars to other parts of the town, accident history, alternative areas for parking and other impacts.

Kevin asked whether the Sheriff could enforce a parking violation if the curb was painted red. Craig and Howard agreed it was enforceable.

Jeff Morgan says painting the curb red doesn't solve the problem of cars overwhelming the street on weekends. He said you can always have residential parking permits, as they do in other jurisdictions.

5.3.2 Midpeninsula Open Space District Communications

Jim Green suggested studying the MROSD environment noting that there is room a little further up Alpine, beyond Willowbrook, by the entrance to Windy Hill off Alpine. He suggested that MROSD should provide more parking on their own land.

Howard said that Jeremy had spoken to MROSD and he suggested that residents could also write to MROSD. Kenny suggested that MROSD update its website to inform people that there are very few spaces for parking near Willowbrook. Ed also encouraged reaching out to MROSD and mentioning website update possibilities.

Howard said the right of the way along Willowbrook was dedicated to the town for transportation. MROSD was limited on parking spaces by the town when the Windy Hill car park was built.

5.3.3 Other Potential Measures

It was suggested that overflow parking go to the school car park at weekends.

Kevin wondered about having information cards to put on windshields suggesting alternative car parking places for Willowbrook residents. Howard didn't want to increase friction between visitors and residents. Denise said she wouldn't want to put cards on windshields. She wants to focus on safety and welcoming people.

5.4 BPTS and Town Next Steps

Ed asked Howard for comments. Howard suggested the committee digest the issues for the next meeting.

6 Public Works Update

Howard reported that this year's paving project, postponed because of COVID, will be done next summer. He has budgeted for crossing improvements, but unsure of how COVID-19 will impact community input.

The town continues with wildfire mitigation – removing combustible vegetation. Town staff are looking at evacuation routes – gates were tested and found to open satisfactorily. Stanford is doing fire mitigation work on their Alpine Road property. San Mateo County is using Ford Field as a storage area for work. Utility companies are also doing work.

Field practices have started. Loading areas at Rossotti Field have been worked out in conjunction with the Alpine Inn.

Howard said that town public works are continuing and soon they would be working on storm drains.

7 Ongoing Committee Business

Angela had circulated ideas for virtual events – she will provide a schedule for posting events and items of interest to the committee and then Kari Chinn, Communications and Community Engagement Analyst for committee messages.

8 Next meeting scheduled: October 7th 2020 at 8:15 am on Zoom.

The next meeting will be at 8:15 am online via Zoom on Wednesday October 7th.

9 Adjournment

Ed adjourned the meeting at 9:31 a.m.