



TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
Wildfire Preparedness Committee
Tuesday, March 1, 2022, 4:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

SPECIAL VIDEOCONFERENCE MEETING AGENDA

Remote Meeting Covid-19 Advisory: On September 16, the Governor signed AB 361, amending the Ralph M. Brown Act (Brown Act) to allow legislative bodies to continue to meet virtually during the present public health emergency. AB 361 is an urgency bill which goes into effect on October 1, 2021. The bill extends the teleconference procedures authorized in Executive Order N-29-20, which expired on September 30, 2021, during the current COVID-19 pandemic and allows future teleconference procedures under limited circumstances defined in the bill. Portola Valley Town Council and commission and committee public meetings are being conducted electronically to prevent imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees. The meeting is not available for in-person attendance. Members of the public may attend the meeting by video or phone linked in this agenda.

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Meeting ID: 884 8388 3040

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MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Open Communications for Items not on Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes of the February 1, 2022, Meeting
4. Review and Approve Amended Committee's Governing Documents / Consider Recommendation to Amend Scope
 - a. Review and Approve Amended Committee Charter (attached)
 - b. Review and Approve Recommendation to Amend Scope of Committee Responsibilities and Restructure Subcommittees (attached)
5. Discuss Goals and Priorities for 2022
 - a. Vegetation Management (J. Youstra)
 - b. Finance / Insurance (J. Hammer)
 - c. Evacuation (D. Pfau)
 - d. Home Hardening (MJ Lee)
6. Update on Evacuation Study (Bob Grandy, Fehr and Peers)
7. Safety Element Update (J. Dennis)
8. Standing Items – As Needed
 - * Fire Marshal Update
 - * Staff Updates
 - * Review of Committee Correspondence/Items of Note
9. Adjourn

Wildfire Preparedness Committee Minutes

February 1, 2022

In attendance:

Committee Members:

Michael Tomars, Chair
Dale Pfau, Vice Chair
Nona Chiariello
Jennifer Hammer
M.J. Lee
Robert Younge
Jennifer Youstra

Town Council Liason

Sarah Wernikoff

Town Staff

Jeremy Dennis, Town Manager
Cara Silver, Town Attorney

Fire Marshal

Don Bullard

MROSD

Chris Barresi

Members of the Public:

Jeff Aalfs
Ulrich Aldag
Paul Armstrong
Liz Babb
Valerie Baldwin
Jane Bourn
David Cardinal
Dudley Carlson
Edith Collin
Kristy Corley
Rusty Day
Patty Dewes
John Donahoe
Laurie Duval
Ron Eastman
Diana Fischer
Bob Grandy
Gary Hanning
Susan Hansen
Alyson Wood Illich
Marc Irvin
Leslie Kraus
JKLeight
Helga Lewis
Lee Middleman

Renee Mille
 Vic Schachter
 Bob Schultz
 Nan Shostak
 Onnolee Trapp
 David Tyree
 Caroline Vertongen

Item 1 - Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 4 pm. The Committee's agenda was modified to accommodate the time constraints of certain presenters. The order of the agenda changed after Item 3. Item 7 was repositioned as Item 4. Item 6 was pulled from the agenda and will be prioritized for the March 2022 meeting. The balance of the agenda proceeded as set forth.

Item 2 - Open Communications:

Bob Turcott commented that he viewed the committee's actions as evidence that the committee believes that vegetation management and home hardening are necessary for fire management but not building separation. Cal Fire standards recognize that building separation plays a role as well.

Item 3 - Approval of Minutes:

The December minutes were passed unanimously with the following changes:

- Caroline Vertongen's name was misspelled in the Open Communications section.

Item 4- Introduction to Fire Maps (Ray Moritz)

Mr. Moritz was hired in 2008 to conduct a risk assessment for fire risk throughout the Town of Portola Valley, and to make maps showing areas of very high, high and moderate risk. Moritz added further detail to the Cal Fire Data as depicted in the presentation slide below.

| Fire Behavior Factors | Cal Fire | Moritz |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Project Survey | Aerial Only | Aerial – Ground Truthing |
| Resolution | 20ac Urban / 200 ac rural | 5 ac/∞ |
| Slope | < or > 20% | 0 % to 50+% |
| Aspect | Not Considered | SE (mod), S (high) SW (very high) NW (mod), NE (low) |
| Ascending Drainages "Chimneys" | Not Considered | Included |
| Vegetation Fuel Types | 5 | 11 (compared to NFFL Models) |
| Developmental Stage | Not Considered | Low, Mod, High, Extreme |
| Burnability | Based on perceived density | Based on NFFL Fuel type, both canopy & undergrowth densities and development stages |

Mr. Moritz commented that fire specialists haven't yet established a comprehensive understanding of the impact of structures on fire in a given area.

Michael thanked Ray for his presentation and added that it's gratifying to see a professional analysis confirming our work on steep slopes.

Special Comment: Michael

Michael welcomed our newest members on the committee- Jennifer Hammer, Robert Younge, and Sara Wernikoff our Town Council representative. Nona Chiariello was also welcomed as the committee member representing the Conservation Committee. Michael thanked all of them for their service to the town.

Item 5- Presentation of Evacuation Study (Bob Grandy, Fehr and Peers)

Dale opened the Evacuation Study discussion, reminding everyone that the study is for major arteries only. Smaller outlets will be added in time.

Bob Grandy started the presentation outlining the following goals of the study:

1. Identification of major evacuation routes;
2. Analysis of the capacity of these routes; and
3. Identification of residential streets that only have one egress outlet.

The study will be doing traffic simulations to identify evacuation time estimates and bottlenecks on certain routes. The study will also identify traffic control locations where sheriffs may be needed to manage traffic in an emergency situation.

The two scenarios currently being modeled are:

- Scenario 1: Fire closes Alpine @280
- Scenario 2: Fire closes Portola Road @ Sand Hill

The demand scenario being considered is early on a weekday morning (6am), so students are not at school yet.

The study also assumes:

- A single outbound lane
- 100% evacuation
- Canada college is the Designated Evac Center

They will also look at traffic strategies that might increase the speed of evacuation.

Item 6- Review of Committee Charter; Consider Updates and Revisions

Michael talked about committee composition and requested input as to whether representatives of the ASCC were needed. Often it is hard to get volunteers who can do both, so while it might be optimal, we need to consider whether it's mandatory to include ASCC representation.

Michael motioned to remove hard coding of ASCC as a mandatory for committee membership. Dale seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Michael also asked if there is consensus on creating another subcommittee to study finance and funding.

Michael motioned to create a finance subcommittee. Jennifer Youstra seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 7- State of Wildfire Preparedness (MJ Lee)

MJ reported on a pilot project to test the efficacy and financial impact of a neighborhood-wide home hardening and defensible space program. Details were included in the following slides:

The image shows three presentation slides related to wildfire preparedness in Portola Valley. Slide 1, titled "State of Residential Wildfire Preparedness in Portola Valley", lists a sub-committee goal for Dec-2021 and details a pilot project to demonstrate neighborhood-wide home hardening and defensible space. It also lists proposed benefits to the neighborhood, such as WFPD assessments, group buys, and safety improvements. Slide 2, titled "Find a Pilot Neighborhood", provides criteria for selecting a neighborhood, including leadership, existing mitigation, and street renewal status. It lists 15 neighborhoods that were walked and notes that only 10% are currently wildfire prepared. Slide 3 is an infographic titled "State of Wildfire Preparedness Portola Valley" that uses a pencil graphic to show the current state: 25% of risk-takers are "Will Not Prepare", 65% are "Get on Board", and 10% are "In the Game". It sets a goal of 75% hardened and defensible homes and provides a note that some segments may not implement due to financial or personal preferences.

Slide 1: State of Residential Wildfire Preparedness in Portola Valley

Sub-Committee goal in Dec-2021

- Pilot Project to demonstrate neighborhood-wide home hardening and defensible space
- Proposed benefits to neighborhood
 - WFPD Assessment
 - WFPD chipping
 - Group buy
 - Prioritization in Right of Way cleanup
 - Waiver of Right of Way permits
 - Waiver of tree removal permits
 - Improve evac safety at corner lots
 - WFPD letter certifying neighborhood
 - Financial assistance or incentive

mj lee Feb-1-2022 **1**

Slide 2: Find a Pilot Neighborhood

- Where to start?
- Neighborhood Watch or WPV-Ready
 - Has leadership
 - Some homeowners already mitigated
 - Already ahead of the game
- Streets with non-renewals
 - Highly motivated ??
- Walked 15 neighborhoods
 - Bear Gulch, Brookside, Cresta Vista, Golden Hills, Hillbrook, Meadowood, Minoca, Possum Lane, Stonegate, Tan Oak, Valencia Court, Wayside, Willowbrook, Woodside Highlands, Wyndham

➤ Only 10% are wildfire prepared

Slide 3: State of Wildfire Preparedness Portola Valley

25% Risk-takers
May never prepare home for wildfire

Will Not Prepare
A segment may not implement due to financial inability, aesthetics, personal values, preference for risk

State of Wildfire Preparedness Portola Valley

65% Get on Board
Our goal is to get 65% more homes to do home hardening and defensible space, moving them from yellow to green in this slide

10% Prepared for Wildfire
In the Game
Have implemented home hardening and defensible space

Goal: 75% Hardened and Defensible
The minimum goal we hope to achieve in Wildfire Preparedness

25% Will Not Prepare | 75% Get on Board and In the Game

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Item 8- Standing Items- As Needed

a. Fire Marshal Update

None.

b. Staff Updates

None.

c. Review of Committee Correspondences/Items of Note

Letter from Bob Turcott included in agenda packet.

Item 9- Adjournment

The Committee meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Item 4(a)
Wildfire Preparedness Committee Charter

MISSION

Given the inherent risk of wildfire in the Town of Portola Valley and evolving character of wildfire related events due to climate change, the Wildfire Preparedness Committee ("WPC") shall advise the Town Council on ways to mitigate risks associated with wildfires.

DUTIES & FUNCTION

To provide the Town Council with recommendations to:

- (1) Advise on the most effective and appropriate vegetation management practices to reduce wildfire danger;
- (2) Suggest opportunities to harden structures from wildfires, and regulations for future construction;
- (3) Determine potential sources of funding to implement any risk mitigation programs adopted by the Town Council;
- (4) Coordinate with the Emergency Preparedness Committee ("EPC") to ensure that residents understand what steps to take in the event of a wildfire emergency, which includes assisting the EPC with communications before, during and after such emergencies;
- (5) Advise on new or more effective ways to coordinate efforts between partner agencies, volunteer groups, and town committees;
- (6) Analyze additional options for improving wildfire preparedness as requested by the Town Council or resulting from research.

RESPONSIBLE TO

Town Council

COORDINATION

Staff Liaison – Town Manager and other assigned staff as needed

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this Committee shall consist of nine (9) members appointed by the Mayor in concurrence with the Town Council as follows: (6) members shall be from the public at large, (1) member from the Town Council, (1) member from the EPC, and (1) member from Conservation Committee.

As deemed necessary by the WPC, a technical advisory committee made up of experts from Town partners, agencies, and issue-area specialists may be created to advance WPC goals and priorities.

SUBCOMMITTEE STRUCTURE

At its discretion, the WPC may establish any number of subcommittees as it deems necessary to execute its mission. Subcommittees may be only established or dissolved through a majority vote of WPC members who are in good standing.

MEETINGS

Monthly meetings

REPORTS

The Committee will work with their staff liaisons to determine how frequently it will make reports to the Town Council.

CURRENT COMMITTEE CHARTER
Wildfire Preparedness Committee Charter

MISSION

Given the inherent risk of wildfire in Portola Valley and the changing character of wildfires due to climate change, the Wildfire Preparedness Committee shall advise the Town Council, on a limited duration basis, on ways to reduce wildfire danger, and increase resident resiliency in a wildfire emergency

DUTIES & FUNCTION

To provide the Town Council with short-, medium and long-term recommendations to:

1. Ensure residents have the tools to understand what to do in a wildfire emergency, including expectations on how communications work before, during, and after a wildfire;
2. Prepare residents for evacuation due to a wildfire, and the information needed to maximize success in an emergency;
3. Advise on the most effective and appropriate vegetation management practices to reduce wildfire danger;
4. Suggest opportunities to harden existing homes from wildfires, and regulations for future construction;
5. Determine potential sources of funding to implement any programs adopted by the Town Council;
6. Advise on new or more effective ways to coordinate efforts between partner agencies, volunteer groups, town committees, and state work;
7. Analyze additional options for improving wildfire preparedness as requested by the Town Council or resulting from research.

RESPONSIBLE TO

Town Council

COORDINATION

Staff Liaison – Town Manager and other assigned staff as needed

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this Committee shall consist of nine (9) members appointed by the Mayor in concurrence with the Town Council. Five (5) members shall be from the public at large, and four (4) members shall be from the Town Council, the ASCC, the Emergency Preparedness Committee, and the Conservation Committee respectively. In addition, a technical advisory committee made up of experts from Town partners, agencies, and issue-area specialists shall be created and participate as needed.

MEETINGS

Monthly Regular meetings are to be held on the first Tuesday of every month at 4:00 pm.

REPORTS

The Committee will work with their staff liaisons to determine how frequently it will make reports to the Town Council

Item 4(b)

RE: Recommendation to Amend Scope of Committee Responsibilities and Restructure Subcommittees

RECOMMENDATION

On April 10, 2019, the Town Council created the Wildfire Preparedness Committee ("WPC") to address wildfire resiliency issues. At the time of its inception, the WPC was structured with the following three operating subcommittees: (i) Home Hardening/Insurance/Infrastructure Back-up; (ii) Resident Communications and Outreach/Evacuation Routes; and (iii) Vegetation Management/Defensible Space. Over the course of several years, the WPC has developed specific core competencies in areas supportive of its three subcommittees, and three rounds of recommendations have been provided to the Town Council by the WPC relative to the work of its respective subcommittees. As the WPC commences its third year, a renewed focus will be placed on its primary mission of addressing higher level risks, particularly related to mitigating the occurrence of wildfire and obtaining funds required to support these efforts.

To facilitate the continued advancement of the WPC's objectives, the current subcommittee structure should be amended to support certain core areas as follows:

- (1) Vegetation Management/Defensible Space will be merged with Home Hardening;
- (2) Insurance will be merged with the newly formed Finance Subcommittee;
- (3) Resident Communications will support the dissemination of relevant informational content from subcommittees to the community at large; and
- (4) Pursue relocation of Evacuation within the Emergency Preparedness Committee ("EPC").

DISCUSSION

Combining vegetation management and defensible space will foster synergies relative to the development of resiliency programs that will require funding sources. The Finance Subcommittee's efforts will seek alternatives that will support the execution of recommendations forwarded by the vegetation management and defensible space. Given the fluid nature of insurance markets, Finance will also seek to obtain transparency in connection with prevailing insurance trends so that residents can take appropriate action. The EPC's current mission is to coordinate emergency services (including neighborhood response programs) in cooperation with the Woodside Fire Protection District and the San Mateo County Office of Emergency Services. Such mission encompasses preparedness, which includes evacuation for a variety of disasters (e.g., earthquakes, wildfires, etc.). Relocating outreach and evacuation within the EPC eliminates redundancies across the EPC and WPC. To ensure ongoing coordination, pursuant to the WPC charter, one member of the WPC must be a current member of the EPC.

Wildfire Preparedness Committee

Finance subcommittee

Update March 1, 2022

Short term goal

Baseline report on PV funding for wildfire preparedness

- Current programs, costs and funding source
- Near-term funding changes
 - Example: Increased home inspection costs
- Grant opportunities in the pipeline

Long-term goal

- Create a collection of financial scenarios for possible future wildfire programs or projects
 - Ballpark estimate of program cost
 - Include several financial scenarios using different assumptions and program models
 - Emphasis on using existing program financial data from other cities that match PV size and budget
- Ongoing: report on changes in PV funding for wildfire preparedness

Sharon Hanlon

From: caroline Vertongen

Sent: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 1:04 PM

To: Town Center <TownCenter@portolavalley.net>

Cc: Sarah Wernikoff <swernikoff@portolavalley.net>; Craig Hughes <chughes@portolavalley.net>; Jeff Aalfs <JAalfs@portolavalley.net>; Maryann Moise Derwin <mderwin@portolavalley.net>; John Richards <jrichards@portolavalley.net>

Subject: Issues with Cal Water/fire hydrants/ and fire prevention

Good evening Chair Tomars and members of the Wildfire Prep committee,

I hope you get this email well. Last email to Vice Chair Pfau was intercepted by Jeremy Dennis and I needed to confirm that the email was not sent to him but to the Wildfire Preparedness Committee

First of all I would like to thank you all for the time you spend to ensure the safety of our community. I hope your efforts are geared towards "fire and wildfire prevention"

Town council relies on "resiliency" and sadly enough has failed to uphold the guidelines of our General Plan and failed repeatedly to take action when residents expressed their concerns.

Thank you for requesting Mr. Moritz to present his thorough study and findings.

Our General Plan, Safety Element and other guidelines referenced this map and findings since 2009- We, PV residents, have addressed our concerns at Emergency preparedness meetings, meetings with Fire department officials, Town Council and staff for many years

Water supply, water quality, and water pressure have also been the concerns of many residents for many years. We have spoken at Town Council meetings, Emergency Preparedness meetings, sent many emails to staff and other officials like our fire department, CalWaterand got the runaround. I have no other choice but to involve CUPC because it is just ridiculous ...

Please review the Town Council minutes of January 26 included in the package for this upcoming Town Council meeting. My concerns were addressed to the Sustainability Committee and was dismissed according to Council member Derwin , but I have not gotten a response from Mr Unnash, who at the time was listed as Chair (I guess my email prompted town staff to update their website). I had intended to attend that meeting, but I could not at the last minute so I do not really know at this time what happened.

Again Town staff did not include all information I have sent to them over the years - there's is study from CalWater showing that the water pressure at the hydrants on Palmer Lane were as low as 29 PSI - and I had submitted pictures to show how damaged our infrastructure is - Palmer Lane is one of the newer streets in Portola Valley, but like many other residents in town we have addressed the issues with our water pressure, fire hydrants, and quality of water for at least 4 years now....After all these years CalWater came out and subcontractors performed 2 emergency repairs in the last 4 months, but the issues only seem to get worse.

Last Thursday February 3, 2022 CalWater performed a fire flush out for the new construction at 85 and 77 Palmer lane dropping our water pressure from 39 to 30 PSI -



Fire prevention is important and we need to make sure that our infrastructure and fire department is ready to prevent fire and definitely prevent any spread of fire. As you heard at your last meeting Mr Don Bullard confirmed that our fire station #8 does not have the ladder needed to access the Multifamily home approved and built accross the street at Woodside Priory - he confirmed they depend on a fire truck to come from Menlo Park in case there is a fire

Please note many PV residents appreciate your work and we will continue to support your efforts.

Thank you,
Caroline Vertongen
Palmer Lane