

TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
Sustainability Committee Meeting
October 20, 2022
7:00 PM

Scott Elrod, Chair
Jason Saleh, Vice Chair
Rebecca Flynn, Secretary
Walter Hays, Member
Ronny Krashinsky, Member
Loverine Taylor, Member
Anita Wotiz, Member

VIRTUAL MEETING

REMOTE MEETING COVID-19 MEETING ADVISORY: On September 16, 2021, 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. COVID-19 is still a major health concern and virtual attendance to the Town Council meeting is encouraged, particularly during case increases.

ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Town Clerk at (650) 851-1700 or by email at mthurman@portolavalley.net 48 hours prior to the meeting start time. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the Town to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION VIA ZOOM

To access the meeting by computer:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88655764743?pwd=YTBkNlpXVzlydmIGL0tHOHROV2tUdz09>

Webinar ID: 886 5576 4743

Passcode: 586938

To access the meeting by phone:

1-669-900-6833 or

1-888-788-0099 (toll-free)

*Mute/Unmute – Press *6 / Raise Hand – Press *9*

- 1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**
- 2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**
Speakers' time is limited to two minutes.
- 3. INTRODUCTIONS**
- 4. PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - a. Committee member changes
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - a. September 15, 2022
- 6. OLD BUSINESS:**
 - a. Updates from Brandi
 - b. Updates from MaryAnn
 - c. Review ongoing effort to issue "Public Service Announcements" on PVForum (October – Greenhouse Gases, Jay)
 - d. Summary of opportunity to update Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance (WELO); possibility of forming a working group with other committees (Lovey)
 - e. Reminder of Safety Element joint meeting with other committees, Wednesday, October 26th at 2:00 pm
 - f. Finding new members

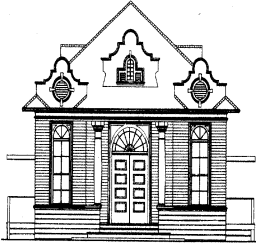
7. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Choose representatives for a joint meeting with Woodside Environmental, Sustainability, Open Space and Climate Change Committee
- b. Prepare inputs for January 2023 Committee Workshop Regarding Major Town Council Projects and Expenditures for FY 2023-24
- c. Update on start of hybrid meetings in December

8. NEXT MEETING AND PROPOSED AGENDA TOPICS

9. ADJOURNMENT

The next regularly scheduled meeting date is November 17, 2022 at 7:00 PM.



TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
Sustainability Committee Meeting
September 15, 2022
7:00 PM

Scott Elrod, Chair
Rebecca Flynn, Secretary
Walter Hays, Member
Ronny Krashinsky, Member
Jason Saleh, Member
Loverine Taylor, Member

VIRTUAL MEETING

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- 1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL – called o order 7:01pm**
 - a. Present Loverine Taylor, Scott Elrod, Walt Hays, Jason Saleh, Ronny Krashinsky, Anita Wotiz (candidate member), Brandi de Garneau, Kristi Corley
- 2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**
 - a. Lovie discussed book “fostering sustainable behavior” and will prepare a complete report.
 - b. Scott discussed issue regarding continued use of gas-powered leaf blowers. Discussed making reports on PV Connect, and increasing our outreach to inform residents of the policy.
- 3. INTRODUCTIONS**

none
- 4. PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

a. none
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - a. Minutes of 8/18/2022 approved as written
- 6. OLD BUSINESS:**
 - a. Updates from Brandi – Communicated updates on behalf of MaryAnn as well.
 - i. Clean air day 10/5. Brandi will inform committee on details afterward.

- ii. Waterpolooza. 9/21-22 1pm-5pm. Suggested some committee members attend event. Interested attendees will email Scott.
 - iii. Behavior in energy and climate change conf (BECC). Brandi will send out additional info, virtual options exist.
 - iv. PCE rebates discussed and will be shared. New rebates may be coming.
 - v. Green building ordinance will go to town council in October
 - vi. Climate action plan. Consultants will have data soon and will be forwarded to subcommittee (Jay and Scott)
 - vii. Smart water meters: Previously brought up concerns will be addressed.
 - viii. Disposable foodware ordinance: Organizations will be given more time to comply. County is providing resources including grants.
 - ix. Organic Waste Bill: SB 1383 – we received a grant to help fund composting
 - x. Kristi Corley inquired regarding difference between local and state green guidelines. Brandi addressed that PV will plan to exceed state guidelines in areas of electric building, EV charge readiness, solar, gray water readiness and requirements for water conservation with turf installation.
- b. Picnic final preparations
 - i. No milk event will be possible due to risks of milk.
 - ii. Reviewed everyone's contribution, schedule
 - c. Public service announcements (September – Drought, Lovey)
 - i. Discusses September PSA from Lovey
 - d. WELO update
 - i. Lovey gave update. WELO does not need to be updated at this time. Question of weather of not we should collaborate w conservation committee to make future recs. Lovey will write up summary.
 - e. Committee involvement with induction cooktop loaners.
 - i. Question of several groups who may be involved in loaning these out and that our committee may act as a referral source to get interested residents to another organization vs providing one ourselves. Might be better for us to have one ourselves for convenience for our residents. Agreed on tentative plan to purchase cooktop and a few compatible pans.
 - f. Committee involvement with En-ROADS climate simulation activity described at 8/18/2022 meeting by Steve Levin
 - i. We'll try for a sample run of the presentation to the committee before promoting it to the community. If quorum is present then a special meeting will be called. Scott will communicate w Steve.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Election of a Vice Chair
 - i. Jay Was nominated and voted in as new vice chair.

8. NEXT MEETING AND PROPOSED AGENDA TOPICS

9. ADJOURNMENT

The next regularly scheduled meeting date is October 20, 2022 at 7:00 PM.

Adjourned 8:27

DRAFT

Notes from Sept 15, 2022 meeting with Planning Department RE WELO

Present: Laura Russell, Planning & Building Director; Dylan Parker, Associate Planner; Brandi de Garneau, Assistant to the Town Manager; Al Sill, ASCC Committee; Loverine Taylor, Sustainability Committee.

Background: The CA Water Conservation in Landscaping Act was established 2010. In 2016 the Town of Portola Valley amended Chapter 15.32 of the Act in response to the state mandate to update the Chapter due to ongoing drought issues. This is Municipal Ordinance No. 2016-410, the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (aka WELO). The town can modify WELO whenever they feel the need. The ordinance is available from the town's WEB site.

When the ASCC reviews building/remodeling projects for approval, they use a variety of resources for guidance in their deliberations/decisions including the Municipal Code, the town's Design Guidelines, the WELO, staff reports prepared by the Building/Planning Departments, and reports from the Conservation Committee.

There is concern that the current (2016) version of WELO has problems that need investigated/addressed. That concern is the basis for the Sustainability Committee's (SC) meeting with the Planning Department and a member of the ASCC.

From Laura Russell (LR): at the present time the Planning Department does not have the resources to work on WELO. The Housing Element and the Safety Element are all they can handle at present. However, LR stated she is on board with the Sustainability Committee leading the WELO update and can devote staff resources to it in mid-2023. In meantime she urges the SC to research the issue, start collecting best practices, chat with landscape architects and review plans on own. She stated she can meet a second time in 2 months to provide feedback on issues/questions we may have and then once Housing and Safety Element are done, determine how to move forward with the goal of having a united idea in Spring 2023 for council priorities. LR provided some specific suggestions that can guide the SC in determining how to revise a stronger WELO that is easier to understand, cannot be gamed by landscapers/applicants and provides the outcome we all desire: conserve water. According to LR, recent policies

include a “carrot” and a “stick” to encourage the outcome the Town wants and discourage what we don’t want to see. This concept can be applied to WELO as well.

* the best way to close loopholes and make WELO more useful to ASCC is to incorporate any changes in the WELO into the town’s Design Guidelines Document and/or the Municipal Code. The Planning Staff use these documents when they provide a project analysis for the ASCC members.

Design Guidelines make sure the project is generally consistent with the rural character of Portola Valley. The Design Guidelines can be updated to address larger projects that go before ASCC.

The Municipal Code is a document that mandates hard numbers such as setback allowances (in feet) and % coverage etc.

**Interview local realtors: they can tell us what buyers’ objections to mandates might be. Will also get info on what they want in their “dream” landscape.

***Amending WELO is a big effort and some of the concerns of the SC overlap with those of the Conservation Committee and the Fire Safety Committee. A sub-committee that includes reps from them could be useful. The sub-committee could propose changes to the Design Guidelines as well as the Municipal Code.

Problematic issues of WELO that that have been identified by Al Sill and Loverine Taylor. Most concern new builds or large-scale remodels. LT recently reviewed the landscape and irrigation plans for a large-scale project in Westridge. Required several hours of intense scrutiny. Lots of technical info as to irrigation hardware and layout; e.g. Each hydrozone and plant must be noted.

Important definitions: These are described in detail in the WELO document Chapter 15.32

MAWA. Maximum Allowable Water Allowance. Calculated by the following formula. $MAWA = (ETo) (0.62) [(ETAF \times LA) + ((1-ETAF) \times SLA)]$

ETWU is Estimated Total Water Use means the total water used for the landscape as described in Section 15.32.070. This is calculated by Landscape Professional. Their goal is to make MAWA large and ETWA small.

“ET adjustment factor” (ETAF) means a factor of 0.55 for residential areas and 0.45 for non-residential areas, that, when applied to reference evapotranspiration, adjusts for plant factors and irrigation efficiency, two major influences upon the amount of water that needs to be applied to the landscape.

“plant water use factor” is a factor, when multiplied by ETo, estimates the amount of water needed by plants. The plant factor is a range; e.g. very low water use 0 to 0.1, for low water use 0.1 to 0.3, for moderate water use 0.4 to 0.6, and for high water use plants 0.7 to 1.0. Plant factors cited in this ordinance are derived from the publication “Water Use Classification of Landscape Species” (WUCOLS) published by the University of California Cooperative Extension and the Department of Water Resources.

The following is a listing of areas to address:

1. Temporary Irrigation: How is temporary irrigation noted on plans? Definition of temporary? After final inspection there is no further checks for compliance. Temporary allows unchecked water use. Suggestions: dump temporary irrigation. ANY irrigation is considered permanent.
2. Swimming pools and water features are considered Special Landscape Areas (SLAs). At present no control on SLAs; they are not considered in MAWA calculation. Can pool size be controlled? Should pool size be in gallons instead of sq. footage? Can # and volume (not sq. footage) of water features be controlled? There should be NO free pass on SLA's. They should be included in MAWA calculation.
3. MAWA is only a function of the landscaped area. LA's overstate landscaped area to get larger MAWA. Should landscaped area be considered as a % of lot size? Need to be more granular in definition of landscaped and non-landscaped.

MAWA calculation should be more granular with respect to the size of the landscaped area. EX. If landscape under 1 acre, ETAF is 0.55; 1-2 acres ETAF is 0.5; > 2 acres ETAF is 0.45. Would encourage more natural/native (non-landscaped) areas.

Game MAWA and ETWU (Estimated Total Water Use) by overstating landscaped area and using lowest value on plant water needs. Possible solution: the Plant Factor (PF) parameter needs to be a single number not a selectable range. LAs will always choose low #.

ETWU must be less than MAWA. MAWA calculation does not depend on plant type. ETWU does include plant type. Are comparisons valid?

4. Does building inspector do LA/IR plan inspection? NO, PV Planning Department personnel do a general inspection of landscaping but not irrigation. For larger projects, the LA has to submit a certification letter that the plants and irrigation are installed according to plan. Planning personnel do not have specialized training for detailed inspections. LAs are licensed professionals and Planning relies on their professional integrity. EX: are the plants in the ground the ones specified on plans? Who knows?
5. Concerned about definition of turf. Can a lawn be called a wildflower meadow on plan? Need to clarify. Need more limits on lawns. Existing lawns should not be exempted.
6. Leave more "natural/native areas", *i.e.*, mandate non-landscaped square footage on larger lots. Or as a % of lot size. Provide wildlife corridors. Do NOT allow native areas to be claimed as landscaped to boost MAWA.
7. WELO easy to mandate on new builds but hard to implement on remodels, even large-scale remodels. Can landscape after completion and do whatever want.

8. Compliance is a problem. Look at Google Earth and count the # of uncovered swimming pools! Amend WELO so compliance is easy to do and something any rational person would feel obligated to do.

From AI: The ASCC members use staff and committee (at present only Conservation) reports as well as official documents to guide them in deliberations. He feels Required Checklist is not particularly useful. Changes should focus on just a few key items/issues. Simplify.

A large MAWA and a large ETWU don't resonate or drive action with most ASCC members. Need to put these figures in perspective. Provide examples of small, medium, and large lot size MAWAs for current households. I compared my yearly water use (2.7 acres in Westridge) to a MAWA for a current project of similar lot size in Westridge. The calculated MAWA was almost 6 times higher than my gals per year! Is WELO working?

A written report about a project's sustainability footprint/rating? might help the ASCC in their deliberations about a project. Could be similar to the analysis the Conservation Committee now provides to ASCC on a proposed project.

Would require a large time commitment to review plans. Large projects have very detailed landscape and irrigation features.

LOVERINE TAYLOR, 09/28/2022