



TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
Special Meeting of the Town Council
Tuesday, January 31, 2023
1:00 P.M.

Jeff Aalfs, Mayor
Sarah Wernikoff, Vice Mayor
Judith Hasko, Councilmember
Mary Hufty, Councilmember
Craig Taylor, Councilmember

SPECIAL HYBRID MEETING

HISTORIC SCHOOLHOUSE - 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028

Remote Public Comments: Meeting participants are encouraged to submit public comments in writing in advance of the meeting. Please submit your comments using this [online form](#) by 1:00 PM on the day of the meeting. Time permitting, your correspondence will be uploaded to the website. All received questions will be forwarded to Council, Commission, or Committee members for consideration during the meeting and included in the public record. Additionally, the public body will take questions using the Raise Hand button for those who attend the meeting online or by phone. Phone callers may provide comments by pressing *9 on your phone to "raise your hand" and *6 to mute/unmute yourself. The meeting Chair will call on people to speak by the phone number calling in.

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. 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/86310542358?pwd=SFhaVjRma3gzclZuZmY2VjA4ekZlZz09>

Webinar ID: 863 1054 2358

Passcode: 657688

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*

Residents have asked if they are able to see a list of participants in Zoom webinar-meetings. Craig Hughes has put together a simple website integrated with Zoom data to provide this for Town webinars. You can visit the site at <https://pv-zooms.rungie.com/> which will show a list of meetings. Clicking on a meeting will then display all participants in the meeting, as well as those who had been in the meeting but have left. The site will only show meetings once they have started and the first participant has joined.

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Persons wishing to address the Town Council on any subject may do so now. Please note, however, that the Council is not able to undertake extended discussion or action tonight on items, not on the agenda. *Speakers' time is limited to three minutes.*

3. SPECIAL MEETING

a. **Conduct** Interview Sessions and Appoint Commission Members for the Following:

- Two Short-Term Vacancies on the Architectural Site Control Commission, with One Seat's Term Expiring in December 2023 and One Seat's Term Expiring in December 2024

4. ADJOURNMENT

The next Regular Town Council meeting will be held on February 8, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

ASCC Applicants

New Applicants:

**Danna Breen
Jennifer Paine McKay
Joslyn Parenti Gray**

Previously Interviewed Applicants:

**Rebecca Flynn (Applied for PC; Interested in ASCC)
Lucy Neely (Updated Letter of Interest)
Carter Warr (Withdrawal Notice)**

Melissa Thurman

From: DANNA BREEN [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2023 4:55 PM
To: Melissa Thurman
Subject: Re: Hi Melissa,

Honorable Council Members,

I am applying for one of the two short term vacancies on ASCC and either is fine by me, because I am stepping up because the two senior members of ASCC have stepped down. As you know I served on the Conservation Committee for twelve years. It was my home committee and was such a rich pleasure to participate with this knowledgeable gang. I feel like everyone in town govt should get their feet wet there. I then applied to ASCC where I was a commissioner for close to 20 years. I served with the most remarkable neighbors and staff and we did fabulous work. Even though we have never been the style police, we helped Portola Valley have the look of great integrated design, responsible landscape, darkness and subservience to nature. We helped neighbors talk to each other and come to mutually satisfactory resolve. But the process was different and I'd like to help ASCC get back to a more gestational process which will take time, but I think it is a worthy goal. I'd like to help guide the process again.

I have lived in PV since the 70s when my parents moved to Westridge and to my marvelous old shack on alpine in '91. We live in concert with the land and as the years have gone by it is still wonderful here...but we need to listen more to our fellow residents and to the earth.

Please let me know when you are interviewing and I will be there, Respectfully yours, Danna Breen

Sent from my iPad

> On Jan 17, 2023, at 4:13 PM, Melissa Thurman <mthurman@portolavalley.net> wrote:

> Hello Danna,

>

> You may send a letter of interest to me and I will ensure the Council receives it. I will also notify you of the interview/appointment date, when one has been chosen. Thank you.

>

> -Melissa Thurman, MMC

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: DANNA BREEN [REDACTED]

> Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2023 4:08 PM

> To: Melissa Thurman <mthurman@portolavalley.net>

> Subject: Hi Melissa,

>

> I am applying for the vacancy on ASCC? How to? Write a letter to each

> council member. Thanks, danna

>

> Sent from my iPad

Jennifer Paine McKay

██████████
Portola Valley, CA 94028

██████████
www.linkedin.com/in/jenniferpainemckay

January 17, 2023

Dear Portola Valley Town Council,

I am submitting this letter with my interest in joining the Portola Valley Town Council Architectural and Site Control Commission. My interest is based on the following:

- 10 years designing and building residential homes in Park City, Utah and Tucson, Arizona
- 5 years in residential real estate in Park City, Utah
- 10 years in Interior Design in Park City, Utah
- Managed the building on my own 1,000 sq ft. ADU at ██████████ Portola Valley

I grew up in Atherton, California. My parents, Mary and Ward Paine, moved to Portola Valley in 1981. I attended the University of San Diego and lived in Avignon, Southern California, Massachusetts, Utah, and Arizona until I moved back to Portola Valley in 2015.

I am currently a Senior Human Capital Business Partner for emerging companies across the country. My LinkedIn profile is provided above.

My background in designing, building, site development and permitting is a way for me to give back to my community and I would be interested in serving a one-year term after which we can assess our mutual success.

Respectfully Yours,

Jennifer McKay

██████████

Melissa Thurman

From: Joslyn Parenti [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2023 5:08 PM
To: Town Center
Subject: Architectural and Site Control Commission (ASCC)

Hello Town Council,

I am interested in volunteering for the Architectural and Site Control Commission (ASCC).

As a resident of Portola Valley for 11 years, it would be my privilege to serve on the committee. I sincerely value preserving the unique character of the area, while simultaneously accommodating the need for future development. I have over 30 years of work experience in architecture, design, and construction. My LinkedIn profile is <https://www.linkedin.com/in/joslyn123/>.

Please let me know if there is additional information I can provide.

Regards,
Joslyn Gray
[REDACTED]

The Portola Valley Town Council is seeking two volunteers to serve on the Town's Architectural and Site Control Commission (ASCC). One of these term's expires in December 2023 and the other expires in December 2024.

The ASCC consists of five members appointed by the Town Council, and meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. The ASCC is charged with the review and approval of design review applications and site development permits, including applications for new homes, second units, larger additions, second-story additions, and commercial buildings. In addition, the ASCC provides comments on conditional use permits, subdivisions, variances, and other matters referred by the Town Council, the Planning Commission, or Town Staff.

To apply, please submit a letter of interest to the Town Council to towncenter@portolavalley.net by 5:00 pm on January 27, 2023. The Town Council will conduct interviews and appoint new members at a scheduled meeting on The week of January 30, 2023. This time is TBD to change, dependent on the number of interviews to be conducted. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact the Town Clerk, Melissa Thurman at towncenter@portolavalley.net.

██████████
Portola Valley, CA 94028
Dec. 21, 2022

Re: Planning Commission

To: Towncenter@portolavalley.net

After much deliberation and consulting with other residents about the ASCC and the Planning Commissions, I've decided to volunteer to serve on the Town's Planning Commission (PC).

Portola Valley is facing important planning decisions over the next year and beyond that will shape how the Town can develop in a manner that will respect our commitment to the preservation of open space and the conservation of our natural environment. All decisions of the Planning Commission must be made balancing our General Plan with the laws and regulations of the state of California.

Portola Valley exists in a stunningly beautiful landscape of mountains, hills, and steep ridges straddling the geologically active San Andreas Fault, covered with oak forests and riparian zones along creeks and riverbeds. It's critical that all land use plans respect and preserve that uniqueness while also making it possible for a wider variety of families and individuals to join Portola Valley.

There are several activities in my background that would be relevant for the Planning Commission.

I have a very strong analytical background with master's degrees from the University of Pennsylvania and INSEAD in France. This background enables me to easily grasp complex concepts, understand detailed government regulations, and make logical decisions.

I have closely followed the massive efforts of the Ad-Hoc Housing Element Committee, Stanford Wedge Redevelopment project, and the Safety Element and have frequently contributed multiple ideas for meeting our housing goals. The efforts to refine the Housing Element as well as find solutions for increasing affordable housing in our Town in a manner that respects and preserves our natural environment will continue to be active efforts for several years to come as the Town grapples with finding locations for affordable housing.

I've been on the Sustainability Committee for many years (and the Water Conservation Committee, prior to that). Given the extreme and critical situation of climate change, it is vitally important that the Town continue to encourage the adoption of green and sustainable building practices and be at the forefront of those efforts. I routinely attend lectures, workshops, and green home tours on green building, air sealing, energy efficiency, water conservation, and passive house building and have a strong understanding of sustainable building practices.

In addition, I've recently been serving on the ADU Ambassadors Team where I've become very familiar with the new regulations for ADUs and JADUs. As the Town seeks to find lower impact housing, ADUs and JADUs represent a significant portion of our new Housing Element that can meet those requirements with less of a visual impact on the Town as a whole.

Finally, I'm very knowledgeable about building plans, zoning regulations, permitting, and architectural drawings as I have been involved in the past in designing my own remodel and general contracting a major project at my own property.

Regards,

s/Rebecca Flynn
██

Lucy E Neely
[REDACTED]
Portola Valley, CA 94028
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Town Council
Town of Portola Valley
765 Portola Road
Portola Valley, CA 94028

January 27, 2023

To the Town Council of Portola Valley,

I'm writing to once again express my interest in applying for the position of Commissioner on the ASCC. I decided to write a new letter because the Town Council meeting of 1/11 was such an impactful experience for me. This letter covers two topics—1) why I'm interested in serving on the ASCC, and 2) a response to comments made about me at the 1/11 TC meeting.

When I was 27 years old and considering moving back to Portola Valley from Mendocino County, I experienced a series of dreams about a place—about the natural environment, the built environment, the trails that connect, and the people that inhabit; about building community—socially and physically. The place was always exquisitely beautiful. I came to understand—to my then surprise—that the place in my dreams was Portola Valley. I did not know at that time how this place lived in me.

Now I know. This place was woven through me as the weft in the fabric of my being. The formative impact this place has had on me has been profound and continues to reveal itself. I am made from this place and for this place.

Nowadays I walk through this landscape with an awareness of layers of time and history. I feel and contemplate the presence of all humans who live/d here—past, present, and future; the landscape and changes to it—past, present, and future; and the built environment and human-nature interaction—past, present, and future. I see that we are experiencing one important moment in a timeless story of a magnificent place.

I feel grateful to have been formed by this place, and I would be deeply honored and committed to the opportunity to help shape this place now, as part of that timeless story.

My work has been in carpentry, building, landscape, farming, land management, and community organizing. The relationship of humans to place and community is paramount in my

consciousness. I'm passionate about design and the built environment, and how they interact with the natural environment and human communities and the wellbeing of both.

I would like to clarify the comments made about me at the January 11th Town Council meeting, regarding my capacity to fulfill responsibilities as a town volunteer. The comments were made regarding my capacity to chair two committees, but obviously implicitly commented on my capacity to serve on the ASCC.

Three people (and one of those people twice!) commented that I'm not capable of competently fulfilling volunteer responsibilities because of my young family, and that I have been saying so myself. These comments were a manipulation and stretching of the truth. The facts of the matter are:

- In October of 2021 I asked to step down as chair of the Finance Committee because a baby would be arriving in our family and I knew my capacity would be temporarily reduced, as my wife and I made the decision to spend as much time as possible with our children in the first year of Ruth's life. No one else stepped up to chair. In 20/20 hindsight, I would have simply stepped down and someone would have had to step up, but I didn't have that perspective then.
- In March of 2022, a few weeks after the baby was born, Rita Comes emailed me about the town audits. It took me a long time to respond and when I did I acknowledged the circumstances of being a new parent.
- In October of 2022, I acknowledged that for the past year my bandwidth to perform the duties of the chair had been reduced—as I had said would happen—but that I had now returned to restored bandwidth and capacity.
- In January 2023, we are sleeping much better and have the support of a nanny to care for our children. Everything changes.

These facts were distorted and manipulated by those who spoke of me at the January 11th Town Council meeting. For example, one speaker said:

“As of December this person was saying on meetings that she didn't have enough time, due to her young family, which makes perfect sense, um, to catch up with all the finance committee stuff.”

I reached out to this individual to substantiate their remarks. They were unable to do so, because they weren't factual. This is just one of various comments that simply weren't factual.

I understand that members of the public have the right to say things that are not factual in public comment, but I want to point out, for your record, that those public comments were erroneous and manipulative and typify a pattern of misinformation that has grown in our town's public discourse in the past few years.

Best regards,
Lucy Neely

From: Carter Warr [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2023 11:08 AM
To: Melissa Thurman <mthurman@portolavalley.net>
Cc: Jeremy Dennis <jdennis@portolavalley.net>; Jeff Aalfs <JAalfs@portolavalley.net>
Subject: Re: PC/ASCC Question from Town Council - Response Needed

Dear Melissa,

With this email I withdraw my application for the Town commissions. It has become clear that the Council is uncomfortable with the number of potential conflicts of interest I could potentially have with the performance of commission duties.

Carter J. Warr, AIA, CSI, NCARB
CJW Architecture

[REDACTED]
www.cjwarchitecture.com