



TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
Conservation Committee Meeting
January 23, 2024
7:00 PM

Catherine Magill, Chair
Judith Murphy, Vice Chair
Teresa Coleman, Secretary
Nona Chiariello, Member
Paul Heiple, Member
Marianne Plunder, Member
Megan Richards, Member
Dieter Walz, Member
Joerg Zimmerman, Member

REGULAR MEETING

HISTORIC SCHOOLHOUSE– 765 PORTOLA RD. – PORTOLA VALLEY, CA

REMOTE MEETING ADVISORY: On March 1, 2023, all committees in Portola Valley will return to conducting in-person meetings. A Zoom link will be provided for members of the public to participate remotely; however, the Town cannot guarantee there will be no technical issues with the software during the meeting. For best public participation results, attending the meeting in-person is advised.

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 towncenter@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/82552582508?pwd=WiaqQBS9STFdwKfueGaWamtKajl0l8.1>

Webinar ID: 825 5258 2508

Passcode: 842740

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 three minutes.
- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - a. November 28, 2023
- 4. SITE PERMITS:**
 - a. 80 Golden Oak
- 5. TREE PERMITS:**
 - a. None
- 6. OLD BUSINESS:**
 - a. Oversight of Town-owned properties – Updates (Committee)
 - i. Town Center
 - ii. Springdown
 - iii. Frog Pond
 - b. Committee / Town Cooperation
 - i. Public Works (Magill)
 1. Update on Corte Madera school oak tree removal
 - ii. Update on advice to ASCC on adding Dittrichia removal to conditions of approval
 - iii. Wildfire Preparedness Committee (Chiariello)
 - iv. Defensible space sub-committee report (Chiariello)
 1. Draft ordinance 23-03 review and collaboration to educate residents about their responsibilities to maintain defensible space.

- v. Open Space Committee (Chiariello)
- vi. Trails and Paths (Coleman)
- vii. Broom Pull - Sunday March 3 (Magill)
- c. Website sub-committee report (Plunder)
- d. Fencing and wildlife corridors sub-committee update (Plunder) –
 - i. Appendix A (ADU-checklist for ministerial approval)
- e. CC Routine Town Communications
 - i. Kudos (Plunder)
 - ii. Backyard Habitat (Plunder)
 - iii. Tip of the Month (Magill)
 - iv. What's Blooming Now? (Magill)

7. ADJOURNMENT

The next regularly scheduled meeting date is February 27, 2024, 7:00 PM.

Land Acknowledgement:

The Town of Portola Valley acknowledges the colonial history of this land we dwell upon—the unceded territory of the Ramaytush (rah-my-toosh) Ohlone, Tamien Nation, and Muwekma (mah-WEK-mah) Ohlone, who endured a human and cultural genocide that included removal from their lands and their sacred relationship to the land. Portola Valley recognizes that we profit from the commodification of land seized from indigenous peoples and now bear the ecological consequences. We seek to understand the impact of these legacies on all beings and to find ways to make repair.



TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
Conservation Committee Meeting
November 28, 2023
7:00 PM
In-person Meeting

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM

Roll Call:

Members present: N. Chiariello T. Coleman, M. Plunder, C. Magill, M. Richards, D. Walz

Members absent: J. Murphy, J. Zimmermann

Also present: M. Hufty (Town Councilmember liaison)

Guests: C. Simons, D. Breen, K. Corley

2. Oral Communications:

none

3. Approval of Minutes for October 24, 2023: The minutes were *approved unanimously* (M. Richards abstained).

4. Site Permits

- a. 857 Westridge – completed (report submitted)
- b. 302 Portola Road – site visit completed; report in process

5. Tree Permits

C. Magill stated Corte Madera School is requesting removal of five valley oaks considered to be at the end of their life (hollowed out; a limb has fallen). C. Magill and J. Zimmermann have looked at the trees unofficially (not subject to a tree removal permit; no report issued) as the trees are located on school property, not on town-owned property. D. Breen asked if there is an arborist's report that could be reviewed. M. Richards agreed she would like to see an arborist report and to determine if there is a role for Conservation in providing advice in similar situations going forward.

Action item: D. Walz, M. Richards, C. Magill to revisit

6. Old Business

- a. Oversight of Town-owned properties
 - i. Frog Pond – no update

- ii. Springdown – no update.
- iii. Town Center – no update.
- iv. Shady Trail – M. Plunder stated the Town has not as yet done any removal of silt on the trail.

b. Committee/Town Cooperation

i. Public Works

no additional update (Corte Madera trees discussed above)

ii. Update on advice to ASCC on adding dittrichia removal to condition of removal – D. Breen stated ASCC won't approve a final permit if dittrichia is observed on the site so they are in synch with Conservation.

Action item: D. Walz to draft appropriate language regarding advice to the ASCC on dittrichia for Committee consideration at the January meeting

iii. Wildfire Preparedness – N. Chiariello stated Kim Giuliacci, the new fire marshal, gave a presentation on the definition of defensible space in the proposed new ordinance and responded to questions from the audience/community (meeting was recorded). She stated there is a lot of interest on the part of residents regarding what the proposed requirements will look like in actuality. The fire department will be taking photographs of violations on properties and will be following up. N. Chiariello stated she had made the point that if everything is cleared as is stated in the ordinance, there will be an opportunity for invasives such as dittrichia and thistles to easily spread to the disturbed areas.

Wildlife preparedness subcommittee – M. Richards stated she received and reviewed the revised draft version of the fire ordinances, focusing on the definitions of types of vegetation, fire safe vegetation and mulch, and appropriate fire safe plantings. She stated they are encouraging the use of inorganic mulch and approved ground covers in the 0 – 5 foot zone around properties. C. Simons stated K. Giuliacci indicated WFD will be providing specific examples at the January meeting.

iii. Open Space – N. Chiariello stated they are working to understand the limited budget for FY2024. And may ask Conservation for recommendations on how to spend the allocated funds with respect to weeding, mowings, etc. (in conjunction with Public Works). C. Magill has spoken with H. Young and said \$44,000 will cover mowings, etc. but not anything beyond such as tree removals. N. Chiariello asked for the specific breakdown of how much each of these activities actually cost.

iv. Trails and Paths – (T. Coleman) meeting was canceled (no update)

vii. Private trail building guidance – (127 Pinon) Following the ASCC meeting it was suggested the landscape architect for this property work with D. Breen and N. Chiariello to develop a revised landscape plan. This property borders Jasper Ridge and is in the area where chaparral has been cut and will be burned in early 2024.

c. Website subcommittee – M. Richards agreed to help C. Magill and M. Plunder on the subcommittee. N. Chiariello suggested a button for “what’s new?” be added to the website.

d. Fence ordinance review – M. Plunder stated there is no mechanism for Conservation to protect wildlife corridors when we review proposed plans. N. Chiariello suggested the subcommittee review language in the ADU checklist for potential use in preserving wildlife corridors.

Action item: Subcommittee (M. Plunder, M. Richards, C. Magill) to review ADU wildlife corridor language

It was suggested the Town should be requested to go out to look at proposed fences and to have ASCC review fences as part of their review of new permit applications.

e. Bilingual flyers on invasives – M. Plunder will work on this for Spring.

f. SOD Blitz (Magill) – The 2023 SOD blitz summary indicates SOD is spreading more slowly than expected; there have been a few “wave years” typically associated with warm wet springs.

The most important oaks are being treated as follows:

1) removal of all bay trees in the vicinity (anything smaller than 50 cm)

2) treat oak trees with agriphos and gypsum around the base

It appears that some bay trees are able to clear the infection, aided by dry, warm springs. N.

Chiariello stated there were no positive bay trees in Portola Valley this year, and the same trees will be tested next year.

e. CC Routine Town Communications

i. Kudos (M. Plunder) – dittrichia removal

ii. Backyard habitat – (M. Plunder) no update

iii. Tip of the Month (C. Magill) – sowing wildflowers

iv. What’s Blooming Now? (C. Magill) – coffeeberries, toyon

7. New Business

a. Wildflower fund – Suggestion to support raising funding for bringing wildflowers back to the Town’s public spaces, similar to Woodside’s fund.

Adjournment: 8:32 pm

Date & Time of Next Meeting: Tuesday January 23, 2024 at 7:00 pm

Proposed ADU Administrative Checklist – Conservation Committee

Final

- All projects shall require submittal of current Site Survey with all Utility, Trail, Conservation and other easements denoted – may require a title search

Structure

- Structures and parking areas shall not alter the flow path of natural drainage systems such as seasonal creeks.
- Transformers, generators, air conditioning units and similar equipment shall be on a side of the structure away from public right-of-way, and screened.
- Setbacks** – All ADU units shall comply with applicable health and safety setback requirements governing specific parcels, including but not limited to setbacks required for fire safety, emergency vehicle access, geology, seismic, creek, topography, and other similar public health and safety considerations.

Landscaping

- Nonlinear planting** – Plant in random groupings (cluster planting) rather than linear plantings.
- Easements** – Plantings shall not encroach upon trail easements.
- New Planting** – New planting is limited to 5'-30' around the new unit as measured from the exterior walls.
- Preparer of landscape plans shall certify that plant list does not include plants on our Do Not Plant list or listed as invasive by Cal-IPC.
- Fencing** is strictly restricted to enclosing vegetable garden space
- Redwood Trees** – Planting of new Redwood Trees shall be consistent with the Redwood Guidelines in the Design Guidelines.
- Trail visibility** - Where driveways cross trails, planting shall be limited to species that do not grow above 3' within a 15' sight visibility triangle.
- Tree Protection** – If any construction or grading is proposed in the dripline of a Significant Tree, an Arborist Report will be required with submittal of the application that includes specific tree protection measures for the impacted trees.
- Removal of Significant Trees (defined under PVMC 15.12.060)**- An Arborist shall supply a report with an assessment and recommendation on removal of all Significant tree(s). Tree removal shall be approved if the Arborist finds, and the Planning and Building Director agrees, that it meets one of the following criteria:
 - The tree is diseased
 - The tree is a public or private nuisance
 - The tree is in danger of falling or could cause substantial damage
 - The tree interferes with existing utilities
 - The tree is a substantial fire hazard
 - There is no alternative design that would retain the tree and provide for locating the ADU as determined by the Planning and Building Director

Lighting

- All lighting shall comply with PVMC 18.36.040.A.8.
- Lumen output and spacing of outdoor lighting fixtures shall be restricted as follows:
 - Overhead light (fixtures attached at a height of 6-8' to the exterior of a building) is limited to 350 lumens per fixture and shall be spaced at no more than 25 lumens per linear foot of walkway. These lights are generally installed at entries to residences.
 - Low-height light (fixtures attached at a height of less than 6' to buildings or railings) is limited to 225 lumens per fixture and shall be spaced at no more than 40 lumens per linear foot of walkway. These lights are generally installed approximately every 4-8'.

- Stair-step light (fixtures attached to or flush with the vertical face of the underside edge of a stair step) is limited to 50 lumens per fixture and shall be spaced at no more than 50 lumens per 4' width of step. These lights are generally installed on the underside of each step. However, a staircase of more than 10 lights shall use post or railing lights to avoid the appearance of a string of lights or runway.
- The Planning & Building Director may authorize additional lighting at points where a walkway or staircase makes a change in direction for safety purposes.
- Lighting for purely decorative purposes, such as around or within landscaped areas, accent lighting of architectural features, and lighting of the perimeter of parking, is prohibited.
- Exterior lighting fixtures shall be broken into groupings, each with their own control, such that lighting in one area can be on while all other lighting is off.