

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING NO. 799, SEPTEMBER 8, 2010

ROLL CALL

Mayor Toben called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Howard called the roll.

Present: Councilmembers Maryann Derwin, John Richards and Ann Wengert, Vice Mayor Ted Driscoll and Mayor Steve Toben

Absent: None

Others: Angela Howard, Town Manager
Janet McDougall, Assistant Town Manager
Sharon Hanlon, Town Clerk

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS [7:31 p.m.]

None

CONSENT AGENDA [7:31 p.m.]

By motion of Vice Mayor Driscoll, seconded by Councilmember Derwin, Items 2 and 3 were approved with the following roll call vote:

Aye: Councilmembers Maryann Derwin, John Richards and Ann Wengert, Vice Mayor Ted Driscoll and Mayor Steve Toben

No: None

(2) Ratification of Warrant List of September 8, 2010 in the amount of \$ 288,981.11

(3) Report from Administrative Services Officer – Annual Report of Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2010 Budget and Interfund Transfers

REGULAR AGENDA [7:35 p.m.]

(1) Minutes of Regular Town Council Meeting of August 25, 2010 [*Removed from Consent Agenda*]

By motion of Councilmember Derwin, seconded by Vice Mayor Driscoll, the minutes were approved as amended 5-0

(4) Recommendation by Assistant Town Manager – Purchasing Authorization Limit for Town Manager

(a) Adoption of a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley Increasing the Purchasing Authorization Limit for the Town Manager

Ms. McDougall provided three examples of urgency situations when authorization for limits higher than the \$10,000 currently authorized was needed due to storm damage earlier this year: She had asked Public Works Director Howard Young whether storm damage would be the only circumstance that might

trigger a need for higher limits, and he told her that urgent needs to replace or repair a pipe absent a storm could arise, and it would help to be able to move quickly on such occasions without seeking formal Town Council approval at the time.

Mayor Toben noted that as it stands now, if a culvert failure is discovered on the morning after a Town Council meeting, it might take as long as 13 days for a request for authorization to come before the Council.

In response to Councilmember Derwin, Ms. McDougall indicated that the vast majority of these costs are included in the Public Works budget. Ms. Howard confirmed this, adding that the funds may not necessarily be in the storm damage budget. If a major expenditure is not budgeted for the current fiscal year, the Town Council would have to authorize it. If it was a dire emergency, she added, the work would be performed and then staff would go to the Town Council for ratification of the action. When Councilmember Derwin asked for the rationale behind the \$25,000 authorization amount requested, Ms. Howard said that the cost of culvert repairs generally runs between \$20,000 and \$25,000.

In response to a question from Councilmember Richards, Ms. Howard said that there is a line item in the budget for emergency use. The problem is not that the costs incurred exceed the budget, but that the authorization limit is too low. Mayor Toben said that even with the funds in the budget, the Town Manager is currently unable to write a check for more than \$10,000 without specific Town Council approval.

Councilmember Wengert asked whether adding a higher expenditure level to urgency items in the budget is an alternative to raising the authorization limit. Ms. McDougall indicated that Mr. Young views the higher authorization level in the context of ongoing maintenance when major problems come to his attention. Ms. Howard said that \$10,000 is simply insufficient, but if the Council is not comfortable with \$25,000, perhaps two limits would be acceptable – \$20,000 on non-urgency items and \$25,000 on urgency items – with anything above \$25,000 requiring Town Council approval.

Mayor Toben noted that Portola Valley's current authorization level is out of line with comparable communities, with Brisbane at \$25,000, Colma at \$50,000, Hillsborough at \$30,000 and Woodside at \$20,000. He said the question is whether \$25,000 is appropriate for Portola Valley. Councilmember Wengert said that the current costs provide the most compelling evidence that \$25,000 is appropriate. Councilmember Richards said that \$10,000 is totally inadequate for any kind of infrastructure work, and he too is comfortable with \$25,000. Councilmember Derwin agreed. Vice Mayor Driscoll pointed out that these limits ought to be revisited occasionally, in light of inflation, changing expenditure patterns and so on. With that in mind, he said that an increase to \$25,000 would last longer than a smaller increase. Mayor Toben concurred. In response to Mayor Toben, Ms. Howard said that the Town Council would see amounts spent on the warrant list, as well as in year-end reporting.

With no audience input on the item and discussion concluded, Mayor Toben asked for a motion. Vice Mayor Driscoll moved approval of Resolution No. 2504-2010 of the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley Increasing the Purchasing Authorization Limit for the Town Manager to \$25,000. Councilmember Richards seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

- (5) Recommendation by Public Works Director – Authorize Town Manager to Enter Into Agreement with O. Nelson & Son for Construction of Perimeter Trail on Open Space at Former Spring Down Property

Mayor Toben said that he had discussed the perimeter trail with Councilmember Wengert, who served as the Ad Hoc Spring Down Master Plan Committee facilitator. She had indicated that they are still awaiting some pertinent information, particularly a study on the property's hydrology. Because some of that information might inform the Town Council's decision, Mayor Toben suggested continuing this item.

Vice Mayor Driscoll said that when he and Mr. Young walked the site recently, Mr. Young seemed concerned about getting something done before the rainy season arrives. Ms. Howard said the hydrology report should be available by the end of this week and that Planning Manager Leslie Lambert will assemble the Committee for a meeting as soon as possible once the report is in hand. Thus, the Town Council may be able to consider this item again as early as October 27. However, Ms. Howard added, it is possible that this work won't happen this year. With no objections from the Council, Mayor Toben announced that the item will be continued until October 27.

COUNCIL, STAFF, COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS [7:50 p.m.]

(6) Recommendation by Trails Committee – Proposed Change to Committee Charter

Vice Mayor Driscoll said that as discussed at the June 9, 2010 Town Council meeting during his report as Trails & Paths Committee liaison, there is some concern that the Committee has become less representative of Portola Valley's diversity of trail users. That led to a process of evaluation, a review of the Committee's charter and several subsequent meetings and ultimately, the drafting of a relatively minor edit to the previous charter. In summary, he said, the revisions add language to make sure that the diversity of trail use is represented, mention use of trails by students going to school and to the Town Center, correct some misspellings and poor grammar, clarify the Committee's advisory role, include a reference to volunteer work days in response to public sentiment that favors getting more people involved, and suggest meetings every other month unless additional meetings prove desirable, in part to minimize the impact on town staff.

If the Town Council approves the draft of the revised Committee charter, Vice Mayor Driscoll said the next step would be to determine whether the Committee membership is representative of all trail users by evaluating the constituencies represented by the current members as well as three applicants being considered for vacancies. Vice Mayor Driscoll said that personally he believes the Committee may overemphasize the equestrians, and he has heard this from other members in the past as well. While equestrian users are an important and historic part of the community and need representation on the Committee, he stated, so do the 1,000 students who walk or bike to school, and the thousands of citizens who use the trails to bike, hike and jog for exercise or simple pleasure. He considers finding the proper balance a challenge, but an important objective as part of the democratic process of self-governance.

Mayor Toben suggested that members of the audience who have comments should avail themselves of copies of the existing and proposed charters to cite specific language in their remarks.

In response to a question from Councilmember Wengert, Vice Mayor Driscoll said that the Committee had input to the draft. Mayor Toben pointed out that Committee Chair Susan Gold, who was involved with drafting the revised charter, was unable to attend tonight's meeting. He then invited public comment on the proposed changes.

Ellie Ferrari, Willowbrook Drive, is a current member of the Committee. She said she does not see how the Town Council can vote on this charter inasmuch as the Trails Committee has yet to approve it. Ms. Howard said that the Trails Committee did not review the draft charter. They were given the existing charter and asked to provide input to her and Ms. Gold regarding what they would like incorporated or changed. One person recommended term limits. Another wanted time limits. Ms. Ferrari said the Trails Committee was not informed of these decisions and did not vote on anything. Committee member Craig Taylor commented on two-year term limits. Ms. Ferrari said the fact that Ms. Howard and Ms. Gold discussed and drafted a revised charter is insufficient.

Ms. Ferrari said that there have been no Committee meetings for quite a few months. She said that Vice Mayor Driscoll expressed the dissatisfaction with the Committee in terms of it having become dysfunctional and concentrating too much on equestrian uses. According to Ms. Ferrari, agenda items regarding equestrian trail usage on the Committee's agenda at recent meetings involve: 1) Town

ordinance building and construction requirements for driveway surfacing for equestrian safety where driveways cross trails, 2) the Safe Routes to School program, mixing bikers and pedestrians with horseback riders on narrow, steep sections of trail, and 3) the perimeter trail around the Town Center mandated in the General Plan.

Regarding the perimeter trail, Ms. Ferrari reported that the last time the Committee met, Ms. Howard had said that the dirt trail that was already in place alongside the Episcopal Church, as per the General Plan, was now going to be used for library parking. She said the Committee suggested that either the road be scored so they could get around the parked cars or that the church be approached to allow the trail to be put on its property. Ms. Ferrari stated that it is not unusual for equestrians to be concerned about the trails. Before the Town had a Town Manager, the Portola Valley Trails Association, a group of volunteer horse people, maintained the Town trails. They would select projects, get approval from the Trails Committee and the Town Council, do the work themselves or hire it out and bill the Town.

After the Town hired its first Town Manager, Ms. Ferrari said that he decided the Association's approach carried too much liability, so he appointed the Town Engineer to hire contractors rather than use the Association's volunteers. She said that the Town Council's behavior toward the Trails Committee has been less than transparent and lacking in respect. In the last few months the Committee has been treated to a hidden agenda and canceled meetings with no indication when the next would be held. And now Vice Mayor Driscoll has informed the Committee that no new members will be elected until the end of the year, with no explanation as to why. This leaves the group limping along with five members when there should be nine. Ms. Ferrari wonders whether this is how the Council expects to energize the Committee – or are they hoping that the current members simply fade away? She said that she appreciates the onerous duty of the Town Council as unpaid volunteers, and would also appreciate a response to her concerns.

Christine Cooper, Martinez Road, Woodside, serves on the Woodside Trails Committee and uses Portola Valley trails frequently. She went to Portola Valley schools and had the great privilege of tying her horse up during the day and then riding home after school – every little girl's dream, she said. She considers it a shame that the Town Council wants to take horse people off the Trails Committee when the trails were fostered by horse people. She said their representation is needed for the horse people as well as pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

Mayor Toben clarified that the proposed language says that the membership will consist of nine members "who represent the broad diversity of the trail user community." It would certainly include the equestrians, he said.

Jill Helms, Los Charros Lane, said that she is very interested in the idea of creating a committee that has no perceived bias. She asked who would represent the students' interests, and whether owning or riding a horse within a given period of time would automatically mean an individual has a perceived bias. She stated that it would be helpful to spell out criteria used to select Committee members.

Mayor Toben indicated that there had been discussion about how to define the spectrum of interests. It will depend very much on the individuals who come forward. He said that he is sure many equestrians are also avid hikers, and also many cyclists who consider horses and bicycles incompatible. He said that trying to define quotas would be a fool's errand; the intention is to enrich the mix and broaden the spectrum of viewpoints.

Kris Moriarty, Quail Court, Portola Valley Ranch, said that horseback riders come through frequently. She described herself as probably a "triple threat" because she owns two horses, her husband is a rabid mountain biker and her son rides his bike. She said that how members are chosen and how they will be perceived is an important point. She said that she has not seen problems between cyclists and equestrians.

Don Pugh, Glenwood Avenue, Woodside, is Chairman of the Woodside Trails Committee. He said that what makes Woodside and Portola Valley so fabulous is without a doubt the equestrian trail system, and he is saddened to see such dissension over this issue. He also said that it would sadden Bill Lane. Mr. Pugh explained that Woodside has been working on their general plan over the last number of months, a process that involves dozens of people – pedestrians, hikers, bikers, parents – who agree unanimously that Woodside's equestrian heritage is incredibly important to its future. He believes that a survey of Portola Valley residents also would reveal unanimous agreement in that regard. He described the Woodside Trails Committee as an 11-member body, many on the Committee for 10 to 20 years. The Committee meets at 3 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month except during August, and always has a quorum. Subcommittees form to focus on specific areas and specific needs. There are no restrictions or qualifications regarding background, but most Woodside Trails Committee members are equestrians because equestrians have the passion and need trails, whereas pedestrians can find many places to hike. Mr. Pugh said that the Committee welcomes pedestrians who support trails. There is a short waiting list of Committee applicants, but he said it isn't as if a hundred people are standing in line. The Committee has a \$70,000 budget, consisting of \$50 per horse for 700 horses from the community, with Woodside contributing matching funds. Town staff provides some support, as well as contractors and California Conservation Corps that come in to improve and enhance the trails. The Town Engineer is very involved, particularly with issues of bridge safety and integrity. Because the trails can be muddy, they put base rock down to make it more convenient for pedestrians, so the Committee focuses on both equestrians and pedestrians. He said that much of Woodside's 25 miles of trails is on public rights-of-way. The trail along Woodside Road is an equestrian-pedestrian trail, improved to the point that children can walk or ride bikes, because that is the only way other than motor vehicle to get to and from Woodside Elementary School. The Committee's goal is to expand the trail system each year by a quarter- or half-mile. Where slippery driveways are an issue, the Town Engineer has developed a system to grind down surfaces several times a year. The Town Planning Manager is also very involved. The Committee takes staff, town officials and council members for trail rides to give them a chance to see how important the trails are for the community and what the trails need. He said that he believes the Woodside Trails Committee has been incredibly successful in improving and enhancing the community's trail system and would like to see Portola Valley build similar processes.

Tom Sabel, Los Charros Lane, noted that the major change in the draft is the addition of the phrase "especially in our schools" in the Committee objectives. He said that introduces bias, emphasizing one use above the others, without getting a broader view of what people in the Town want.

Daniel Alegria, Mapache Drive, referenced No. 4 in the current charter's Duties and Functions section, "Prepare the Trails and Paths Committee budget" and noted that the related item in the draft document, No. 3, reads, "Reviews the Trails and Paths Committee budget." Unsure of the reason for the change, he asked who would prepare the budget. He said that it seems to him that people who know about the trails should do so.

Mayor Toben asked Ms. Howard to explain the Portola Valley budget preparation process. Ms. Howard said the way it has been working is that the Committee comes up with projects they'd like to see completed and the Town Engineer uses his experience to cost out the amount it would take to cover those projects. Thus, Mayor Toben summarized, the Committee provides a list of priority projects, the Town Engineer crunches the numbers for the budget and returns it to the Committee for review.

Although she does not live in Portola Valley, Nancy Armstrong, Towle Way, Palo Alto, has worked for Portola Pastures on Arastradero Road and said she loves to ride in Portola Valley. So do others who board many of the 120 horses at Portola Pastures, she said. They also enjoy and appreciate the well-maintained, beautiful trails along Alpine Road. She said that her concern is the discussion about trail sharing along Alpine Road. She agrees that for the most part, there is a wonderful sharing of trails, whether at the Arastradero Preserve or in Portola Valley, with bicyclists, pedestrians and horseback riders doing quite well together. However, she added, real safety issues can arise. She recalled a time when she was riding a safe, calm, "retirement" horse on Arastradero Trail when the horse suddenly scooted about 10 to 12 feet off the trail. When it stopped, she looked back and saw two boys on bikes

approaching quickly. Had the same thing happened while riding on the banks along Alpine Road above Roberts and even farther down – any of several places where the trail is just about six feet across – she said her calm horse might have gone off the edge.

Mary Paine, Mapache Drive, said she has been riding most of the time she has lived in Portola Valley, about 30 years. Her main concern is that the Trails Committee seems to be a "second thought" on the part of the Town Council. She said that people who move to Portola Valley are so impressed with the trails that they may not realize that unlike Woodside, which seems to have an incredibly organized Trails Committee, maybe Portola Valley hasn't given its Trails Committee enough emphasis. She said that people move here and stay here for the trails. She suggested that perhaps the Committee should have even more equestrians on it. We should really look at who uses the trails, she said, and make sure there are well-coordinated plans.

Mayor Toben said that an enormous allocation of time from Portola Valley's maintenance staff goes into upkeep on the 30-plus miles of trails in the Town – a large percentage of their work-life clearing trails, making sure they are in good shape and are well-tended. He said he considers the quality of trails uniformly excellent.

Ms. Paine agreed that the maintenance people have been fabulous.

Ellen Vernazza, Nathorst Avenue, said that she too is concerned about safety on the upper Alpine Trail. She has heard people say that riders should not be on the trail on horseback if they don't have total control over the horse, which she considers a ridiculous statement. If a bicycle – or jogger or runner – is coming either toward you or up from behind you, the horse won't just stand there. She said that horse people must be represented on the Trails Committee, because only they can understand the safety issues. People on foot and bikes do not understand the safety issues of being on a horse, and these trails originally were made for the horses. She also said that she does not see 1,000 students walking on the trails, and that there are safe trails for the children that are away from the horse trails.

Chloe Miller, Woodside, has two children in the Corte Madera School, and sometimes takes them to and from school on horseback. She said that she has also used Portola Valley trails for hiking, dog-walking and even biking, and took these wonderful trails for granted until recently developing great concern and interest. She said she had no idea there was such controversy surrounding the issue, and definitely feels all parties can work together and get along, keeping the wonderful heritage.

Looking at the membership and the meetings but not knowing the genesis of what went on, J. Jernick, Grove Drive, said that he perceives a castration of the Committee. Cutting terms back to one year decreases the power of what had been and could be a tremendously great Trails Committee and increases someone else's power. Thus, he said, he is interested to hear why the Town Council felt the Trails Committee was too strong. He said the fact that the Committee has not met for months suggests that the rug has been pulled out, and he wants to know why.

Mayor Toben added a point of clarification: Every volunteer committee in the Town has a one-year renewable term. There is no change to the term of service for volunteer committees. The only Portola Valley bodies with multi-year terms are the Planning Commission, the Town Council, and ASCC.

Dr. Jernick said that obviously there was a lot of discontent with the Trails Committee. He wants to know more about it and the rationale for meetings every other month. As he sees it, the intent is to radically change something for some reason; he wants to understand the reason.

Vice Mayor Driscoll said that in the past the Committee met approximately eight times a year, and also the Town Engineer was kept on hand for meetings that ran as late as 10 p.m., meaning 14-hour workdays on those occasions. Furthermore, at some times of the year the trails are not so active. Still the option for

more frequent meetings remains open, if they are needed, Vice Mayor Driscoll said. The proposed language provides for that flexibility, while minimizing the impact on the Town Engineer's time.

Rebekah Witter, Montelena Court, Woodside, said that she came to support Portola Valley because she enjoys the Town's trails as well as Woodside's. She describes the area as a "wonderful island" within the Bay Area where horses are still welcome. She said she and other equestrians come because of the passion for horses, and they have invested heavily in that passion – buying homes in Portola Valley and Woodside, which is not inexpensive, paying to have the trails maintained, donating to the Folger project to keep the history of the area in the forefront of children's minds, supporting the sports and the Pony Club. She mentioned articles about the Pony Club – including members in Portola Valley – and the Woodside Vaulters in the September 8 *Almanac*. It is difficult to take horses to more distant areas to use trails; in contrast, bikers and hikers have access to many places throughout the Bay Area. Horseback riding is a valuable asset to both Woodside and Portola Valley, monetarily, fiscally and in terms of lifestyle and maintenance of the rural atmosphere. She expressed thanks to Portola Valley for sharing its trails, caring about them and perpetuating them.

Catherine Siegel, Saddleback, Portola Valley Ranch, said she has lived there for almost 20 years. The family's two daughters both attended Ormondale and Corte Madera schools, she said, so she knows something about getting children to school and walking and biking around Town. She also is an equestrian, and although she does not own a trail horse, she said she feels fortunate to be invited to go trail riding on occasion. So, she said, she has experienced the trails from the standpoint of a parent, a horseback rider, a jogger and a dog-walker. She said that unpaved surfaces, whether dirt or packed gravel, are among the greatest things about Portola Valley's trails for joggers, runners, dog-walkers and horseback riders. She said that there are ways to get children on bicycles on main streets to and from various places without interfering with other trail uses. She said it requires more creativity in how road crossings are set up. For example, near the Priory, pushing a button makes the crosswalk lights flash. She said that she also applied for membership on the Trails Committee and is willing to serve, having recently retired from her job. She was amazed to have submitted an application in June without ever hearing back from Town staff or the Town Council. She was just left in limbo, and is confused as to why. She said the Committee needs people who have experienced the trails from many different standpoints. She also said that the Town Council should give the Committee more credence, because the Town was founded on the importance of community input through a system of working committees that really get out there and aid staff. She said that she understands the concerns about time requirements imposed on the Town Engineer, but believes they can be addressed without detracting from the Trails Committee's important role.

Vice Mayor Driscoll said that Ms. Siegel's application is appreciated. Once it was decided to review the Committee charter, it also was decided to delay any new appointments until that process was complete. He said he had thought the Trails Committee Chair communicated that information to the applicants.

Joe Coleman, Sioux Way, said that he and his wife, Teresa, and their horses use the trails a lot. The children they encounter are enamored to see the horses. He is doing some volunteer trail work, and wants to make the trails as accessible to people and horses as possible. Mr. Coleman also said that hard-pack is very hard on the horses.

Ronnie Eaton, Folkstone Avenue, San Mateo, boards her horse in Portola Valley and has been riding in the Town for about 15 years. From the standpoint of safety with horses and children on bikes, she does not see a conflict if the children are educated. She said that every child she encounters on a bike is polite and enamored by horses. She moves her horse to the side and asks the child to walk the bike past the horse. Children also need to be taught to ride their bikes safely in the presence of people walking their dogs, other pedestrians – from children to elderly – and others on bikes. She said trails cannot be limited to one use. They are an important, but limited, resource.

Mary Hufty, Mapache Drive, pointed out that if Portola Valley loses its horses it will lose its rural nature and be just like Atherton. She blames the equestrian community for not shouting out about it enough. She said that when riding a horse, she can see the gratitude and excitement in children's eyes; the joy of having animals that size walking around is an amazing experience. She also said that in her experience over the past five or six years, connections with horses have been perceived as black marks for members of the Trails Committee. She said that she is a hiker and a mother as well as an equestrian, but she is feeling that she should be ashamed of the horse part. She said that she feels very passionately about horses as a part of her life in Portola Valley; that is why she lives here and works with the community. She said that in what she perceives as the Town Council's hidden agenda, the Council is upset because they don't want the perimeter trail around the Town Center. Although the Town Center planning process always included a perimeter trail so that the center would reflect the presence of horses in the community, the Town Council seems to want others to give land for the trail rather than using Portola Valley land. She understands that Ms. Howard doesn't want a hitching rack there, but it could go somewhere else instead.

Mayor Toben said that Ms. Hufty's narrative does not align with his understanding of the status of the perimeter trail at all, so he asked Vice Mayor Driscoll, as the point person on that issue, to explain. Vice Mayor Driscoll first indicated that there is a recently upgraded hitching rack on the Town Center property, and there is a plan to install another once the perimeter trail is built. He said that the problem with the perimeter trail is that the longest section, which is behind the soccer field, requires removing a number of very large oak trees. The Town has been trying to negotiate with the neighboring landowner for a small land swap to minimize the number of trees to be removed. Those negotiations have not succeeded, so the plan now is to construct the trail this fall, not put up a fence and basically avoid the oak trees. There is also a budget issue, he said, but "we will build the perimeter trail."

Jeanette Hansen, Portola Road, is a resident of 30-plus years who has been on the Trails Committee for quite some time. She is also an equestrian and hiker. She said she feels that she has to apologize for being an equestrian. Horses are more than symbolic; they are an important part of the Town's heritage and the reason many people moved here in the first place.

Kelly Starr, Sausal Drive, said that she also has applied to serve on the Trails Committee. She has not been involved in local politics, but feels that the Trails Committee is the Town's most important committee because trails are what the Town is about. She grew up in Portola Valley, went to Corte Madera School and has lived here as an adult for the past 15 years. She said that horses are the character of the Town, and she is saddened and shocked by the controversy. She said she still wants to be a part of the Trails Committee, because the trails are so important and they should serve everyone.

Victoria Klein, Longspur Street, Portola Valley Ranch, said that as an equestrian she moved to Portola Valley and bought real estate specifically because of the horses. She has always appreciated the trails tremendously and, having had her horse fall on a slippery driveway, wants scoring driveways for safety to remain a priority. She also said that her neighbor, Majda Jones, was unable to come to the meeting but asked her to extend her similar thoughts. Ms. Jones also had a horse go down on an unscored driveway. Also, Linda Giampa, 4840 Alpine Road, was unable to come. Last year, she had two children who rode their bicycles to and from Corte Madera School, but she wants the trails to remain suitable for horses, without hard surfaces. She said the equestrian community of Portola Valley is why these women wanted their opinions heard.

Alison White, Grand Street, Redwood City, has had horses in Portola Valley for 15 years. Piggybacking on what Ms. Eaton said, she agrees that safety is a huge issue. She is a retired teacher, and while riding today, she came very close to two little girls who did not know how to pass a horse. She also had a child from Corte Madera School just jump out of nowhere, startling her horse. The children need to be educated, and she would like to offer her services as a former teacher to perhaps talk to the administration and offer some guidelines to give to the children.

Teresa Coleman, Sioux Way, said that an unbelievable dream came true for her 15 years ago when she and her husband were able to buy a home in Portola Valley. She said that as a little girl, she rode her horses from Los Altos Hills to Portola Valley and Woodside, always thinking, "if only...if only." Although her husband did not share her passion for horses, he understood and embraced hers. They have two horses in their back yard, and board two others. Mucking stables and hauling hay are among Ms Coleman's twice-daily chores. She said that the idea of compromising the feeling of immeasurable passion and pride she gets from saddling the horses and riding through the community is insufferable. Anything we can do to preserve this environment that we want to be in is a top priority, she said.

Terry Conroy, Grant Avenue, Palo Alto, said she does not ride her horse there because it is like a desert. She said she loves to ride in public parks, and finds that children and their parents alike are blessed by seeing horses. She especially enjoys riding her horses in Portola Valley and Woodside; she called it the most beautiful riding in the world. She said she is blessed to have a Trail Club key, so she is free to ride when she chooses without dogs and bikers. She said that she has ridden every inch of Portola Valley's and Woodside's trails. They cannot be duplicated. It is precious and special. Bill Lane would cry, she said, and many others, if the system were changed to discourage equestrians. Safety is another issue of concern – the safety of horses and their riders as well as those they encounter on the trails, especially those on bicycles, and many of the areas are very steep. She said you are asking for trouble when you intermingle the two.

Katie (unidentified last name), Arastradero Road, asked whether there is a program in the schools for training children to be safe around horses.

Mayor Toben said that he believes the schools from time to time have offered modules on safety with horses on the trail. Councilmember Derwin said that at least one of the schools has brought in horses and equestrians to help teach safety on more than one occasion, and that Shelly Sweeney has worked hard to try to find people to do that.

Clair Jernick, Grove Drive, said it is curious to her what is happening and she would like to understand it better. Although she is not a horseback rider, she said she can hear them, loves the clip-clop sound and wants it to continue to be part of the community.

Douglas Janiewicz, Alpine Road, said it should be a blessing that Portola Valley is and always has been horse territory. Nothing should get in the way of that. Portola Valley is known for that, and it is all that he has known it to be. He said that he has not had a conflict with a mountain biker on the trails except for one that complained about dust from the dirt trail.

Andrea Felsovanyi, who now lives in Menlo Park, said that she grew up in Portola Valley and boards horses here. She said the last time she was in the Historic Schoolhouse building, it was her library. She said that she had the incredible pleasure and freedom to ride her horse all over the Town, to and from school, church and camping in the orchard behind the school. Portola Valley's history and its identification with horses seems to have been lost with the influx of people who don't identify with horses, who maybe aren't at the meeting tonight, but who do have influence and do vote. She said that like many other speakers, she is dismayed at the controversy, at the perceptions on both sides that she has heard, comments such as the Trails Committee being dysfunctional. She said that her grandmother used to tell her that you catch more flies with honey than vinegar; it seem the more appropriate question from the Town Council to the Trails Committee might be, "How can we help you be a better Trails Committee?" How can we get together, and who else can we have on the Committee, following the model described by Don Pugh in Woodside? Where can we come up with more money so the Town Engineer maybe has an assistant to work on the trails so he doesn't have to work from 8 a.m. until midnight and more of those driveways can be scored? She said that about a year ago, her horse went down where the trail crosses a driveway that remains unscored to this day. She said that in a small town with a lot of competing interests but with a valuable history to preserve and ongoing uses of the trails to provide, there is a way through without name-calling, gossiping and the rest of the garbage that goes on in politics. She said that we don't

have to do things that way here. She pointed out that many people in the audience are willing to work with the Town and to participate and volunteer – a lot of brains, a lot of experience. She said that the Trails Committee can be reworked, but it should be done in a positive way.

Karie Debenedetti, Portola Road, Woodside, said that she has a Portola Valley Library card, and would love to ride to Town, tie up her horse, borrow a book and ride home. She said she looks forward to that day.

Mayor Toben invited brief closing comments from speakers wanting to add to their earlier remarks.

Ms. Vernazza, who served on the Trails Committee until December 2009, when health issues intervened, said that in terms of the Committee being dysfunctional, the Committee had a full complement of nine members at that time. She expected her replacement to have been named in January, and was shocked recently to learn that the Committee has only five members remaining. She said that she does not understand what happened to the Committee in the months since she's been gone. In terms of Mr. Young at the meetings (as Town Engineer), she said that it is good to have him there but wonders if it is necessary for him to attend every meeting.

Ms. Vernazza also recalled that it had been decided there would be a fence between the street and the parking lot on the perimeter trail; now it seems there's not enough room for a trail, leaving the impression that the horse community is no longer important to the Town Center project. Newer people moving into town do not seem to have the same appreciation for horses as long-time residents, she added. And when you put too many bikes on a trail, she said, it keeps the horses away; it simply isn't safe anymore.

Mr. Pugh said that the discussion has been both fascinating and distressing. He alluded to Dr. Jernick's reference to castration of the Trails Committee, initially thinking it was a bit strong but then deciding perhaps it is an appropriate metaphor. Regarding whether the Town Engineer's time is too valuable to waste on the Trails Committee, he said that our taxes should cover the two hours a month the Town Engineer has to spend to understand what the issues are and what the trails need. He said that if the Committee meetings are too long, perhaps it is because a number of issues warrant discussion. If the problem is that the Committee chair needs to manage the meetings better, then provide the help necessary to put an agenda together and move things along.

Mr. Pugh noted that Woodside Trails Committee members serve two-year terms. Some have been on the committee for 10 to 20 years, which is beneficial in that they know the history of the trails over the years. The long history in the community and with the trails is important. It takes new people a year or two just to figure out what's happening, he said. Mr. Pugh stated that monthly meetings are essential, because maintenance issues come up frequently and must be prioritized. He said that the Woodside group has subcommittees that work during the month; one of them deals with the schools. People on the Committee must have a passion for the trails and believe in their importance to the community, and the people who know and understand the trails best are the equestrians. Furthermore, at any one time, with all of the community committees and church and the school, 10% or 20% of the population is volunteering for something; so he said they are lucky to have those few people who are willing to put the time and effort into the Trails Committee. We should respect them and recognize their contribution. Mr. Pugh sees Portola Valley at a fork in the road, and said that it's time to step back and decide whether to maintain the Town's heritage or become another Atherton. He drew attention to the statue of the mare and foal just erected as a welcome to Woodside, with the equestrian and arts community donating \$100,000 to make the statement that it is horse country. He concluded by saying that today is the day to decide which fork in the road the Portola Valley Town Council wants to take.

Ms. Hufty said that she and Vice Mayor Driscoll have discussed the perimeter trail many times, and she respects his efforts. She reaffirmed a desire to participate in the Town Center, and having horses a part of it. She wants to be able to come in on horseback, go to a meeting or vote or go to the library. The Town Center is as much a destination for equestrians as it is for the children and other adults. Having been

active in the creek restoration, she recalled that a lot of the expense for that project involved the bridge, which included a six-foot dirt path. It is frustrating to be continually stonewalled about something that has been in the General Plan from the beginning – for instance, being told four more parking places are more important.

Mike Bushue, Semeria Avenue, Belmont, boards three horses at Webb Ranch. He rides Portola Valley trails 30 to 50 miles each week. Any time someone breaks a segment of the trail, it makes it very difficult and disruptive to get from point A to point B to point C on a horse. As Vice Chair of the Equestrian Trail Riders Action Committee (ETRAC), he said he did a survey last year, and about 150 respondents indicated where they ride and the distances they ride. He said it's more like 7 to 15 miles than 3 to 5 miles – an hour to an hour and a half. He said that he rides Alpine Road from one end to the other, as well as the Apache and Hidden Valley trails. He said he loves being able to go the distance, interconnect and get into areas where he can stop at Roberts or go down to Rossotti's for something to eat. Those are the things that make the equestrian community such fun, he said. "Please allow us to keep those."

Ms. Ferrari asked that the draft charter amendment, presented this evening, be returned to the Trails Committee.

In response to Ms. Ferrari, Vice Mayor Driscoll said that he had been informed that the Trails Committee members had received the draft charter. Now that he is aware they did not, he will recommend that it go to the Trails Committee.

Mr. Sabel, Los Charros Lane, suggested that it might be worthwhile looking to the Woodside Trails Committee's charter as a possible model, because he said that the one-page Portola Valley document does not do a very good job outlining what the Town thinks about its trails and why they are important. It may be a more fruitful way to be inclusive and responsive to the needs of the diverse user groups.

Chris Cooper, who serves on the Woodside Trails Committee, said that it benefits from a great deal of support from Woodside's town staff and council. Committee members are allowed to draft letters and guidelines; their suggestions are always considered honestly.

Mayor Toben thanked the audience for their attendance and valuable input. Before taking the item back to the Councilmembers for further discussion, he noted that options include adoption of the draft charter as presented and refining aspects of the document to incorporate some of the audience feedback and then turning it over to the Trails Committee for its further comments. Vice Mayor Driscoll suggested that the item be continued, with the document referred back to the Trails Committee for further reflection.

Noting the "astounding turnout," Councilmember Wengert said that she believes she can speak for the Town Council when she says they all love what the people in the audience love. She said we are all here because we adore these trails, and she said she couldn't agree more that horses are a magnificent part of it. She said she had no idea that some disconnect gave the impression that the Town Council is not supportive of trails or equestrians. She further said that nothing was intended in any way to alienate the community. She described the Trails Committee review as part of an effort that began two years ago to ensure that all committees know they are valued and that their membership reflects a broad representation of the community – whether Park & Rec, Conservation, Trails or Emergency Prep. She encouraged people in the audience to involve themselves, because this kind of participation is critical to preserving the character of Portola Valley while adapting to change. She said that going forward, it is important that educational efforts focus on making sure that equestrians and non-equestrians alike understand safe and appropriate behaviors. She said that a fair representation on the Trails Committee obviously would include equestrians.

Councilmember Richards agreed with Councilmember Wengert. He too was stunned by the concept that the Town Council is anti-horse. He grew up with horses and so did his children. He recognized also that some of the changes taking place in Portola Valley threaten the reasons the Town was founded. One of

the most important things, he said, is to keep the committees healthy and functioning. As an architect, he said, he knows well that landscaping always comes in at the end of a project, and in terms of the perimeter trail, there wasn't enough room left over because it was not laid out properly. There must be some "give" somewhere to make that trail work, which will take more time to figure out.

Councilmember Derwin said it feels as if she's been dropped into an alternate universe, because the sentiments expressed do not jive with what she knows. She said there are no conspiracies. Nobody is talking about paving over the trails or banning horses from Town. After working for a year with the school district on Safe Routes to School, she said there is only one conflict on a portion of one trail – between Corte Madera School and the Alpine Hills Tennis and Swimming Club. The intent is for children to ride their bicycles or wheel their backpacks to Alpine Club or the Town Center. Getting from Corte Madera to Alpine entails going on the steep path on Upper Alpine, because children would face the treacherous crossing at the Club if they used the other side of the road. Aside from that single conflict, Councilmember Derwin said she does not know what the controversy is all about. She said the audience can find the Town Council's objectives for the trails in Portola Valley's General Plan. She has been liaison to the Trails Committee, and has advocated for improving crossings for the horses and for the perimeter trail. She believes the perimeter trail needs to go on the agenda and be resolved once and for all – either do the trail and the hitching post or don't do it. She is unhappy, frustrated and a little overwhelmed about what's happened at this meeting.

Vice Mayor Driscoll said that he wants the Trails Committee to review the draft and make themselves comfortable with it. He also is happy to discuss it with them. He said that we're just trying to make sure the Committee represents the entire Town – all the populations. There was no desire to exclude anyone.

Mayor Toben said that his colleagues have expressed their mutual deep devotion to the history of this Town and its origins in the horse community. He said we know where these trails came from. He does not see any prospect whatsoever of any action that will compromise the experience of equestrians. He said that will not happen. Rather, he said, this is an effort to build new constituencies for support of the Town's trails system. We don't have enough people hiking and cycling along the destination trails that are available for their use. We are interested in the next generation of trail users as well as the original generation. He said that when he goes to the trails in Portola Valley Ranch, his concern is that no one is there. He wants to expand the circle, and see more non-equestrian residents engaged with the trails. They may come from a very different starting place, but the trails would introduce them to that tradition.

Mayor Toben noted that throughout the discussion there had been very little focus on the specific language of the proposed draft, but still he said it was important that the Trails Committee consider and discuss the document, make changes and refer it back to the Town Council. Councilmember Wengert, having worked at the start of the process of evaluating all committees and their charters two years ago, said that in each case the relevant committee ultimately blessed the charter that went to the Town Council for approval. For whatever reason that did not happen this time, she agreed that it should go to the Trails Committee for the final version. With a Trails Committee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 14, there is a possibility that the item could come back to the Town Council at its September 22 meeting.

Ms. Howard asked whether there are any specific comments regarding the language of the draft charter before it goes to the Trails Committee. For instance, she said that perhaps the Committee should be charged with coordinating educational programs in the community. Councilmember Wengert suggested that the Committee meet monthly and the Town Engineer attend meetings as requested.

Councilmember Derwin moved to refer the Trails Committee's draft charter, including revisions that the Town Manager will include, to the Trails Committee for consideration, discussion and any necessary changes at its September 14 meeting and return to the Town Council for possible action on September 22. Vice Mayor Driscoll seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

(7) Reports from Commission and Committee Liaisons

(a) Council of Cities

Councilmember Derwin said that Joan Cassman, an attorney with Hanson Bridgett, a municipal law firm, made an instructive presentation to the Council of Cities at its August 27 meeting. Ms. Cassman described Proposition 26, which would require voter approval for most local levies, fees and charges, a sleeper that is extremely dangerous in that it re-characterizes regulatory fees as taxes. This would render local government ineffective because everything will require voter approval.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS [9:45 p.m.]

(8) Town Council 8/27/2010 Weekly Digest

(a) #1 – Memorandum to the Mayor and Town Council from Janet McDougall regarding the Hasso-Plattner Six-Month Report, January to June 2010 – August 27, 2010

Vice Mayor Driscoll said that it was a very nice report and is pleased to see all that's going on. In response to his question about a limitation on the number of events, Ms. McDougall said there is a maximum of 24 private events. She also said that staff is making an effort to avoid booking events when they might present parking problems. Concerned about spending operating funds in connection with a donation, Vice Mayor Driscoll also asked about how much time staff spends preparing the report. Ms. McDougall said that the most time-consuming task is Cindy Rodas' creating spreadsheets that detail each event.

ADJOURNMENT: [9:48 p.m.]

Mayor

Town Clerk