

PORTOLA VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING NO. 889, NOVEMBER 12, 2014

Mayor Wengert called the Town Council's special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in Hanson Hall at The Sequoias and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Hanlon called the roll.

Present: Councilmembers Craig Hughes, Maryann Moise Derwin and John Richards; Vice Mayor Jeff Aalfs; Mayor Ann Wengert

Absent: None

Others: Howard Young, Public Works Director
Leigh Prince, Town Attorney
Sharon Hanlon, Town Clerk

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Ronald Chandik, a resident of The Sequoias, expressed his concern over a proposal to remove several trees at The Sequoias. He suggested the problems may not be so much with tree roots as aging facilities, recalling a time when he could not get his homeowners' insurance renewed without upgrading the 70-year-old house he lived in. He said it's similar to the situation at The Sequoias, which is 50 years old. It's not so much a tree root. Commenting that tree removal is always highly debated, discussed and analyzed, Mayor Wengert, said she's confident that process will be followed as plans move forward, so there will no doubt be alternatives to what's being proposed.

CONSENT AGENDA [7:05 p.m.]

- (1) Approval of Minutes: Regular Town Council Meeting of October 22, 2014 [*Removed from Consent Agenda*]
- (2) Ratification of Warrant List: November 12, 2014 in the amount of \$117,080.19
- (3) Recommendation by Mayor: Amendment to agreement between the Town of Portola Valley and Jorgenson, Siegel, McClure & Flegel, LLP for provision of legal services
 - a) Adoption of a resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley approving and authorizing execution of agreement for legal services between the Town of Portola Valley and Jorgenson, Siegel, McClure & Flegel, LLP. (Resolution No. 2635-2014)
- (4) Recommendation by Town Manager: Approve first amended as restated Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement for San Mateo County Operational Area Emergency Services Organization
- (5) Recommendation by Planning Director: Designation of Land Acquisition Negotiator
- (6) Appointment by Mayor: Request for appointment of a member to the Conservation Committee
- (7) Recommendation by Town Manager: Extended winter closure for Town Hall
- (8) Recommendation by Town Manager: Request approval of budget amendment for 40-hour workweek
 - a) Adoption of a resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley amending the administration budget for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 to modify the standard workweek (Resolution No. 2636-2014)

Vice Mayor Aalfs moved to approve Items 2 through 8 on the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Derwin, the motion carried 5-0 with the following roll call vote:

Aye: Councilmembers Derwin, Hughes and Richards, Vice Mayor Aalfs, Mayor Wengert.

No: None.

(1) Approval of Minutes: Regular Town Council Meeting of October 22, 2014

Councilmember Hughes moved to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2014 meeting, as amended. Seconded by Councilmember Richards, the motion carried 4-0-1 (Derwin abstained).

REGULAR AGENDA

(9) Public Hearing: Proposed Portola Road Corridor Plan [*removed from the Agenda*]

Mayor Wengert said this item is likely to be rescheduled for a Town Council meeting in January 2015.

(10) Recommendation from Public Works Director: Authorize staff to submit a conceptual trail project proposal for relocation of the existing trail along Alpine Road [7:13 p.m.]

As indicated in his November 12, 2014 staff report, Mr. Young said this proposal involves the dirt trail section between Saddleback Road and Hillbrook Drive, adjacent to the Hawthorns property, which was being transferred to Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) ownership at that time. In 2010, Mr. Young explained, the Trails and Paths Committee indicated concerns about perceived conflicts among various users – bicyclists, pedestrians, schoolchildren and equestrians – in this very constrained and narrow section of the trail, with a steep slope on one side and the MROSD fence on the other.

To pursue solutions to the concerns, Town representatives met with MRSOD on September 9, 2014 to assess the trail, observe the conflicts first hand, and better understand the constraints envisioned by MROSD. The group discussed the possibility of relocating the trail inward, from Town right-of-way (ROW) onto MROSD's property, and the need to secure the Hawthorns complex with a fence.

Several weeks ago, Mr. Young said, Town Manager Nick Pegueros met with MROSD General Manager Steve Abbors to follow up on the possibility of a joint Town/MROSD project to construct the proposed trail. Mr. Abbors said its resources are stretched thin, but MROSD would be willing to entertain a proposal for a project funded and managed by the Town. Due to timing and the MROSD's budgeting and planning process, which begins in December 2014, Mr. Pegueros asked staff to propose a highly conceptual plan to bring to the Council before taking it to MROSD for its consideration.

Time constraints precluded polling various parties, but Mr. Young emphasized that the proposal he developed is highly conceptual, and if MROSD provides positive feedback, the Town would undertake its normal consensus-building process with the appropriate committee, commission and public input to flesh out scoping, planning and design details. Mr. Young distributed a handout, Exhibit B, showing a potential multi-use trail, about 3,000 feet long and six to eight feet wide within a new 10-foot easement, separated from the Hawthorns property by a fence in a 75-foot setback. He noted that the trail would minimize disturbance to the land and vegetation, and would meander rather than run in a straight line as indicated on the exhibit. Considering the variables and the conceptual nature of the proposal, at this stage he said costs could range from \$130,000 to \$175,000.

Councilmember Richards asked whether the fence would be on the property line. Mr. Young said that without surveying the land, aerial photos indicate the fence encroaches five feet onto the public ROW. He also noted that trees have grown under the fence, so some vegetation management would be needed.

Councilmember Hughes said one thing discussed when Town and MROSD representatives walked the trail in September 2014 was how the trail doesn't connect only Saddleback Road to Firethorne Way now, and there are other places where people enter and exit the trail. If a new easement is set into the property, he asked whether there would be access easements along the way. Mr. Young said yes, but they don't appear on the exhibit. He also noted that MROSD's long-term master plan would connect its trails to the Town's.

Councilmember Derwin asked whether the old trail would be more for equestrians and the new trail for other users. Mr. Young acknowledged that the consensus-building process might lead to two separate trails, but the initial vision is to relocate a single trail to MROSD property and make it wide enough to accommodate all uses and minimize the conflicts by also providing more easement space to enable users to step out of each other's way. Councilmember Derwin said that if she recalls correctly, the equestrians were adamant about having their own trail.

On the cost issue, Councilmember Derwin asked whether the Town has \$130,000 to \$175,000 to fund this project. Mr. Young said he would defer that question to the Town Manager. He also pointed out that the Bicycle, Pedestrian and Traffic Safety (BP&TS) Committee supports the conceptual proposal, as does the Trails and Paths Committee.

Mayor Wengert said that she and Mr. Young attended yesterday's Trails and Paths Committee meeting to introduce the idea of the conceptual plan, and emphasized that the ultimate decision will be based on a robust, prototypical Portola Valley process. She also said she believed that because we'd looked to the idea that the opportunity to relocate the trail might surface, we would be able to find the funds. If it didn't seem feasible, she added, we wouldn't have reached the point of developing a highly conceptual proposal.

Kirsten Kingdon, a resident of The Sequoias, said she'd assumed that if MROSD were to develop the Hawthorns property, the fence would disappear. Mr. Young said that's not been discussed with MROSD yet, but at this point he doesn't know what its plans are in that regard. He also noted that with the Town's new fence ordinance, if there's a fence it would have to be a wire fence a maximum of four feet high, or if MROSD wants a six-foot chain-link fence, it would have to be set back 75 feet from the property line. Councilmember Richards said MROSD had indicated wanting a fence of some sort to avoid unrestricted access, especially as long as the Hawthorns site is minimally used.

Councilmember Richards said we have a framework to start with, and he's all for it. Councilmember Hughes agreed it's a great idea and we should move forward with it. Councilmember Derwin anticipates quite a discussion but said she's happy to see something the Trails and Paths Committee is buying into. She also looks forward to seeing the idea moving ahead. Having participated in the September 9, 2014 trail walk and discussions with MROSD, Vice Mayor Aalfs said he's very happy with this. Mayor Wengert also expressed support for moving forward, adding that it's a very exciting development because there's been such an increased usage of the Town's trails. The more we can provide residents and visitors with these safe and scenic corridors, which she considers among Portola Valley's greatest resources, she said she's very much in favor of it. It's been a long time coming and will be a long time before it's finished, she added, but it's a great first step.

Councilmember Hughes moved to authorize staff to submit the conceptual trail project proposal for relocation of the existing trail along Alpine Road. Seconded by Councilmember Richards, the motion carried 5-0.

COUNCIL, STAFF, COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(11) Reports from Commission and Committee Liaisons [7:30 p.m.]

Councilmember Richards

(a) Conservation Committee

Lacking a quorum for its meeting on October 28, 2014, the Committee convened a special meeting on November 3, 2014, discussing new member recruitment to make sure that effort moves forward. (The Committee's newest member is Nona Chiariello, staff scientist at Jasper Ridge. With academic training in plant ecology, Committee Chair Judith Murphy said Ms. Chiariello brings a new wealth of knowledge to the Committee along with her enthusiasm and volunteer spirit.)

(b) Architectural and Site Control Commission (ASCC)

After a field meeting at 40 Antonio Court on November 10, 2014 to review and comment on plans for a new development being proposed by Brian and Emily Melton, the ASCC agreed to continue the review at its meeting on November 24, 2014. The proposal for this 4.48-acre parcel, one of three lots created with the Priory subdivision in 2000, includes a main residence, detached second unit, swimming pool and pool house. Comments from neighboring property owners on Veronica Place (Daniel Abrams and Linda and Mark Waissar) were positive; neighbors on Antonio Court expressed concerns about the project's visibility (Robin and Firouzeh Murray, Rene Lacerte and Joyce Chung).

The ASCC also reviewed a music room addition and remodel at 125 Fawn Lane in the Westridge area (Scott and Virginia Huffman) and a garage storage and addition at 191 Ramoso Road in the Oak Hills Subdivision (John and C.J. Mumford).

Councilmember Hughes

(c) Bicycle Pedestrian & Traffic Safety (BP&TS) Committee

Among the items on the BP&TS Committee meeting agenda on November 5, 2014:

- A Sheriff's report that included discussion about an accident on lower Los Trancos Road, an area where the San Mateo County Sheriff's Department is looking into additional policing
- The shoulder widening project, scheduled for completion by 2016 according to by Mr. Young
- Tree-cutting near the roads
- The conceptual Alpine Road trail project and the MROSD

Members are working on final edits on the Committee's proposed traffic-calming policy, which they're close to submitting for the Council's consideration. Their proposal separates traffic-calming into two distinct areas because solutions on arterials differ from those in the neighborhoods.

Councilmember Derwin – None to report

Vice Mayor Aalfs

(c) Geologic Safety Committee

The Geologic Safety Committee, which met on October 31, 2014 to discuss the nature of the San Andreas Fault at its intersection with Alpine Road, submitted an updated geologic safety hazard map to the Town. The main change is in the area of Alpine Road at the top of Willowbrook Drive, where retired U.S. Geological Survey geologist Chet Wrucke remapped the fault. The next step is Planning Commission review of the revised map.

Mayor Wengert

(d) Trails and Paths Committee

In addition to the conceptual plans for the Alpine Road trail, members of the Trails and Paths Committee discussed several other items when they met on November 11, 2014. Thanks largely to Mr. Young working with Chair Susan Gold to reach out to certain property owners over the past two years, only two properties are left to review in their effort to have owners score their driveways to make it safer for horses to cross and relocate boulders from the ROW that interfere with trail use. Also on the trail-safety front, the Committee continued discussion of signage for bicyclists on the lower section of Alpine Trail.

The committee is working on two events for next year; sponsoring a trail ride scheduled for on June 14, 2015 and a Day of the Horse celebration in coordination with the Town Picnic on June 21, 2014.

With the recent resignation of Committee member Phil Reilly, Mayor Wengert said there's an opening to fill.

(e) SFO Airport/Community Roundtable

Mayor Wengert reported that the subcommittee of the Airport Roundtable, which met today, is beginning to be more aggressive in lobbying the Roundtable for changes that will improve its effectiveness, including sub-regional initiatives. The three elected officials who participated were Mayor Wengert, representing southern San Mateo County, San Mateo County Supervisor Dave Pine and Brisbane Councilmember Cliff Lentz, who also chairs the Roundtable.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS [7:40 p.m.]

(12) Town Council October 24, 2014 Weekly Digest

(a) #6 – Memo from Nick Pegueros, Town Manager re: Removal of 31 hazardous trees – October 23, 2014

Mr. Pegueros wrote that PG&E had confirmed that the tree-removal work previously discussed will move forward but did not yet know when crews would be deployed. In response to Councilmember Derwin, Mr. Young said the timing information is still unknown, but he continues to check the status regularly.

(13) Town Council October 31, 2014 Weekly Digest

- (a) #9 – City Selection Committee Appointments/Reappoints for December 2014 – October 31, 2014

Councilmember Derwin said that all the important seats are up for election at the December 19, 2014 meeting of the Council of Cities' City Selection Committee meeting in Colma, and because they will be hotly contested seats, the Council might want to discuss candidates at the Council meeting on December 10, 2014.

Only one person from each city represented is allowed to vote, either the Mayor or the Mayor's appointee, she said.

(14) Town Council November 7, 2014 Weekly Digest

- (a) #9 – Invitation to Council of Cities Dinner Meeting – Friday, November 21, 2014

Mayor Wengert noted that Portola Valley would host Council of Cities dinner meeting at Town Hall on November 21, 2014. A buffet-style dinner is on the menu, and the program will focus on Water Sustainability as a Region. Featured speakers include Peter Drekmeier, Policy Director for Tuolumne River Trust and Brandi de Garneau, the Town's Sustainability and Special Projects Manager, who will focus her remarks on the Town's water-sustainability efforts.

A former Palo Alto Mayor, Mr. Drekmeier gave a presentation at the Town Council meeting on September 10, 2014, the night the Council adopted Resolution No. 2633-2014 in support of Sustainable Groundwater Management in the San Francisquito Creek Area.

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION [7:45 p.m.]

(15) Conference with Labor Negotiator

Government Code Section 54957.6
Agency Designated Representative: Jeff Aalfs, Vice Mayor
Unrepresented Employees: Town Manager

REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

None to report.

ADJOURNMENT [8:30 p.m.]

Mayor

Town Clerk