

Minutes for JANUARY 26, 2016 CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Present: Bourne, Chiariello, DeStaebler, Eastman, Eckstrom, Murphy,
Plunder,

Absent: Heiple, Walz

Also present: Town Council Liaison, Richards

1. Call to Order 7:30
2. Oral Communications
 - a. Bourne brings to our attention a new to this area pest - soil borne Phytophthora tentaculata in nursery stock
3. Approval of Minutes. October and November 2015 minutes approved with minor corrections.
4. Current Site Permits
 - a. 1260 Westridge - A, B and C Plunder
 - i. committee has concerns about development encroaching onto creek setbacks.
 - b. 30 Zapata deStaebler
 - i. committee strongly feels steep rocky slope is not appropriate for large 36" oak boxes.
5. Old Business
 - a. Broom Pull Sunday 3/6/2016 9am to noon. Members will take same responsibilities as last year. Eckstrom compiling lists of work sites.
 - b. Tip of Month - Eastman and Plunder will do current weed seedlings
 - c. Monthly Kudos - Murphy will do thanks to those who have toyons.
 - d. Local Native seed collection - Plunder is beginning to organize this. She made a brief presentation to the PV Garden Club.

- e. BYH - deStaebler
 - i. No current applicants
 - ii. Murphy has approached TechShop member about making the awards
- f. PV Ranch
 - i. Revised planting list - corrections sent? Chiarriello, Heiple and Walz were to do this. They will get to PVR soon.
 - ii. broom on Alpine hillside - consultation with PVR by Eckstrom and Eastman to help determine exactly where broom stands are located.
- g. Ban on Poison bait - deStaebler is beginning to collect documentation to support a position paper from us to Town Council
- h. Monarch waystations - Murphy will send out Doodle to pick best day for planting the Asclepius seedlings Acterra grew for us.
- i. Guide to Town Center Plantings - Chiariello has produced an impressive illustrated brochure. She requests that we look it over carefully and give her feedback. Goal is to have the finished product for Earth Day.
- j. Our web site - Plunder Nothing new
- k. Weed seedling info sheet - Heiple progresses
- l. Committee/Town cooperation
 - i. Trails - nothing new
 - ii. Cultural Arts - Library Project - nothing new
 - iii. Public Works - always can use help with weeding this time of year.
 - iv. 25 year planning task force - Jean presented data gathered by the task force and solicited input from members. Members expressed concern that so little was known about this in town, and that the next meeting does not

show up on the Town calendar. Major concern of entire committee is that the site not be over-developed, that Springdown remain pristinely Open Space with no encroachments, and that all planting be native plants. Attached as appendix A is our list of recommendations

6. New Business
 - a. Election of Chair and Vice-chair: Murphy was unanimously re-elected Chair and Chiariello was unanimously elected Vice-chair.
 - b. Sponsor Sempervirens event? Discussion of video proposed. We would be interested in sponsoring a video and discussion that detailed the methods used by the local tribes in maintaining the lands and what parts of those practices are now being used again. But we find the current video primarily about the political process of the Amah Mutsen tribe reestablishing some influence in the Open Space Districts too off target for us to sponsor. Murphy will communicate this to Sempervirens.
 - c. Low Water use Garden Tour - co-sponsor? Idea originated with Water Conservation Committee. We are interested in helping if it can be titled Native and Low Water Use Garden Tour. It is not our mandate to encourage the use of other Mediterranean plants. For 2016 because time is short, we will focus on helping publicize the Going Native Garden Tour. Murphy and deStaebler will follow up with this.
 - d. Annual Report to Town Council Murphy will create a draft and circulate.
 - e. Goals for 2016. We will discuss this in detail next month. We need to create a priority list and

include only items we have a subcommittee chair for. We should not spread ourselves too thin or waste time tilting at windmills.

7. Announcements
 - a. Next Meeting February 23, 7:30 pm
8. Adjournment at 9:50

Submitted by Judith Murphy, Chair

Appendix A

Comments from Conservation Committee to PV Long Range Planning Committee

Town Center Master Plan Update Input from Town Committees and Commissions

Name of Committee/Commission: Conservation Committee

Date of Meeting: 01/26/2016 Committee Liaison: Murphy/Eastman

Town Center should continue to be a model showcase for best practices for residents and visitors.

Our Highest Priority is maintaining all of Springdown as dedicated Open Space. We need to see documentation of actual legal restrictions (binding) and Springdown Committee Report (?non-binding)

Current issues:

-Views of Town buildings and western hills possibly obscured by increasing vegetation

-multiple events scheduled at same time create parking problems.

Future Opportunities:

-Improve development only to the extent that it continues our role as demonstration of best practices in sustainability and wise landscaping (native plants/habitat preservation).

-Improve our use of water – greywater, recycle, rain barrels, rain garden.

-Restore Springdown pond so it becomes a feature not a hazard/blight

- Optimize use of open creek at rear of Springdown Open Space. About 80% of the length of that creek is on Town side of the property line. Purchase of very tiny piece of land (useless to Springdown because outside their fence) there would put the entire creek in Town property. This would be a small fraction of the cost of daylighting the current culvert.

Other Comments:

- Be mindful of Portola Road View Corridor guidelines.

-Preserve views of the western hills.

-Preserve and protect the redwood groves.

-Only native plants in the landscaping except for playing fields.

-No artificial turf.

-Planting plan for Town Center created by Conservation Committee and approved in 2014 and plans for restoration of Native Plant Demonstration Garden are both currently on hold because of drought. Consult these as Long Range Committee plans take shape.

-There will be more requests for space and structures than this acreage can meet. We urge minimal build out for only the highest priority projects to preserve the park-like and open ambience. Do not jam in everything possible.

to conserve the rural quality of Portola Valley and to maintain the Town as an attractive, tranquil, family-oriented residential community for all generations, compatible with the many physical constraints and natural features of the area. The committee does this by promoting programs to enhance the environment through protection of native habitat and by helping to ensure that all land development respects and preserves the natural condition of the area.

Accomplished in 2015-6

1. **Site visits:** 10-12/year; simple to complex
2. **Tree Permits:** 8-10/year
3. **Annual Broom Pull** first Sunday March
 - a. slowly winning the war in some areas –
CorteMadera School, Grove Drive, Ford Field
 - b. Increasing participation from Scouts
 - c. Coordinating with Acterra this year 3/6
4. **2nd year of Backyard Habitat Program**
 - a. Carrot not stick. Motivation. Education
 - b. 9 applications, 6 awards, more in pipeline. Plan to formally acknowledge at TC redwood grove mtng each year.
5. **Education**
 - a. **Table** at Earth Day, Town Picnic, Drought Action Day.
 - i. Living examples Natives and Weeds
 - ii. literature
 - b. **Tip of the Month on Forum**
 - c. **Kudo of the month on Forum - new**
 - d. **Evening Lecture** – Mountain Lion
 - e. **Guide to Native Plantings at Town Center**
 - i. **Brochure Nona Chiariello ** give them**
 - ii. Signage disappeared.

- f. **Expanded/Updated CC web page** on Town web site. Native and Invasive Plant Lists, Conservation Guide, Design Guidelines
- 6. **Native Plant Garden** – revised plan to upgrade – Howard Young, Alex von Felt, Danna -on hold – Drought

7. Collaboration with Public Works

- a. Howard calls us and we call him 80 emails
- b. 1/year adjust our meeting time so he can meet with us all.

8. Collaboration with other committees and projects–

- a. ASCC - attend their site visits
- b. trails ongoing
- c. water conservation
- d. Convened members from 4 other committees and local designer Bob Waterman for Schoolhouse Front Yard Upgrade project that Council approved last fall. Work begins in April

Proposed for 2016-7

1. Site visits

2. Tree permits

3. Annual Broom Pull – how to increase volunteer numbers? Challenge of fewer volunteers for labor

4. Continuation of Backyard Habitat program

5. EDUCATION:

- a. **Tables** at Earth Day, Town Picnic
- b. **Tip of the Month**
- c. **Kudo of the Month**

- d. Weed Seedling illustrated**
 - e. Maintain/update web site**
 - f. Brochure – Guide to Native Plantings at Town Center**
- 6. Native Plant Garden by Old Schoolhouse – Best Practices in Drought - Revive**
 - 7. Illustrated guide to Town Center native plantings.**
 - 8. Upgrade of Old Schoolhouse front area – more hardscape, protected planting, Benches.**

I know that your consideration of our Budget Requests will grow from this report. Want to add – Important to INCREASE the Public Works budget. The team can mow all the right of way only once a year – more focused attention to certain problematic areas at exactly right time of year – e.g. before the thistle seeds,