

TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
Special Meeting of the Town Council
Monday, February 5, 2024
2:00 PM

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

SPECIAL HYBRID MEETING (ASCC and Planning Commission Interviews)

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, technology permitting, 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 their phone to "raise your hand" and *6 to mute/unmute themselves. The meeting Chair will call on people to speak by the phone number calling in. Remote participation is provided as a supplemental way to provide public comment, but this method does not always work. The public is encouraged to attend in person to ensure full participation.

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/89115186018?pwd=LincMJ2abXuAGFI6OLNrH7TNCr-hjw.2EfSiAg-Dj0duYlW>

Webinar ID: 891 1518 6018

Passcode: 253837

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- SPECIAL SESSION

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. *Speaker's time is limited to three minutes.*

3. COMMISSION INTERVIEWS

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

- Two volunteers to serve on the Town's Planning Commission. These two terms expired in December 2023.

- Three volunteers to serve on the Town's Architectural and Site Control Commission (ASCC). Two of these terms expired in December 2023 and one expires in December 2024.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The next Regular Town Council meeting will be held on February 14, 2024, at 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.

PORTOLA VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

FEBRUARY 5, 2024

PLANNING COMMISSION AND ASCC INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

PLANNING COMMISSION CANDIDATES			
NAME	START TIME	PARTICIPATION	NOTES
Ed McGavin	2:15	In Person	
Nicholas Targ	2:30	By Zoom	
Lynda Brothers	2:45	By Zoom	
Carter Warr	3:00	In Person	
ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE CONTROL COMMISSION CANDIDATES			
NAME	START TIME	PARTICIPATION	NOTES
Carter Warr	3:15	In Person	
Gina Dixon	3:30	In Person	
Rebecca Flynn	3:45	In Person	

**TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
PLANNING COMMISSION CANDIDATES**

Jon Biggs

From: Ed McGavin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 3:29 PM
To: Jon Biggs
Subject: Application for Planning Commission

[You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Hello

I would like to be considered to serve on the Portola Valley Planning Commission.

My wife and I have lived in Portola Valley for the last 12 years. We first moved here in 2011 when her Canadian expat position expired and we wasted 3-4 frustrating months looking at housing from San Carlos to Campbell, before we stumbled on PV. We were struck by the rural feel of PV vs the more urban communities east of 280 and the relaxed atmosphere relative to Woodside, Los Altos hills etc. PV had a brilliant trail system, an active commercial presence, friendly residents and a very welcoming town center. Although it took a while to find the right residence, we never seriously considered living anywhere else.

It's been a great decision. We really love it here. The access local businesses (e.g. PV Hardware, PV Garage, Parkside Grille, Rossotti's), recreation (Windy Hill, the PV sport courts, Spring Down, the Ford and Rossotti fields, etc.), and all the services in the Ladera area make this town unique. It's a privilege to live here.

I have been especially impressed with the PV community aligning on issues like Broom pulls and Zotts to Tots, etc. But I was especially impressed with how the town has pulled together to address the ongoing Housing Element directive from Sacramento. While it would have been an issue that divided residents and resulted in personal attacks etc, the Planning Commission and Town Council collaborated well to provide transparency and an opportunity for extensive feedback, as well as providing significant education on the state requirement and realistic options. (I attended several of the discussions at the town center.) The feedback in PV forum spoke to the hard work and good intentions of the residents and the Planning Commission.

I know this has been a trying time for the Commission and it is time for other residents to step up and carry forward their work. Striking a balance between the requirements of the state and our desire to keep Portola Valley special is an impossible but important task. I can help with that. I have lived here long enough to know a bit of the history and what makes PV so special. I am not directly invested in Planning Commission decisions. I have extensive program and organizational leadership and management experience through previous professional roles at Amazon, Coloplast (medical devices) and KPMG, as well as volunteer roles as a firefighter, EMT, and Forest Service ranger.

Kind Regards
Ed McGavin
[REDACTED]

Nicholas Targ
[REDACTED]
Portola Valley, CA 94028

January 30, 2024

Via E-mail

Sarah Wernikoff, Mayor
Members of the Town Council
Town of Portola Valley
765 Portola Road
Portola Valley, CA 94028

Subject: Expression of Interest— Town of Portola Valley Planning Commission

Dear Mayor and Portola Valley Council Members:

Thank you for considering me for re-appointment to the Town of Portola Valley Planning Commission. In each matter that has come before the Commission, I have endeavored to bring an open mind, creativity, professional expertise and the values, policies, and objectives of the Town's General Plan. I would welcome the opportunity to continue service.

This past term, I was honored to work with residents, fellow Planning Commissioners, Council Members, Town staff and others on the Housing Element and compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This effort is one of the most consequential matters that has come before the Town in years. During this process, I worked hard to build consensus. I also used both my skill as a land use/environmental attorney and judgement as someone who has lived in Town for years to address, head-on, those issues that generated the highest-level of community concern.

Emblematic of this work are two "Dear Colleague" letters, each co-authored with another Commissioner, which were meant to crystalize issues for consideration by the Planning Commission, frame potential responses, and help set the stage for ongoing community engagement. These letters included measures to:

- Explore opportunities to preserve the Ford Field open space area, in addition to other approaches to maintain the rural character of the Town, while at the same time complying with state housing requirements. Benefiting from the insights and ideas of others, this letter was co-authored by, then, Commissioner Craig Taylor; and
- Strengthen CEQA compliance, address wildfire and safety issues, and enhance community engagement during Housing Element implementation. Planning Commissioner Lynda Brothers, who also has deep CEQA expertise, co-authored this letter.

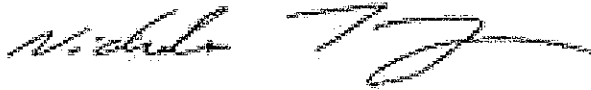
I am gratified that many of the concepts and approaches included in the Dear Colleague letters served as a point of departure for recommendations adopted by the Planning Commission and offered to the Council for consideration.

The Housing Element process re-doubled in my mind the importance of thoughtful community engagement in land use decision making, which was the focus of my planning school studies. The Housing Element process also underscored for me the importance of transparency and ongoing community engagement that is necessary to create and maintain an atmosphere of goodwill and trust and in which challenging issues can be worked through productively.

In addition to the Housing Element, I have appreciated the opportunity to address issues of direct and immediate concern to applicants (and their neighbors), who request land use entitlements, such as conditional use permits, variances, and lot line adjustments. In big and small ways, these decisions shape the Town's built and natural environment and facilitate the vision of Town residents, its schools and businesses. Each of these decisions also represent an opportunity to demonstrate the Town's ability to listen carefully, to consider competing issues and perspectives, and to act fairly and efficiently, while creating a record for potential reconsideration by Council. My goal is that at the end of the entitlement decision making process, and regardless of outcome, applicants and neighbors feel listened to, and treated fairly and respectfully.

It is a privilege to serve on the Portola Planning Commission, and I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicholas Targ". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Nicholas Targ

Jon Biggs

From: Carter Warr <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 4:43 PM
To: Jon Biggs
Cc: Sharif Etman; Sarah Wernikoff
Subject: ASCC and Planning Commission

Dear Jon,

Pursuant to a request for volunteers sent this afternoon I am responding.

Please share my interest in renewing my volunteer efforts in the Town. Since purchasing the smallest house on the smallest lot in Portola Valley 35 years ago my love for the Valley has continued to grow. Although, I still feel like a relative "newcomer."

Previously I volunteered as a member of the ASCC for a period of 21 years beginning in 1991. I am well versed with the Portola Valley General Plan, the Municipal code, and the Design Guidelines as a practicing Architect. I believe my contributions would be of great benefit to the Town on either the Planning Commission or the ASCC. My interest is in contributing my talents, experience, and history to help guide the Town as it deals with the challenges of the future.

Clearly, after 21 years on the ASCC my contributions on the Commission would be like riding a bicycle... easy to restart. On the other hand, my contributions to the Planning Commission would be benefitted by the years of experience with the Town understanding the topography, geology, demographics, and infrastructure. The embodied planning and building memory I have to share of the Town's last 35 years is likely rivaled by a very few here in Portola Valley.

So, I joyfully throw my hat in the ring to help out for the collective good of existing and future residents.

Carter J. Warr, AIA, CSI, NCARB

[REDACTED]

TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE CONTROL
COMMISSION CANDIDATES

Jon Biggs

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Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 4:43 PM
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Carter J. Warr, AIA, CSI, NCARB

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Jon Biggs

From: Gina Dixon [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 8:00 AM
To: Jon Biggs
Subject: ASCC Letter of Interest - Gina Dixon

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi Jon,

Please see below for my letter of interest.
Thank you for your time.

I am applying to be part of Portola Valley's Architectural and Site Control Commission. I have lived in Portola Valley for the past 5.5 years and truly value the community as well as the nature and architecture which support this beautiful town. We have two small children and are looking forward to raising them here.

I am a partner and architect at Fergus Garber Architects based in Palo Alto, providing single family residential design services and construction administration throughout the Bay Area.

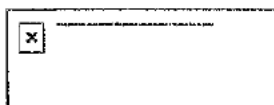
I have been working in architecture for the past 12 years after receiving a Bachelor of Architecture from Notre Dame, and practicing in the Bay Area with FGA for around 7 years. While FGA works solely on single family residences, I do have experience working on boutique commercial developments from prior offices; a good lesson in how to juggle a variety of stakeholder opinions and needs.

Given my profession, I am well versed in code interpretation as well as understanding the sometimes difficult challenge of balancing design guidelines, zoning codes, and aforementioned stakeholder interests. I have worked on projects in Portola Valley so am well acquainted with the zoning portion of the municipal code as well as the town's design guidelines. I am in the process of familiarizing myself with the town's General Plan. I feel strongly that I can provide an insightful approach to the review of the variety of projects the ASCC has oversight of. I hope this can be an opportunity to utilize my skill set as an architect to aid this lovely community.

Please let me know if there is any additional information you would like me to provide at this time. I saw the interviews will be the week of February 5th. If I am selected for an interview, is it possible to request it for 2/5 or 2/6 (I have some family travel planned for the rest of that week)

Respectfully,
Gina

--
Gina Dixon
Partner
She/Her/Hers



[REDACTED]
Portola Valley, CA 94028
January 26, 2024

RE: ASCC

To: Towncenter@portolavalley.net, Town Council, Jon Biggs, Portola Valley Planning Director

I am volunteering to serve another term on the Town's Architectural and Site Control Commission (ASCC).

I have enjoyed my time on the Commission evaluating neighbor's projects and gaining a better understanding of the nuances necessary to craft high quality projects that fit in with the natural aesthetic of Portola Valley.

I consider that I still have a lot to offer to the Town by my continued service on the ASCC.

With the effects of climate change being felt in Portola Valley from more severe storms, droughts, and fire danger, I have been encouraging all applicants to explore building their projects as high-performance homes to reduce their carbon footprint and future energy use. The US Energy Information Agency estimates that buildings are responsible for nearly half (48%) of all greenhouse-gas emissions annually. It will be critical for Portola Valley to have residents build and remodel their homes into energy efficient, high-performance homes. By continuing to serve on the ASCC, I will be able to have more direct impact on those projects coming before the commission by encouraging applicants and their architects to build in a greener and more sustainable way.

Serving on the Portola Valley Sustainability Committee for many years, it has been one of my emphases to educate and encourage residents to consider innovations that have lower carbon footprints such as electrification, air-sealing, increased insulation, fewer thermal bridges, etc.

I've also recently signed up to be a *Switch is On* volunteer to encourage people to electrify their homes. I routinely attend lectures, workshops, and green home tours on green building, energy efficiency, water conservation, and passive house building and have a strong understanding of more sustainable building practices.

In addition, I've been recently 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. Even though most ADUs and JADUs will not require ASCC approval, many of the larger projects coming before the ASCC will likely include ADUs.

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

Regards,
s/Rebecca Flynn

[REDACTED]