



**TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY**  
**Conservation Committee Meeting**  
**Jan 06, 2026**  
**5:30 PM**

**Marianne Plunder**, Chair  
**Judith Murphy**, Vice Chair  
**Megan Richards**, Secretary  
**Nona Chiariello**, Member  
**Teresa Coleman**, Member  
**Sarah Gilbert**, Member  
**Eliza Low**, Student Member  
(honorary)  
**Dieter Walz**, Member  
**Joerg Zimmerman**, Member

**MEETING MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm

Members present: M. Plunder, J. Murphy, N. Chiariello, T. Coleman, S. Gilbert, E. Low, D. Walz, J. Zimmermann

Members present via zoom: M. Richards

Also present: R. Flynn (Town Council Liaison), C. Morace (pending member)

Attendance Via zoom: D. Cardinal

**2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

a. None

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES Nov 25, 2025**

a. *Approved unanimously with one correction*; S. Gilbert, J. Zimmermann abstain

**4. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

a. Committee priorities for 2026

A. Town requested activities

1. Building permits/site reviews - Rotating subcommittees
2. Review of new landscaping plans - Rotating subcommittees
3. Review tree removal permits – M. Plunder (lead), N. Chiariello, R. Walz, C. Morace (in training)
4. Review of plant materials for non-residential projects (Erosion Control and Landscaping; Code Section 15.12.260)\*
5. Review of roadside planting against established standards in districts other than residential (25% Front yard Requirement; Code Section 18.56.020)\*
6. Site Visits with ASCC – Rotating subcommittee lead & M. Plunder
7. Urgent special requests by Town Manager - M. Plunder (lead) & TBD

\*M. Plunder will verify details required for 4 and 5 above

B. Town Council requested activities

1. Town Open Space Management  
Springdown – M. Plunder (lead), N. Chiariello, J. Murphy  
Town Center – M. Richards (lead), N. Chiariello, J. Murphy  
Frog Pond – S. Gilbert (lead), N. Chiariello, J. Murphy, J. Zimmermann  
Ford Field – N. Chiariello (lead), D. Walz, S. Gilbert

C. Committee selected activities

- i. Fence permit reviews – suggested on a trial basis. M. Plunder (lead), J. Murphy, C. Morace (Approval of Planning Director needed)

- ii. Tip of the Month – M. Richards (E. Low will assist)
- iii. What's blooming now – N. Chiariello
- iv. What are the frogs doing now – J. Murphy
- v. Annual broom pull – T. Coleman
- vi. Wildlife corridors/wildlife friendly fencing – M. Richards, M. Plunder, N. Chiariello, J. Murphy
- vii. Nature app initiative development/implementation – C. Morace (lead), M. Plunder, E. Low
- viii. Backyard habitat – C. Morace (lead), D. Walz, M. Plunder
- ix. Website – M. Plunder
- x. Biocide/herbicide/rodenticide free PV – N. Chiariello (lead), S. Gilbert, E. Low
- xi. Liaison to School District – M. Plunder, N. Chiariello
- xii. Liaison to Town Committees
  - Trails – T. Coleman
  - Open Space – N. Chiariello
  - Wildfire Preparedness – M. Plunder
  - ASCC – M. Plunder
  - Nature and Science – J. Murphy
- xiii. Kudos and the Update of the ADU ministerial checklist were removed from the Committees 2026 task list.
- xiv. Evening Lecture - R. Flynn - indicated the Cultural Arts Committee (Ivy Margolis) may be open to have the third Friday of every month available (room, equipment, etc.) for events such as an evening lecture.

**k. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. J. Murphy and M. Plunder met with D. Smith, R. Burtt and C. Booker to deliver the Committee's management plans for Town Open Space properties
- b. Tip of the Month – weeding and ID of weed seedlings
- c. What's blooming now? - Garrya elliptica, Silk Tassel
- d. What are the frogs doing now? - Not discussed
- e. Broom Pull – suggested date Saturday March 14, 2026 (to be confirmed with the Town).
  - i. **Post meeting note:** J. Murphy provided the historical background document for the broom pull which indicates Sundays are preferred over Saturdays for the broom pull to better accommodate community participation. **Sunday March 15, 2026** will be requested.
- f. Committee/Townwide cooperation – no update
- g. Duration of meetings – The majority of the committee agrees that meetings between one to two hours are appropriate. J. Murphy suggested agendas identify if an issue is to be discussed and voted on, and that members self-censor to limit off-agenda discussions. It was suggested some items might be discussed on a quarterly rather than monthly basis. Identified action items should be included on the agenda.

**I. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Corte Madera field spraying – N. Chiariello stated after meeting with school district representatives, it is apparent divergent opinions exist with respect to the use of herbicides (such as Roundup). The school representatives are open to hearing input from Conservation and will lead a joint site visit Jan./Feb. 2026.

**m. SITE PERMITS - none discussed**

- a. 195 Ramoso
- b. 140 Degas
- c. 95 Sausal
- d. 5588 Alpine

**n. TREE PERMITS - none discussed**

- a. 10 Ohlone
- b. 228 Westridge
- c. 140 Shawnee Pass

**o. ADJOURNMENT: 6:39 pm**

- a. The next regularly scheduled meeting date is February 3, 2026, at 5:30pm

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.