Los Altos Hills Town Newsletter - Early 1977

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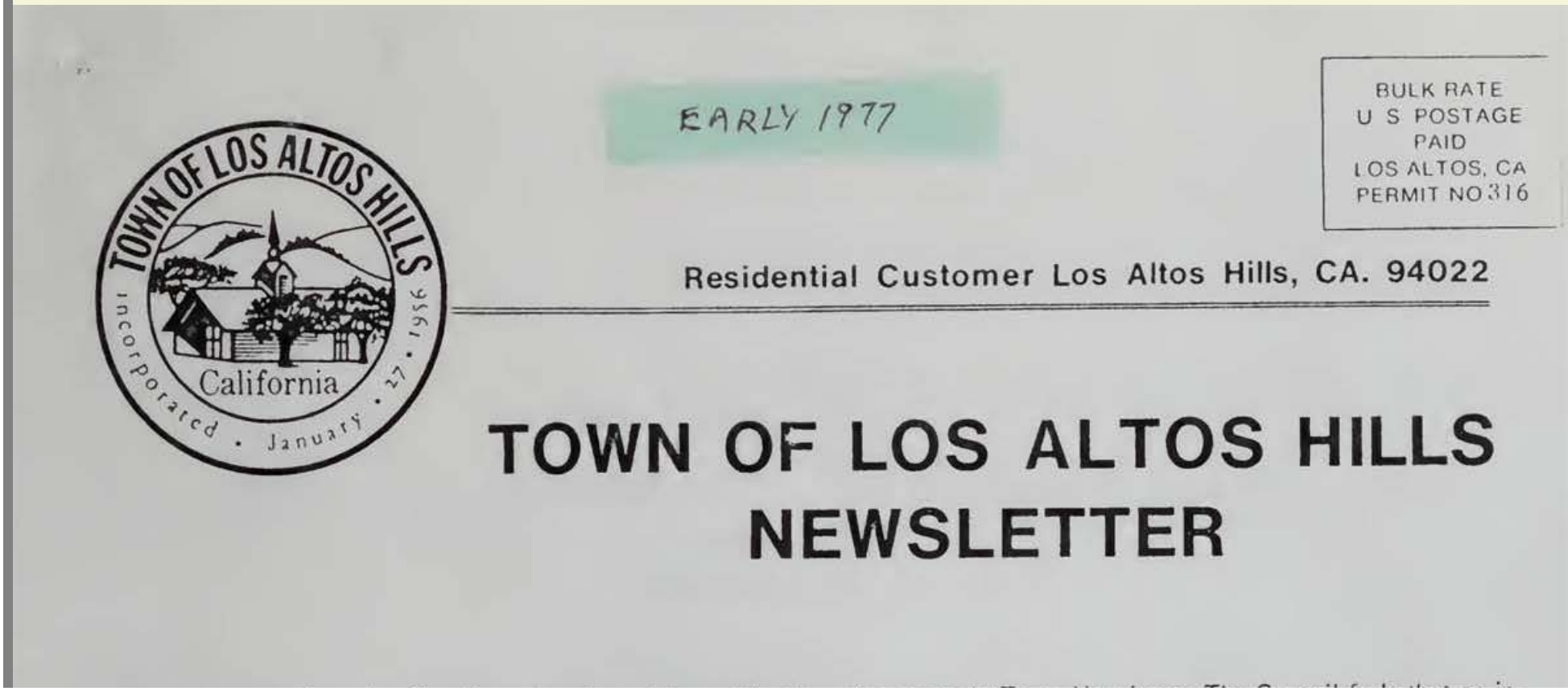

At a recent meeting, the City Council endorsed the publication of a quarterly Town Newsletter. The Council feels that an informed Town makes for a much happier citizenry, and would like you to feel proud of the Town in which you live. All residents are invited to contribute articles or any information for future issues.

TOWN ZONING AND LAND USE

Recently, various statements and claims have been made regarding the current Town zoning ordinance and what uses may and may not be allowed. Many of these claims maintain that the Town allows only a single family residential use. At the present time, the original *zoning ordinance*, along with its *fifteen amendments*, permits the varied uses shown below:

1. Primary dwelling.
2. Agricultural, including horticulture and grazing.
3. Forest preserves.
4. Other open space uses.
5. Accessory uses:
   a) Home occupations
   b) Accessory buildings
   c) Private stable limited to two hoofed animals per acre
   d) Swimming pools, tennis courts, greenhouses and workshops
   e) Child day care homes for not more than six children
6. Conditional Use Permits may be obtained for any of the following:
   a) Public libraries
   b) Churches, other places of workship and convents
   c) House trailer used for a dwelling for not more than 30 days in one calendar year subject to issuance of a temporary permit.
   d) Recreational facilities except those customarily carried on primarily for profit.
   e) Day nurseries and kindergartens for ten or fewer children under 16 years of age.
   f) Public schools
   g) Private Schools
   h) Service uses determined by City Council to be essential to recruitment of resources for emergency use.
   i) Fire stations
   j) Police stations
   k) Secondary dwellings subject to the applicable provisions of Title 9, Chapter 5 of the Municipal Code and other laws.
   l) Commercial stables

In 1973 a completely revised zoning ordinance was adopted deleting the Town's previous exemption from its own zoning regulations. The purpose of deleting the exemption was to limit the Town's activities to legislative, administrative and maintenance functions.

It should be noted that those uses of the Town in effect in 1973 included the above for legislative, administrative and maintenance activities. These functions were not listed as conditionally permitted uses because they were pre-existing and it was not con-

sidered necessary to make a specific separate provision.

A legal opinion has been prepared stating that the Town should have a specific provision with regard to Town activities. In this regard, it has been suggested that the *Conditional Use* section be amended to allow for the Council Chambers, Town Hall and Maintenance facilities. All qualified legal judgements state that adding additional uses for Town facilities *in no way jeopardizes* the one acre single family zoning.

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TOWN MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

There have been legal decisions, Attorney General opinions, Legislative Counsel opinions, as well as City Attorney opinions, regarding responsibilities of the Town for safely maintaining public properties. These decision and opinions have outlined substantial liability which can be incurred by the Town if publicly owned property and facilities are not maintained in a safe manner.

In 1956, shortly after Incorporation, the City Council appointed a Citizens Committee to study and make recommendations on maintaining the Town's streets, storm drains, signs, pathways, parks, etc. The Committee concluded that it would be less expensive for the Town to perform its own maintenance responsibilities. A similar, though less comprehensive, study was conducted in 1968 and again in 1973, where the same conclusion was reached.

In 1977, the Council appointed a Council Sub-Committee to again study the cost effectiveness of the Town performing its own maintenance functions. Again, the conclusion was the same: The Town's costs are lower than those of private contractors. Following are some of the major maintenance functions and comparative costs:

Streets – Maintain and repair
Signs, Street Markings – Maintain, repair and install
Pathways – Maintain, repair and install
Storm Drains – Maintain, repair and install
Trees and Shrubs – Maintain, trim and plant
Parks and Open Space – Maintain, plant and irrigate
Miscellaneous – Maintain, repair public buildings; respond to emergencies.

COMPARATIVE COSTS*

	Contractor	Town
Pot Holes	$67.00 per hour and material	$24.81 per hour and material
Crack Sealing	$57.00 per hour and material	$16.29 per hour and material
New Street Signs	$75.00 and material	$22.92 and material
Paint Stop and Bar	$9.40 each	$5.56 each
Clean Catchbasins	$53.98 per hour	$20.09 per hour
Maintenance and Repair of Pathways	$69.50 per hour	$27.48 per hour

*Labor and equipment cost including all fringe benefits, operation, maintenance, and depreciation.

SPRING CLEAN-UP PROGRAM

At the April 20th City Council Meeting, a new garbage collection agreement with the Los Altos Garbage Company was approved which included a provision for a Semi-annual clean up program. One weekend in the Spring and Fall, large containers will be placed at five locations throughout the town. Residents may bring any accumulated debris, old furniture, etc., and dump these materials free of charge in the containers which will be replaced as needed by the Garbage Company.

The first pick-up is scheduled for June 4th, between the hours of 8 a. m. and 3 p. m. at the following locations:

1. Town Hall Parking Lot
2. Magdalena at IS280
3. Moody Road at Elena
4. Altamonte Road at Black Mountain
5. Page Mill Road at Arastradero (West)

For further information, call the Los Altos Garbage Company -- 961-8040

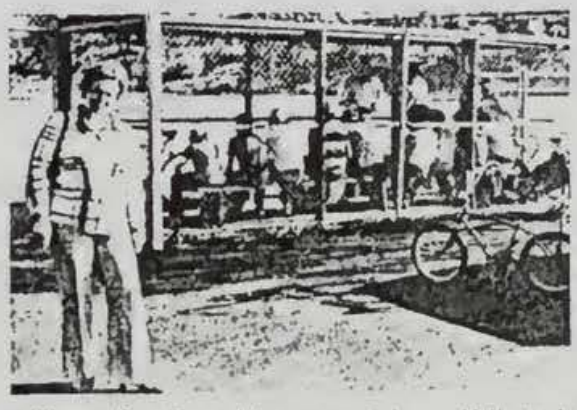
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

In addition to the routine maintenance and repair functions, the Town, through the Street Maintenance Department and private contractors, has an active Capital Improvement Program to upgrade the safety and quality of the Town's streets, storm drains, recreational facilities, bridges, etc.

The Town, in conjunction with Little League, has just completed the grading, paving, and fencing of the Youth Facility on Purissima Road at Viscaino. The major portion of the labor-intensive segments of the improvements were performed by the Town's Maintenance Crew in order to keep the costs down. This improvement will allow for greater utilization of the facility by the youth of Los Altos Hills, as well as providing a safer environment.

Recently, seven catchbasins and storm drains were installed along Page Mill Road in conjunction with other street preparatory work to be accomplished prior to the asphalt overlay which will be placed on Page Mill Road from IS280 to Altamont Road this August.

See our Mayor. His name is Keith Brown. He is pointing at one of our new Town entrance signs. This sign is at Anza Park. So is the Mayor.



See our Mayor Pro Tem. Her name is Lucy Hillestad. She is at the Little League field and stuck to the new blacktop. Stop by and see her. She gets hungry.

Other capital improvements for this year include:

1. Design and installation of new Town Entrance Signs (completed March 1977).
2. Replace the two narrow and dangerous bridges on Page Mill Road near Arastradero. (Estimated completion – August 1977.)
3. East Branch Barron Creek storm drain improvements, a problem the Town has been attempting to solve for eight years. (Estimated completion – Fall 1977.)
4. Open space acquisition of land on O'Keefe Lane and Moody Road.
5. Overlays: Natoma-Lucero to Black Mountain Road
   Black Mountain-Natoma to Sunrise Farm
   St. Francis-Fremont to La Cuesta
6. Chip seal approximately 12,000 lineal feet of street. (Chip sealing consists of placing road oil and fine stone chips on road surface and rolling.)

WESTWIND BARN

As a result of negotiations handled by the City Manager and City Attorney under direction of the City Council, the Town received a gift of the unique Westwind Barn and fifteen acres of land valued at over $400,000. The Town paid $25,00.00 for the one plus acre under the barn. A Citizens Committee was subsequently appointed to study various ways the barn could be used. The City Council considered several alternatives and rejected all as not being completely compatible until the recently presented proposal by the "Friends of Westwind." The concept which was accepted by the Council is the creation of a citizen's non-profit Co-op which will operate the facility as a low-key horse boarding and training facility. Specific programs will be discussed by the Council in April with operations expected to begin in May.

WATER RATIONING

The Directors of the Purissima Hills County Water District adopted a Water Rationing Ordinance at their meeting held at Town Hall on Tuesday, April 12, 1977. The Ordinance provides that water usage be restricted to 70% of the water used during the corresponding billing period in 1976. An "excess use" charge of $1.00/unit (100 cu. ft. or 748 gals.) may be assessed for use over this amount. An additional charge of $4.00/unit may be assessed for all use over 50 units. The excess use charge would not apply where consumption is 5 or less units.

Under certain conditions, the General Manager may adjust the allotment upon written application. Enforcement procedures such as the installation of flow restricting devices and even discontinuance of service are also provided. The Board noted that the 25% cutback required by the City of San Francisco (the District's sole source) was now being met, and that so long as this continues, it is unlikely that the penalty provisions will be enforced.

WATER SAVING SUGGESTIONS

Listed below are a few ways we can help our water conservation efforts:

1. Do not wash sidewalks, driveways, porches and other outside areas.
2. Do not wash the exterior of dwellings, buildings and structures with the exception of windows.
3. Insure that ornamental fountains or other structures make use of a recirculating system or discontinue their use.

4. Repair broken or defective plumbing, sprinklers, watering or irrigation systems which permit the escape or leakage of water.
5. Do not leave a hose running when washing automobiles, trucks, trailers, boats and mobile homes.
6. Limit outside watering to early morning and evening hours, and adjust automatic sprinkling systems to changing weather conditions.
7. Encourage use of inside water saving devices (shower flow restrictions and devices to lower toilet tank water volume – available through your Water District).
8. Insure full loads when washing dishes and clothes in automatic washers.

BURGLARY PREVENTION

There were 71 burglaries reported in Los Altos Hills in 1976. Of that number, 48 were known *daytime* burglaries. Of the 48 known daytime burglaries, 19 burglars *gained access to the residence through unlocked doors!* While statistics show that the Town's crime rate is not as alarming as those of nearby cities, homeowners can help to prevent burlaries every day by remembering these tips:

1. Be certain doors and windows are locked. Double lock sliding glass doors and windows by placing a piece of wood on the sliding track.
2. Prune shrubbery so entrances are not hidden from neighbors and police patrols.
3. Never hide keys outside your house.
4. Don't leave notes on your door explaining that you are out and will be back at a certain time.
5. Never keep your house key and car key on the same ring. This makes it easy for someone to make a copy of your house key when you leave your car at a garage or parking lot.
6. Do not publicize your expected plans for trips or social events by sending notices to local papers. Make sure that wedding, funeral, or graduation announcements in the paper don't include the date and time. This is a perfect tip-off to burglars for specific times you will be away from home.
7. Talk to your neighbors about the need for being alert to strange vehicles and persons on your street and look out for each other's interests.

When you will be away on vacation, take the following prevention measures:

1. Have mail and papers picked up daily or suspend delivery. Cancel milk deliveries.

2. Have lawns mowed and watered, so your house looks occupied.
3. Install one or several automatic timers in different parts of the house to turn lights and, if possible, a radio on and off during the usual hours.
4. Turn down the loudness of the ring of your phone so it does not give a clue that the house is unoccupied.
5. Leave a car in the driveway rather than the garage. This makes it appear that someone is home. It can also prevent burglars from backing a van up to your door or garage for loading bulky items.
6. Notify Town Hall or the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department that you will be away and would like a daily check of your home by an officer.

COMMITTEE-COMMISSION VACANCIES

Recently, the City Council held a "Committee Appreciation Evening" where outgoing members of Standing Committees were awarded Certificates of Appreciation for their contributions and efforts to better enhance the Community and the rural environment which we strive to maintain.

The Council recognizes that there is seldom little reward in volunteering to serve on Standing Committies except the donation of hours of time spent in studying problems in an attempt to recommend alternative solutions to the Planning Commission or City Council; however, a responsible government depends on the input and recommendations of such dedicated citizens, and their accomplishments since the incorporation of the Town in 1956 are very impressive.

At the present time, one vacancy exists on the following: Traffic and Public Safety, Legislative Review, Noise Abatement, and Planning Commission. If you are interested in serving on one of these Committees or Commissions, or would like additional information as to specific charges and duties, please contact City Clerk Norma Hislop at 941-7222.

COUNCIL AGENDAS AND MINUTES

Persons wishing to subscribe to Minutes and Agenda can do so by calling City Clerk Norma Hislop at 948-7222.

HISTORY ROOM

The Town's History Room, located in back of the Council Chambers at Town Hall, is staffed by volunteers of the Historical Society and is open every Tuesday between the hours of 11:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M., or by appointment by calling Town Historian, Mrs. Rosemary Meyerott at 948-5970.

COUNCIL OFFICE HOURS

Mayor Keith Brown – Mondays, 10:00–12:00 Noon
Mayor Pro Tem Lucile Hillestad – Tuesdays, 2:00–4:00 P.M.

Apointments may be made with individual Council Members by calling them individually, or calling Town Hall, 941-7222.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

City Council – 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 7:30 P.M.
Planning Commission – 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 7:30 P.M.
Environmental Design Committee – 1st Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

Environmental Design Committee — 1st Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.
Legislative Review Committee — 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 9:15 A.M.
Pathway Committee — 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 8:00 P.M.
Noise Abatement Committee — Quarterly, 2nd Thursday, 8:00 P.M.
Traffic & Public Safety Committee — 2nd Tuesdays, 7:30 P.M.

COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND PROJECT

Parents of Bullis-Purissima School children have begun a project to develop the ten-acre school property located on Fremont Road into a playground which will serve the needs of the Community as well as the children. Committees composed of parents, interested community members, and teachers have been formed to develop a Master Plan, secure volunteers and materials, and to raise funds in order to finance the project. The work will be done by volunteers.

The site will be developed in such a way as to make maximum use of the natural environment in providing a park-like atmosphere for family and organizational use. This type of park is non-existent in Los Altos Hills, and it is felt that this project will meet a real need in an area in which large parcels of open space are diminishing. It is hoped that community organizations, as well as interested community members, will become involved in this endeavor so that the real needs of the community may be met.

Current needs are for your suggestions, financial aid, volunteer help, and all types of construction materials. Organizations or individuals who might have ideas or suggestions are requested to contact Mrs. Lucy Martell, 391 Cypress Drive, Los Altos Hills (phone 948-2139).

The first work day will be held on April 30th. Anyone wishing to donate time and energy on that day may contact Mrs. Martell, or just be there on Saturday, April 30th!

PLEASE FILL OUT THE ENCLOSED QUESTIONAIRE AND RETURN TO THE SCHOOL