

**TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS**  
**OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**AUGUST 16, 2023**  
**Council Chambers Meeting Room**  
**Los Altos Hills Town Hall, 26379 Fremont Road**  
**Los Altos Hills**

**Call to Order**

- The meeting was called to order at 9:02 am. Members present: Peter Brown, Kit Gordon, Paul Marcos, Wendie Ward, Anita Baldwin. Also present, Jean Struthers and the Hon. Lisa Schmidt, committee liaison. Absent: Viggie Mokkarala, Richard Contreras

**Minutes**

- KG moved and PB seconded a motion to approve the 7/12/23 minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

**Announcements**

- AB, who attended the N. Alta Lane fast track hearing on 8/15, said that Suzanne, the interim planning director, asked that the OSC make a recommendation to the new planning director before the amended conservation easement requested by the owner could be approved. It was agreed that the amended easement request was reasonable and authorized the chair, PM, to meet with the director to convey the recommendation.

**Planning**

**Planning site reviews:**

- **13113 Byrd Lane**, remodel. No significant issues. PB moved, PM seconded, the following recommendations.
  1. Require planting only native plants within the conservation area, protection of willows along stream.
  2. Recommend landscaping with native plants. See calscape.org for list of plants native to Los Altos Hills.
  3. Add Condition of Approval (COA) Shall remove all Stinkwort plants (*Dittrichia graveolens*) from entire property and the road ROW by manual pulling or herbicide by Sept 1 of each year until final building approval.
  4. Recommend removal of cobblestones in stream. Presence of cobbles is inconsistent with conservation easement.

5. Recommend removal of sediments in culvert or research requested maintenance for construction of driveway permit.

- **12243 Tapa Way**, new residence. The site is essentially flat with creeks running on either side. The site, formerly known as “Pink Horse Ranch,” may have flooding issues and is in a liquifaction zone. A flashboard dam was installed a long time ago to divert Adobe Creek, thus two streams. Valley Water required an easement along the creeks. There may be an issue with the 25’ setback from the banks of Adobe Creek and an old tennis court. There is also a lot of non-native vegetation along the riparian banks and old fences. PB moved and WW seconded the following recommendations:

1. Clearly mark on plans “top of bank” for both channels of Adobe Creek.
2. Request second open space committee visit on site with planning staff to evaluate fences and top of bank location.
3. Require developer to grant open space easements extending 25 feet from top of bank of both channels of Adobe Creek. This request will require modification of ADU.
4. Recommend modification of tennis court to be 25 feet from top of bank.
5. Recommend removal of fences within 25 of top of bank, both streams.
6. Recommend removal of bamboo, privet, vinca, stinkwort, palm, ivy and non-native plants in the riparian zone.
7. Recommend protection of riparian trees and native plants 25 feet from top of bank.
8. Recommend coordination with Valley Water on their easement and their concerns on these modified stream channels. Ask VW about planting willows on steep channels to reduce erosion. Coordinate with VW about *Arundo donax* removal.
9. Recommend landscaping with native plants. See [calscape.org](http://calscape.org) for list of plants native to Los Altos Hills.
10. Add Condition of Approval (COA) Shall remove all Stinkwort plants (*Dittrichia graveolens*) from entire property and the road ROW by manual pulling or herbicide by Sept 1 of each year until final building approval.

- As reported by LS, the new SB9 ordinance is in process. KG requested that the OSC actually see SB9 applications as they come in; LS said the process wasn’t finished and this idea could be revisited then. KG said that Los Gatos had two ordinances, one for the flatter parts of town and one for the more rural. Question: will the SB9 rules apply to the various ratings that CalFire has designated – not known.

#### **Fast Track meeting recaps:**

- August 15: 13021 N. Alta, new residence and ADU. AB reviewed the N. Alta meeting, 8/15. See under “Announcements.”

## **New Business**

- No new business.

## **Continuing Business**

- Stinkwort mapping and updates: KG wrapping up the mapping of public areas of stinkwort. Another plant, hayfield tarplant, looks a lot like stinkwort but is a native plant and currently growing in Byrne Preserve. There is a new and more effective herbicide for stinkwort, Vastlan. Also discussed, the notification of owners whose property has stinkwort; there needs to be an effective way of alerting them to the importance of removal. The prevalence of star thistle also discussed, but it's too late to consider any type of removal now.
- Additional Byrne Preserve Signs: In addition to the two large signs at entrances to the Preserve, smaller signs are to be installed at other entrances. Modifications were made to the original large-sign graphics and copy.
- Signs for OSC to use at events: AB showed a picture of the Technology Committee's ten-foot sign. It was decided to order a six-foot version for both OSC and EDPC from the town.
- Town Committee webpage enhancements. AB will send suggestions for improvement to Deborah Padovan once final edits have been made.
- Proposed Resolution and Code of Conduct for Committees: KG recapped the history of the proposed rules, which are not finalized. PM and AB to attend the latest listening session for chairs on September 20.
- Native Plant Garden at Town Hall: Eucalyptus tree removed; a hedge may be planted in winter. Project to go forward primarily next year.
- Management of town open spaces: Grassroots Ecology, which partners with the town to monitor and improve these spaces, holds events for people to volunteer with weed removal, etc.

## **Open Discussion**

None.

**Adjournment by PM at 11:30 am.**