

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING NO. 738, FEBRUARY 27, 2008

ROLL CALL

Mayor Derwin called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Howard called the roll:

Present: Councilmembers Merk and Toben, and Mayor Derwin
Absent: Councilmembers Driscoll and Wengert
Others: Town Administrator Howard, Public Works Director Young, Town Attorney Sloan, Planning Manager Lambert, Asst. Town Administrator McDougall and Asst. Clerk Hanlon

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Bill Lane, Westridge Dr., said he read in a recent bulletin from Sustainable San Mateo County, that San Mateo Community College was getting a special award. He felt the Town Center might also be a candidate for an award from this organization. When the buildings were completed, the architects would need to submit an application. The bulletin also mentioned the Town's participation in the solar panel project. In so many ways, the Town had been a leader. He thanked those who kept Sustainable San Mateo County informed of what the Town was doing.

CONSENT AGENDA

By motion of Councilmember Merk, seconded by Councilmember Toben, the items listed below were approved with the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers Merk and Toben, and Mayor Derwin
Noes: None

- (1) Minutes of the Town Council Meeting of February 13, 2008.
- (2) Warrant List of February 27, 2008, in the Amount of \$320,790.83.

REGULAR AGENDA

- (3) Resolution in Support of Tuolumne River Water Conservation

Referring to her memo of 2/21/08, Mayor Derwin said she brought this resolution to the Council. She introduced Peter Drekmeier, Bay Area Program Director for the Tuolumne River Trust.

Peter Drekmeier said he was also representing the Sierra Club Water Committee. Referring to the Tuolumne River Position Paper, he discussed: 1) the source of the Town's water; 2) the Tuolumne River and watershed; 3) projects undertaken by the Tuolumne River Trust; 4) reservoirs, including Hetch Hetchy; 5) species native to the Tuolumne River area; 6) recreational areas; 7) water quality; 8) delta system; 9) SFPUC; 10) Bay Area Water Supply & Conservation Agency (BAWSCA); 11) Water System Improvement Program (WSIP) and costs; 12) Hetch Hetchy system and faults; 13) proposed seismic upgrades; 14) proposal to divert up to 25 millions of gallons per day from the Tuolumne River for outdoor use; 15) decline in Chinook salmon levels; 16) Fish & Game's position on the diversion; 17) SF Board of Supervisor's resolution last June encouraging that aggressive water conservation and recycled water be pursued; 18) the Tuolumne River Trust report, "From the Tuolumne River to the Tap"; 19) inflated demand projections for 2030; 20) underestimation of the potential for recycling; 21) increase in water rates and cost effectiveness of

water conservation; 22) Santa Clara County programs for home water audits, rebates, etc.; 23) recycled water programs in the area and potential; 24) drought tolerant landscaping; 25) Seattle's program to decrease water usage; 26) Tuolumne River Trust's comments on the EIR for the diversion proposal; 27) conservation groups supporting the Trust's position; 28) Tuolumne County opposition to the diversion; 29) Hayward's comments on the diversion; 30) timeline for the diversion project and alternatives addressed in the EIR; and 31) supporters of Tuolumne River Trust's position.

Matt Stoecker said the San Francisquito Creek and Cal Water Service also supplied some of the Town's water. Currently, the Tuolumne water was mixed with the San Francisquito Watershed, and the language in the resolution tied the two together. If the Town supported sustainable conservation, it was critical to send the message that water conservation and efficiency were necessary to protect the local watershed.

Craig Breon, Bonita Rd., said the Town had some reluctance at times to take a stand on issues that seemed outside its jurisdiction. But, this issue was very close to the Town, and it was reasonable to take a position. This dealt with the long-term reliability of the water supply. Seismic upgrades needed to be done; anything that would slow that down like the proposed project was not a good thing for the Town and a much wider region. Additionally, as the new Sustainability Element for the General Plan was created, issues that the Town could control directly would be addressed. But, it should be acknowledged that the resources used in Town had impacts elsewhere. Where the Town had an opportunity to take a progressive stand on the value of those resources, that was appropriate. He urged the Council to adopt the resolution.

Councilmember Merk said he fully supported this resolution. He attended San Mateo County emergency services meetings where it was warned that cities needed to figure out how they could supply their residents with 60 days of drinking water. That was not easy to do—especially if there was a big earthquake on the Calaveras Fault or a break in the dam at Eugene Doran Bridge over San Mateo Creek. The Town would be in a very tough spot. He moved to adopt the resolution.

Councilmember Toben said this was compelling. In his initial reading, he had been somewhat concerned about a "Just Say No" attitude. The environmental community got into difficulties when it didn't take the next step of offering some alternatives. He was pleased to hear the comments about the efforts the Tuolumne Trust and BAWSCA were making toward assisting the SFPUC in arriving at an aggressive but workable approach. He spent some time with Heather Cooley at the Pacific Institute who had done some analysis. She underscored the point that the work that had been done so far by the PUC was inadequate and that there shouldn't be a linkage between the proposed diversion plan and the seismic improvements. Even if all the conservation and efficiency measures were taken, he felt some amount would need to come from diversion from some place. Referring to the resolution, he said there was nothing in the documentation that talked about the problem of diversion out of San Francisquito Creek. He thought that issue should be taken up at another time and could not support the resolution with that language included.

Councilmember Merk said he preferred to include the language. The same factors applied to both issues, and it was all part of the same system that delivered water to the Town. Councilmember Toben said no substantiation had been offered on this at all. There had been two minutes of commentary, and he felt the Council should take a more informed approach. He supported the tenor, but could not support the resolution with this provision tacked on. Additionally, the resolution was addressed to the San Francisco PUC. The tacked on provision was addressed to Cal Water Service Company. He would be happy to take it up on a separate occasion with an appropriate briefing.

Mayor Derwin said she was comfortable with the added on language. She seconded the motion to adopt the resolution as written. Councilmember Merk said he would like to see this passed with a 3-0 vote. He agreed that the resolution was addressed to SFPUC and not Cal Water. He amended his motion to adopt the resolution omitting the tacked-on language about San Francisquito Creek. Councilmember Toben seconded the amended motion. Mayor Derwin called for the question, and Resolution No. 2378-2008, as amended, was passed by a vote of 3-0.

(4) State of California Land and Water Conservation Fund Program Grant Application for the Sausal Creek Project

Ms. McDougall reviewed the staff memo of 2/27/08 on the grant application to the Land and Water Conservation Fund. These were federal matching funds available through the State Department of Parks and Rec. The Friends of Sausal Creek would be applying for \$200,000. The application was due March 3 and required that the Council adopt a resolution that would accompany the application and CEQA information.

Referring to the resolution and requirement that the Town had matching funds from eligible sources, Councilmember Toben asked what "eligible" meant. Ms. McDougall said the Friends were looking to use the funds generated to date as the match.

Ms. McDougall said the Town in the past had been the recipient of some reimbursement grants. It was important to point out that the funding that would be secured here would be used for the tail end of this project. For this particular pot of money, you had to spend the money first and then go back and request it. You could not ask for reimbursement for any expenses that were incurred prior to entry into the formal agreement with the State.

Responding to Councilmember Toben, Ms. McDougall said Craig Breon was writing the application. Responding to Councilmember Toben, Mr. Breon said the State process would go until June. The State then picked its list to send on to the National Parks Service at the federal level. The State received a certain percentage of the overall Land and Water Conservation Fund. If the project was accepted, a contract with the State could be signed in late August or early September. He noted that the application needed to stress the recreational aspects of the new Town Center.

Councilmember Toben moved adoption of Resolution No. 2379-2008 Approving the Application for Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Sausal Creek Project. Councilmember Merk seconded, and the motion carried 3-0.

(5) Engineering Services for Town Center Project

Mr. Young reviewed his memo of 2/27/08 on construction staking and layout services for the Town Center project Phase 2B. By motion of Councilmember Merk, seconded by Councilmember Toben, Resolution No. 2380-2008 Approving and Authorizing Execution of an Agreement Between the Town and Lea and Braze Engineering, Inc., was approved by a vote of 3-0.

(6) Amendment to Agreement with Minton Door, Inc.

Mr. Young reviewed his memo of 2/27/08 on Change Order #1 to the contract with Minton Door to provide the revised exterior doors for the Town Center project. Responding to Councilmember Merk, he said Jim Goring specified the original doors. Councilmember Merk said he felt the architect should pay for the difference since it was their mistake. They should have known that panic hardware could not be attached to the doors selected. Mr. Young said the Town needed the doors and would be receiving value for the Town's money. The Town would have had to pay for the doors in any case if they had been correctly specified. Loewen doors said they could provide the doors. But, they could not warranty the doors if the panic hardware was attached. That was a risk he did not feel the Town should take. Councilmember Merk reiterated that he thought the architect should take responsibility for the additional \$48,000—not the Town. Minton Door Company was a good company that bought good products and backed the products up. It was not a question of what was being proposed. The issue was who should pay for it.

Ms. Howard said she would discuss it with the architect, but the doors were needed fairly soon. Councilmember Merk said he would like to hear the architect's argument, but agreed the Town needed to go ahead with the doors.

Councilmember Toben moved to adopt Resolution No. 2381-2008 Approving and Authorizing Execution of Change Order #1 to the Agreement Between the Town and Minton Door Company. Councilmember Merk seconded, and the motion carried 3-0.

COUNCIL, STAFF, COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(7) Field Visit to Foster City Emergency Operations Center

Marianne Plunder, Chair-Emergency Preparedness Committee, gave a presentation on the Committee's field visit to the Foster City EOC on 1/19/08. She discussed: 1) Committee members attending; 2) layout of the EOC; 3) television screens; 4) computer screens; 5) command stations; 6) computer equipment and software; 7) emergency generator for the EOC; 8) concealed closets; 9) dedicated phone lines; 10) need for an experienced fire resource present in the EOC; 11) redundant systems; 12) off-site EOC; and 13) what was planned for the Town's EOC. Responding to Councilmember Toben, she said Foster City would not give the Town its software. They would provide cost estimates and assist with training. Councilmember Toben said there was template software that the Town could adapt.

Ms. Plunder said the Town was short of EOC staff. Volunteers needed to be trained to work in an EOC. The Fire Chief suggested that the Town recruit volunteers from the committees and train them so that there was a reliable pool of volunteers and resources. The custom software had to be backed up with paper. Additionally, the Parks and Rec Department in Foster City was responsible for the shelter. The Red Cross had great shelters, but they might not come for 3-4 days. She thought one of the Town's other committees could take on the shelter issue. Also, Foster City's CERT was actively funded and managed by the town. The Fire Dept. had maps of all the CERT resources and would do the call ups and give instructions. She said Foster City had exceptional training, which she described. They also had a comprehensive plan for water. They had plans for potable water for the EOC and every resident. She said the Committee would be meeting with Cal Water to hear what their emergency plans were and whether they had conducted exercises. In addition to what Cal Water and the Town could provide, Town residents needed to be educated about what they should have on hand.

Councilmember Toben said the Council's first responsibility to the Town residents was their safety. The presentation was a reminder of how vulnerable the Town was and how much work still needed to be done. The Committee had done good work and the Town was fortunate, but the Committee couldn't do everything. The Council and committee members all needed to be present when an emergency happened. He suggested sending a letter to Foster City expressing appreciation for the tour. He also wanted to pursue the 5th Wednesday training sessions. Because two Councilmembers were absent, the next session could be a recap/update of the presentation along with Committee's suggestions. Ms. Plunder said she also wanted to discuss evacuation. The Fire Chief might be asked to attend as well. She said she would put together an agenda for an April meeting that focused on issues and solutions. Councilmember Toben said he felt one training session per year with a mock emergency would be appropriate. Ms. Plunder said the software issue needed to be addressed before exercises were held.

Councilmember Merk said all of the equipment for the EOC needed to be worked out. Ms. Plunder said she thought it could be mapped out by the April meeting. Bill Lane said Foster City seemed to have the very best. The equipment and people trained to use it were critical. Ms. Plunder said the Committee would be looking at other EOCs and state-of-the-art equipment as well. Mr. Lane noted that he had two fiberglass water tanks that the Fire Department could connect with. The tanks were earthquake proof and fireproof. The Town could have a lot of water stored. Ms. Plunder said the Committee had gathered a lot of information.

(8) RFP for Athletic Field Analysis of Artificial Turf, Sod/Seed Grass, and Native Grass

Erica Hughes, Chair-Parks and Rec, said there had been problems with the quality of the athletic field surfaces for a long time. There was a complete rebuild of Rossotti's in 2003. The total usage of the fields had increased and continued to do so. All of the sports leagues had higher enrollment, the seasons ran longer, and it was hard for the fields to get any down time to give grass time to re-grow and re-generate itself. In September of 2006, Steve Willis prepared a report that analyzed the status of the fields. He used a 5-point scale similar to what San Jose used to evaluate their fields. On a scale of 1 to 5 (high), the field use was at 4.5 and field maintenance was at less than 2.5. At that time, an outside contractor was hired to do a more intensive maintenance of Rossotti's to see if that would work. That three-month experiment had a positive effect, but it was very expensive. In Mr. Willis's report, he suggested hiring long-term maintenance to put extra compost, mow, etc. Another option was to replace the natural turf with synthetic, which had the potential for less maintenance and avoided some of the problems with things like gophers, dry and wet spots; it had its own host of problems and would also be very expensive. Either way, it would be a very large capital expenditure, and the Committee spent about 6 months looking at the options and doing as much research as possible. It was found that the available information was either out of date, was not applicable to the site or was biased. A lot of things on the Internet talked about Astroturf as opposed to modern synthetic turf, which was completely different. A lot of the information about the environmental pros of turf was coming from the manufacturers; a lot of the cons came from people who were rabidly against it on principle. The Committee wanted to hire an outside consultant who could look at all the facts and compile them for the Town so a factual decision could be made in terms of playability, cost to improve the fields and environmental health; there was an environmental cost to what was being done now. The proposal for the consultant was an analysis of three of the fields—Rossotti's, Russ Miller, and Ford. The analysis should include a survey of what the fields were like now, what the use pattern was, where the use demands were coming from, and a review of three different alternatives: conventional grass, synthetic turf, and native or drought tolerant grass varieties. If the RFP was approved and the study was received, the Committee would review the information with input from other Town committees and the public before recommending any changes to what was currently being done.

Responding to Mayor Derwin, Ms. Hughes said Ford Field was due for renovation, but it had not been scheduled. Russ Miller had problems and was having some work done as part of the Town Center project. Rossotti's had the most problems because it was not in the shape that the players wanted it to be in. Responding to Mayor Derwin, Ms. Howard said Russ Miller was supposed to be renovated in the next several months. If the Town was going to take on a study like this, she thought it should be put on hold. The schedule called for the renovation to occur in May. The bid package called for all new sod, irrigation and new drainage.

Mayor Derwin asked for public comment on whether to spend Town resources to do the study at this time.

Jon Silver said he felt the merits of the type of turf were very much an issue.

Emma Ingebritsen, Brookside Dr., said she did not support a study of artificial versus natural grass. As a soccer player for 8 years, she strongly preferred real grass to artificial.

An Alpine Rd. youngster said she strongly preferred playing soccer on a grass field because it was less painful when you fell and better for little children. It was more enjoyable to play on a grass field instead of artificial turf.

Haley Egbert, Golden Oak Dr., felt having a turf field would take away from the ruralness of Portola Valley. Playing on a natural field was a lot more fun than playing on a turf field.

Eugenia Jernick, Grove Dr., youngster said she preferred to play soccer on a regular grass field rather than synthetic. When she played on artificial, her feet always hurt, and she had injuries. She liked the environment of grass better.

Elaine Taylor, Tinturn Ln., said she did not think the Town should waste any money on a consultant to investigate whether the Town should use artificial or natural. The consultant should be used to figure out the best kind of grass, best kind of irrigation, etc. Several people she spoke with indicated that heat radiated off of synthetic turf. Her neighbor's son had little balls of black rubber in his bed after playing on fields in Menlo Park. She was worried about toxicity, maintenance, etc.

Annaloy Nickum, Alpine Rd., said she did not think the RFP had been written in a manner that reflected the Portola Valley way in terms of sustainable development, use of green materials, tight building controls, etc. Specifically, in paragraph c of Part 2 under Scope of Work, it stated that the analysis would be of the pros and cons of various types of synthetic turf and natural grasses. There was a big area missing. If the Town went ahead with the RFP, the analysis should be expanded and broadened to include an analysis of an all-organic approach with natural grasses using the soil ecology methods developed by the Soil Foodweb or an equivalent reputable source. The goal would be to rebuild the soil to support healthy grasses, reduce compaction, and improve drainage. Those items alone would deal with some of the issues with the current fields. They would also have no detrimental creek runoff problems associated with artificial turf and the conventional chemical-heavy approach to turf management. Possibly, the existing fields could be rehabilitated and significantly reduce overall costs. This method could reduce the down time of the fields during rainy seasons because of improved drainage. Grasses would also develop much deeper stronger roots that would not incur as much damage from use. She passed around a picture of the grass roots using the methods she described. Additionally, there were reputable, local material and people resources available for implementation of this approach. One of the resources had offered to do a Powerpoint presentation to introduce this approach if Parks and Rec was interested. The resource also had contacts with experts who had experience using this method on athletic fields and golf courses. She did not think this approach had been closely looked at. In the 2006 report, the use of some of these methods had been recommended—specifically the use of compost tea. She had just learned that one of the resources used was a certified adviser for the Soil Foodweb method. There was a very specific, on-going protocol for this method that had to be used. Not all compost tea or compost was biologically active or properly applied. In addition, if you mixed organic and chemicals together, some of the beneficial microbes would be killed, and compost tea would have to be put down again. This was an organic approach that she recommended be included in the RFP. The inclusion of the organic approach had the potential to save the Town money, improve the health of the local creeks from damaging runoff, and help the longevity and use of the fields. Responding to Councilmember Toben, she said the local people she spoke with said they had contacts for people who had used this approach on athletic playing fields. She did not know the degree of usage. This information came from a 2-day soil workshop she attended in January. Elaine Webber had the contacts for people who had more direct experience with playing fields.

Ms. Hughes said one reason she wanted to see this study done was that this was a debate that had been going on for a long time between soccer/baseball players, who liked synthetic turf, versus other people who absolutely hated it. She did not think this debate would ever be put to rest unless everyone could get and share the same facts and debate them in a rational way rather than hurling accusations at each other, making sarcastic remarks, complaining behind peoples' backs, etc. The subject needed to be out on the table so there could be an adult discussion about it.

Danna Breen, Alpine Rd., questioned the timing. Apparently, Rossotti's had another five years in its life. She did not understand the need to do a study now. The technology was also moving very quickly on these fields. Why do a study that could possibly be obsolete in 3-4 years. If there wasn't something that was going to be done immediately, she questioned why the study had to be done now rather than when the fields were going to be replaced.

Rosie Breen, Alpine Rd, said she had played on both natural grass and synthetic. She had some cuts from synthetic turf. When playing soccer in the community, the whole family was there watching with little kids picking at the grass. You didn't want rubber going into little kid's mouths; soil wouldn't hurt. Part of the fun was playing in the dirt and getting muddy. It also added an element of challenge; the ball bumped in a different direction. It was more natural and what you were supposed to be playing on. It was more fun when you got dirty. It was not about modern technology.

Responding to John Boyce, Tynan Way, Ms. Howard said the field at Town Center was a grass field; no other surface had been considered.

Jean Eastman said the Conservation Committee felt it would be inappropriate to use artificial turf on any of the Town fields and that it would not be a good use of Town resources to investigate the matter any further—specifically by hiring a consultant. The Committee unanimously opposed hiring a consultant because the Committee had identified three key concerns about artificial turf: long-term health risks, long-term environmental impact, and inconsistency with the Town's rural character. Personally, she would oppose hiring a consultant at this time because there was a lot of science that had not yet been done regarding health and safety factors. Certain risks had been well documented with artificial turf, such as staph infections and latex allergies. The potential cancer risks associated with these fields were not known at this time. Since that science hadn't been done, no consultant would be able to tell us that it was safe. One of the articles she read said this was one time when perceiving innocence until proven guilty was not appropriate. She did not think anything accurate and valuable would be obtained by hiring a consultant.

Angela Hey, Alpine Rd., said if this study was done, arguments could be made both ways. She suggested looking at another option, which was to do nothing with the fields. She grew up playing hockey. If the goals were muddy and there was no grass growing there, it was not the end of the world. If there were slippery places and dry places, it was not the end of the world. At the end of the season, you could re-seed it. She used to play on incredibly muddy fields with lakes in the middle. Soccer was played all over the world in small villages and valleys where fields were waterlogged when they were near a stream. There was a very fine field on Alpine Road. To close it because it was a bit muddy was absolutely ridiculous. Kids falling was part of the game.

Mary Enright, Willowbrook, agreed. She grew up playing soccer here when it was muddy with an inch of water. The Town needed to be careful about keeping the fields up to incredibly high standards. Part of soccer was what bump the ball would take. She also questioned what kind of decisions were being made about field usage. If the Town had done its best on that, the fun was coming home with muddy socks and grass stains.

Jim Stoecker, Alpine Road, said in addition to environmental and safety concerns, points had been made about playing in the mud and playing in bad weather. He could support a proposal to look at different types of grass, irrigation and construction if the Town had the time and money to do it. He would not support looking into the artificial option. The memories he had of all the times he played on these fields were the muddy memories. Those were the ones that stuck and were important. It would be a shame to deprive kids of having those experiences. It was part of the game to get rained out. If there was a study, he hoped that it wouldn't include artificial turf.

Matt Stoecker, Alpine Rd., said his coach was his dad. From third grade, his greatest memory was winning the division championship in a rainstorm with mud all across the field. The Town was concerned about its carbon footprint. Artificial turf was a petroleum product and took huge amounts of energy and greenhouse gases to make it. It was not water free or porous and required water to clean it. All the fields were adjacent to creeks. Natural grass permitted bio-filtration. Water would run off artificial turf right into the creeks along with all the toxins and chemicals. Artificial turf was a deal breaker for this Town for any number of reasons. It also looked ugly. It would be ironic to have a beautiful green Town Center with plastic fields. He

supported figuring out what the best options were with natural/native grasses.

Ruth Wilcox, Applewood Ln., said when she moved here 10 years ago, she was surprised that there were no streetlights, stoplights or blinking lights—regardless of public safety. At first she thought it was strange, and now would fight against streetlights and stoplights. It was okay to have some things that were off the table because they were so in conflict with the atmosphere and character of the Town. She remembered Councilmember Merk saying once that part of the success of Portola Valley was that everyone gave up something to gain something bigger. She was sympathetic to Parks and Rec who heard from people who wanted to play more often and wanted better fields. But, many people had spoken quite eloquently about tolerating the mud and keeping the Town character.

Yvonne Tryce, Joaquin Rd., said she taught the sciences classes. The fields were athletic fields but were also multi-use facilities. She took the kids out there to catch butterflies and collect bugs. The area was used to do experiments on how things were camouflaged and hid in the grass. Additionally, being right next to the redwood grove, she was concerned about a large impervious surface. A lot of the water for the tree roots would be blocked with serious impact.

Mary Hufty, Trails Committee, said it was difficult to please everyone when deciding what trail surfaces should be. It was just like this. In her decisions, she used a positive vision of what a wonderful trail system needed to have. That positive vision should be maintained for the playing fields as well, and let the naysayers step back.

Marty MacKowski, Los Charros, said he understood that artificial turf produced heat up to 200 degrees on a hot day and could exacerbate injuries from burns and slides. One study called them “Fields of Screams.” He was not in favor of studying them.

Bob Pierce, Tan Oak, said all the comments seem to be in one direction. The Parks and Rec Committee had probably done a lot of work on this. But, as a taxpayer, he felt it would be a waste of money to do a study for which there was no support. It was oxymoronic to be talking about Portola Valley as a green town and then put in petroleum-based fields.

Susan Thomas, Cevantes Rd., said her daughter coached soccer and played soccer on these fields for many years. She saw the injuries from Astroturf. Over half the players tore ligaments and had serious injuries that did not happen on grass.

Lindsay Bowen, Portola Rd., said there was a new generation of material that was different from Astroturf. Astroturf was not being considered for use on the fields. Someone mentioned 200-degree temperatures. People would not be playing in the middle of the summer. He also did not think there would be a lot of water runoff. He questioned how that compared with having to water a field 3-4 times a week. There was a lot more runoff from the roads than any artificial turf. He said playing on wet/muddy fields damaged the fields for the next group that would be playing on the field.

Neil McKinnon, Parks and Rec, said there were a lot of misconceptions voiced by members of the audience. He felt it was worth studying and trying to get someone who could provide subjective, factual advice. He did not see what was wrong with that. This was part of a basic strategic plan for down the road. There were no immediate needs to replace Rossotti Field, but it was worth taking a look at for the future. Additionally, people said they had great memories from playing on natural grass. Rossotti's took 1.5 million gallons of water every year. That was not natural or consistent with a green environment. He felt it was worth looking at some of the alternatives. The Committee was not advocating one point of view. They just wanted more facts at this point.

Jon Myers, Alpine Rd., said he used the fields for his leagues. The environment and outdoor activities in the community drew people together. To help facilitate that, good playing fields were needed. He did not know what the best solution was, but there had been a lot of issues with the fields over the last few years. The Town staff did a great job, but they were facing a tremendous amount of challenges. The Russ Miller field was shut down mid-season because it was unplayable, and Corte Madera went off line. There were many different views and information out there, and he felt it needed to be assessed so the situation could be improved. He felt a study would give more rather than less information and that it would be helpful.

Rosie Breen suggested that some of the complaints about the fields were coming from kids outside of Town who were used to playing on turf and not used to playing in mud. That should be looked at too.

Responding to resident Mary Enright, Ms. Howard said a consultant had been hired to see what would be best for Rossotti Field. The resident said the field was never perfect and two weeks after it was done, everybody started worrying. It had gone down hill and had been closed more than any field she could recall. She asked who decided to use that consultant and who decided to hire the firm who installed the field. She was worried about the system and process as well.

Wendy Hoag, Crescent Ave., said she was on the Parks and Rec Committee when Rossotti's was redone. The Town looked at many options. Obviously, you always got promises that didn't turn out. Artificial turf had been discussed at that time as well. Personally, she felt that if you were going to spend money on something, you should spend it on green rather than something that was artificial. When Astroturf first came out, no one knew how it would end up. Rossotti's wasn't as good as hoped, but it was green. When it was time to replace the field, a consultant could be considered at that time. Things would change before it was time to replace the field, and the money was needed for the new field.

Jon Silver reviewed his memorandum on artificial turf. He thanked the Parks and Rec Committee members for putting in a lot of hard work on this. He did not think this issue merited any more examination. The Town should be looking at sustainability—not trading in the natural heritage for something made out of processed hydrocarbons. Recent studies had been done by reputable organizations on public health such as Environmental and Human Health, Inc. The report they issued in the fall of 2007 recommended that communities not install any more synthetic turf until more about the hazards was known. The Woodside Elementary School Board decided to install turf made from ground up tennis shoes. Those tennis shoes had not been tested rigorously. Most tennis shoes were made in the third world. Recently, many toys from China had been recalled. He understood from Christina Phelps, that the artificial field on a warm day gave her a headache. There were things that were odorless, tasteless and invisible that could cause problems. Sometimes you shouldn't wait for the government to ban materials such as lead paint and asbestos. It made sense to look at the evidence and not spend money to study something. In five years, there might be great artificial turf. What was out there now was questionable. Excessive heat had been demonstrated to be a problem. He did not think a consultant needed to be hired to figure out that certain things were not worth pursuing. This was one of those things. To the comment about bringing the community together, he would not want his nieces, nephews, kids or grandkids playing on artificial fields, going in a schoolroom on top of a fault, or living in a house with lead-based paint. This would split the community. There would be people who would not use the fields. The way to do things in Portola Valley was to have the staff examine it or appoint an ad hoc committee if necessary. The suggestion from Annaloy Nickum was promising. If this RFP went forward, he would work to put an initiative on the ballot about the Town having poison fields until the science was done to prove him wrong.

Lindsay Bowen said not all artificial fields had ground up shoes. The Committee wanted to study this instead of having everyone give their personal opinion on what they thought the science was on this.

A Willowbrook resident [*inaudible*] said dogs loved the fields. You couldn't take dogs on artificial turf—especially if they were short and close to the ground. There was no dog park in Town, and there would be fewer places where dogs could run.

Clair Jernick said all her kids participated in AYSO, CYSA and little league. She did not support spending \$20,000 for a consultant to study artificial turf. The Town had established itself as a leader in the protection of the environment and sustainable development. In October 2007, the Council signed Resolution No. 2366 supporting AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act, and pledged to take a leadership role in promoting public awareness of the causes and impacts of climate change. The Athena Institute reported that the tree planting offset requirements to achieve a 10-year carbon neutral synthetic turf installation was estimated to be 1,861 trees. The replacement of natural turf with synthetic turf contributed to the urban heat island effect. Urban heat islands were created when grass and trees were replaced by impervious surfaces such as rooftops, asphalt, and Astroturf, which contributed to global warming. Installation of Astroturf or synthetic turf flew in the face of Resolution 2366 and support of AB 32 that the Town agreed to. Secondly, artificial fields created a dead zone. It killed everything living underneath it—worms and bugs—and wildlife was not attracted to the surface. Aesthetically, it did not fit with the environment. The other living organisms it repelled were people. They just didn't hang out on it. She could not imagine the Blues and BBQ picnic on artificial turf that had been sprayed with bactericide. It would wash off into the streams and might have a negative effect on other living organisms. No consultant could refute these points. She suggested the Town study drought tolerant turf grass varieties. She found some varieties that you could mix with clover seed. Clover fixed nitrogen into the soil so the field required less fertilizer. Drought tolerant turf grass required less water. The other area she proposed be studied was how to maximize water use. When the Council voted to daylight the creek, it voted to leave the culvert in place and use it as a cistern. She suggested studying how to make water a recyclable resource. State Sen. Joe Simitian had worked to put a tax on automobile registration because cars polluted the bay. This money was now available for projects that involved cisterns and gray water. They were looking for high visibility projects. She suggested building environmentally responsible playing fields that required less water and fertilizer. This was an opportunity for Councilmembers to make long-term sustainable decisions that would be good for the Town twenty years from now. She wanted to build fields of acclaim--not fields of shame.

Councilmember Toben thanked the residents for their comments. There was a great deal of apprehension that the Council might consider artificial turf. At the same time, one of the great pillars of the community was an aspiration to optimize the decision-making environment. No one in Town wanted to be railroaded by one set of viewpoints or another. There was an aspiration that the Council did the best job it could by obtaining information from credible sources. Those who might not have views that were as well formed as those in this room could choose for themselves what direction they wanted the Town to go. Having observed this dialogue for a number of years as liaison to the Parks and Rec Committee and circulating in the community, there were a lot of well-meaning and sincere people who wanted to look at this. There might be a different kind of surface that would have a positive effect on the environment. The fact that 1.5 million gallons of water per year was spent on Rossotti's alone was a significant data point. He had not made up his mind on this issue. He was not "pro turf," but he was curious. He wanted to learn more and understand why there were arguments that suggested this could be an attractive alternative. A piece that had been less common in this discussion was the increasing demand on the fields; in the last five years, there had been an explosion in participation of girls soccer, adult leagues, etc. He was not concerned about a muddy game but rather the next day when five more games were scheduled and how those people would be able to experience safe and playable conditions. He did not know the right outcome, but given the fairly modest cost of the study, he wanted to adduce information in an organized fashion. If the proposal was approved, he hoped that the minutes of this meeting would be conveyed to the consultant so that he could take into account some of these comments as well as all the written information. There would be ample opportunity for anyone in the community to submit their own commentary on this. He felt there was a lack of a sturdy, impartial, objective base on which to build a community conversation that those who were not here tonight would buy into. He felt this was an important thing for the Town to do as a modest step forward. He agreed the Town should be cautious before it did anything. What was being proposed was entirely in keeping with that idea. He wanted to proceed with the study. He was also interested in pursuing Annaloy Nickum's approach.

Councilmember Merk said it was tempting to get into all the pros and cons that were discussed tonight. He saw this purely as a question of whether this expense should be authorized at this time. At the time the field was built, the Town might or might not do a study to determine what kind of field it would be. The proposal talked about the Town's four fields. One of them was just nearing completion. He didn't see the point of studying the brand new baseball field at Town Center. The baseball fields got considerably less use than the soccer fields, which were the issue. They were impacted by high use, which was why there were problems. The Town spent about \$1 million on Rossotti Field. It was supposed to be good for at least 10 years—which was \$100,000 per year. It had gone for four years and was starting its fifth year. Russ Miller Field was incorporated into the Town Center plans. It was discussed by the Council. The Council decided to renovate the field. That work was about to be put out for bid. He questioned why this was proposed now—especially when there was so much new information coming in. If the study was done now and three years passed, the study would have to be done again to find out what was current. If the study was done, it should be done when the Town was going to rebuild or renovate a field. It was backwards to spend that money at this point in time.

Councilmember Toben said one reason to proceed now was because there was no pressure to convert these surfaces at this time. This study could be undertaken with a more dispassionate regard for the future. He was not worried in 3, 5, or 7 years, things would have changed so radically that a simple update couldn't be done to supplement the report at some nominal cost. The core of the information and having a conversation now outside of an imminent need to convert a field was a rational way to go.

Councilmember Merk said he felt it would be throwing money away. The study would have to be done again. The composition of new turfs probably changed every six months, and the studies changed all the time. If the study just looked at natural grass, the science might not change that much. Also, until the last couple of years, no one had even thought about organic fields; compost tea was a relatively new thing. He was not against this as an idea, but did not think it should be done now.

Councilmember Toben said \$15,000 was budgeted for this. That was a nominal sum to spend, and the information would be helpful. It would provide a platform on which to have a reasoned community conversation that would get to some of these profound and important values-based issues. To do that outside of an imminent need to convert one of the fields was appropriate.

Mayor Derwin thanked Parks and Rec for their work. She supported a thorough and impartial study. But, she also felt it was a timing issue. Rossotti's or Russ Miller would be re-done at some point. Rossotti's had five more years. Russ Miller was going in at a cost of around \$350,000. If a study was done now, it would be obsolete by the time a field needed to be replaced. She said staff had done an interesting study in 2006 on the playing fields. Given that the technology of the synthetic turf was changing and the science and medical issues, she did not think all of those things could be addressed right now. She might support having the study in two years but not now.

Given the significance of this issue for the community, Councilmember Toben said it was unfortunate that the Council would be taking an action in the absence of two councilmembers. He suggested the item be continued until all five members were present. Mayor Derwin said this item was originally on the 2/13/08 agenda. It was moved to the 2/27/08 agenda so that everyone was notified. At that time, it was known there would only be three members present. Councilmember Toben said taking action tonight was not consistent with the way the community traditionally addressed matters of concern and foreclosed the opportunity of two councilmembers to participate in an issue with this degree of sensitivity. Mayor Derwin agreed it should have been before a full Council, but that should have been taken into account when it was moved to the 2/27/08 agenda.

Councilmember Merk reiterated that he felt the timing was wrong. He did not see a point in continuing it unless it was continued for two years. He moved to decline the recommendation and RFP at this time.

Mayor Derwin seconded, and the motion carried 2-1 (Toben).

(9) Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit

Ms. Lambert reviewed her memo of 2/20/08 on the proposed Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit (MRP). She said staff recommended that Council direct staff to work with the Town Attorney on the final version of the Town's comment letter on what was proposed. She noted that she would be attending the first public hearing on MRP on March 11, 2008, in Oakland.

Councilmember Toben said this was a serious issue and was a classic un-funded mandate circumstance. He questioned whether the cities and towns had enough muscle at the table. In other contexts, circumstances like this lead to hiring lobbyists, pooling funds, etc. He asked whether the League of Cities was involved and what the media had put out. Ms. Lambert said many jurisdictions were being represented by one person. It did not seem to be filtering up to the right level. Ms. Howard said there had been a presentation at the manager's meeting, and it was stated that residential development would be exempt from the requirements. She added that she was very surprised the League had not been involved. Ms. Lambert suggested writing a letter to Congresswoman Eshoo. She added that single-family residences were excluded from a number of mandatory things, but Regional Water Quality would still require a report. Regional Water Quality didn't have the funds or the staffing to review all these things.

Councilmember Merk said what was proposed was overly bureaucratic. He questioned what would be served by some of what was being required.

Responding to Mayor Derwin, Ms. Lambert said she thought it would be helpful to have a Councilmember present at the hearing. Mayor Derwin said she would attend. Councilmember Toben suggested contacting some of the other Mayors.

(10) Approval of Job Description for Police Commissioner

Ms. McDougall reviewed the proposed role/job description for the Police Commissioner. Councilmembers felt the draft was well written. By motion of Councilmember Merk, seconded by Councilmember Toben, Council approved the job description by a vote of 3-0.

(11) Status of Town Center Project

Ms. Howard said the rain did not cause too much delay because a lot of the work was being done indoors. The sample of the siding was on the Community Hall. The playground would need to be closed for another two weeks. The concrete would be poured tomorrow. The holes for the backstop would need to be pumped and dried before work could continue. At the next meeting, the final bid packages would be ready. There was a special meeting on March 4 at 7:30 p.m. to discuss the creek project and budget.

(12) Reports from Commission and Committee Liaisons

(a) Planning Commission

Councilmember Toben said the Commission recommended adoption of amendments to the zoning ordinance regarding variances. The ability to reconstruct a home that had been involuntarily damaged or destroyed had been liberalized. A technical change to the fence provisions was also recommended. The Spring Down Equestrian Center's CUP was on the agenda, but the applicants weren't present, and the item was continued to the next meeting.

(b) Parks and Rec Committee

Councilmember Toben said the Committee prepared for the Council's discussion on the RFP for the field surfaces. There was also a lot of discussion on whether the Town's current policy on user fees should be updated. The Committee discussed doing a survey.

(c) Open Space Committee

Councilmember Toben said he was concerned that there was no pipeline of deals to show the community with respect to the Open Space Fund. The renewal of the UUT would occur in 2009, and he was eager to show that the Town was looking for opportunities. Gary Nielsen was the new Chair.

(d) Conservation Committee

Councilmember Merk said the Committee discussed the RFP for the field turf. Alex Von Feldt was leaving the Committee, and they had someone who was interested in filling the vacancy. Ms. Howard said staff had not been officially notified that there was a vacancy. When staff received a letter of interest, it was agendized for the committee, and the committee made a recommendation for the Council. All vacancies were noticed so people had an opportunity if they wanted to join a committee. The committee could also recruit. The committee chairs needed to be more pro-active in notifying staff of resignations and vacancies.

(e) Emergency Preparedness Committee

Councilmember Merk said the Committee discussed the presentation to the Council on the visit to the Foster City EOC. The Committee was still very concerned about water storage at the Town Center and how the EOC would be equipped. The field trip gave them a lot of good ideas.

(f) Communications Post Card

Mayor Derwin said a post card was being sent out to see how residents wanted to receive Town news.

(g) Council of Cities

Mayor Derwin said she attended the dinner meeting in East Palo Alto. Students from the journalism department of East Side Prep were introduced. East Side Prep placed 100% of the students in 4-year colleges. Featured speakers included Chief Dep. District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe and Superior Court Judge Mark Forcum. They provided an update on the Superior Court and successful efforts resulting in a decrease in crime in the County—particularly in East Palo Alto.

(h) League of Woman Voters

Mayor Derwin said she attend a meeting in Woodside. Assemblyman Gene Mullen discussed his health care bill that failed. He felt it would probably be 5 years before there was a health care bill in Sacramento. He also discussed the budget crisis and atmosphere in Sacramento.

Mr. Lane said the legislature was very sensitive to appeals from communities in their jurisdiction. He said he had been reasonably successful in opening doors and offered to help anyone in Town who wanted to make a presentation on behalf of Portola Valley on matters being decided at the State level. He discussed his recent efforts to keep State parks open. He said making calls to Sacramento often paid off. The Town had a very good reputation, and he would be happy to assist.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

(13) Town Council 2/15/08 Weekly Digest

(a) Weed Abatement Ordinance

Referring to Gunther Steinberg's letter of 2/9/08, Ms. Howard confirmed for Councilmember Toben that Mr. Steinberg had been told that the Fire District was the responsible entity. Councilmember Toben said if the District's regulation didn't have teeth, Mr. Steinberg needed to mount an effort to strengthen it. Ms. Howard said she would draft a response to Mr. Steinberg's most recent letter.

(14) Town Council 2/22/08 Weekly Digest: None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

Mayor

Town Clerk