

Town of Los Altos Hills Emergency Preparedness and Response Committee

Regular Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, October 7th, 2025 @ 6:00 pm. PDT

[Public Documents Folder \(minutes & agenda\)](#)

1. Call to order (start recording) [6:00 pm]

The meeting was called to order by Chair Harter at 6:05pm

2. Roll call of EPRC members [6:07 pm]

Voting Member	Status	Comment
(S) Amita Sachdeva	Present	
Ben Gikis	Present	
(VC) Dave Stewart	Present	
(C) Phil Harter	Present	
Rob Singh	Present	
Sam Wood	Not Here	
Terry Kearney	Not Here	

With **5** of **7** voting members attending, a quorum was present.

Associate Member	Status	Comment
Andy Kirk	Present	Left early before 7pm

Associate Member	Status	Comment
Bill Lattin	Present	
Bill Ralston	Absent	
David Gilmour	Absent	
Neil Katin	Abesent	
Victoria Bebee	Present	

Other attendees

Name	Comment
Jay Bradford	LAH Community Development Director
Victoria Bebee	LAH Town Emergency Manager Liaison
Denise Gluhan	LAHCFD Liaison
Joram Parcutilo	LAH Management Analyst

3. Public comment on subjects not on the agenda

4. EPRC Chair Remarks (Harter)

- Streamline things and get agenda topics in on time including presentations by EOD on Thursday prior to Tuesday's meeting
- November meeting will be in Duxbury room due to November elections
- Victoria sent out email re Portola Valley volunteer group wildfire

5. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Member	Moved	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Ben Gikis		x	x				
Dave Stewart	x		x				
Phil Harter			x				
Rabindra Singh			x				
Sam Wood							x
Terry Kearney							x

5 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain. Motion Approved

6. General and Invited Reports and Q&A (30 minutes)

6.1 Municipal Code Update (Parcutilo & Bebee)

- Subcommittee feedback points
 - Definition of Term: Emergency Services Coordinator (ESC) vs Emergency Services Manager (ESM)
 - ESC: facilitate overall functioning of the EOC. Serve as advisor to the EOC Director & EOC Staff during emergencies
 - ESM: responsible for supporting & implementing a comprehensive disaster & emergency preparedness program, including education & community engagement, have authority over day to day admin & operations of the Office of Emergency Services.
 - Is Disaster Council required - 4-1.06
 - Not a requirement - but required if you want to have your Disaster Service Workers covered by the State Worker's Compensation System
 - Adding EPRC to the municipal code under Disaster Council Members: create plans, identify the people who will approve and implement plans, which would not be in a volunteer capacity under implementation. Suggestion: recommend that we define "advisory" if needed into the municipal code or leave off and plan to add to

disaster council meeting agenda and confirm participants at 2025 council meeting.

- Disaster Council: Can Mayor convene?
 - We have opted to wait to have discussion with Cody & recommend that right now. Leave wording as is.
 - NIMS Training: 4-1.05e - follow best practices, remove NIMS wording altogether from municipal code in case language, class numbers/descriptions change.
- Who can activate the plan?
 - Plan may be activated by any of the following Town reps:
 - Recommend:
 - Councilmembers with NIMS training
 - CERT Supervisor with NIMS training
 - Those listed in section 4-1.05(d)(f) under Director of Emergency Services Order of Succession
- Dave: had productive conversation with Victoria who did research on the various questions that have come up
- Prior concern about the Disaster Council and the regular meetings that have been held including the depth of bench of who can make the call regarding an emergency
- Why is EM currently not listed in the list of line of succession for disaster management
- Main sticking point was to have EPRC have some advisory role on Disaster Council

Motion: EPRC recommends Town Council to accept the new wording on the Emergency Organization and Function of Title 4, Chapter 1.

Member	Moved	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Ben Gikis		x	x				
Dave Stewart	x		x				
Phil Harter			x				
Rabindra Singh			x				
Sam Wood							x
Terry Kearney							x

5 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain. Motion Approved

6.2 Fire Code Update (Bradford)

- Gave general overview of building codes to City Council on September 15th
- Discussion was light - highlighted initiatives from EPRC, other committees, and staff perspective
- Code modifications that EPRC requested regarding home hardening & defensible space
- Conversation on what we need to do to modify building standards
- R337 & 7a codes - residential and commercial respectively
- Wildland -Urban Interface consolidated the two codes into Title 24 - Part 7, which has dual authority
- Draft language modifying the base text for CA Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) added to meeting's chat
- Taking a regional approach to implement the WUI standard as we are working
- 101.1 scope - if you're adding new construction (that specific piece) would have to meet the WUI standard
- 101.3.1 Exception 5 - any building before July 1, 2008 would not be subject to this new code
- Does the new standard apply for any new construction/additions?
- Regardless if you have applied a fire severity zone or WUI, it does not matter, you will still need to follow the Town's ordinances
- All incorporated land in Los Altos Hills will be included in the WUI Area codes

- Bradford will be bringing the changes made to Section 101- Scope & General Requirements packet to Council
- Group U occupancy is utilities.
 - Agriculture type of buildings are exempt
 - Should we include new construction Group U and make them non-exempt
- Group C - mental health facilities, mental hospitals, detox facilities, where occupants are under restraints and cannot get out on their own
- Should we apply WUI to all Group U occupancies or keep as is?
 - EPRC recommended applying WUI standards to all incorporated parts of Los Altos Hills
- Fire Severity Zone Color Coding: Moderate - yellow, High - orange - Very High - Red
- From a building code perspective, religious code exemptions are relatively the same as residential
- Why is the statement “All incorporated lands designated by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection as State Responsibility Area (SRA) including...” if this is not applicable to Los Altos Hills? Wording is part of the boiler plate from the State.
- Require replacement of Federal Pacific and Zinsco electrical panels

Motion: EPRC recommends that the Town adopt the modifications to Part 7 of the WUI code as ratified at the EPRC meeting on October 7th, 2025.

Member	Moved	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Ben Gikis		x	x				
Dave Stewart	x		x				
Phil Harter			x				
Rabindra Singh			x				
Sam Wood							x
Terry Kearney							x

Motion Passes: 5 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

- Assembly Bill 130 - part of the 2025 housing budget package - reshaped the state's code adoption process
- Allowed building code amendments - building standards commission deems changes necessary as emergency standards to protect health & safety: Home hardening included
- Because we have adopted R337, we feel comfortable moving forward with the other exemptions
- Committee recommendations were taken into consideration, from
 - Tech Committee (gas earthquake safety shutoff valve program)
 - EPRC (WUI adoption & noncombustible fencing near structures)
 - Environmental Initiatives Committee (transition to heat pumps & zero NOx policy for multifamily)
- Recommendation: work with the Town Committees, Santa Clara County Fire Department, Los Altos Hills Fire District to prepare amendments in these areas and bring back policies and or resolutions/ordinances for consideration and potentially adoption - which Council said yes to
- Fire code amendments - receive fire code amendments directly from Santa Clara County Fire Department
- All modifications they are asking for this year are just clarifications for prior and new building codes
- Administrative amendments: standardize authority for the Building Official to grant permit extensions through a consistent administrative guide
 - Recommendation: to bring back modifications to the administrative section of the building code with necessary changes to help enforce said code and the administration and safeguards

6.3 Discussion on EPRC 2026-2027 EPRC Goals (Harter)

- EPRC Priorities and Goals for 2026-2027 print out sheet - should we discuss fully today or form a subcommittee or utilize the Exec Committee to further discuss the goals
- Decide today on what the Town needs to handle and what the EPRC should handle
- If we are asking for a staff position to be filled, we need to put that in our recommendation and outline what it would look like from a cost perspective
- If we have a special meeting, we can have motions and vote, if we have a subcommittee

7. Town and Fire District Reports

7.1 Town Council Liaison Report (Bhateja)

No report

7.2 City Manager's Report (Pirnejad/Einfalt)

No Report

7.3 District Liaison Report (Gluhan)

[Link to presentation](#)

- Fire Risk Reduction: non-city and county application submitted to Board of Forestry
 - This recommendation came from the EPRC and it was nice that the Fire District was able to apply and the Town will apply in 2027
- Firewise USA Communities recognized - 8 since 2022, 11 with new applications being submitted
- HIZ requests have gone down - 15 at last meeting. No waiting list, completion rate is higher
- Rebates are increasing
- Campaign with Mailers for focus group of high severity & all communities that do not have any Firewise organizing going on

7.4 Town Emergency Manager's Liaison Report (Bebee)

8. EPRC Subcommittee Reports

8.1 Community Outreach (Sachdeva)

- October 18 - CERT Windshield Survey/Zone Map Update

8.2 Medical and Environmental Health (Harter)

No Updates

8.3 Mass Notification (Singh)

- Subcommittee will be meeting
- Had meeting with T-Mobile regarding emergency communications
- Emergency sat comm solutions - what Starlink is doing with T-mobile and what other companies are also doing

8.4 Town Emergency Plans (Stewart)

- Victoria enrolled Dave, Bill, Neil and others to go through EOP
- Evacuation annex is next big push within this

8.5 Emergency Communications (Lattin/Katin)

- Emergency Group that runs the repeaters upgraded the batteries

9. Review action items from the meeting

Discuss/Propose Future Agenda Items

- Hold Special Meeting on Monday, October 27 at 6pm - Council Chambers
- An executive subcommittee meeting will be held prior to the special meeting to further discuss goals/priorities

Adjournment [20:22]

Chair adjourned the meeting without objection.

Member	Moved	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Amita Sachdeva							x
Ben Gikis							x
Dave Stewart							
Phil Harter							
Rabindra Singh							
Sam Wood							
Terry Kearney							

Voting Template

X yes, Y no, Motion Approved