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Sent: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 12:02 PM
To: Keren Brunner
Subject: Meeting assets for Open Space Committee Regular Meeting are ready!

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November 12, 2025 Meeting summary

Quick recap

The meeting covered discussions on vegetation management and fire prevention in open spaces, including the creation of a subcommittee to draft new language for easements and addressing defensible space requirements. The committee reviewed various topics including weed control, tree management, and the unauthorized construction activities in a riparian corridor, while also discussing potential housing development sites to meet state mandates. The group addressed compliance with Senate Bill 1425 regarding open space requirements and discussed ways to strengthen climate resilience measures in open spaces.

Next steps

- [Kit and Denise: Work on drafting language for open space easement agreements regarding fire prevention, vegetation management, and invasive species removal](#)
- [Anita: Receive and incorporate into minutes the chat content and links from Denise regarding fire prevention language and fuel reduction information](#)
- [Peter: Send the correct property number for Purissima Road to Anita for the September minutes correction](#)
- [Anita: Correct spelling errors in September minutes and submit corrected version](#)
- [Kit: Write a condolence letter to Nancy Koperas's family on behalf of the Open Space Committee and send to committee members for review/editing](#)
- [Sarah and Eric: Form ad hoc subcommittee to develop bench donation policy language and criteria, including naming conventions and location recommendations](#)
- [Staff : Send draft open space easement agreement language to committee for review regarding fire prevention and vegetation management](#)

- [Staff : Continue code enforcement process for 26872 Elmaden Court violation, including obtaining abatement warrant and working with city attorney](#)
- [Staff : Draft memo on Senate Bill 1425 compliance that includes additional elements beyond what's in the general plan, to be circulated to the committee](#)
- [Kit and Peter: Review 2024 agendas and compile committee goals and accomplishments for the year](#)

Summary

Vegetation Management for Fire Prevention

Denise from the Los Angeles Hills Fire County Fire District presented on vegetation mitigation and open space easements, focusing on fire prevention. She explained the concept of fuel reduction, including removing dead or overgrown vegetation and creating natural fire breaks. Kate Gordon suggested focusing on removing invasive plants, particularly those that are highly flammable, and clearing and thinning based on distance from structures. The discussion highlighted the challenges of managing vegetation in open space easements while considering both fire safety and habitat preservation.

Open Space Fire Mitigation Plan

The committee discussed vegetation management and fire prevention in open space areas, focusing on the 100-foot defensible space requirement around structures. They explored adding language to open space easements that would encourage vegetation removal for fire mitigation while allowing invasive species removal. The group agreed to create a subcommittee to draft new language for easements, with input from fire district representatives and consideration of existing agreements. They also discussed the changing landscape due to increased tree growth and the need for ongoing management of vegetation.

Weed Control and Fire Science

The meeting focused on two main topics: weed control and tree management. WooJae announced plans to continue manual weed removal using staff and crews, and mentioned an ongoing tree survey that will identify eucalyptus trees in public right-of-way. Peter invited volunteers to help revise language related to fire science and conservation easements, with Denise offering to provide input based on fire science principles. The group discussed the need to maintain appropriate spacing for heritage oak trees and agreed to create generic fire science language that would apply across different fire zones, with Denise noting that defensible space requirements would increase from 30 feet to 100 feet in very high severity areas starting January 1.

Code Enforcement and Committee Updates

The meeting began with the approval of September meeting minutes after correcting several spelling errors and misnumbered addresses. Peter announced the passing of Nancy Koperas, a founding member of the Ocean Space Committee, and proposed sending a note to her family expressing

appreciation for her contributions. The group discussed a code enforcement case involving unauthorized construction in a riparian corridor at 26872 Elmaden Court, where Jay explained that the town has been pursuing legal action through abatement warrants and working with the city attorney's office to address the violation.

Environmental Abatement and Enforcement Discussion

The town council discussed a property owner's unauthorized construction activities that have caused significant environmental damage, including erosion of a creek bank and potential public safety risks. Peter explained that while the town lacks formal enforcement mechanisms, they are pursuing an abatement warrant through the courts which could take 3-6 months, during which time they will work to secure necessary permits and contractor engagement. The council expressed concern about the town's limited enforcement capabilities and agreed to consider reviewing other municipalities' policies for potential improvements, with Peter agreeing to discuss this with the city manager.

Benches Placement Criteria Discussion

The Open Space Committee discussed the placement and criteria for benches in town properties, focusing on locations along pathways and recreation areas while avoiding open spaces to accommodate maintenance needs. The committee debated the number of benches to allow and agreed that applicants should suggest three potential locations, with a subcommittee to be formed to develop specific recommendations for the town council. They also considered alternative memorial options like trees or tile walls to manage requests more effectively.

Housing Mandate and Site Challenges

The town faces a state mandate to build 589 new housing units, with 489 units plus a 15% buffer required, totaling 563 units. While three potential sites have been identified (Foothill College, St. Nicholas School, and Twin Oaks), they may not be sufficient to meet the requirement. The committee discussed the possibility of developing the O'Keefe Preserve, though concerns were raised about the environmental impact and safety of building on a dead-end road and floodplain. The town risks facing builder's remedies if they fail to meet the housing mandate, with other cities facing similar consequences.

O'Keefe Site Development Discussion

The committee discussed two main topics: a potential housing development on the O'Keefe site and compliance with Senate Bill 1425 regarding open space. For the O'Keefe site, they debated whether to pursue development, with concerns raised about the property's attractiveness and access. Sue proposed conditions for removing the site from open space, including finding alternative land and strengthening protections for Burn Preserve. The committee also reviewed staff's presentation on SB 1425 compliance, which found the town already meets most requirements. They discussed ways to strengthen climate resilience measures in open spaces and agreed to draft a memo addressing compliance for future reference.