

News

Police Blotter

Battery

Sept. 17, 4:58 p.m.: 600 block of Showers Drive, Mountain View

Residential burglary

Sept. 17, 4:50 p.m.: 500 block of Arboleda Drive, Los Altos

Sept. 17, 6 p.m.: 11100 block of Mora Drive, Los Altos

Sex crime

Sept. 19, 11:42 a.m.: 1100 block of Grant Road, Mountain View

Theft

Sept. 17, 11:32 a.m.: 600 block of South El Monte Avenue, Los Altos

Sept. 18, 3:39 p.m.: 300 block of Main Street, Los Altos

Sept. 19, 1:16 p.m.: 100 block of Castro Street, Mountain View

Sept. 19, 4:07 p.m.: 300 block of Second Street, Los Altos

Sept. 19, 4:18 p.m.: 600 block of San Antonio Road, Mountain View

Sept. 19, 5:09 p.m.: 1000 block of North Rengstorff Avenue, Mountain View

Sept. 19, 7:17 p.m.: 800 block of Central Avenue, Mountain View

Sept. 19, 8:32 p.m.: 2000 block of California Street, Mountain View

Trespassing

Sept. 17, 1:19 p.m.: 1000 block of Lammy Place, Los Altos

Sept. 18, 12:17 p.m.: 800 block of California Street, Mountain View

Sept. 18, 1:53 p.m.: 500 block of North Shoreline Boulevard, Mountain View

Sept. 19, 1:21 a.m.: 2500 block of Grant Road, Mountain View

Sept. 19, 9:47 a.m.: 800 block of East El Camino Real, Mountain View

Vandalism

Sept. 17, 12:47 p.m.: 900 block of Manor Way, Los Altos

Sept. 17, 9:01 p.m.: 2600 block of Miller Avenue, Mountain View

– Megan V. Winslow

Los Altos council OKs firearm safe-storage ordinance

By Bruce Barton
Staff Writer/bruceb@latc.com

Jennifer Burton called the new Los Altos firearm safe-storage ordinance an “important first step.”

She and other correspondents in advance of the Sept. 14 Los Altos City Council meeting cited an Everytown for Gun Safety study that found households that locked firearms and ammunition experienced a 78% lower risk of self-inflicted firearm injuries and an 85% lower risk of unintentional injuries among children and teens.

To their minds, Los Altos became a little safer after the council voted unanimously

in favor of the ordinance, joining Los Altos Hills, Sunnyvale and Palo Alto among those with similar laws.

The decision allows for amending the city’s municipal code to require owners to place weapons in locked containers, disable the firearm with a trigger lock or “have the firearm in their close possession and control.”

According to a city staff report on the ordinance, “Firearm fatalities and injuries are of epidemic proportions in Santa Clara County and across the country, and unsecured weapons in the home pose a threat to public health and safety. When firearms

are left unsecured in homes, children are at risk of injury or death. ... Studies have found that the risk for suicide increases when firearms are kept loaded and/or unlocked.”

The council action comes at the urging of Councilmember Jonathan Weinberg, who pushed for an ordinance in April. The ordinance is designed to fill a gap in legislation – the state does not have a law requiring gun owners to store their weapons safely.

The ordinance has the backing of the Los Altos Police Department. Capt. Katie

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LA, LAH to work on Redwood Grove path after council gives go-ahead

By Bruce Barton
Staff Writer/bruceb@latc.com

For the past 50 years, residents of both Los Altos and Los Altos Hills have walked through steep brush between Redwood Grove and the end of Fremont Road, creating makeshift paths. Now comes the opportunity to formalize a path over the popular route.

After some discussion about the impact on city staff time, the Los Altos City Council last week approved staff participation in the “exploration” of a proper pedestrian trail that would be designed with improved access and safety in mind.

The council on a 4-1 vote, Vice Mayor Anita Enander dissenting, passed a resolution expressing support for pursuing the formal trail connection, directing City Manager Gabriel Engeland to work with town staff and city commissions and return to the council with project recommendations.

According to Los Altos Hills Mayor Kavita Tankha, the town has been interested in building “an easy connection” since 2009. She noted the path would benefit residents in both communities, with Los Altos residents having access to the Hills’ nearly 90 miles of town pathways. She added the Los Altos council in 2017 informally agreed to the connection if the town would pay for it. Town officials have offered to pay for the staffing and construction costs associated with the project.



COURTESY OF TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

A map of Redwood Grove shows the location of the proposed trail, highlighted in red.

Still, two Los Altos council members worried about city staff commitments.

Councilmember Lynette Lee Eng flagged the proposal with concerns about staff time being diverted from higher-priority projects to work with Los Altos Hills staff on the feasibility of the path improvements.

“I think we have a lot of things on our plate right now that require a lot of staff attention,” said Lee Eng, who cited construction of the new Emergency Operations Center and restoration of the historical Halsey House at Redwood Grove as examples.

“If council would like to consider this (project) this year, we would have to reprioritize the capital projects already

in place,” Engeland said, noting that the city’s engineering department, which normally would be tasked with the work, is down two positions.

Prioritizing the path

But Mayor Neysa Fligor, citing improved trail safety, felt the project was worth prioritizing.

“This is just the first step to explore and work with the Los Altos Hills staff,” Fligor said. “I think this is a wonderful opportunity for this council – let’s figure out how to do it and move forward.”

Ginger Summit, who has lived near the proposed path for more than 50 years, expressed support.

“We have been waiting for

See PATH, Page 7

Off-leash dog hours may extend

By Bruce Barton
Staff Writer/bruceb@latc.com

The Los Altos City Council was scheduled at Tuesday’s meeting – after the Town Crier’s Monday print deadline – to consider extending off-leash hours for dogs at Hillview Baseball Field as a pilot program is set to expire next week.

Councilmember Jonathan Weinberg proposed at the Sept. 14 council meeting agendaizing discussion of the extension. Although acknowledging he received a complaint about dogs and owners congregating at the site, he noted the program “appears to be a rousing success. There is a whole community that has been built. ... This is a resource that is about to expire.”

The pilot program, which began April 1 and expires Tuesday, allows off-leash hours 7-9 a.m. and 7-9 p.m. weekdays, and 7-9 a.m. and 5-9 p.m. weekends. The program launched after years of discussion over dog parks and off-leash hours at several city parks that ultimately went nowhere because neighbors didn’t want them.

The city’s Parks and Recreation Commission is scheduled to discuss findings of the pilot program at its Oct. 13 meeting before making a recommendation to the council on a possible permanent program. The council would discuss that recommendation at its Nov. 30 meeting. The extension would allow continued off-leash hours until a council decision.

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FIREARM

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Krauss, in answering a question about enforcement, noted that officers would not be targeting residences for adherence to the law, but would cite violators in the course of entering a home for another reason. Fines are \$500 for the first infraction, \$1,000 for the second.

Vice Mayor Anita Enander believed the ordinance would have “little or no effect.”

“In my experience, responsible gun owners already secure their weapons in a way that is anticipated by this ordinance,” she said.

However, Enander joined her colleagues voting in favor.

“This ordinance is a matter of public health,” Weinberg said. “I believe the proposed ordinance is a positive step forward and an opportunity for Los Altos police. The safe-storage ordinance does not take away anyone’s right to own a gun or to self-protection. In short, safe-storage laws work – they do not prevent all suicides, they do not

prevent all unauthorized use of a firearm. But they demonstrably reduce both.”

Local residents agreed, registering their support.

“Safe-storage (laws) reduce deaths, suicides, unintentional shootings, school shootings, domestic violence and gun thefts,” said Los Altos physician Susie Maclean. “I am grateful and proud to live in a city ... which takes public safety so seriously.”

“I believe that requiring firearms to be stored in a locked container or be disabled with a trigger lock are common sense options to ensure the safety of both children and adults,” wrote resident Mike Hacker. “These are simple and non-onerous requirements. With the increased number of firearm purchases in Santa Clara County over the past two-plus years, it’s only logical to take steps to minimize the possibility of accidental deaths due to the mishandling of firearms.”

“I understand that we will not solve the gun violence epidemic with one agenda item,” Burton wrote to the council, “but this ordinance will get us a step closer.”

SHOOTING

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incident, and the shooter fled.

“A preliminary investigation suggests Medina was at the park at the time of the shooting potentially looking for Rambo,” according to the release. “We are continuing to investigate a motive as to why he opened fire.”

Later that day, an employee of a Redwood City restaurant encountered Rambo in the restaurant and recognized the dog from news reports about his disappearance, the release stated.



COURTESY OF THE MEDINA FAMILY

Rambo was reunited with his family last week.

The employee contacted the Redwood City Police Department, and that agency contacted

MVPD officers, who collected the pup.

Rambo’s theft is still under investigation, MVPD spokesperson Katie Nelson said.

The Town Crier spoke with Juana Medina, mother of Reynaldo and his 9-year-old brother, through a family friend, Susana Santi, Friday. Santi provided English-Spanish translation.

The women did not mention Reynaldo Medina’s arrest, but they said Rambo was visibly excited when reunited with his family Thursday.

“He went on top of them and everyone was very happy,” Santi said.

PATH

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this pathway to come in all this time,” she said. “It would be very discouraging for this to be put on hold again.”

Tankha pointed out the need for the path with the resurgence of walking and hiking amid the pandemic.

“What’s more important than health and happiness?” she asked.

Enander suggested addressing the proposal in December, when the city is scheduled to review and prioritize its capital improvement projects.

“I would like to support this, but we should not fool ourselves. This is going to cost us in time and staff that right now we don’t have,” she said. “We also have a responsibility not to overcommit to our staff.”

Engeland said the council go-ahead means the project exploration

would become a priority, but there would still be “lag time” getting to it.

Dave Brees, in charge of the city’s special projects, noted exploration would involve “defining the scope” of the project with a conceptual design. Such factors as determining the stability of the hillside and satisfying Americans with Disabilities Act requirements would be part of that exploration, he said.

The New Los Altos Community Center Celebration!



VIEW the Ceremony via Livestream

Saturday, October 2, 2pm

youtube.com/cityoflosaltosca

Recording of the ceremony will also be posted on the City website.

PARTICIPATE in an In-Person 45-minute Guided Tour of the new Community Center

Tours begin the week of October 3

TO REGISTER for a Community Center Guided Tour:

losaltosca.gov/communitycenter or (650) 947-2790

Note: All tickets for the In-Person Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony have been claimed. Ceremony capacity was limited to ensure attendee safety due to COVID-19.



The New Los Altos Community Center
97 Hillview Avenue, Los Altos

