

Griffith Park Master Plan - Working Group

MEETING SUMMARY

Third Meeting, September 12, 2005

The Griffith Park Master Plan Working Group convened their third meeting on Monday, September 12, 2005, at 6:30 p.m. at the Park Ranger Station Auditorium.

Members in attendance at this meeting were:

George Grace, Susan Swan, Craig Kessler (alternate Jim Gilbert was in attendance), Gerry Hans, Bernadette Soter, Valerie Vannerman, Lynn Brown, Jeff Gardener, Louis Alvarado, Richard Bogy, and added member Clare Darden (from the Griffith Trust). Wendy Triplett was absent. Acting Assistant General Manager Kevin Regan facilitated the meeting. Ms. Darden read a letter from Van Griffith, great-grandson of Griffith J. Griffith, expressing concerns about content of the draft Master Plan.

Old Business

On Tuesday evening, September 27, 2005, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., and Wednesday morning, September 28, 2005, from 8:00 a.m. to noon, Recreation and Parks will make available for public review the original Community Workshop Materials, as well as all materials connected with a report done as a Leisure Studies class project through Cal State Northridge. Any interested persons are welcome. The location will be Conference Room #1, downstairs, at the Recreation and Parks Central Service Yard, 3900 W. Chevy Chase, Los Angeles, 90039.

Draft Plan Chapter Review

Note: Points of Recommendation for addition or correction to the Draft Griffith Park Master Plan will be noted as Working Group Recommendation or **WGR**.

• 2. Vision (Objectives)

Discussion resumed on the core issues of the draft Plan's Vision chapter, which establishes the groundwork for reviewing, revising, and rebuilding the rest of the draft Plan that follows it. A review of the Northridge Study, summarized by Ms. Soter, reflected a primarily passive recreational interest among Griffith Park users surveyed. This information launched further discussion on the meaning of "passive" versus "active" recreation, and also about the audiences that use Griffith Park. The Northridge Study was seen as generally in consensus with the majority of commentary coming in on the Urban Wilderness petition forms.

As in the prior meeting, the theme expression, “Living Laboratory of Learning” engendered concerns, such as: is it indicative of too activist an approach to managing the Park’s natural areas, or does it seem to grant too much opportunity for intervention in the Park? The subject of “urban wilderness” became intertwined as a possible theme concept contrasting with the “living laboratory.” Discussion ensued about how “urban wilderness” is defined or should be defined, and how the concept is defined in the Debs Park framework plan. Group members expressed opinions about the Debs example and also about how “urban wilderness” could be defined for Griffith Park as an integral element in the revision of the Master Plan draft. The concept of establishing a clear boundary for a segment in the heart of the Park to be designated as “urban wilderness” and given special protection was surfaced and discussed. The challenges of defining and maintaining specific borders was raised in connection with that alternative. Also, the interdependence of both developed and undeveloped areas in Griffith Park were seen as suggesting the benefit of a customized approach. Also covered in this discussion was the potentially divisive decision-making about how Griffith Park, being a Regional Park, best serves regional needs.

The working group reached a consensus in discussions that satisfactory revision of the Vision chapter would lead to more productive and efficient editing of the rest of the plan, and that the “Living Laboratory for Learning” theme should be removed to an ancillary recommendation in the Natural Environment or other appropriate section, while “Urban Wilderness,” to be defined as part of a revised Vision, should replace it as the cornerstone of the Vision’s objectives. Ms. Vanaman agreed to chair an ad hoc meeting of the Working Group to work on revising the Vision under that guidance, for presentation in draft form at the next regular meeting of the Working Group.

WGR: Drop “Living Laboratory for Learning” as theme concept in Vision and utilize an “Urban Wilderness” theme to be carefully defined for all of Griffith Park.

- 3. Education

Initial discussion on this brief Chapter questioned the purpose of the separate chapter and whether portions integrated better in other existing chapters. The establishment of the icon system for noting miscellaneous ideas, often ideas which are controversial, is included in this chapter, but was seen as an aspect of the draft Plan likely to be dropped. Upon further discussion, the contents of the Education Chapter were also designated for review by the ad hoc group with a goal of incorporating salvageable information into the Vision or other chapters.

WGR: Eliminate separate Education Chapter and integrate worthy information into Vision or other chapters as appropriate.

☐ **Public Comment**

During the Public Comment period, members of the audience commented principally on the “urban wilderness” concept, that Griffith Park could be a leader in defining it as a park-wide concept, and that many opportunities for learning exist within the Park

The Grand Opening on September 22nd, 3:00 p.m., of the new Ranger Visitors’ Center was announced. This new interpretive space was funded primarily through the generosity of the Griffith J. Griffith Trust.

The next meeting will be Monday, October 3, 2005, at 6:30 p.m. at the Park Ranger Auditorium. The regular schedule for meetings will be monthly on the first Monday of the month, with provision to modify for special circumstances. Meetings will remain the Ranger Station for consistency.

The agenda for the next meeting will review the revised Vision and begin Built Environment, Design Guidelines, and Mobility chapters.