

Griffith Park Master Plan – Working Group Meeting Summary – May 7, 2007

The Griffith Park Master Plan Working Group convened their meeting on Monday, May 7, 2007 at 6:40 p.m. at the Griffith Park Ranger Station Auditorium.

Present: Working Group: Bernadette Soter, Clare Darden, Craig Kessler, George Grace, Gerry Hans, Jeff Gardner, Lynn Brown, Richard Bogy, Susan Swan, and Valerie Vanaman

Council District 4: Rory Fitzpatrick and Patricia Malone

Recreation and Parks: Daryll Ford

Absent: Jose Sigala and Louis Alvarado

Facilitator: Mark Mariscal, Superintendent, Department of Recreation and Parks

The meeting opened with Mr. Mariscal introducing himself as the facilitator for the May 7th meeting as Mr. Regan and Ms. Israel were not available. He explained to the audience that at 8:00 p.m., public comments will be heard. The meeting agenda was read followed by calling the roll of Working Group members.

Meeting summaries for the November 6, 2006, December 4, 2006, and March 5, 2007 were handed out to the Working Group members for their review. The Working Group members agreed to e-mail any changes or comments to Ms. Iwata by noon on Wednesday, May 9, 2007. Summaries will be posted on the Griffith Park Master Plan website by Thursday, May 10, 2007.

The draft of the Management Chapter outline was read and briefly described by Ms. Vanaman. A few copies were handed out to the audience. Comments from the Working Group members were heard. Mr. Kessler was concerned about the stewardship elements. There are two existing advisory groups related to Griffith Park, Greek Theatre Advisory Committee (GTAC) and the Golf Advisory Committee (GAC). These should be referenced on the document. It was requested that a brief description on GAC be drafted by Mr. Kessler and a GTAC description be written by RAP staff. For clarification purposes, there should be distinction between governmental and non-governmental agencies. A draft will be prepared by Mr. Kessler.

Discussion took place on various City departments and RAP divisions that affect Griffith Park. Mr. Kessler suggested that Golf Division should be addressed under Section II – The Stewardship Elements. He stated that as discussed in prior meetings, the Golf Division is managed by a Golf Manager and is not under the Griffith Region Superintendent. In the discussion of this section, the Working Group brought up several City departments, such as Department of Public Works which includes Bureau of Sanitation, Bureau of Engineering and Bureau of Street Services; Department of Water and Power; Zoo Department; Department of Animal Services; and General Services Department. Outside entities such as County of Public Works, CalTrans, Army Corps of Engineers are to be considered due to the involvement on the Los Angeles River. Also suggested were the City of Glendale and the City of Burbank, both bordering Griffith Park. Ms. Soter asked the Working Group for ideas on different entities that affect Griffith Park and submit lists to Ms. Vanaman. The certified neighborhood councils are under the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE). All City Departments are asked to work with neighborhood councils from DONE in any work involving the community. Based on transportation issues, a specific discussion took place regarding the Department of Transportation (DOT). DOT should be part of stewardship elements; however, they do not have the authority to decide if the Zoo Drive could become an official alternate to the 134 Freeway. In collaboration with other entities and agencies, they are given the responsibility to come up with policies

Griffith Park Master Plan – Working Group Meeting Summary – May 7, 2007

and procedure as it impacts the flow of traffic within the City. It was suggested that user groups should be included in the decision making process.

According to Ms. Vanaman, the prior draft was not detailed enough and did not show how complex the management is. A recommendation was made by Mr. Kessler to improve this draft by making it a better living document since this will be at least a 25-year document. This must be done without being too generic and lose the concept of all the groups as park stewards. A proposed re-written language of Page 18, Chapter IV, Section B, was drafted by Mr. Kessler and was distributed. There is a procedure and set of guidelines on how the PAB members are selected. Ms. Soter suggested that this proposed language be taken under advisement.

The bylaws for Greek Theatre Advisory Committee and the Golf Advisory Committee were requested. On Page 15, Chapter VI - Asset Management Section, language should allow RAP to restructure Golf programs so the revenue directly goes back to the purpose of its on programs instead of the General Funds. For a better park management, Mr. Kessler suggested that Golf Division representatives and Griffith Park staff representatives should meet regularly.

Questions were raised on how RAP is funded. Mr. Mariscal mentioned that RAP has three fund sources: (1) Funds from property tax; (2) Funds generated by RAP (MRP, golf, concessions, rental fees); and (3) City general fund allocation – source of the shortfall for what's needed to run the Department for direct expenditure.

The Working Group was reminded by Mr. Mariscal that the Rangers report to the Assistant General Manager of Operations West and Administrative Resources reports to the Chief Financial Officer. Concentrating on the Griffith Region, he clarified how the Department is structured. Griffith and Metro Region Superintendents work together on some of the Griffith Park tasks.

In response to questions regarding trust accounts, Mr. Mariscal informed the Working Group that the two trusts within Griffith Park will be discussed by Assistant General Manager Kevin Regan at a later time. It was also announced that RAP's Public Information Officer Jane Kolb is scheduled to discuss the 501c3 on the June 4, 2007 meeting.

It was suggested that the unofficial friends group section should be acknowledge in the Management Chapter under a new heading or sub-heading such as "Not Formally Identified Groups". Private non-profit groups do not fall under management role. These groups support the whole park and open the door for fundraiser, capital improvements and grant requests.

Ms. Soter stated that one of the Working Group's goals is to make recommendations to create accountability and transparency in park management. She suggested that the Griffith Park Trust Fund and the Griffith Family Trust information should be under the Financial Resources and Asset Management heading. Ms. Soter attempted to ask the council representative regarding the Griffith Park Trust Fund; however, Mr. Mariscal reminded her that this would be discussed at the next meeting. He also reminded the Working Group that there are other accounts specific to Griffith Park, not just the trust fund. The Working Group expressed an interest in seeing the expenditures made under the Griffith Park Trust Fund.

A discussion was raised on various types of expenditures. The Zoo, which became a separate department by an ordinance through City Council, controls their own revenue and expenditures. The Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners has the authorization to spend RAP monies. A question was raised about the Los Angeles Equestrian Center's revenue, which only RAP's Concession Section can answer in detail.

Griffith Park Master Plan – Working Group Meeting Summary – May 7, 2007

According to Ms. Vanaman, based on the discussions, in depth research and re-writing is required and that the re-draft might not be available until the July meeting. This concluded the discussion of the Management Chapter.

Due to the Fourth of July holiday, the July meeting is scheduled for July 9, 2007. The next Working Group meeting will be held Monday, June 4, 2007. The May 7, 2007 Working Group meeting concluded at 8:20 p.m.

Public Comments include the following:

- The City's responsibility is to get the job done not to make sure that the public understands why a certain project is completed the way it's done.
- Golf revenue should go to the general maintenance of Griffith Park
- The Management Chapter should be specific but includes the possible future changes
- Surprised that there is no mention of the vision for the next 25 years and strategic plans; hoping that the Working Group would have the time to include this
- How come the Zoo Magnet Program is not mentioned in the document? Is it because it's part of LA Zoo? Is anyone aware of this program?
- Thankful for including Symphony in Glen
- Does Shane's Inspiration still have interactive funds?
- MTA should be included as they are responsible for the buses that run through the park
- A reconsideration is requested that the Park Rangers' headquarters should be based where their region assignments are
- No mention on the maintaining the Park Ranger post status
- A set of criteria should be written for advisory groups and plan/design committee for every project in terms of impact on environment before proceeding with the project.
- Discussion on overriding the vision and management structure
- Question on the nature conservancy meeting regarding Rim of the Valley. The Working Group should keep an eye on the City's plan to relinquish some properties