

Griffith Park Master Plan – Working Group Meeting Summary – September 22, 2008

The Griffith Park Master Plan Working Group convened their meeting on Monday, September 22, 2008 at 6:45 p.m. at the Friendship Auditorium.

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

Council District 4: Renee Weitzer and Rory Fitzpatrick

Recreation and Parks: Mike Shull, Darryl Ford and Christina Iwata

Absent: Jose Sigala

Facilitator: Vicki Israel, Assistant General Manager, Department of Recreation and Parks

The meeting was opened by Ms. Israel by calling the roll of the Working Group members followed by the Council District 4 (CD 4) and Recreation and Parks (RAP) staff. The outstanding summaries were discussed and resulted to the following:

- May 2008: Approved and will be posted on the website.
- June 2008: The corrections made by Mr. Hans, Ms. Soter and Ms. Swan were noted. Ms. Iwata will make the corrections and will e-mail the corrected version to the Working Group members by Tuesday, September 23, 2008. Any comments on the corrected version will be accepted until Wednesday, September 24, 2008. The final will be posted by end of September 24th.

The Executive Summary and the Appendices were discussed. The September 22, 2008 version of the Executive Summary reflects the recommendations made by the Working Group members and the public members during the August meeting.

In addition to a few language changes on the Executive Summary, the following were suggestions to the timeline that the Working Group members brought up:

- In the 1-5 year goals, it should state that the public transit be increased to and within the Park.
- In the 5-10 year goals, add the completion of pedestrian/equestrian bridge across the Los Angeles River, connecting the North Atwater Village equestrian community to the main section of the Park. This goal should be moved to 1-5 year goals. According to Mr. Shull, there is no problem in moving to the 1-5 goals however, this depends on funding.
- Add the Headworks restoration projects on the 5-10 year goals. Land is leased to the Department of Water and Power and is not a RAP property. This area is critical to wildlife corridors connecting the Los Angeles River.
- Add a goal under the 10-15 year goals to retain run-off from the park as much as possible and that when funding becomes available, beyond Prop O monies, for run-off to be analyzed and completed to avoid erosion problems in the future.

The Master Plan draft distributed at the meeting is not thoroughly completed and needs formatting changes. 2007 statistics regarding the Greek Theatre, Boys Camp, and Girls Camp have been requested. The Travel Town water tank is not operating. When the draft is turned over to RAP Advanced Planning, they will get updated information from Department of Water and Power regarding the tank.

Griffith Park Master Plan – Working Group Meeting Summary – September 22, 2008

The Toyon Landfill Gas Power project was suggested by Mr. Hans to be added in the Built Section of the draft. It was discussed and questions were raised. Mr. Shull will contact Department of Sanitation to assist the Working Group members on their research. He will update the Working Group members as soon as he gets the information.

More time is needed to go through the draft. The final draft will be submitted at the October 2008 meeting. Ms. Soter will contact Ms. Iwata regarding discussing the Appendices.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 27, 2008, location to be determined. The final draft and the corrected appendices will be presented at the next meeting. Also at that meeting, the document will be turned over to Mr. Shull and RAP Advanced Planning staff.

The trust's official name is the Griffith J. Griffith Charitable Trust, not Griffith Family Trust. The Working Group members were requested to review the draft and e-mail all comments directly to Ms. Vanaman at vvanaman@navlaw.net. Each Working Group member must submit a profile sheet to Mr. Hans.

The Atwater Neighborhood Council passed a motion endorsing the nomination of historical designation for Griffith Park.

When the document is turned over, it will be reviewed by RAP senior staff for clean-up of the document as pertains to grammar and text. The consultant's main task is to do the environmental checklist which will determine the level of CEQA study that is needed for the master plan. Consultant will be determined at a later time. At that point, RAP Advanced Planning staff will report back to the Working Group members. The suggested changes will be marked on the document for final discussion.

Funding for entire CEQA and request for proposal will be discussed at a later time. The initial study is to determine the level of CEQA needed. The rest of the timeline will depend on the result of the initial study and the availability of funding. More information will be available at the next GPMPWG meeting.

Just like the Melendrez draft, RAP Board of Commissioners would not be able to adopt a master plan until a CEQA has been completed. The Melendrez Draft did not have a CEQA study and was not adopted at all. No action can be taken on any master plan without going through the CEQA process. The main funding would be for the CEQA process, publication, and other related costs.

The last meeting for 2008 is in October and the GPMPWG meeting will reconvene in February 2009 due to the holiday season and to give RAP Advanced Planning staff some time to review the draft that will be submitted to them. Mr. Shull should be able to identify the consultant who would be assigned to this project by the next meeting. The environmental consultant will not be allowed to make any substantive changes on the draft. The consultant's main goal is to take the draft's content and make recommendations on the checklist, which is a separate document from the draft, to determine the level of CEQA study needed.

A dissent letter dated September 22, 2008 was formally presented by Mr. Kessler to the Working Group members and RAP. He dissents from the section that pertains to the composition of the community advisory board, which was agreed by the other Working Group members. He would like to have this reflected somewhere on the record. There was a discussion as to where this would be noted and why does it have to be stated on the final draft when all the other votes made throughout the process will not be noted other than on the meeting summaries. Ms. Israel will take it into advisement and will seek additional guidance on the proper procedure.

Griffith Park Master Plan – Working Group Meeting Summary – September 22, 2008

It was stated by Mr. Shull that when it's in the CEQA process, by law, it is required that the draft be circulated to the community for comments. All comments collected will be included in the final CEQA document and a response will be included as well. It is not required by law, however, to answer each comment. The final master plan document may be amended based on the comments and the response.

Until a CEQA study is done, there will be no draft document to be circulated to the public. A specific date cannot be determined as of yet.

The current draft was written as a response to the Melendrez Draft and to counter balance the control of the Mayor, Council Office and City agencies according to Mr. Gardner.

Ms. Soter drafted a letter to Councilmember LaBonge, RAP General Manager Jon Kirk Mukri, Cultural Heritage Commission, and a copy to Van Griffith, in behalf of the Working Group members as a response to CD 4's letter dated August 7, 2008 regarding the nomination of Griffith Park to be a designated historical heritage monument. The draft letter states that in August 2008, the Working Group voted on the nomination, and that everyone endorses the application. Copies of this draft letter were distributed to the Working Group.

A motion was passed to finalize and send the letter to the Council Office, RAP and the Cultural Heritage Commission.

The Greater Toluca Lake Neighborhood Council has not voted yet, however, Mr. Bogy spoke to the environmental group and they will consider and recommend the application.

The next Working Group meeting will be held Monday, October 27, 2008. The September 22, 2008 Working Group meeting concluded at 8:10 p.m.

Public Comments include the following:

- A question on the document regarding biodiversity hotspot was asked.
- Suggestion was made that stronger language be used in the Major Recommendations Section.
- Suggestion was made to add the non-native garden in the document.
- Expressed concerns about not hearing Councilmember LaBonge's support to the nomination.
- The Daily News conducted a poll on community's opinion regarding the nomination and it resulted to 92% was for the nomination and 8% was against it.

**The September 22, 2008 meeting summary has been revised and finalized per GPMPWG meeting on February 23, 2009.*