

Griffith Park Master Plan – Working Group Meeting Summary – October 27, 2008

The Griffith Park Master Plan Working Group convened their meeting on Monday, October 27, 2008 at 6:41 p.m. at the Griffith Park Ranger Station Auditorium.

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

Council District 4: Renee Weitzer and Jullian Harris-Calvin

Recreation and Parks: Mike Shull 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:

- August 2008: Ms. Iwata will e-mail the document to the Working Group members by Tuesday, October 28, 2008 and will accept comments until Thursday, October 30, 2008 before posting on the website.
- September 2008: Will be finished and email by next week. Ms. Iwata will give the Working Group members four to five days to submit their comments by email.

Ms. Soter distributed the Executive Summary with notes on what was discussed during the last meeting and the Working Group members were asked to review it and open for discussion.

Ms. Vanaman was commended and applauded by everyone finalizing draft and getting it to everyone involved. Ms. Israel commended the Working Group members for their time, hard work, and passion they have in writing the Draft Griffith Park Master Plan (GPMP). She thanked everyone on behalf of the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP), the City of Los Angeles, and the community.

The Executive Summary has not been incorporated into the draft but will be incorporated before the draft is turned over to RAP. The changes on the document were clearly marked for everyone to see. The RAP Camp numbers were left blank awaiting RAP staff to provide the information. A clarification was made that the numbers needed are actual attendance for 2007 for both Boys and Girls Camps.

A few comments were made by the Working Group members. There were missing appendices. Ms. Iwata will work with the Working Group to straighten out the appendices.

Mr. Kessler inquired as to where in the record would his dissent letter dated September 22, 2008 be noted. When RAP Advanced Planning takes the document for review, staff will include it in the first review and as part of RAP initial response. Discussions will take place regarding RAP's comments to the document. A document containing an overview of community advisory

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committees which was prepared by some of the Working Group members was given to Mr. Shull as a response to Mr. Kessler's dissent letter. The document listed community advisory committees for regional parks such as Hansen Dam Recreation Area, Elysian Park, Harbor Regional, O'Melveny Park, Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area, etc. Greek Theatre Advisory Committee and Golf Advisory Committee were not included on the overview since these two groups are not considered as community advisory committees.

Mr. Shull reviewed and clarified a few items listed on the September 22, 2008 meeting recap notes prepared by Ms. Soter. The EIR checklist, as it relates to the CEQA study will be presented to the Working Group, not the CEQA summary as of yet. The EIR checklist must be completed first to determine the kind of CEQA study needed and the checklist will lay the ground work for what the consultant believes the document needs. Everything that RAP and the consultant will be working on will be brought back and presented to the Working Group as the process moves on.

Based on all the work Jones & Stokes have done in the Park for the last nine months, Mr. Shull recommends that RAP use their consulting services for this process. There is no determination as to who will conduct the actual CEQA study and no funding has been made available as of yet. RAP is only funded for initial steps needed to be done. Regardless of what route the CEQA study is determined to go, the draft will be released to the community for review and comments.

The document drafted by the Working Group members will be reviewed by RAP Advanced Planning staff and RAP Senior Management staff. After which, a consultant will be tasked to review for contents and grammatical errors, formatting, and complete the EIR checklist.

In January 2009, an e-mail update will be sent to the Working Group members. This will include a definite date for the next meeting which will occur in February 2009.

The Working Group members and the community were asked to inform Mr. Shull and Ms. Israel of any observations they may have pertaining to activities in the Park, especially any activities contrary to the Master Plan draft, such as growing non-native gardens anywhere in the Park. This way, staff can address the issues. RAP agreed to the Working Group's request to inform the community of any projects in Griffith Park which may change the Park's characteristics and atmosphere. RAP does not object to e-mails to be sent out within the community regarding what's going on in Griffith Park.

The repairs being done at Vista del Valle is a result of the fire and storm damages. The repairs were requested by the Los Angeles Fire Department due to safety hazard. The roads are just being restored and nothing is being changed.

Ms. Soter acknowledged that through this process, she has made new friends and will miss everyone until February 2009. A lot of work still needs to be done and the process is just entering a new phase.

Ms. Israel thanked the community members for patiently attending the meetings and sharing their comments and input regarding the master plan draft.

The next Working Group meeting is yet to be determined. The October 27, 2008 Working Group meeting concluded at 7:33 p.m.

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Public Comments include the following:

- Excitement was expressed in getting to the next phase of the process. The Working Group members deserve acknowledgement after their hard work for three years.
- The landscape document which is an amendment to the cultural heritage application will be presented to the Cultural Heritage Commission on Thursday, October 30, 2008. This amendment is important as it will either provide support or opposition to the urban wilderness identity of the Park. The community members are requested to read and review the positive and negative items on the document, and how to address the negative ones.
- Ms. Marian Dodge, on behalf of the Los Feliz Improvement Association, thanked each member of the Working Group. She also thanked the Department staff, Mr. Kevin Regan, Ms. Vicki Israel, Ms. Marilyn White, Mr. Michael Shull, Ms. Christina Iwata, and the sound technician crew, for all the hours and hard work they have invested in this process. She also thanked the faithful community and the Master Plan Working Group members. A special thanks to Ms. Vanaman for the outstanding job in getting the document together.
- Ms. Weitzer of CD 4 thanked everyone on behalf of Councilmember Tom LaBonge for their passion for the park. She apologized for saying “Griffin” instead of “Griffith” at the last commission meeting when she talked about the historic designation of Griffith Park.
- CD 4 will announce their stand on the cultural heritage designation on Thursday, October 30, 2008 at the next council meeting.
- Ms. Evelyn Davis of the Autry complimented the Working Group members for their dedication. She also acknowledged the Autry’s awareness of the community’s concerns on urban wilderness and thanked the community for sharing their concerns.
- A lot of good things came out of the master plan process such as the community’s awareness of urban nature of the Griffith Park.

**The October 27, 2008 meeting summary has been revised and finalized per GPMPWG meeting on February 23, 2009.*