

MINUTES

City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board **BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE**

February 2, 2012

Meeting held at:

Balboa Park Club
2150 Pan American Road
San Diego, CA 92101

Mailing address is:

Balboa Park Administration Building
2125 Park Boulevard
San Diego, CA 92101-4792

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present

Jeri Dilno
Michael Hager
Luanne Kanzawa
David Kinney
Minnie Rzeslawski
Michael Singleton
Rob Steppke
David Strickland

Members Absent

Andrew Kahng
Don Liddell
Mike McDowell

Staff Present

Stacey LoMedico, Park and Rec. Director
Susan Lowery-Mendoza, Balboa Park
Bruce Martinez, Balboa Park

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Kinney called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED (HAGER/STRICKLAND) TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 5, 2012 MEETING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (8,0,0)

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCES

None

NON AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Ashley Gardner, Executive Director of the Women's Museum noted that they are looking to relocate to Balboa Park and have a donor who wishes to rehabilitate Building 8, the former Navy Medical Library. They are willing to create a revenue stream for the City, not just pay \$1.00 for rent for year. They would like to create an exhibit showcasing the women who helped build the Park in time for the centennial celebration.

Bruce Coons, Executive Director of Save Our Heritage Organization distributed their new magazine, noted the MOU has been ruled illegal and five planning committees have voted against the project.

Scott Armstrong of the San Diego Mountain Biking Association noted that they are still pursuing a bike park in Morley Field. They had a volunteer trail day on January 21, 2012 and donated supplies to improve the trails.

Jarvis Ross noted the Executive Summary in the EIR clearly states that the environmentally superior alternative, second only to no project, is one that does not include the proposed bypass bridge. Planning boards, C3, Committee of 100 and the majority of the public do not support the bypass bridge. The park is in arrears for deferred maintenance and the cost of parking in the garage will likely be close to \$10.00.

Jay Shumaker stated that the project is over-engineering for a problem that does not exist. Under his plan, only a sliver of the park is reserved for vehicles. Large plazas are often empty. He urged the Committee to consider a less expensive, more comprehensive plan.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairperson Kinney noted the Park and Recreation Board did not meet in January, but will meet in February. The Park and Recreation Board also serve as the Oversight Committee of the San Diego Regional Parks Improvement Fund which will meet on February 16, 2012 at 4:00 P.M. in the Council Committee Room. There are some funds that can be spent in regional parks and recommended projects for Balboa Park. The draft Environmental Impact Report for the Plaza de Panama Project has been released. The Historic Resources Board will have a site tour and workshop specifically on the EIR in the Park on Wednesday, February 8, 2012, flyers are on the table in the back of the room. Information Item number 502 on the agenda tonight will not be project specific; it will be a general overview of the CEQA process and EIR structure.

STAFF REPORT

Steve Hill, representing City Council – District 3

Steve Hill reported the following:

- Todd Gloria was able to contribute \$34,000.00 in savings from his office budget to projects in Council District 3 including the purchase of eight hours of operation per week at the Balboa Park Activity Center through June 30, 2012 which will enable the Center to be open an additional three hours on Saturdays and five hours on Sundays for a seven day a week operation. Additionally the office budget savings will be used to purchase a new marquee at Adams Avenue Recreation Center and the repair and resurface the basketball and volleyball courts at Golden Hill Recreation Center.
- He provided an update on the services and facility to serve the homeless population at 6th Ave. and "A" Street scheduled to be open December 2012. The City Council, lead by Councilmembers Gloria and Faulconer were able to make a \$45,000.00 contribution

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to save the storage facility operation through June 30, 2012 located at 917 9th Avenue, called the Waterman Check-In Center were homeless can store items in bins.

- A food truck rally fundraiser will held tomorrow night at 4353 Park Blvd. to benefit Alice Birney Elementary which was a victim of arson.

It was requested by Rob Steppke to extend the public comment period for the EIR. Cecilia Gallardo of Development Services Department responded that they have the ability to extend the public comment period fifteen days.

Susan Lowery-Mendoza, Balboa Park Facilities and Special Events District Manager

Susan Lowery-Mendoza provided the following report:

- The Casa del Prado building re-roofing project is underway. The contractor will be working Monday through Friday from 7:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.
- Park and Recreation staff are pleased to open an additional 30 hours per month and thanked Councilmember Gloria for helping to open our doors to better serve the community.
- She provided information distributed from the Park and Recreation Director, Stacey LoMedico regarding a large number of vacancies in the Department due to retirement of an unprecedented number of veteran staff. A plan is in place to select replacements but many positions will be filled on a temporary basis.
- Circus Vargas will be setting up and operating in the Lower-Inspiration Parking Lot from February 14 – 27, 2012.

Bruce Martinez, Balboa Park Operations District Manager:

Bruce Martinez provided the following report:

- The tot lot renovation project along Sixth Ave. is progressing. Currently it is approximately 80% complete. The rubberized surface material still needs to be installed then City staff be working on the bench seating around the immediate area.
- We are also currently working with the Friends of Balboa Park to get a final bid for renovations of the two fountains in front of the Bot. Building. The scope of the project is substantial and will include removal of the non historic tiles, re-plumbing to put the pumps in a vault out of the fountain and the possible use of LED lights to illuminate the fountains. We will be forwarding the final proposal to Historic Review to ensure there are Not any issues or concerns on their part. It is our hope that this planning and funding phase can be completed soon as the fountains are in dire need of repair.

- We currently have two turf renovation projects occurring; one around the Lily Pond and another at Morley Field. Staff has noticed some significant upgrades to the turf at Morley Field in the last several years in part because we have been able to close the fields twice a year for renovation and because of the great support we have received from Citywide Maintenance Crew.
- Last and certainly not least, we are currently in the planning stages of replacing the termite infested Honey Locusts Trees inside the Spreckels Organ Pavilion. Staff is looking into the soil conditions, irrigation upgrades and availability of 16 good condition 36 or 48 inch box trees to work with the grates and trunk guards currently in place. If we can get everything worked out we may be able to have all the trees replaced and be part of this year's Arbor Day celebration. At this time the replacement tree being considered is a Crape Myrtle.

CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM UPDATES

Michael Hager reported the following:

- The Balboa Park Sustainability Program is partnering with the San Diego Regional Sustainability Partnership (SDRSP) and the Japanese Friendship Garden on February 15, 2012 for the SDRSP's annual breakfast and unveiling of the 2015 Centennial Celebration Living House Exhibit.
- This month, energy efficiency upgrades at the San Diego Natural History Museum (lighting) and the San Diego Museum of Art (HVAC) as well as adding the new projects at the House of Hospitality (lighting), San Diego Automotive Museum (lighting) and the San Diego Model Railroad Museum (lighting).

Luanne Kanzawa reported the following:

- The Cultural Partnership Board of Directors voted to provide up to 8,000 passes to share in our appreciation for volunteers. Each year, the City in collaboration with Park institutions, distributes free basic admission passes to our City and County's incredible volunteers. These passes are good for one admission per person per institution during the month of April, which is National Volunteer Month.
- The Balboa Park Learning Institute hosted a sold-out Parks 2015 event for 140 participants representing 80 San Diego arts, science and cultural institutions. Participants explored and advanced ambitious 2015 Centennial planning for Balboa Park. Photos, videos, articles and documentation of the event will be posted on our website and Facebook.

ACTION ITEMS

Consent

101. None

Adoption

201. Balboa Park Activity Center Verizon Telecommunication Facility Chairperson Kinney noted that this is a return visit for this project. Plans were presented and reviewed for the project which involves the installation of twelve panel antennas in a 54 foot high monument tower. The tower is 14' by 14' and the base houses the equipment. Landscaping will be provided with installation of nine trees. Placement is closer to the building as requested, providing an anchor on the building.

Committee Comments:

- Inquired about the construction phase- which should be late summer if it moves successfully
- The poured in place concrete needs architectural detail
- The color needs to match the Balboa Park Activity Center
- The orientation was discussed

MOTION MOVED/SECONDED (SINGLETON/ DILNO) TO APPROVE THE PROJECT AS SHOWN ON THE PLAN WITH A CONDITION OF INCLUDING ANY NUMBER OF ARCHITECTURAL ENHANCEMENTS TO THE BASE BUILDING.

Discussion: There was discussion regarding the rotation of the facility from the original plan. Charles Daniels noted that he reviewed the plans and they did move the tower closer to the building, but rotated it 90 degrees so that the equipment enclosure would be located between the tower and Park Blvd. He recommended that it be rotated back to its original orientation. A subsidiary motion was made for clarity of scope and details, the motion was amended to read:

MOTION MOVED/SECONDED (SINGLETON/DILNO) TO APPROVE THE PROJECT AS SHOWN, RECOMMENDING ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENTS TO THE BASE BUILDING , COLOR TO MATCH THE BALBOA PARK ACTIVITY CENTER, AND BASE BUILDING TO BE ROTATED NINETY DEGREES FROM THE CURRENT PLAN PROVIDED. MOTION CARRIED (6,1,1) STEPPKE OPOSSING AND KINNEY ABSTAINING.

Special Events

301. Hot Chocolate 15K and 5K, Joel Greisbach, RAM Racing

Susan Lowery-Mendoza introduced Joel Greisbach of RAM Racing and informed the Committee of a new 15 K and 5K race being proposed. The portion of the course going through Balboa Park will include use of Pershing Drive, Upas Street, Florida Drive, 26th Street and use of the perimeter road of Golden Hill Park. It is anticipated that the Park Roads will re-open by 9:30 A.M.

Committee Comments:

- Delighted to see use of a different route that doesn't utilize the Central or West Mesa of the Park
- Appreciate that the run will conclude by 9:30 A.M. in the Park as Golden Hill Park is generally used after 10:00 A.M.

MOTION MOVED/SECONDED (SINGLETON/STRICKLAND) TO APPROVE THE EVENT AS PRESENTED. CARRIED (7,0,1) KINNEY ABSTAINING.

WORKSHOP ITEMS

401. None

INFORMATION ITEMS

501. San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC) Chapter 6, Article 3, Division 1 Changes (effective December 31, 2011) Presenter – Stacey LoMedico, Park and Recreation Director

Stacey LoMedico provided information on the changes to the San Diego Municipal Code as it pertains to park permits. She distributed four (4) documents; the updated Municipal Code (12/2011), park capacities, park permit and the reservation for park use form. The park capacities document is also posted on line. This change includes permits for athletic events, ground use and special events.

Ms. LoMedico explained that the changes were brought forward by the CERF (Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation) fireworks lawsuit. They alleged that the City's issuance of the permit for the La Jolla Cove fireworks was "discretionary" and not ministerial. The municipal code needed revision to capture the Department's process for permitting to the code. Park capacities were listed for each of the parks permitted. Park capacity is the maximum number of people that may receive ministerial permits for activities requiring permits pursuant to the San Diego Municipal Code.

If a request is made that is discretionary it may be submitted to the Office of Special Events depending upon the nature of the event, these and other permits in which staff uses discretion will be subject to review under CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act). This would be done through DSD (Development Services Department). A review will cost \$193.00 for the permits that are not submitted to the Office of Special Events. Currently there is a court ordered stay on CEQA reviews. When an event goes to The Office of Special Events, the applicant has obtained a reservation of park use from the Park and Recreation Department. Park and Recreation issues the “reservation” after consideration of many factors, including but not limited to; other events taking place that day, other events being held in that location, any restrictions and any recommendations from the appropriate park advisory body or committee. The actual park use permit will be issued concurrently with the Special Event permit.

The proposed amendments also codify the practice of observing the Summer Moratorium for Special Events in the Developed Regional Parks Division (e.g. Shoreline Parks, Beaches, Mission Bay Park and Balboa Park) and existing exceptions, (i.e., Rock’n’Roll Marathon, San Diego Pride, Patrons of the Prado, AFC Half Marathon). A waiver process is outlined in the municipal code for applicants seeking to hold a “special event” during the Summer Moratorium.

Committee Comments:

- There was discussion as to when the Committee review takes place which is prior to the CEQA review
- There was a question regarding the cost of a CEQA review if an appeal is filed –the fees start at \$3,500.00
- A request was made to provide Balboa Park Capacities separate of other City parks – staff will provide
- Inquired if those events that are identified in the summer moratorium need to go through a CEQA review – Yes, they are not exempt from CEQA

502. Overview of CEQA process and EIR Structure, City of San Diego Development Services Department, Cecilia Gallardo, Assistant Deputy Director

Ms. Gallardo provided a PowerPoint presentation on CEQA and the California Environmental Quality Act, a State Law which passed in 1972. Development Services Department is charged with implementing CEQA in the City of San Diego and the Department Director is Kelly Broughton. The intent is to inform decision makers and the public about the possible environment effects. If it is determined during evaluation that a discretionary act will have an impact on the environment, feasible mitigation measures are identified or alternatives are presented which can reduce the significant environmental effects. The Environmental Analysis Section (EAS) provides legally defensible document and providing an unbiased impact analysis. Significance thresholds have been developed and are used for evaluating all projects submitted to the City.

An EIR is prepared when impacts cannot be mitigated. Once an EIR is prepared, a 45 day public review takes place which can be extended 14 days. Comments and responses become part of the EIR. QEQA requires that reasonable number project alternatives are analyzed. The decision makers make findings of fact and can make statements of overriding considerations. Consultants can be hired by the consultant but all work done by consultants are subject to review and approval by City staff. She informed the Committee that information is available on their website.

Committee Comments:

- There was discussion of alternatives being dismissed because they don't meet the goals and objectives of the project and if goals set are reasonable.
- There was discussion of the timing of the recommendation. The final document with overriding considerations is published at the end of the public comment period.
- Is it possible for Council to certify the EIR and not to approve the project? The response was yes.
- The environmentally superior alternative cannot be the either the project or no project.

SUB - COMMITTEE REPORT

601. Land-Use and Policy – None

602. West Mesa Subcommittee – None

COMMITTEE MEMBERS REPORT

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 P.M.

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, March 1, 2012
6:00 P.M.
Santa Fe Room/Balboa Park Club
San Diego, CA 92101

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowery-Mendoza
District Manager

