



RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 19, 2009

Ken Edwards Center, 1527 4th Street, Santa Monica CA 90401

1. **Call to Order** – Chairperson Cloke called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Roll Call**

Present:

Chairperson Cloke

Vice Chairperson Carrey

Commissioner Brock – arrived at 7:35 pm and left at 9 pm

Commissioner Deutsch

Commissioner Nafshun

Commissioner Winterer

Also Present: Barbara Stinchfield, Director of Community & Cultural Services
Karen Ginsberg, Assistant Director of Community & Cultural Services
Anne Deasey, Community & Cultural Services

4. **Approval of Minutes from the meeting of November 20, 2008** – Commissioner Winterer moved to approve the minutes from the meeting of January 15, 2000. Commissioner Deutsch seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Commissioner Winterer moved to approve the minutes of January 24, 2009. Commissioner Deutsch seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

5. **Director's Report** – Director Stinchfield reported on a notice from the City Clerk asking Commissioners to notify its office of resignations or recommendations for vacant seats. She also called attention to a letter from a citizen urging the Commission to support the proposed Colorado Boulevard Expo Light Rail and to support keeping the coral trees on Olympic.

Director Stinchfield updated the Commission on City budget reductions, including a possible 3% reduction for the current fiscal year and a 5% reduction for the budget plan for FY 09/10. Staff is looking at program fees which are either not close to market level or have not been raised in a long time in order to increase revenue.

Assistant Director Ginsberg notified the Commission about the City Council study session on the Civic Center Joint Use Project on March 24, and reviewed the opening activities for the Annenberg Community Beach House, inviting the Commissioners for a tour on April 24 and to the public open house on April 25.

Vice Chairperson Carrey commended staff on their response to a citizen concern regarding the lights at Memorial Park.

Chairperson Cloke reported on the successful opening event for the Pier Centennial celebration on February 18.

6. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS:

A. **Community Gardens Advisory Committee** – No report.

B. **Palisades Park Committee** – No report.

C. **Environmental and Sustainable City Task Force Liaison** – Commissioner Winterer reported that at the recent Task Force meeting he introduced himself as the new liaison from RPC and spoke about issues of common interest to the two groups.

D. **Planning Commission Liaison on Land Use & Circulation Element Update** – No report.

E. **SMMUSD/SMC Liaison** – Vice Chairperson Carrey reported that he will introduce Commissioner Nafshun to SMMUSD liaison Michael Hill, and that the first meeting of the Proposition 39 Bond Oversight Committee will be public.

F. **Sports Advisory Council Liaison** – Vice Chairperson Carrey reported that the adult soccer league drop-in program has been so successful that people are being turned away. The Commission requested specific data to support a request for more field space.

In other SAC news, Samohi received a grant from Nike to resurface a field; Michael Hill's report on the Joint Use Project was well received; there is still a problem with adults encroaching on the new artificial turf field at John Adams Middle School; and SMC will host an international soccer tournament July 29-31.

G. **Virginia Avenue Park Advisory Board Liaison** – No report.

H. **Event Committee** – Commissioner Nafshun reported that a recent brainstorming meeting was very productive, and the committee is now in the exploratory phase of producing cultural events attracting under 150 people in some of the smaller parks. The committee will bring ideas to the Commission for review.

7. ACTION ITEMS:

A. **Presentation by Koning Eizenberg Architecture and formulation of Commission recommendations regarding site studies for locating a Pico Neighborhood Library within Virginia Avenue Park** – After noting that there is significant public support for a library at Virginia Park due to its convenient location and the potential for synergy with park programs, Greg Mullen, City Librarian, introduced Julie Eizenberg and Oonagh Ryan of Koning Eizenberg Architecture.

In reviewing the three best options within the park, Ms. Eizenberg reported that the optimum site is adjacent to the Thelma Terry Center and lies partly in the current Farmers Market zone. The proposed location would allow for the maximum interaction with existing buildings and programs, and has been endorsed by VAPAB. KEA recommends a 2-story building of approximately 7,000 to 7,500 square feet. The addition of 25 to 30 parking spaces would minimize impact on neighbors and traffic on Virginia Avenue.

Commission comments included:

- Concern regarding removing open space in favor of buildings and parking spaces
- Concern regarding noise impacts on neighbors
- Concern regarding reducing the number of Farmers Market stalls
- Consider installing parking spaces on the roof of the building
- Consider expanding the existing Thelma Terry Center
- Use innovative traffic management practices in the immediate vicinity

- Explore non-traditional opening hours to mitigate traffic and parking impacts
- Minimize the footprint of the facility as much as possible
- Explore locations at Santa Monica College and the YWCA on Pico Boulevard

In addition, the commission strongly supports opportunities for families to engage in multiple activities in a safe environment.

Mr. Mullen stated that locations outside of the park are being considered. Ms. Eizenberg noted that expanding the Thelma Terry Center would be very expensive.

Chairperson Cloke moved in support of locating the Pico Neighborhood Library in Virginia Avenue Park and further exploration of the two schemes for the area where the Farmers' Market is located; expressed major concern regarding the removal of open space for parking; and strongly recommended exploration of all possible transportation and parking alternatives. Commissioner Nafshun seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

B. Presentation by Roxanne Tanemori, (Associate Planner at Planning & Community Development) and Commission Discussion of Draft Palisades Park Regulatory Review Program and setting of Joint Special Meeting with the Landmarks Commission (March 9, 2009 proposed) to discuss the proposed program – Ms. Tanemori briefed the Commission on criteria established to identify modifications in Palisades Park as routine maintenance exempt from review, and what type of modifications would be subject to staff evaluation. Proposed projects outside the scope of these specifications will be subject to Landmarks Commission review for Certificate of Appropriateness.

The discussion was continued to March 19, with the joint special meeting with the Landmark Commission to take place on April 13.

Item 8A was heard before Item 7C.

8A. Presentation by Peter James, Associate Planner, Planning and Community Development Community & Strategic Planning on the concept plans for Ocean Park Boulevard streetscape improvements – Mr. James presented two design concepts for streetscape improvements on Ocean Park Blvd west of Lincoln Blvd, both of which involve unique elements for each block and fulfill the following project objectives:

- Enhance walking and biking (including Class II bike lanes)
- Increase pedestrian safety
- Promote environmental sustainability (including optimum storm water infiltration)
- Beautify streetscape and enhance greenery
- Calm traffic and resolve conflicts at intersections
- Provide opportunities for gateways, landmarks, and public art
- Maintain views from the 4th Street overpass

Alternative A would allow for the capture of more storm water with bioswales, move traffic away from homes and buffer pedestrians from vehicles, and cost approximately \$250,000 - \$650,000 more than Alternative B. Alternative B creates an opportunity to enhance the view from the 4th Street overpass, allows for more tree canopy, and maximizes green median opportunities.

The Commission agreed with City Council direction to mix and match elements from the different designs while maintaining consistency. They also encouraged using bioswales if current research supports their effectiveness, widening sidewalks in some areas, and optimizing the tree canopy while maintaining the view corridor.

A third community meeting will be held in April or May before final Council review in May or June.

7C. Request by Commissioner Winterer to recommend to the City Council that a commemoration honoring late Councilmember Herb Katz be included as part of the Joslyn Park off-leash dog area improvements –

Commissioner Nafshun moved to continue item 7C to the meeting of March 19, 2009.
Commissioner Deutsch seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

B. **Review of Commission Long Range Agenda** – No revisions were made to the Long Range Agenda.

10. **Public Comment** – There was no public comment.

11. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 pm.