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Elysian Park Committee Notes

October 5, 2005

Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park (CCSEP)

No. 131

Memorial Tree Planting - Save the Date

The Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park will be sponsoring its annual tree planting and dedication on Saturday, November 19 at 1 pm in the Chavez Ravine Arboretum of Elysian Park.

Once again we are fortunate to have found a good selection of rare trees with which to enhance the variety in the arboretum. We will be planting about 30 trees of 20 different species. Virtually all have been lovingly hand propagated by either Los Angeles City Recreation and Parks horticulturalist Jose Ochoa or by horticulturalist at the Los Angeles County Arboretum. Some are larger than others but all are rare exotics. Because their cost can only be measured in man hours taken to grow them, we are asking that those who wish to plant a tree make a donation of \$50-150 to the CCSEP tree fund. The fund will be used for such things as making new identification tags for trees that need them, creating tree walk maps and replacing dead trees.

Because there is a finite number of trees, call early to ensure the best selection to reserve a tree for yourself or a loved one. The deadline for orders is Monday, November 7. To order a tree please call Mary at 323.667.0867

Saturday, Nov 19, 2005

Place: Arboretum
Elysian Park

Time: 1:00 P.M.



Elysian Park Master Plan Update

Community Meeting Workshop #3 Presentation of Draft Master Plan

The third and final Master Plan Community Meeting Workshop was held September 22, 2005, 6:30-9:30pm at Grace E. Simons Lodge, Elysian Park. Attendance was sparse.

Copies of the Draft Master Plan were available for review before the meeting began.

Steve Davis, landscape architect with the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering, and Project Manager of the Master Plan Oversight Committee opened the meeting with a general overview of the Master Plan process. From the beginning of the Master Plan project, over a year and a half ago, every effort was made to make the process as transparent as possible and encourage the community to participate in that process.

Lacy Withers and Jan Sandgren, landscape architects, and authors of the Draft Master Plan were introduced. They reviewed the Master Plan Project and Community Workshops. Memorable quote: "The Elysian Park Draft Master Plan has come to life through the community." In summary:

Workshop #1 Withers and Sandgren listened to comments from the community - what was working, what was not.

Workshop #2 The consultants presented new ideas and concepts based on feedback they received from the first workshop.

Workshop #3 Final community meeting from which the ideas and concepts will be modified again.

See Master Plan, page 2

Power Point Presentation

Withers and Sandgren presented the Draft Master Plan which is divided into four sections or chapters. After each chapter was presented, there was a 15 minute question and comment period. Selections from the presentation (per chapter) and audience response include:

RECREATION AND FUN IN THE PARK

- Key Findings (from Community Workshop #1)
- Plan Actions (response to Findings)
- Audience Comments/Issues
 - Could the DWP Reservoir be covered and who would decide this.
 - The proposed Pedestrian Bridge across Academy Road sounds ghastly.
 - An off leash dog park
 - Playing fields need to be improved.
- Complicated Issues: Proposals for an off-leash dog park and playing field lighting would need to be debated as separate issues outside of the Master Plan process.

GETTING AROUND THE PARK

- Key Findings
 - Sample: A safety issue for the community is the fact that there is no pedestrian or bicycle access on Stadium Way.
- Plan Actions
 - Sample: Solution to the above Finding is the permanent closing of 1 lane on Stadium Way.
- Audience Comments/Issues
 - The Draft includes no mention of equestrian trails or connections to Griffith Park
 - The park lacks public transportation options.
 - The California High Speed Rail's potential impact on the park should be addressed.
 - Bike path lanes on Stadium Way should continue beyond Academy Road.
 - If park cannot take care of itself now (in terms of maintenance) how can it expect to accommodate new ideas?

THE PARKLAND

- Key Findings
 - Preservation and restoration are the two largest issues.

See Master Plan, page 3

A special thank you to Dave Gold from the CCSEP!

Just prior to our annual Fundraising Banquet the CCSEP received a letter from Dave Gold. Inside was his business card, 9 buy-one-get-one-free coupons for the 99¢ Store and a check. It turns out that Dave Gold, founder of the 99¢ Store chain, was one of the many Angelenos, concerned citizens all who 40 years ago became founding members of the Citizen Committee to Save Elysian Park. While he was too busy establishing and expanding his business to become directly involved with the Citizens Committee he had apparently been following our hard work for all these years.

Apparently he approves; the check was a donation for \$999.99!
Thanks Dave!

Notes is published by the Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park (CCSEP).

CCSEP meets the 1st Wednesday of the month, 7:00 P.M. at Barlow Hospital-Williams Hall.

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The CCSEP is a 501(c)(4)
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- Plan Actions
One of the most valuable sections of the Draft Master Plan is the “Elysian Park Natural Resources,” an in-depth paper prepared by Verna Jigour Associates, Conservation Ecology and Design Services, detailing the natural history of the park, existing vegetation and habitats, soil analysis, recommendations for plant restoration, etc. (Located under Appendices.)
- Audience Comments/Issues
What are the exact boundaries of the park and what is its Acreage?
What are the parks indigenous plantings? comparisons with Arroyo Seco Park

TAKING CARE OF THE PARK

- Key Findings
Maintaining the park is THE priority.
- Plan Actions
Sample: irrigation issues
- Audience Comments/Issues
Need trash dealt with more efficiently
Additional bathrooms need to be constructed
Future accomplishments as a result of the Draft Master Plan
Homeless encampments need to be discouraged and removed

After the presentation, Steve Davis encouraged the community to mail in Response Cards or e-mail him directly regarding their concerns or issues.

His comments in closing:

TIMETABLE

- Next 2-3 weeks: Comments will be received from the community.
- For 1 month after that (approx): Draft will be circulated among the Department of Recreation and Parks, LADOT, and other city staff for comments.
- November (approx): Oversight Committee to meet again to consider changes to Draft Master Plan.
- January 1st – Park Board will look at the document.

NOTES & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Every effort was made to make the Master Plan process transparent to the public.
- The Draft Master Plan represents what the Oversight Committee could agree on as a group.
- A Master Plan, in general, is only good for 5 years.
- The Oversight Committee should be kept alive to revisit the Master Plan.

See Master Plan, page 3

Buena Vista Hill

A Destination for Dogs

Attention, all you dog owners who walk your dogs on the west fireroad trail in Elysian Park: did you know there is an extensive trail system suitable for dog walking on Elysian Park’s Buena Vista Hill? If you currently drive your dog to one of several trailheads on the West side, why not consider traveling a little farther to Buena Vista Hill on Elysian Park’s Eastern side. There is ample parking along the access road on the hill itself. The trails are well maintained and the views include the L.A. River, the cornfields (which currently really are cornfields*) and the downtown skyline. There are drinking fountains both on top of Buena Vista Hill and down below in Buena Vista meadow which can be accessed by the trail system.

So live a little—try something different! Explore beautiful Elysian Park, and make Buena Vista Hill a destination for you and your dogs.

From Morton Avenue, continue straight onto Academy Road. Pass the Police Academy and turn left at the light (Solano Canyon Road). Take the first right up the hill at the end of the canyon. Continue across the Pasadena Freeway bridge and make an immediate left into the Buena Vista Hill area.

* www.NotACornfield.com

Sallie Neubauer

History Note: Elysian Park Auto Camp

If you decide to take a wander to the eastern edge of Elysian Park you can find the terraces of the long forgotten Elysian Park Auto Camp.

The Elysian Park Auto Camp was established in 1920 after the Automobile Club of Southern California petitioned the city for a *campground for machines* to provide free camping to those wishing to visit Los Angeles. It was argued that the city had the *stigma of being camp-less* and that after parties had driven all the way across the country to visit Los Angeles the Auto Club had to direct them to camps in Pasadena or Santa Monica.

The Elysian Camp was listed as having a capacity of 86 cars and its facilities included shade trees, two community kitchens, two lavatory buildings with hot and cold showers, outdoor ovens, and amusements!

Today the Auto camp site is a completely fenced, sheltered and shady refuge for the neighboring Solano Canyon community. Inside the entrance off of Casanova Terrace one can find four levels of turf and a children’s play structure, one of two purchased by the CCSEP several years ago for the children of Elysian Park. Scott Fajack

Support the
CCSEP
Join Today!

Membership
Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

New Member \$10

Renewal \$10

(Student and Seniors, \$5)

Donation \$ _____

I'd like to help

I'm interested in the following:

Master Plan, continued from page 3

The major question is:

How can the Master Plan go beyond just being a piece of paper and create real action or change?

To view the Master Plan online:

www.laparks.org/dos/parks/elysianPK/elysianMasterplan.htm

Send your comments to:

Elysian Park Master Plan

Withers & Sandgren, Ltd.

3467 Ocean View Blvd.

Glendale, CA 91208

ELYSIAN PARK MASTER PLAN OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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- Citizens Committee To Save Elysian Park
Pamela Burgess, Scott Fajack, Sallie Neubauer
- Greater Echo Park and Elysian Neighborhood Council
Christine Peters
- Elysian Valley Neighborhood Council
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