

Griffith Park Advisory Board Minutes

April 28, 2022

Meeting began at 6:32pm

Ashouri, Chung, Cramas, Crow, Gilbert, Greenwald, Laib, Phillips; Thornton excused

Minutes

Phillips first, Chung second. Approved unanimously without changes

Chair Remarks

-Welcome of new board member, Alex Crow. Crow stated his love of Griffith Park and volunteerism

-The Transit and Mobility ad hoc committee has been reconstituted. Greenwald shall chair and Phillips and Ashouri have been asked to join. Greenwald emphasized the important role this committee's work will play in the year ahead, and that mobility and transportation are strong components of the vision for Griffith Park, our governing document.

Report from Government Officials

Xanthe Scheps, CD4

-Budget season at City Hall; the council office would like our input as to budget priorities

-Rent registry for RSP motion made by the Councilperson

-Homesharing motion made by the Councilperson

-All can watch these deliberations

Board Questions/Comments

Phillips: How can we watch the deliberations? Scheps: She will send YouTube links

Laib: Thanks to the Councilperson for attending the recent GP vigil for slain biker Andy Jelmert

General public comment re items not on this agenda

Marian Dodge: FOGP thanked those who attended recent hikes and the Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor groundbreaking

Michael Schneider: Traffic violence is acute in GP and cars should not be allowed to commute thru the park. Bike lane cutouts needed

Gerry Hans: FOGP, LA Wild and FOGP are proposing a wildlife facility, perhaps in GP. There will be a public meeting on 5/19 5p at park central

Motion made by chair to move up the Superintendent report Phillips first, Laib second.

Approved unanimously

Superintendent's Report

Stefanie Smith, GP Superintendent

-The department extends its condolences to the family and friends of Andrew Jelmert

-RAP has been working on closures in the park to minimize cut throughs and also on other mitigations. There have been numerous internal stakeholder meetings, including LADOT meetings. Immediately, there will be re striping and some other mitigations. A traffic consultant has been identified and will be retained to analyze and present long term, strategic solutions.

-Smith asked Ranger Chief Losorelli to speak:

-Jelmert was hit by a drunk driver, an ex felon with an extensive criminal history who was driving 80mph. The rangers attempted to apprehend him, but he abandoned his vehicle and fled on foot, ultimately to be arrested. Alcohol limit was double legal limit, he has been charged with felony hit and run, and other charges.

-In another incident in the park, a driver lost control of their vehicle on Western Observatory Rd, went off an embankment, was seriously injured and hospitalized.

-There was a suicide in the park on a trail

Board Question

Cramas: Do the rangers who responded to these and other accidents have access to trauma related mental health services? Losorelli: Yes, they have access to LAPD mental health services.

Ashouri: Asks to move agenda, as there are numerous members of the public on the call who wish to speak.

Public Comment

Note: In addition to the following live comments at the meeting, there were also 82 written comments submitted to RAP, all of which were on the same topic, road safety for cyclists in Griffith Park

- S. Alper: It is unacceptably hazardous to ride bicycles in GP
- L. Mares: Bike safety compromised by commuter cut throughs
- E. Brightwell: More effort needed by city re bike safety in the park
- C. Davidson: Get more input from bikers and a fully dedicated bike lane
- G. Hans: The car centric transportation model is not working in GP any longer. FOGP has long expressed concerns about safety
- K. Grevarsy: What is time frame for these safety improvements? Remove all cars from GP
- Adrian: Santa Monica does a good job with bike lanes. Cars and bikes are separated
- Losorelli interjects: The speed limit in GP is 10-25 mph for ALL vehicles. Bicyclists also need to observe stop signs and speed and other laws in vehicle code. 90% of accidents in the park are bicycle related
- R. Vega: Cameras needed to ticket speeders
- D. Kevitt: Streets are for everyone. I was a victim of an auto/bike accident and lost my leg. Wants to see a sense of urgency. He has a petition circulating to close GP to cars. It has 1,100 signatures
- T. Tezos: We are not a bike friendly city. San Francisco has closed a 1 1/2 mile roadway in Golden Gate Park to vehicles

Board Comments and Questions

- Laib: I double down on getting passenger vehicles out of GP
- Ashouri: Bike issues need to be preeminent
- Phillips: We have been addressing bike issues, and all will remember that Riverside Dr lane reconfiguration and added bike lanes was on last month's agenda
- Tracy James, RAP: Spoke about the numerous transportation initiatives already being pursued by RAP in the park. And that the process requires involvement with other city agencies that have jurisdiction. This inevitably adds time to the process of executing any changes.
- Chung: Thanks Tracy and also advocates for closure of the 5 freeway mid park GP exit
- Ashouri: Would like to see bike collision stats for GP
- Laib: Encourages Ashouri to join transit and mobility ad hoc committee. Ashouri: Yes, I will
- Greenwald: Are there any imminent deliverables? Smith: Yes and some short term solutions will be discussed at the May meeting; a traffic engineer is being retained
- Phillips: Can the public help expedite the process? James: There will be a time in the near future that the public can help
- Smith continues the RAP report:
 - RAP covid protocols are unchanged
 - Fencing for the upper Old Zoo will proceed shortly
 - The independent veterinarian revisited the Pony Ride on 3/18 and is pleased with improvements
 - Griffith Observatory has launched its new show in the Samuel Oschin Planetarium, Signs of Life. It is fantastic!
 - James shared 2 versions of the proposed educational sign at the Old Zoo; one with more historic information and another more minimalistic

Board Comments and Questions

- Ashouri: Likes version that is less busy and advocates some design changes
- Laib: Likes the version with the historic context

Public Comment and Questions

- S. Alper: Historic oriented one better; offer to help with the QR code
- G. Hans: Also likes the historic content oriented sign. Disagrees with the comment about the LA Zoo on the bottom of the signs.

Motion to approve the version with the historic content, with the LA Zoo comment at bottom modified or deleted.

Laib first. Gilbert second. Motion passes 7 yes, Ashouri abstaining. Phillips offers to draft the official GPAB letter. Laib drafted by chair to assist.

Board Business

Greenwald: Reintroduces the conversation about live vs virtual meetings.

Ashouri: Valuable to have live meetings and many of the public on tonight's call would benefit from them

Crow: Live meetings appealing

Greenwald: We would have to mask and monitor proof of vaccination if we go live, and conform with current RAP covid protocols

Laib: Referred to prior meeting minutes and reminded board that we had already decided to wait till the mask and vaccination proof protocols were rescinded

Ashouri: Outdoor meetings?

Phillips: Lets wait

Greenwald: Phillips has been asked to consider the matter and report back to board and I have suggested that Ashouri and Crow would be other board member resources to help with this

Committee Reports

Transit and Mobility: Greenwald

Reiterated the central position mobility issues occupy in the Vision for GP and our mission. The Zoo EIR and public transportation will be on the agenda when the committee meets for first time before the next board meeting. He will report at May meeting

Engagement: Crames Meeting postponed

Safety: Laib

The wildfire no smoking signs are made and will be delivered to RAP next week.

There was also an armed hold up during daytime last week at the Merry Go Round. Watch stolen, no-one injured

Committee is delighted that RAP is installing the fencing at the upper Old Zoo

Equestrian: Gilbert for Thornton

There is a RAP consultant reviewing the future of the Equestrian Center. There have been numerous trail safety issues with horses and vehicles and there is a report being drawn for the Rangers

Sustainability: Phillips

Working on the slow process of watering station installation

Board Comments and Questions

Ashouri: She appreciates the discourse tonight and that Smith brought forth transit action items

Adjournment

Greenwald asked that we adjourn in honor of Rex Link, who was a regular park visitor, volunteer, advocate and GPAB attendee for years

Motion to adjourn

Laib first, Crames second. Unanimous

Meeting ends at 9:07pm

Next meeting on May 26 at 6:30pm and will be virtual