

Minutes - Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee

3-25-97

In Attendance: Kathleen Bullard, David Ecklund, Gene Greene, Steve Hartman, Eric Lesser, James Ward, Rosemarie White, Sandy Wohlgemuth

Meeting called to order by chairperson Rosemarie White (RW) at 7:00, followed by lengthy introductions and approval of past meeting's minutes. Eric Lesser will represent Sierra Club in place of Jill Swift for next few months.

RW discussed proposed retirement gift from Committee for Dick Ginevan, past Valley Region Supervisor for City Rec & Parks. RW still needs letters of appreciation from organizations represented on Steering Committee. Seven pictures of wildlife area (photographed by Alex Trachtenberg) will be included in album along with letters of appreciation. Each group will be requested to donate \$15-\$20.

Sandy Wohlgemuth (SW) is concerned that there are no mud flats currently available for shore birds to feed (as was case in days before Wildlife Lake). Steve Moe in past has lowered the lake to expose a small ribbon of bare earth around the lake during shorebird migration time (mid-summer). SW asked if low area at south end of lake (which fills with water during wet periods) could be filled regularly and used as a seasonal or permanent mudflat. James Ward (JW) suggested skimming off vegetation in certain areas around lake to create mudflats as a possible solution. [Note: a survey for potential areas should be undertaken and these areas should be officially proposed as potential mudflat areas.]

SW reported that a volunteer group (SW, Clyde Ade from CNPS, and another person from S.F. Valley Audubon) participated in weeding at Hummingbird Hill on Saturday March 22 from 9am to noon. SW noticed that it was very dry in the plant basins and notified Steve Moe. Steve Moe called back to say that a leak was found and is being fixed. Steve Hartman (SH) voiced concerns that the City is not regularly maintaining the irrigation system as previously agreed to by City. JW will direct Steve Moe to follow-up more regularly on the irrigation system now that we have gotten into the warm dry months of the year. RW mentioned the importance of utilizing volunteers to help monitor this project. JW urges us to volunteer information whenever possible to help the City find out about problems in the Wildlife Area.

SW discussed the proposed osprey nesting platform close to the lake, and that he had contacted Chevron, wrote a letter requesting assistance, and is awaiting for the response.

JW announced that the City will disk open areas east of Woodley and north of Burbank and the open field adjacent to the model airplane field only along the edges.

Gene Greene (GG) announced that the berm plantings around the Tillman plant are doing fine, and that "Swallow Day" (April 6) will include a 1pm Berm Walk (SH to lead) and 2pm Wildlife Walk (Muriel Kotin to lead). GG reviewed plans for "Springtime in the Garden," another public event focusing mainly on the Japanese Garden, which will take place in June.

GG discussed the ongoing mitigation project (Tillman Pipeline Project) and that since 80% success rate is required after 5 years, new plants will be installed, and asked if the Steering Committee have any concern with the plant palette used in the two areas (south of Burbank right-of-way and 4.5 acre mitigation in north Wildlife Area). [Note: Steering Committee should arrange a survey date for these two projects to assess the current planting success and diversity in order to make useful recommendations.] SH asked if there are extra plants left over from berm planting project. GG noted that there is some *Ceanothus* left over, and that it could be used for planting on Hummingbird Hill, and that we need to contact Steve Moe regarding getting laborers to dig holes for planting.

There was an inquiry about the huge pile of soil in Woodley Park, which is part of the "East Valley Water Recycling Project," along with a brief discussion of the project.

It was requested of JW to make available to the Steering Committee the list of names/addresses currently being sent announcements of the Steering Committee meetings.

GG made a presentation describing the proposed 11,000 sq. ft. Japanese Garden Visitors' Center for which private funds are being solicited. This Center would include a 160 person dining room, a smaller conference room, kitchen, offices, along with a patio area facing into the Japanese Garden where a Bonsai garden would be located. This facility would be available for public meetings and events.

RW initiated a discussion of the Wildlife Areas Expansion Project Plan. Why was Steering Committee only given two days to review a very complicated set of plans? As it was, only RW, SH, SW, Muriel Kotin and Glenn Bailey were able to provide the briefest comments in a letter faxed to Andy Lopez (Army Corps of Engineers) and JW (City of L.A.). SH commented that because the City was never satisfied with the incremental percentage plans that NUVIS (the design contractor) provided to the City, the City did not share any incremental percentage plans with the Steering Committee, and thus the Steering Committee was faced with reviewing the entire plan without any prior review. JW explained that there was no good excuse for the lack of time other than "contract requirements."

JW discussed proposed signage, and commented that some of the permanent signs should not have temporal references (i.e. "recently completed restoration") because in 10 years the "restoration" won't be recently completed.

There was continued discussion regarding comments on the plan, and a cursory review of the plan. SH noted that more than half of the planting and irrigation plans were not included in the "100%" plan which we were to review. JW indicated that the Steering Committee still may influence the plant palette and trail design (perhaps) and other issues (bird viewing areas?), but the construction designs for the buildings and amphitheater were not up for revisions. JW volunteered to look into providing to the Steering Committee a design of the project which would fit on one piece of paper. (SH had mentioned that photocopying the individual sheets and taping them together would at least allow Committee members to see overall plan, trail routes, etc.). It was agreed to try to arrange a meeting of Steering Committee members to review the overall plan prior to meeting with JW, Bob Fawcett (City of L.A. Landscape Architect) and Steve Moe prior to next Steering Committee meeting, which is scheduled for April 22.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Minutes prepared by Steve Hartman