

**APPROVED**

**JUN 18 2008**

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 08-181

DATE June 18, 2008

~~BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS~~  
and ~~Facilities~~

C.D. 4

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: GRIFFITH PARK – SITE IMPROVEMENTS AND REROUTING OF POWER LINES AT OLD ZOO

R. Adams _____	J. Kolb _____
H. Fujita _____	F. Mok _____
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*V. Israel _____	M. Shull _____

  
General Manager

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_

Withdrawn \_\_\_\_\_

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Approve the proposal by the Symphony In The Glen (SIG) to enhance the atmosphere and landscape in the area referred to as the Old Zoo Great Lawn by working with the Department of Water and Power (DWP) to reroute the existing power lines by moving the lines north of the restroom building along the service road. DWP will install new power poles and remove the old ones;
2. Authorize Department staff to work with SIG and DWP to obtain a fully engineered plan and budget; and
3. Approve SIG procurement of \$14,000 to pay DWP for the engineered plan.

SUMMARY:

Free Arts Pavilion – Griffith Park Early Feasibility Phase

SIG, in partnership with the Moss Foundation is assessing the feasibility of designing an open-air, free arts pavilion for the Old Zoo Picnic Area in Griffith Park.

The Organization

SIG is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization with a 15 year history of providing free symphony concerts at the Old Zoo in Griffith Park. These concerts feature live performances of

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great classical works presented by the SIG orchestra, under the baton of Maestro Arthur B. Rubinstein.

Combining this exquisite natural setting with free performances of Beethoven, Mozart, Revueltas, Dvovák, Copland and Bernstein, provides a true fulfillment of Colonel Griffith's directive of "providing recreation and relaxation for the masses, a resort for the rank and file, for the plain people in Griffith Park." SIG has made its cultural offerings in the heart of the Park, a beloved aspect of park life and a rich arts resource for low income families. In addition, SIG's mission is to cultivate new generations of classical music lovers. Each concert is preceded by an activity especially crafted to introduce youngsters to basic musical concepts. Over the years several thousand children have participated in these pre-concert activities.

### The Free Arts Pavilion Concept

The objective of this project would be to provide a multi-purpose, open-air structure that would serve a day-to-day function as a picnic pavilion, and which would transform easily into a performance space for the 40 to 60 piece SIG orchestra. There is potential for other low-impact cultural uses for the structure, such as art classes, nature lectures, a weekend "story hour" series, a summer children's theatre workshop, youth orchestras and chamber groups.

As SIG begins exploring the concept of the Free Arts Pavilion with the Department, Council District Four and the community, the goal is to improve the functionality of the Old Zoo as a designated picnic area, within the following stated design principles:

- Enrich the usability of the Great Lawn for its current primary function as a picnic area
- Support the continued use of the Old Zoo Great Lawn for SIG Free Concerts
- Design a structure that is sensitive to the extraordinary landscape of Griffith Park
- Make the existing space more flexible and open for all users
- Employ Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), environmentally responsible and sustainable design principles

### Project Status

1. The project architect is Michael Palladino, FAIA, of Richard Meier Partners. SIG, along with Jerry Moss (Moss Foundation), is working with Mr. Palladino to develop the concept visually for initial consultation with City and community entities.
2. SIG has already commissioned a professional topographic survey of the site from which a site map has been drawn. This site map will be used as a frame of reference during the stages of consultation with the City agencies and the community.

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### Immediate Challenge

**Power Lines:** An existing power line, running east to west, bisects the Old Zoo Great Lawn (two poles are seated in the lawn, one in the exact spot where SIG is proposing to place the pavilion). Through consultation with the DWP personnel, it has been determined that there are two options to consider: to bury the power lines or to reroute them to the north along the fire road.

1. Option #1 burial: (\$300,000/\$350,000 DWP written estimate) Taking the lines underground (approx. 450 ft. over all) would require the installation of two underground manholes (one on the east end and one on the west end of the Great Lawn) and would be too costly.
2. Option #2 overhead rerouting: (\$140,000/\$150,000 DWP verbal estimate) Rerouting the lines would require a set of new poles along the service road with further reconnections to the existing pole east of Great Lawn. A new pole north of restrooms building would serve to deliver power to the Great Lawn electrical switchboard.

Note: The relocation of the existing pole with a step-down transformer, providing power to the restrooms, will be free of charge for the new overhead lines layout since it is considered an existing customer service.

**Fees for DWP Engineering:** Obtaining cost estimates requires a DWP engineered plan, SIG will procure \$14,000 to fund this plan, and obtain funding for the remainder of the project.

### Next Steps

- SIG must receive authorization from the Department to pursue the rerouting of the poles.
- The engineering fee must be paid to the DWP before design can begin. Once authorization is granted to further explore the overhead rerouting option, SIG will consult with the Moss Foundation about funding for the engineering fee.
- SIG is in the process of hiring a professional project manager to: develop an initial project budget and master schedule; help build the project team; coordinate activities related to the various components; and guide the project through the coming phases. The DWP engineering plan/budget is a crucial component to be considered in the initial budgeting phase.
- The project is in the early development stage and, when authorized to do so, the SIG project team will begin initial consulting with appropriate City agencies with the object of receiving crucial input. The concept will be refined according to this initial input.
- Once this initial City agency input is obtained and compiled, appropriate adjustments will be made to the project plan and the initial concept will be refined further. At that point, an internal feasibility assessment (including budgetary and time factors) will be undertaken and presented for approval to the SIG Board of Directors and the Moss Foundation. Once that approval is obtained, the architect will proceed with the full architectural plan for the structure.

Staff has determined that the subject project will consist of the rerouting of existing power lines to accommodate uses of the park and associated improvements. Therefore, the project is exempt from

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the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 1(3) of the City CEQA Guidelines. Additional CEQA evaluations will be performed as the park improvements associated with this project are developed in the future.

The Councilmember of the District and Griffith Region management and staff support relocating the power lines to facilitate future consideration of this project at Griffith Park.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

At this time there is no fiscal impact to the Department's General Fund due to SIG/Moss Foundation's commitment to funding all of DWP's costs to relocate the power lines.

Report prepared by Vicki Israel, Assistant General Manager, Operations East and Harry Surmenian, Electrical Engineering Associate, Planning and Development.