



Motion for the Soro NC to send a letter to CD #10 Councilwoman Heather Hutt recommending the approval of the Reynier Park Improvement Plan.

Agenda Item: GB 091924-09

Date: September 19, 2024

Proposed By: Leisure Spaces
Committee

Include motion in Consent Agenda? No

Background

The South Robertson NC was requested by CD # 10 and the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks to review the proposed improvement plan for Reynier Park and provide their input on an expedited basis. The relevant Soro NC Committee was the Leisure Spaces Committee. Due to the limitations on time requirements of all members of this committee the only date to schedule to meet was August 20, 2024.

Some members of Reynier Village have expressed concerns over the timing of the Leisure Spaces Committee meeting. Ordinarily we would not address those concerns in the Background to a proposed motion. In view of the concerns, we felt it appropriate to list those concerns and the Committee's response in order to provide 100 % Transparency.

Concern # 1: There was no advance notice of the Committee's meeting.

Response: The meeting was requested on an expedited basis. The date picked reflected the only time within a two-week period that a majority of members would be available to meet. The meeting was posted and is in accordance with the DONE requirements for meetings and complied with the Brown Act.

Concern # 2: Copies of the Plan provided to Soro NC by the Department of Recreation and Parks were not given to Reynier Village.

Response: All materials provided to Soro NC by the Department of Recreation and Parks were posted on our website at the same time that the Agenda was posted. Those members of Reynier Village that had expressed concerns about this prior to the meeting of the Leisure Spaces Committee were advised of this and had access to these materials.

Additionally, the Chair of Leisure Spaces Committee discussed this with members of Reynier Village prior to the meeting and advised:

- 1. Reynier Village would be represented at the LS Committee meeting as some members of the LS Committee were residents of Reynier Village.**
- 2. Any Reynier Village response to the decisions of the LS Committee would be provided to the Soro NC General Board prior to their acting on the Committee's proposed recommendation.**
- 3. Members of Reynier Village would have the opportunity to provide comments at the General Board Meeting prior to any action being taken on the subject.**

Michael Lynn
President

Ken Blaker
Vice-President

Terrance Gomes
Treasurer

Jon Liberman
Secretary

Stuart Weiss
Corresponding Secretary

**South Robertson
Neighborhoods Council**

PO Box 35836
Los Angeles, CA 90035

P: (310) 295-9920
F: (310) 295-9906
E: info@soronc.org

soronc.org

When the Leisure Spaces Committee met it considered the following criteria in it's review of the proposed improvements:

- A. The focus of the committee was to encompass all Soro Stakeholders. While those in Reynier Village had a significant interest in the park it was not limited solely to those nearest to the park.
- B. The park improvements were being financed by City funds which are currently extremely scarce as to funding available to improve parks,
- C. Parks are available to all residents of the City and should include a diverse range of activities to bring recreational availability to those who want to use the park.
- D. Exercise equipment is certainly appropriate as a park improvement. It is core to the mission of the Department of Recreation and Parks goal to provide availability for stakeholders to achieve and maintain physical fitness. Significant investment in this proposed plan is allocated to items that add to the aesthetic values of the park. We believe that the inclusion of the fitness equipment is one that must be retained in the plan. However, we have no objection to the Department working with Reinier Village to locate the exercise equipment in another area of the park.

Motion:

The South Robertson Neighborhoods Council having reviewed the proposed Reynier Park Improvement Plan authorizes the Neighborhood Council to send a letter to CD #10 Councilwoman Heather Hutt recommending the approval of the Reynier Park Improvement Plan.



Considerations

Votes For: 4

Against:0

Committee review:

(highly recommended)

Amount previously allocated in Committee's working budget:

\$-0-

(applies to funding motions only)

Arguments for:

1. The proposed park improvements provide a balance of interests that apply to all stakeholders of Soro.
2. The proposed plan is within the funding available to the community now and if we do not avail ourselves of the opportunity now we may preclude any improvements to this park for a great many years.
3. The plan as proposed is a reasonable approach to meeting everyone's basic needs.

Arguments against:

1. There is some diversity of opinion as to what features the park should have.

[EMAIL from Reynier Village Resident]

Reynier Park Improvements

1 message

Kathryn Pellman <kathryn.pellman@gmail.com>

Sun, Sep 8, 2024 at 9:19 AM

To: Terrence Gomes <terrence.gomes@lacity.org>, Kimani Black <kimani.black@lacity.org>, heather.hutt@lacity.org, Michael Lynn <michaelynn@soronc.org>, Jon Liberman <jonliberman@soronc.org>, kenblaker@soronc.org, stuartweiss <stuartweiss@soronc.org>

Cc: Malius Masucci, Mauro Bordovsky, Peter Iliff, Laurie Levine, Andrew Yip, jichael

First of all, I want to give a big shout out and thank you to Terrance Gomes for his continued follow up and persistence in making the park improvements we requested a reality (we first asked the Parks Department to replace the pergola 2021 due to safety issues with no success) and to Kimani Black for returning my calls and more importantly, listening to me and suggesting the motion detector lighting and cameras in response to gang related incidents in the park. And, most especially, a big thank you to Heather Hutt for her continued support of our little park which is a quiet, peaceful respite in a busy city.

For those of you not familiar with Reynier Park and the incredible amount of effort, time and commitment the park neighbors invested, here's a few things you should know.

This is what Reynier Park looked like in 2017 <https://fb.watch/usDqP-jE2M/> (you have to be on FB to view - cut and paste) before the neighbors who live next to the park organized. We are dedicated and deeply care about Reynier Park and the safety of the people who use it. This is what we have collectively accomplished since 2016:

1. Had four way stop signs installed at each corner of the park after repeated requests to manage speeding cars around the park
2. Requested and got speed bumps on Reynier Avenue
3. Requested and had signage with park rules and regulations posted so they could be enforced by LAPD
4. Engaged with LAPD to enforce park rules and patrol around the park
5. Requested additional trees. After almost four years of asking, the Parks Department planted five new trees of which four were destroyed and after many requests were replaced with substandard trees. I am still trying to get a tree assessment and a plan for strategically placed trees that will mature as older trees die off. I have escalated my request to the Parks Department Board which has yet to respond.
6. Had parkway trees that were removed replaced with two trees for each tree removed around the park or directly adjacent (Street Trees only planned to replace each tree with one tree) and stopped the street tree department from cutting down street trees that were erroneously marked for removal by standing in front their truck until I got a supervisor to come out.
7. After numerous requests, the picnic tables were moved back to their proper locations
8. Continually report graffiti
9. Successfully addressed the lack of proper trash removal
10. Had the Parks Department repair the sprinklers
11. Had trees pruned and old tree stumps removed

We did all of this as the Parks Department and Council Offices of Herb Wesson and Mark Ridley Thomas did not respond to our requests for improvements and safety measures for the park. Heather Hull's staff (Kimani Black and Terrance Gomes) not only heard us, but made this project happen and we are most appreciative.

I am unable to attend the Board meeting and would like to request the following changes be considered to the proposed plan:

1. **Exercise Equipment.** First, and most importantly, this is a safety issue. The proposed location is poorly located next to childrens playground and restroom which is already a highly trafficked area especially during peak hours. The sidewalk and walkway that border the proposed exercise area are a flurry of activity as children race around on foot, scooters, skateboards and bikes stopping for no one. They also run across and around the proposed exercise areas. It will be challenging to keep children out of the exercise area. Additionally, it seems too close to the neighboring houses. I recommend that the exercise equipment not be placed anywhere in the park. It is a small park and people spread around the park to picnic, play and lounge with their friends, family or by themselves. There is no appropriate location for exercise equipment.
 2. **Shade Structures.** These appear to provide only 50% of the shade that the pergolas provided. Shade is an extremely important component of the park on hot days as many people in the surrounding area live in apartments with no outdoor space or air-conditioning. I recommend that the shade structures be expanded to the size of the existing pergolas.
1. **ADA Picnic Tables.** The area between the shade structure is generally very busy with children running around and does not seem like a good location for ADA picnic tables. They are too close to the play area with children running around. If they are required, consider placing them under the Shade Structure instead of the picnic tables and place them under shade structure on Reynier as there would be more space between them and the playground. Perhaps two more benches with or without backs can be placed where the ADA Picnic Tables are currently slated to be.
 2. **Optional Seating Areas Under Shade Structures.** I recommend adding more benches under the pergolas similar to the amount of seating we currently have. They are used a lot.
 3. **Picnic Tables Under Shade Structures.** There is a lot of activity around the playground so it is better to spread people around the park. I believe there are enough picnic tables in the park. People frequently picnic on blankets or bring their own folding tables which seems to work well. I recommend that we do not add additional picnic tables. We want to leave space for the community to enjoy the park and treed outdoor space avoiding overcrowding with additional picnic tables.

I initiated this project in 2021 and want what's best for Reynier Park and the people who use it. Before voting on this, I urge you to spend some time at the park at different times and days to better understand how the park is used and to think about how the improvements impact the park and also ask yourself if you would want to live across the street from the exercise equipment. Perhaps, the Board and Council Office and whoever designed the plans could tour the park with a few of the neighbors so they can fully understand how the park is used and learn more about the neighbors concerns.

The community members that live adjacent to Reynier Park should have a voice in working out the final details of the planned improvements for the park. The park would not be what it is today without them. It is disappointing that there was no advance notice for the Leisure Spaces Committee meeting and that RNVA was not notified of the meeting before the plan was voted on nor did they receive copies of the plan.

I hope you will consider the changes I proposed before moving forward with the proposed plan.

Thank you!

Kathryn Pellman

[Proposed Letter to CD #10]



**south robertson
neighborhoods council**

City of Los Angeles Certified Neighborhood Council

PO Box 35836

Los Angeles, CA 90035

(310) 295-9920

info@soronc.org



soronc.org

Councilwoman Heather Hutt, CD # 10
City Hall
200 N. Spring Street , Suite # 420
Los Angeles, CA 9012

September 27, 2024

Re: Soro NC Motion , GB091924-09, as adopted at our September 19, 2024 General Board Meeting.

Dear Councilwoman Hutt:

I am writing on behalf of the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council (SORO NC) to comment on the proposed Reynier Park Improvement Plan as submitted by the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department. This plan has been reviewed by our Leisure Spaces Committee and by our General Board. We support that plan.

Given the fiscal constraints that the City is operating under, we were very pleasantly surprised at the proposed upgrades that the Department has been able to fund. We feel that the proposed plan provides a balanced approach between what can be achieved and what is affordable. We are also aware that the entire city is recreation poor and that the Department of Recreation and Parks has to spread its funding throughout the entire city.

We have discussed with stakeholders our belief that the plan should retain the proposed Exercise Equipment area. We note that the promotion of exercise is one of the core values of the Department. Reynier Park is within a few blocks of Hamilton High School. The exercise area could be used by over 3500 high school students, numerous working people, and those residents of Soro who are into physical exercise. We are , however, open to the Department and the residents of Reynier Village having a discussion as to moving the Exercise Area to another part of Reynier Park.

Additionally, I want to thank you and your office for championing this project and for the generous allocation of funding to make this project viable.

Sincerely,

President
South Robertson Neighborhoods Council