



26 May 2011

Hon. Jose Huizar
Los Angeles City Councilmember
200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 410
Los Angeles, CA 90012

pl a t y p u s

museum planning

interpretive exhibits

graphic design

1570 w. colorado blvd.

pasadena, ca. 91105

626-449-9080

626-449-9044 fax

RE: Southwest Museum - Exert jurisdiction to save this priceless resource

Dear Councilmember Huizar,

Please enter into the record my strenuous objection to the May 20, 2011 action of the Board of Recreation and Parks Commission to allow the Autry National Center to expand its exhibition space and outdoor park spaces in Griffith Park in its ongoing effort to destroy the institution of the Southwest Museum and take for itself the priceless collections of the Southwest Museum and Casa de Adobe. As Councilmember Reyes has publicly declared: this is nothing but cultural piracy. I agree.

I ask that you work with Council President Eric Garcetti to take immediate action under the City Charter to place on the City Council's agenda an item to assume jurisdiction over the Recreation and Parks Commission's decision.

The Recreation and Parks Commission's attempt to defeat the protection of the City's first and most historic museum asset as set forth in the Northeast Community Plan by simply ignoring the law is highly offensive to people throughout Los Angeles.

The circumstances under which Recreation and Parks Department staff evaded proper environmental review, the use of an unlawful special meeting notice when there was ample time for a 72-hour meeting notice, and the apparent failure of the Department to send email notification of its meeting to persons who specifically are on the Recreation and Parks email list for agendas demonstrates that these actions were taken with a malicious intent to evade public knowledge and any reasonable opportunity to object to the Recreation and Parks Department's unlawful actions.

It is even more disturbing to me that all of these actions were taken under the supervision of Recreation and Parks Commission President Barry Sanders who is a former partner in the law firm of Latham & Watkins, the Autry's legal counsel on its expansion ambitions. The City Attorney determined in 2009 that Mr. Sanders, and therefore the entire Recreation and Parks Commission was disqualified under Government Code section 1090 from participating in any action of or concerning Autry's request for permits from the Commission. How it is that Mr. Sanders, barred by state law from participating in this decision, now oversaw its placement on a sneaky special meeting notice and the failure of his Commission staff to send email notice of the agenda to persons on the email list? These actions illustrate the precise dirty gamesmanship of City Hall partisans that leave voters so disgusted with our City's government.

I am informed that the Commission's actions are null and void under environmental laws and the open meeting laws of the State. It is the duty of the City Council to represent the interests of the people by asserting immediate jurisdiction and forcing the Autry Museum, the Recreation and Parks administration, and Mr. Sanders to consider this set of changes to our Griffith Park in an open, transparent, and lawful process where those who have ongoing concerns about the Autry's stewardship may express themselves.

Please add my name and address to the list of persons to be notified of action on this incredibly important issue

Most Sincerely,

Richard Valencia
President.

cc: Councilmember Garcetti



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Hon. Ed Reyes
Los Angeles City Councilmember
200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 410
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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