

# Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL DATE: MARCH 30, 1998  
FROM: ARTS COMMISSION  
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE CENTRAL PARK PLAY ENVIRONMENT PROJECT

## RECOMMENDATION:

This report is for information purposes only.

## CURRENT PROJECT STATUS:

Currently, the Planning and Permitting staff is working to comply with the terms of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Central Park Play Environment Project. During the week of March 30, 1998, staff will be reconvening the panel to review a semi-finalist's proposal to design and install pre-fabricated play equipment within an integrated design concept with artistic components. The first semi-finalist was unable to comply with the terms of the city's contract. In this case, the RFP states:

"In the event the recommended artist team is unable to accept the final form of the contract, then another evaluation process shall be conducted from the semi-finalists who submitted eligible proposals and the recommended artist team shall become the recommended artist team who, in turn shall review and accept the contract terms and conditions as outlined above."

In addition, the Public Art Guidelines for City Construction Projects (approved by City Council on December 16, 1996) provide for clear guidelines to reconvene the panel to review the new finalist's proposal and submit the panel's recommendation to the various city commissions for their review and approval.

## BACKGROUND:

The Central Park Play Environment project dates back to 1992. Originally titled The Art of Play, this project developed from a collaboration between the Cultural Planning Division and the Armory Center for the Arts in conjunction with the Armory's exhibition on the same theme. On December 17, 1992, the Arts Commission recommended

\$9,000 in funding from the Downtown Cultural Trust Fund to be used for payment to three semi-finalists for maquettes of artist designed play environments. This action was followed in January of 1993 of City Council approval of a \$9,000 journal voucher in collaboration with the Public Works and Transportation Department and Recreation and Parks Department.

The original Request for Proposals was released on March 26, 1993, from which three project finalists were identified. "Reptilia Island" by the artist team of Tricia Ward and John Maroney was recommended by the panel as the finalist project on July 26, 1993.

In 1993, Planning and Permitting staff presented "Reptilia Island" to Arts Commission, Recreation and Parks along with the Community Development Committee (CDC) and received their approval. In addition, in 1996, the Accessibility and Disability Commission voted to support "Reptilia Island" for its commitment to accessible play spaces.

Beginning in August 1993, the artist team began design development. In addition, the scope of work was increased to include an irrigation plan. Fiscal year 1993-94, Cultural Planning staff was engaged in the World Cup activities under the direction of the City Manager. Design development continued with "Reptilia Island" to address site issues, safety and ADA concerns, construction matters and irrigation plans. The artist team presented full construction drawings, a model and sample board in a Consolidated Design Review application to the Design Commission on March 4, 1996. Consolidated Design denial for "Reptilia Island" was issued on March 19, 1996. On March 25, 1996, the Design Commission reconsidered its Consolidated Design Denial of this project, but issued another denial of "Reptilia Island."

On April 5, 1996 the Recreation and Parks Department filed an appeal of the Design Commission's Denial of "Reptilia Island." On April 29, 1996, the Recreation and Parks Department withdrew its request for appeal of the Consolidated Design Application for "Reptilia Island." There has been discussion that "Reptilia Island" would find a new home in one of the City's larger parks such as Victory or Brookside.

On May 8, 1997, the Arts Commission voted to re-open discussion of the Central Park Play Environment project. At a joint meeting of the Arts Commission and the Design Commission on August 11, 1997, a proposal for a new playground in Central Park was presented by Parks and Natural Resources of the Public Works and Transportation Department. The Arts and Design Commissions voted to reject the proposal and have the Arts take the lead in developing a new Request for Proposals that would integrate an artist designed play environment, consistent with the Central Park Master Plan.

In accordance with the timeframe established by the Arts and Design Commissions, a new RFP was developed which more closely defined the parameters of the project. A Vision Statement was developed by the Central Park Play Environment Advisory Group, composed of Old Pasadena residents and business persons.

Extensive outreach was conducted to seek a large, qualified applicant pool. Approximately 4,000 postcards were mailed notifying the public of the project, the RFP and the Community Meeting and Workshop. Outreach efforts specifically targeted artists, public artists, landscape architects and architects in the greater Los Angeles area and included related programs at the college and university level. Also included in the mailing were minority and gender based resource listings for an inclusive method of outreach.

Over forty people attended the December 10, 1997 Community Meeting and Workshop to discuss and review the RFP. A general concern expressed by the participants at the Community Meeting was that the budget was inadequate to cover the Scope of Work outlined in the RFP. The deadline to submit proposals was January 13, 1998 and four proposals were received by this date.

A panel comprised of artists, an architect, a childhood development specialist and representatives from the Old Pasadena business and residential communities was convened on January 22, 1998. In addition, non-voting representatives were invited to participate from the following Commissions: Arts, Design, Accessibility and Disability and Recreation and Parks along with Council District 6 Field Representative.

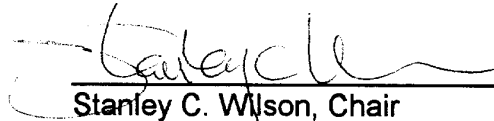
Of the four responding proposals received by the deadline, one was determined to be non-responsive by the Selection Panel and two were selected to participate in Phase II of the selection process. The two semi-finalist teams made presentations to the Selection Panel on February 19, 1998 and the Panel recommended a finalist. Staff proceeded to begin contract discussions and establish a time line for presentations to the various city commissions when it was disclosed that the team was unable to accept the terms of the city's contract.

As a result, staff is complying with the requirements of the published Request for Proposals Public Art Guidelines for City Construction Projects and reconvening the panel to evaluate the semi-finalist's proposal and determine if the semi-finalist will accept the terms of the required city contract.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Funding for the Central Park Play Environment is from approved CIP Projects that amounts to \$92,000. \$81,868 is designated Prop A (Parks) funds with an additional \$9,000 from the Downtown Cultural Trust Fund for maquettes and \$1,132 in miscellaneous revenue sources. As of February 28, 1998, Public Works and Transportation Personnel charges amounted to \$11,543, services and supplies amounted to \$4,629 for a total expenditure of \$16,172, leaving a balance of \$75,828 to implement the Central Park Play Environment.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



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Stanley C. Wilson, Chair  
Arts Commission