

APPROVED

01-18-2017

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

BOARD REPORT

NO. 17-009

DATE January 18, 2017

C.D. 14

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: CITY HALL PARK – INSTALLATION OF TREE AND PLAQUE; CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA), PURSUANT TO ARTICLE VII, SECTION 1, CLASS 4 (3) (MINOR ALTERATION OF LAND AND VEGETATION) AND CLASS 11 (1) (CONSTRUCTION OF MINOR ACCESSORY STRUCTURES) OF THE CITY CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT GUIDELINES

AP Diaz _____

V. Israel _____

for *R. Barajas CSP _____

N. Williams _____

H. Fujita _____

Ramon Barajas ^{for} _____

General Manager

Approved ✓ _____

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Grant approval for the planting of a tree and the wording, placement, and installation of a plaque on the south lawn of City Hall Park, as described in the Summary of this Report;
2. Find the project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Article VII, Section 1, Class 4 (3) and Class 11 (1) of the City CEQA guidelines and direct Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) staff to file a Notice of Exemption; and,
3. Authorize RAP's Chief Accounting Employee to make technical corrections as necessary to carry out the intent of this Report.

SUMMARY

The Los Angeles Housing + Community Investment Development (HCIDLA) submitted an application to RAP for the installation of a proposed commemorative tribute to HCIDLA's founding General Manager Gary Squier, which will include the planting of a tree and installation of a plaque on the south lawn of City Hall Park. This commemorative tribute will correspond with the "Phases & Faces of Affordable Housing in Los Angeles" Exhibit to be displayed in the Los Angeles City Hall Bridge Gallery. On November 22, 2016, Rushmore Cervantes, General Manager of HCIDLA, submitted a Maintenance Commitment Letter (Exhibit A) stating that HCIDLA will maintain the proposed tree and plaque in a presentable condition, replace the tree and plaque if necessary, and treat the proposed plaque with an anti-graffiti coating.

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RAP staff has worked in conjunction with HCID to determine the most suitable installation method and location of the commemorative plaque in order to minimize visual impact and facilitate access and maintenance. The plaque is to be installed on a sandstone slab, west of the South stairs of City Hall. RAP staff will also work in conjunction with HCIDLA to determine an appropriate tree species for the project taking into account the existing aesthetics, water requirements, and maintenance needs. Proposed text for the plaque is as follows:

“Affordable housing represents the start of an individual's livelihood, and the catalyst for the economic stability and overall well-being of an entire city.” – Gary Squier

In recognition of founding General Manager Gary Squier, whose vision twenty-five (25) years ago to provide affordable and permanent supportive housing for all Angelenos in need remains firmly ingrained in the foundation and mission of his successors.

His ideals and zeal to improve the quality of life of the City's residents, the viability of communities, and stability of neighborhoods have served as impetus to a range of innovative City housing and neighborhood recovery programs. While we've come a long way and have much to be proud of, the work he started is far from done. Furthering his legacy, the Los Angeles Housing + Community Investment Department will continue to remain resilient, avant-garde, and prosperous as we build towards a Los Angeles that provides affordable housing to all its residents.

Additional project information, including a letter of support from Mayor Eric Garcetti (Exhibit B), and photographic renderings of the site and proposal (Exhibit C), are attached hereto as Exhibits.

This Project was presented to the Facility Repair and Maintenance Commission Task Force at their regularly scheduled meeting on December 14, 2016, at which time the Task Force recommended that the Project be forwarded to the full Board for review.

The Offices of Mayor Eric Garcetti and Councilmember Jose Huizar, Fourteenth Council District, as well as RAP management and staff, support this Project.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed Project involves minor alteration to land for the purpose of planting a new tree, and minor construction of a plaque (on premises sign) that is accessory to the City Hall Park. Therefore, RAP Staff recommends that the Board determine that the subject Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article VII, Section 1, Class 4 (3) and Class 11 (1) of the City CEQA Guidelines. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the Los Angeles County Clerk within five (5) working days of the Board's approval.

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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

There should be minimal fiscal impact as the cost of the plaque manufacture and installation and tree planting is the sole responsibility of HCIDLA, including anti-graffiti coating and replacement if necessary. Routine care for the tree will be absorbed into the regular maintenance schedule of City Hall Park.

This Report was prepared by Melinda Gejer, City Planning Associate, Planning, Construction, and Maintenance Branch.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Exhibit A – HCIDLA Maintenance Commitment Letter
- 2) Exhibit B – Mayoral Letter of Support
- 3) Exhibit C – Renderings of Site and Proposal



Eric Garcetti, Mayor
Rushmore D. Cervantes, General Manager

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

TO: MICHAEL A. SHULL, GENERAL MANAGER, DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS

FROM: RUSHMORE CERVANTES, GENERAL MANAGER 

DATE: NOVEMBER 22, 2016

REGARDING: THE LOS ANGELES HOUSING + COMMUNITY INVESTMENT DEPARTMENT'S (HCIDLA) PHASES & FACES OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN LOS ANGELES COMMEMORATIVE TREE AND PLAQUE – MAINTENANCE COMMITMENT LETTER

With reference to the Los Angeles Housing + Community Investment Department's (HCIDLA) Phases & Faces of Affordable in Housing in Los Angeles commemorative tree and plaque application, HCIDLA is committed to maintain the commemorative tribute in a presentable condition and will replace the tree and plaque if necessary. Anti-graffiti coating will be applied by HCIDLA staff to protect the plaque from graffiti staining and damage.

RDC:TCS:ey



ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR

November 9, 2016

Sylvia Patsouras
President
Los Angeles City Recreation and Parks Department
Office of Board of Commissioners
P.O. Box 86328
Los Angeles, CA 90086-0328

Dear President Sylvia Patsouras and Board of Commissioners:

I am writing in support of the Los Angeles Housing and Community Investment Department's (HCIDLA) application for a tree planting and memorial plaque to honor the legacy of the first HCIDLA General Manager, Gary Squier.

Mr. Squier was a leader for our City during his time as the first Housing director, launching several programs to address the severe shortage of units for low-income residents. His career is also distinguished by his efforts to acquire hotels in the Skid Row neighborhood that later became the foundation of the Skid Row Housing Trust, as well as being a developer of more than 2,500 affordable apartments for low-income families, seniors and people with disabilities throughout California.

This dedication will serve as a lasting recognition of our City's work to ensure that all people in Los Angeles have access to housing and shelter.

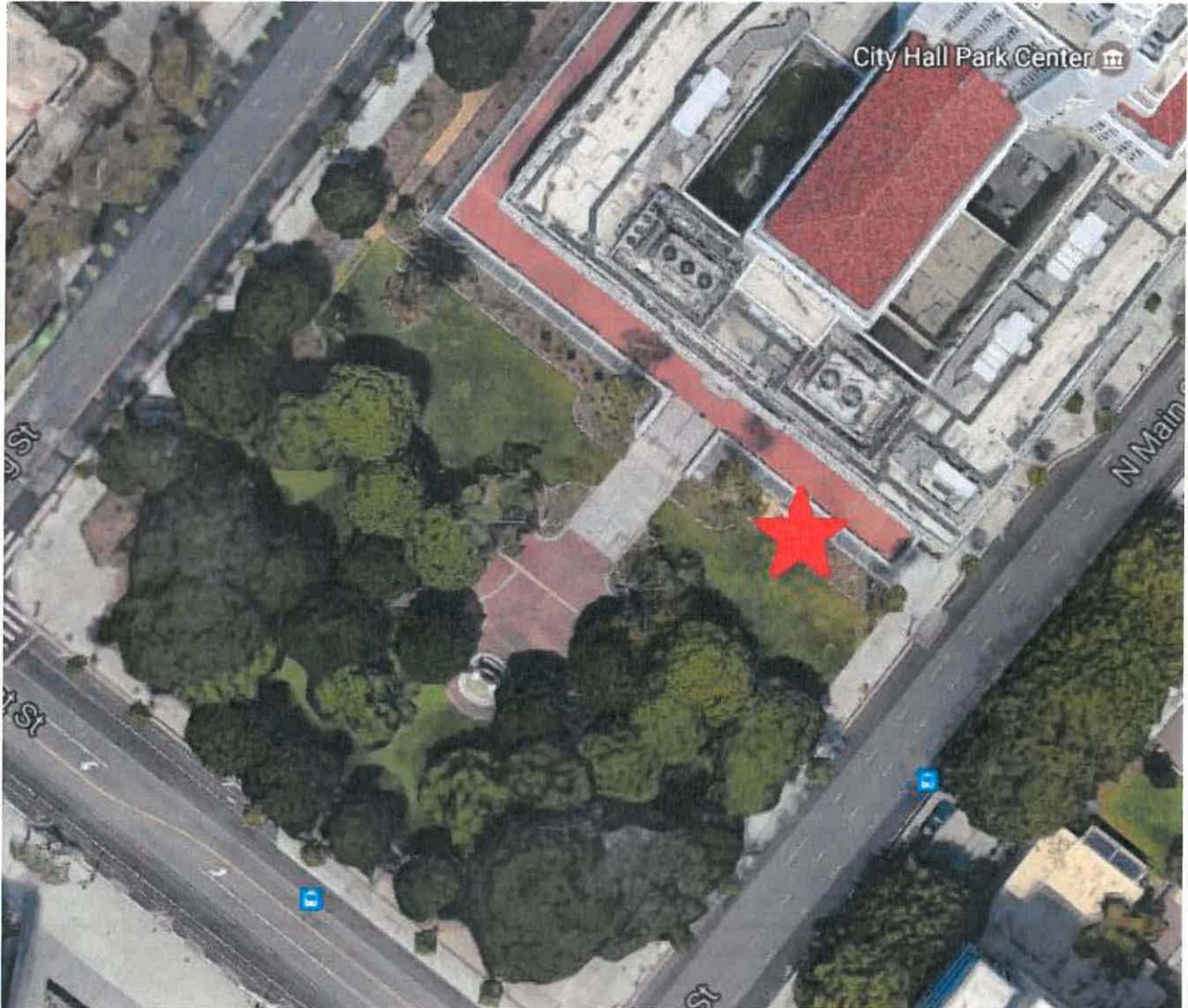
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of the initials "E.G." followed by a stylized surname.

ERIC GARCETTI
Mayor

Tree and Plaque Location

CITY HALL PARK, SOUTH SIDE OF CITY HALL / 200 N SPRING STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012



Photograph Rendering of Tree and Plaque at the Site (east of the City Hall South Stairs)

Arbutus Marina



Color Photographs of the City Hall Park Surroundings



Submitted: January 6, 2017