



**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA**  
**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT**

**AGENDA DATE:** January 28, 2009

**TO:** Park and Recreation Commission

**FROM:** Administration Division, Parks and Recreation Department

**SUBJECT:** Recommendation to Suspend the Franceschi Park Advisory Committee

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Park and Recreation Commission indefinitely suspend the Franceschi Park Advisory Committee.

**BACKGROUND:** The Franceschi Park Advisory Committee (FPAC) was appointed by the Commission in March 2004 and held its first meeting on April 15, 2004. The formation of the FPAC was a condition of the Franceschi Park Master Plan. The FPAC was charged with advising the Commission regarding:

- Park management and operations
- Operational policies and compliance with the Franceschi House Usage Plan and Park Use Plan
- Phased implementation of the master plan
- Pursuit of financial resources in the form of grants and contributions for improvements, maintenance and growth of the endowment fund for the park and house in concert with staff and volunteers
- Appointment of ad hoc subcommittees as needed
- Provide an annual report to the Park and Recreation Commission

The FPAC created four subcommittees—Education, Horticulture, Funding/Donor Recognition, and Volunteers. These subcommittees have made valuable contributions regarding the implementation of a capital improvement project, community clean-up days, development of educational materials for visitors, a horticultural grant application, procuring the services of a pro bono planting design for a demonstration garden and a draft handbook for volunteers, among other accomplishments.

**CURRENT STATUS**

The October 2008 quarterly meeting was cancelled due to a lack of agenda items and there are currently no pressing issues for the FPAC to address. Of the six primary

advisory roles assigned to the FPAC, it appears that there would be little benefit from continued efforts:

Park operations and management: There are no maintenance policy changes or planting projects likely to be undertaken in the next few years.

House Usage Plan and Park Use Plan: This role could be suspended until the house is reopened for public use or significant changes in park use are proposed.

Phased implementation of the master plan: There are no funds identified for capital projects in the foreseeable future. Implementation of the Master Plan has been floundering for a number of years due to a lack of funding. The current local, state and federal economic situation makes any funding or work in the near future very unlikely.

Pursue grants and contributions: The committee has researched and applied for a grant to fund a planting demonstration project, but was not awarded. Continued efforts could result in funds for park improvements.

Appoint ad hoc subcommittees: Four subcommittees have been formed and have produced valuable results. There are no current unaddressed issues that would benefit from subcommittee activities.

Provide annual report: Staff has produced the required annual reports.

Four of the five seats on the FPAC are vacant. Although the Pearl Chase Society and the Riviera Association have permanent positions, the necessary applications for reappointment were not received by the December 2008 deadline. Additionally, two at-large positions were advertised but no applications were received. Staff had hoped to discuss the idea of suspending the FPAC with its members and receive their recommendation to the Commission. That will not be possible given lack of a quorum.

The FPAC could be reformed at the Commission's discretion at such a time that there is a need for guidance regarding the house and park. These needs might include significant activity in the Pearl Chase Society's Franceschi House restoration project, or funding for implementing the Franceschi Park Master Plan.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Given the lack of meaningful activities that can be addressed by the FPAC, staff recommends that the Park and Recreation Commission indefinitely suspend the Franceschi Park Advisory Committee.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Billy Goodnick, Landscape Architect

**APPROVED BY:** Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director