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newsletter one

PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN

A master plan

Early in 1973, the San Francisco Zoo and the San Francisco Zoological Society, with the assistance of a distinguished Advisory Committee, developed a statement of goals and objectives for the zoo as a preliminary to preparation of a new Master Plan.

This statement dealt specifically with many detailed issues under the following larger headings:

Enhancement of Visitor Interest, Excellence through Specialization, Achievement of Optimum Standards in Animal Care and Welfare, Encouragement of Responsible Research Programs, and Readiness to Meet the Needs of the Future.

The San Francisco architectural and planning firm of Esherick Homsey Dodge and Davis was selected in mid-1975 to research and analyze all data pertinent to achieving those goals and to prepare a Master Plan which would enable the Zoo to grow according to a plan that satisfies the future needs of the Zoo and the citizens of San Francisco.

What is a Master Plan? A Master Plan is a broad and general description of the steps that need to be taken to achieve the goals and objectives set forth. As such it comprises both descriptive and narrative material and drawings showing in broad outline the many and various elements of the Zoo

and their interrelationships. A Master Plan displays general directions and establishes broad criteria. It is not a blueprint for construction but serves as a guide for future development and it needs to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate detail changes and more specific design in the future.

In the summer and fall of 1975, Esherick Homsey Dodge and Davis prepared several broad scale studies which focused on different elements of the Master Plan process and reviewed them with interested citizens at several public meetings. They subsequently have prepared and presented a Preliminary Master Plan to the Recreation and Park Commission, which formally approved it on 18 March 1976.

This newsletter is to inform you of the current status of the plan and pertinent aspects of it, and to also encourage you to attend further public meetings being held to gather comments and ideas about this plan.

Meetings will be on May 20th at 7:30 p.m. in McLaren Lodge, Golden Gate Park, and May 27th at 2:00 p.m. in the Visitor's Center, San Francisco Zoo. Staff from the Zoo and the Department of Parks and Recreation will be at these meetings for questions and Mr. Esherick will make a presentation.

THE AVERAGE ZOO VISITOR . . .

Spends 2-3 hours at the Zoo
Comes several times a year
Arrives by automobile
Is between 20-40 years of age
Has attended college
Has an income of \$10,000 or more
Makes a general tour of the Zoo

Lives in the Bay Area
Has a small family
Likes to see active animals
Likes some but not all exhibits
Would like a restaurant
Would like better information on the animals

goals and objectives

In March 1973, a Zoo Advisory Committee was established to assist the Recreation and Park Commission and Department in formulating a statement of goals and objectives for the future development of the Zoo. This eight member panel reviewed the following Objectives and Policies for the San Francisco Zoo and determined that a new Master Plan be prepared in order that they be implemented.

OBJECTIVES: ENHANCEMENT OF VISITOR INTEREST

The Zoo is principally a culture and leisure-time facility for all peoples, but within this context it should be entertaining and educational. The Zoo, through its collections and programs, should lead the human species to a better understanding of the animal kingdom, the responsibility that mankind has to this kingdom and to an increased appreciation of the interdependence of all living things.

Policy: The quality of the collection should be measured by how effectively the collection pleases and informs the visitor rather than by the number of animals on display.

Policy: Encourage the development of designs for animal enclosures and service facilities which enhance the Zoo's park-like atmosphere, are aesthetically pleasing, naturalistic and "fun to see" while maintaining high standards of public safety.

Policy: To assist in furthering the educational values of the collection, accurate and up-to-date labeling and graphic displays which identify and describe the background, natural habitat and other pertinent characteristics of all species should be achieved.

Policy: An information and education center (orientation center), including subcenters, should be developed to provide illustrative materials on the collection specifically and wildlife generally.

Policy: The living animal exhibits should be interpreted and emphasized through various audio-visual devices and educational programs.

Policy: Encourage the development of educational programs which emphasize the importance of wildlife conservation and natural history.

Policy: The development of accessory recreation or amusement facilities and concessions may be located within the Zoo providing they do not detract visually or physically from the principal role of the Zoo.

Policy: The landscaped, park-like atmosphere of the Zoo should be maintained, enhanced and improved to further its visual attractiveness to visitors and to provide improved settings for animal exhibits.

Policy: Provide for a public relations program to encourage visitor interest in the Zoo's collections and educational programs.

OBJECTIVE: EXCELLENCE THROUGH SPECIALIZATION

The San Francisco Zoo, situated in one of the most intensively developed cities of the nation, is surrounded by confining natural or man-made features which limit the land resources available for future expansion. Similarly, economic resources constrict development opportunities. Therefore, to assure that the Zoo realizes fully its existing assets and future opportunities within these constraints, all physical and economic resources should be concentrated in developing specialized and representative family groupings of animals.

Policy: The display of random specimens, while a valuable part of the collection, should not take priority over the development of specialized and representative animals groupings which are adaptable to climatic conditions of San Francisco.

Policy: Where possible, specialized animal collections should be arranged on a geographical rather than family basis to increase the visitor's interest in the diversity, by habitat, of the specialized collection and further the visitor's understanding of the specialized family's relationship to other animals sharing a common habitat.

Policy: Special emphasis should be placed in developing representative family collections of primates and felines.

Policy: A representative collection of the fauna and flora indigenous to the Pacific Basin and especially the western United States should be developed to promote a better understanding and appreciation of the wildlife of our geographical area.

Policy: Consideration should be given to new specialized displays to enhance public interest in little known or seldom seen animal groupings.

Policy: A list of possible acquisitions should be established to assure the representative development of existing and future specialized collections.

Policy: New animals should be selected on the basis of their exhibitional or behavioral characteristics to enhance public interest and appreciation.

OBJECTIVE: ACHIEVE OPTIMUM STANDARDS IN ANIMAL CARE AND WELFARE

The value of the Zoo as a recreational, educational or cultural facility depends upon healthy and well-cared-for animals to achieve and maintain public interest and to protect the economic investment in the collection.

Policy: All animal quarters should be spacious, safe and durable enclosures for animal housing and display which also assure maximum staff safety while working with the animals.

Policy: The enclosures used to contain the animals should be designed to accommodate as close as possible their typical behavioral characteristics in a naturalistic habitat.

Policy: Within the available resources of the Zoo, special programs for the care of animals should be developed to provide for their survival and perpetuation in captivity, especially rare or endangered species which are threatened with extinction.

Policy: Continuous and close supervision should be maintained for all animals to detect as early as possible changes in activity and eating habits which may signal physical or behavioral problems.

Policy: Develop a better understanding of animal diseases and the treatment of these diseases to prolong the life expectancy of animals in captivity and, where possible, to animals living in their natural environment.

Policy: Hospital and food preparation facilities should be maintained to provide high quality animal care.

Policy: An inoculation program should be provided to assure that the impact of communicable diseases within the collection is minimized.

Policy: Provide for on-going staff training programs to promote a better understanding of the animals, their needs and requirements.

OBJECTIVE: RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Animal research by qualified individuals should be encouraged providing it does not interfere with or take priority over the public's enjoyment of the Zoo or that it is not contrary to the well being of the animals.

Policy: To provide for a competent professional approach to animals research, facilities should be designed to accommodate the scientific requirements of qualified research individuals.

Policy: Through research programs, develop scientific methods of animal husbandry, including the study of social and physical aspects of animal behavior, to insure a high quality of animal care necessary for their survival and propagation in captivity.

Policy: Translate data and information obtained through research programs into educational concepts to further the appreciation and understanding of the natural world in which we live and the principles of conservation.

Policy: Develop and maintain a research program between the Zoo and various qualified educational institutions in the Bay Area and elsewhere which could utilize the living laboratory of the collection in cooperative research projects.

OBJECTIVE: MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE FUTURE

For the future, the Zoo must be receptive to new ideas and technologies but, more importantly, it must be ready to provide for the orderly growth and change of the Zoo within its physical and economic capabilities.

Policy: The preparation of a comprehensive master plan is of paramount importance to not only provide for the future growth of the Zoo but to provide the base for the evaluation of existing space uses and allocations within the Zoo.

where is the Unicorn?

Dear San Franciscans:

Here are seven questions for you to ask yourself:

- 1) Did you ever want to stare eyeball-to-eyeball with a 500-pound gorilla?
- 2) Have you ever had the desire to walk through the Malaysian Rain Forest?
- 3) Would you like to visit Treetops in East Africa and sleep, eat and live among the animals?
- 4) Would you like to watch colobus monkeys cavorting in their treetop home only feet away?
- 5) Would you want to watch a snow leopard give birth and care for her young, a sight seen only by a handful of people in all history?
- 6) How far would you have to travel to take a safari on the African plains and how much would it cost?
- 7) What would you do if you came upon a 20-foot reticulated python three feet away, separated from you by only a wall of cold air?

If you answered 1) yes, 2) yes, 3) yes, 4) yes, 5) yes, 6) 10,000 miles and \$3,000, and 7) run, then you will want to become a regular visitor to the San Francisco Zoo. All of the above ideas are being incorporated into the Master Plan of the new San Francisco Zoo. As the new director of the zoo, I'd like to invite you to join us in shaping San Francisco's Zoological gardens into a learning and research center as well as an exciting recreational experience for you and your family.

The zoo's famous gorilla group will have a new spacious naturalistic home where they can continue to breed and rear their young. Eventually, you may be able to see 15-20 gorillas living as you might see them in West Africa.

The Elephant House will be converted into a Tropical Rain Forest where you will see the reticulated python without any visible barrier. Snakes are cold-blooded and most prefer temperatures hovering around

80F. If we give the snake a heated platform and surround him with freezing air, he'll stay on the platform. I think!!!

East Africa West will be the first drive-through plains exhibit in any urban American zoo, where you may ride a historic steam train through herds of African antelope, zebra and ostrich. We want to contain the people, letting the animals roam free, and the area will double as a breeding center for rare and endangered species. In one corner of East Africa West, we hope to build a replica of the famous Treetops Lodge in Kenya, where you may stay overnight and watch animals during the evening as well as at daybreak.

Closed circuit television will let you watch the mother snow leopard, or polar bear, or wolf rearing her young, while she remains in protective isolation. At the same time, scientific observations will add to our knowledge of rarely seen animal behavior. Research at the zoo, like the Harris Hawk breeding project just underway this spring, will grow significantly.

The new zoo will mean more spacious and natural habitats for the animals, breeding sanctuaries for vanishing wildlife, and a more fascinating zoo experience for you.

Join us at the San Francisco Zoo, maybe become a member of the San Francisco Zoological Society and be more than a spectator at the zoo. I'd like to welcome you as a member of the zoo family, a participant in the exciting changes at the San Francisco Zoo.

Sincerely yours,

Saul L. Kitchener

Saul L. Kitchener, Director
San Francisco Zoological Gardens

A Preliminary

FREDERICK HOBDEY DODGE and DAVID
ARCHITECTS and PLANNERS

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Master Plan.....

some features

NEW ENTRANCE COMPLEX
including an
Education Center
Zoo Administration Building
Zoo Society Offices
Schoong Auditorium
Library/Gift Shop
Mother's Building Museum
Muni Terminus
Parking for 800 cars

MAJOR NEW EXHIBITS
Cat complex
Meadow vista
Primate complex
Tropical World
Nocturnal/Small Mammal House
Marine Mammal Exhibit with
underwater viewing
Drive-through (Zoo vehicles) Plains
Exhibits - first in major municipal Zoo
Bears in large natural wooded
exhibits

EXHIBITS TO BE ENLARGED
Large Mammals
Musk Oxen
Monkey Island (refurbished)

MINI-ZOO
Realignment of Children's Zoo
westward to include the Carousel
- one of San Francisco's treasures
Redesign/rehabilitation of present
facilities

RESTAURANT
Provides high quality food service
to zoo visitors and staff; and
neighborhood
Open at night, allowing good vista
over zoo and ocean
Overflow parking for zoo, + 250
cars

PLAYGROUND
Replaces free neighborhood park
eliminated when zoo first started
charging admission.

NEW WIND BERM
first barrier in new wind protection
system
wind breaks follow-up at proper
intervals
utilizes site of Great Highway and
closes that Highway at the Zoo
allows link between Zoo and ocean,
beach front
only major Zoo in U.S. on an ocean

INTERNAL CIRCULATION SYSTEMS
Separate roadways systems for
pedestrians, service, and Zebra
Zephyr. Crossovers to be minimal.
This is to insure uninterrupted
viewing by visitors and efficient
service operations.

SERVICE COMPLEX
Separate service entrance and
unloading facilities
Centralized food preparation and
storage
Modern facilities utilizing closed
circuit television

some recommendations

Presently, 70% of zoo area is in
non-exhibit use. Recommend that
majority of landscaped areas be
incorporated into appropriate
exhibits, thereby increasing exhibit
use area to 70% from 30%.

Exhibits should, when possible,
utilize moats and other non-visual
separation systems, rather than
chain link. All chain link in the
zoo should be eliminated.

Visually enhance the visitors
environment by reducing to a minimum
concrete and asphalt they must
encounter.

Initiate a comprehensive educational
program complete with an integrated
graphic program utilizing audio-
visual and other modern techniques,
to enrich the visitors' experience.

Exhibit fewer rather than more
species but in larger groupings and
in larger areas, when appropriate.

Enlarge and enrich animal environ-
ments in order that such things as
breeding, animal privacy, visitor
appreciation and education, and
efficient maintenance are better
accommodated.

Each exhibit, when appropriate,
should have water, grass, trees,
sand and other specialized components.

No major exhibits or facilities be
built in the southern Zoo expansion
area until such time as the Southwest
Treatment Plant is either constructed
or known to be in phase with Zoo
construction. This is to avoid
costly demolition and disruption of
Zoo operations.

Zoo development occur in five
separate phases. First phase
includes:
entrance complex,
cat complex, meadow exhibit,
primate complex, wind berm,
partial service core. Cost of
Phase I is estimated at \$8.7
million if constructed next
year.

Long green vistas, as found in Golden
Gate Park should be developed to
enhance the park-like atmosphere
of the Zoo.

A wind protection system program
(berms & breaks) be started
immediately.

Provide more parking, concentrated
at the entrance to the Zoo. Operate
one main entrance for control and
efficiency.

The Zoo not be organized in either a
zoogeographic or a systematic
structure, but rather a composite of
both.

Reduce to a minimum visual archi-
tectural intrusions through thought-
ful design and planning. Establish
a modest barn-like architectural
theme throughout the zoo.

All zoo development be carefully
phased to insure growth in a manner
compatible with the highly sensitive
on-going zoo operations.