

Council Meeting of
August 21, 2012

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the City Council:

SUBJECT: Supplemental Information to Item 12A

Attached are e-mails received from the public regarding Item 12A.

Respectfully submitted,



John Jones
Community Services Director

CONCUR:



LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

JJ:epv\city council items\2012\supplemental information to item 12A 8-21-12ci

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Friday, August 17, 2012 1:43 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Commentary on the Citizens Enrichment Meeting

-----Original Message-----

From: Leilani Kimmel-Dagostino <leilanikd@aol.com>
 To: fscotto <fscotto@torranceca.gov>; tbrewer <tbrewer@torranceca.gov>; gbarnett <gbarnett@torranceca.gov>; pfurey <pfurey@torranceca.gov>
 Sent: Wed, Aug 15, 2012 4:42 pm
 Subject: Commentary on the Citizens Enrichment Meeting

Mayor Scotto and Councilmen Barnett, Brewer, and Furey:

I am writing to you to tell you how disappointed I was in the handling of the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee meeting that was held on Monday, August 13, 2012. First of all there were not enough copies of the information packets at the back of the City Council Room for the attendees at the meeting.

There were 5 topics to be discussed on the agenda yet halfway through the meeting, Councilman Brewer announced that the meeting would have to be concluded by 5:30pm because of a prior commitment. This announcement was made after Tracey from the Madrona Marsh had sucked up half of the meeting time with her presentation. Then the Council members allowed 24 people to comment on the Madrona Marsh. That left less than 30 minutes to cover the Torrance Museum, the Senior Excursion Program, the Community Services Subsidy levels, and the Marketing Support for Cultural Services classes. The last 2 items were not even covered and insufficient time was allocated for discussion of the Senior Excursions. In fact we were only allowed 30 seconds each to make a comment.

After the meeting was over we were all wondering what the purpose, direction, and conclusion of the meeting were all about. From what we could gather, John Jones was going to develop another survey to send out to tour participants. I can tell you that unless there is a self-addressed stamped envelope to return the survey, you will not get a big response. Also, the minute you start asking questions about income sources to senior citizens, you will not get a response either. I believe the purpose of asking such questions is to set up a scholarship program for low income seniors to participate in these tours. This is not going to work because it is going to be unwieldy to implement. Are the seniors going to be pre-screened or will it be done on the registration day? The Torrance Seniors are proud people and will not want a handout this way.

I understand that after the surveys are returned you wanted the Commission on Aging to discuss options for the tours. Believe me, we have been discussing this very topic for the last 8 months and what it all boils down to is the indirect costs that are being added to the tours making them **unaffordable**.

I believe that in the Commission letter that was sent to you on May 8 we asked for a 1 year moratorium on these costs and a revisiting of the tour pricing. That would entail a complete explanation of how the indirect costs are comprised and factored into the tours. By the time the surveys are completed and more discussion takes place, the entire Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter Tour season will be over for the Senior Citizens as the program is on complete shutdown now. By the time something is resolved, you will have to spend the time and energy to rebuild and remarket the entire program to the former levels of participation. Isn't this a terrible waste of time and a disservice to the senior community that you are trying to serve?

Let me make a recommendation. Roll back the pricing levels for one budget cycle while the discussion process is taking place and if no resolution can be found, then there will be no tour program in the next budget cycle. How much will that cost?

Sincerely,
Leilani Kimmel-Dagostino, MBA, RFC

John Jones

Community Services Director

City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance, CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |

JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

City Council Citizens Development & Enrichment Committee Members
 Tom Brewer, Chair
 Pat Furey, Member
 Gene Barnett, Member

John Jones, Community Services Director

Subject: Community Services, Sr. Citizens Excursion Program

Dear Sirs:

In my efforts to understand why a popular and successful program has collapsed on its face, I attended the 8/13/12 Chambers Meeting. I learned that: "The Committee has been tasked with the goal of exploring additional options that would benefit those seniors who are most "in need" of the Excursion Program. (A broad term) The definition of "need" means "requisite for well-being". The City of Torrance, through the Bartlett Center sustains the "needs" of its Sr. Citizens, both physiologically and psychologically. It is available to each Sr. Citizen for a minimal annual membership. To my limited knowledge, I do not recall any citizen's demise (physically or mentally) attributable to a "need" or lack of the Excursion Program.

HOWEVER, As a Torrance Sr. Citizen, who has resided on the same street since 1952, I participated, enjoyed and appreciated what was a professionally, well-run, friendly and nurturing Sr. Citizens Excursion Program. At my age, "letting someone else do the driving" fits perfectly...and conservative costs enhanced the whole package. Not a "need", but a "pleasure".

We all, Government and individuals are challenged today to weather a difficult time. In that effort it is important to spread the benefits and options efficiently. I believe, the Cost Recovery/Subsidy 2012 Plan is an effort in that direction by the Torrance City Council.

In the 8/13 meeting, the following Cost Breakdown for A Day Trip including the impact of the Plan was discussed:

Fee to Main Street Tours (admission and transportation) \$68
Tour chaperon salary (One Recurrent staff) \$5
Planning and preparation (Recurrent staff) \$4
Snacks for bus ride \$1
Current Direct Cost Per Participant \$78
Indirect Rate for the Excursion Program \$43
Total Cost Per Participant \$121
Less City Subsidy (20%) (\$24)
Ticket Price Per Participant \$97

I question the application of the formula within the Recovery/Subsidy Plan used to arrive at the "**Indirect Rate for the Excursion Program \$43**". With per trip attendance of approximately 50 individuals, that is \$2,150. This is not a Budget Year item...it is a one-time only, per trip item. If we extend that rate out over several trips, it becomes a bloated figure...I would ask "Why"? I recognize that identifying operational costs can be challenging within the budget mandate, but even with the 20% Subsidy, I believe, the Day Trip Program, implodes on itself ending a popular, affordable Senior Service.

Respectfully,

Joyce Hughes

Ms. Joyce Hughes
812 Beech Avenue
Torrance, Ca. 90501



Mr. John Jones,
Community Services Director
City of Torrance
3031 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, Ca. 90503

90503505999



Jones, John

From: Beverly Sherman [peanutandbailey@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Saturday, August 18, 2012 12:33 PM
To: Scotto, Frank; Brewer, Tom; Barnett, Gene; Furey, Pat
Cc: Jones, John
Subject: Senior Citizen Excursion Plan

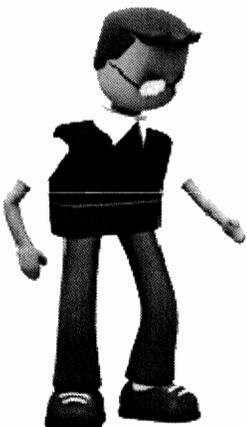
My name is Beverly Sherman, I live in Carson and attended your August 13th meeting. As a non-resident of the City of Torrance, I spoke regarding the additional cost of \$20 charged to non-residents, and the fact that we have to wait an additional hour for what's left after the Torrance residents get first choice. We were only allowed 30 seconds to speak, so I passed on a packet containing information regarding trips I've been on this past year with six different groups. Included in this packet were pages indicating where the trips were going along with prices charged. I did have time within those 30 seconds to say that none of the six organizations I'd traveled with cared whether a participant was a resident of the City in which they were located (i.e., the City of Carson and the Peninsula Seniors). Seniors were able to register when they chose and the same price was charged for all. The Peninsula Seniors do give a discount to their members and St. Mary's Hospital of Long Beach does require that participants be a member to go on their trips (a \$15 annual fee), but that's it. Peninsula Seniors doesn't require that a participant be a member.

As far as doing a survey is concerned, I think it is a waste of your good time. I've already given you information regarding other organizations as far as fees and excursions offered. Know that the City of Carson will welcome all newcomers and the Peninsula Seniors are always looking for new members.

I've traveled with your Torrance group for many years and used to call in to your facility on Artesia to reserve a spot. It was horrifying when I saw that additional \$20 added to the trips. Know I haven't signed up since.

Respectfully,

**Beverly Sherman
22123 So. Figueroa Street
Unit 131
Carson, CA 90745**



Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Friday, August 17, 2012 1:41 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Please SAVE Madrona Marsh!

From: Dina Wiley <dina.wiley@gmail.com>
Date: August 13, 2012 6:28:30 PM PDT
Subject: Please SAVE Madrona Marsh!

Dear Torrance Council Members:

As a long-time Torrance resident, I have enjoyed the Madrona Marsh numerous times and have been thrilled that there is a place to come to see nature in reality. As a peaceful habitat, it allows for much-needed respite from the tribulations of the daily grind, and offers an opportunity for self-reflection and learning. Believe it or not, it is a pride of Torrance--totally unique and vibrant.

Please keep it open! Please save Madrona Marsh!

Sincerely,

Dina M. Wiley

John Jones

Community Services Director

City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |
JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Friday, August 17, 2012 1:40 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: RE: Citizen Development & Enrichment Budget Meeting

From: Bill & Fran Arrowsmith
Sent: 8/13/2012 2:33 PM
To: Scotto, Frank; Brewer, Tom; Furey, Pat; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Numark, Cliff; Sutherland, Bill
Cc: Drake, Tracy; Brunette, Richard; Jones, John; Fran & Bill Arrowsmith
Subject: Citizen Development & Enrichment Budget Meeting

August 10, 2012

Dear Mayor, Chairman Brewer, and members of the CD&E Committee and Council,

The recession out of which we are climbing has placed great stress on all of us, in particular the leaders of our nation, states and cities who are tasked with stemming the tide of reduced revenues and righting the governmental ship. As the leaders of Torrance, you have done, and continue to do an admirable job of marshaling our resources. The current close examination of the budgets of City departments by the Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee and others is exactly the right approach to better understanding what our expenses are in order that we obtain a firm grip on the magnitude of current and future problems.

This is also an excellent opportunity to, in a spirit of cooperation with the units involved, discover areas that can be improved -- e.g., through more efficient methodology or elimination of unnecessary or wasteful operations. As a 32-year citizen of Torrance as well as a long time supporter of Madrona Marsh, I understand what you are doing and heartily approve. And I realize that it's almost like asking parents to choose from among their children who will receive food from a dwindling supply.

I have been associated with, and active in, the Friends of Madrona Marsh since its inception, 40 years ago. I have been privileged to work very closely with Preserve Manager and Naturalist Tracy Drake and Community Services Director John Jones for the last ten years, and with Tracy's more recent supervisor, Rich Brunette for the last several. In a word, they run a tight ship. I am sure your review of their budget will show that, especially as you discover the full extent of what Tracy and her staff provide to the citizens of Torrance.

Tracy has designed and implemented, with the assistance of the Friends, a truly remarkable array of environmental programs and opportunities for the citizens of Torrance and all visitors to the Preserve -- from tots to tweens to seniors -- the Preserve and Nature Center offer rich educational experiences in the classroom of the outdoors as well as the laboratory and classroom.

Tracy has been an inspiration to all of us, and works extremely long hours, and weeks, to make it all happen. Although she has a sparse staff of part-time employees, Tracy always manages to get the job done. The staff itself is extremely talented and efficient, and includes retired school teachers we could not possibly afford, but for their desire to volunteer their services to the Preserve.

When Tracy has had particular staffing problems, as she did with a staff cut in 2006, the Friends have stepped in to help. At that time, we provided volunteer workers for the front desk, thus freeing up her staff for tasks we were not qualified or able to do. The Friends have continued to help, as greeters at the front desk; as docents for school tours, as leaders of children's programs and as assistants in restoration programs. The thousands of hours of volunteer work by the Friends and others, combined with Tracy's expert leadership, make the Preserve and Nature Center the biggest bargain in the City's Recreational Program.

Since his arrival as the Groundskeeper for the Preserve a year or two ago, Ed Vandever has proven to be a valuable addition to the team. Like Tracy, he has a very strong work ethic and appreciation for what needs to be done. Although the maintenance of the Preserve is quite different from the City's other parks, Ed has dived in to learn how to care for this large, and sometimes fragile, wildlife preserve. His enthusiasm and ability to work well with others has multiplied his effectiveness. He is a bargain many times over.

The Friends and I look forward to working with the Committee and Council to help the City through this period, and am confident we will emerge stronger in the process.

Your fellow citizen,
Bill Arrowsmith

President, Friends of Madrona Marsh

John Jones

Community Services Director

City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance, CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |

JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Friday, August 17, 2012 12:09 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: Emerly_Gueron@ahm.honda.com [mailto:Emerly_Gueron@ahm.honda.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 8:10 AM
To: Furey, Pat
Subject: Madrona Marsh

Please continue to fund the Madrona Marsh.
It ensures that our grandchildren will inherit the wildlife this wetland supports.
How many cities can boast a vernal spring in their urban environment.

Sincerely,
Emerly Gueron

John Jones
Community Services Director
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice |
310.781.7502 fax | JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Friday, August 17, 2012 12:11 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Please do not cut funding for Madrona Marsh

From: Koken, Debby [HMA] [mailto:dkoken@hmausa.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 9:54 AM
To: Furey, Pat; Numark, Cliff; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Brewer, Tom; Sutherland, Bill
Subject: Please do not cut funding for Madrona Marsh

I am a former resident of Torrance, and I come back to the city at least once a month to visit the Madrona Marsh. While I'm there I often dine and shop. The Marsh brings visitors and money into Torrance. But more than this financial incentive, the Marsh is an irreplaceable slice of nature, and in so many ways it provides a unique municipal resource. Please support the Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center and do not allow funding to be cut.

Debby Koken
Costa Mesa, CA
Phone: 714-965-3466

John Jones

Community Services Director
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |
JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Friday, August 17, 2012 12:12 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Fw: Let the City of Torrance know how you feel about the Madrona Marsh

From: kathy donovan [mailto:khdonovan@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 10:46 AM
To: Scotto, Frank; Furey, Pat; Numark, Cliff; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Brewer, Tom; Sutherland, Bill
Subject: Fwd: Fw: Let the City of Torrance know how you feel about the Madrona Marsh

Dear Counsel -

The Madrona Marsh with a large percentage of volunteer engagement should be last and least considered in budget cuts.

Sadly, economic times demand City Employees and Torrance residents share the burden of the reduced budget just as increases were shared during better days.

The Madrona Marsh however is a sanctuary to plants, birds, and insects which impact daily our city environments. It is a learning institute which in tandem creates and contributes more natured benefit than it consumes. It must be protected.

Please be gentle with the Madrona Marsh allowance.

Thank you.
 Kathy Donovan

FScotto@torranceca.gov (Mayor)
PFurey@torranceca.gov
CNumark@torranceca.gov
GBarnett@torranceca.gov
SRhilinger@torranceca.gov
TBrewer@torranceca.gov
bsutherland@torranceca.gov

Thanks for your support,

---Connie Vadheim and The Friends of Madrona Marsh

John Jones

Community Services Director

City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |
JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Friday, August 17, 2012 12:12 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Please support Madrona Marsh

From: Rob and Sharon Friedrich/Houston [mailto:andthezootoo@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 10:41 AM
To: Furey, Pat
Subject: FW: Please support Madrona Marsh

Dear Councilmember Furey-

My husband and I want to Thank-you and your fellow council members for your continued support of the Madrona Marsh. What a wonderful and valuable educational resource the City of Torrance has! Not only are the children of Torrance benefiting from the programs at the Marsh, but also those of us that are adults.

Just this past year my husband and I have enjoyed the moonlit walks through the Marsh, astronomy lectures including the viewing of the transit of Venus and the always popular talks on California native plants. The native plant garden that surrounds the nature center is a fantastic learning tool for those that are interested in reducing their water usage and planting California native plants.

An idea for the future is for the Marsh to partner with the water departments that serve not only the City of Torrance, but the surrounding communities. Lectures could be offered on reducing the size of the front lawn and the value of planting using California natives, which is a great way to save water. This is just one idea and I am sure that there are probably many other suggestions that others have been offered.

So please, we urge you to continue your support of the Madrona Marsh for the present and the future generations.

Sincerely,
Rob Friedrich and Sharon Houston (Mayor)

John Jones

Community Services Director
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |
JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Friday, August 17, 2012 12:10 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh
Attachments: Madrona Marsh Letter.docx

From: NIETOENT@aol.com [mailto:NIETOENT@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 10:35 AM
To: Scotto, Frank; Furey, Pat; Numark, Cliff; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Brewer, Tom; Sutherland, Bill
Subject: Madrona Marsh

Gentlemen,

I have attached the Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Chapter response to Madrona Marsh closure or cut back.

Thank you,

John Nieto
President
Palos Verdes/South Bay
Audubon Society

John Jones
Community Services Director
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |
JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Gentlemen,

My name is John Nieto and I serve as Chapter President of the Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society. I represent the nearly 1000 person membership of our Chapter. It should not at all be surprising that our membership uses the Marsh complex almost daily.

The Marsh is one of the few ecological treasures herein the South Bay. The richness of the micro environments at the Marsh makes it unique in the array of local habitats. From the almost microscopic fairy shrimp to the majestic great horned owls, this place is home. This is also home to a very unique pallet of plant species. The fact that hundreds of species of living things are viable and living at the Marsh is a minor miracle in itself. The Marsh has been the learning center for thousands of the areas families, from the monthly classes offered to the daily visits exploring the richness of the Marsh's environments.

Our Audubon Chapter is very fond of the Marsh, not only for the monthly Chapter membership meetings and the yearly strategic planning meetings held there, but also for the unique bird observations made there each season of the year. Our members are present at the Marsh for the Audubon Society's yearly Christmas Bird Count and our yearly Butterfly Count. Our members are at the Marsh monthly for the bird walks on the second Wednesday of the month. It is the starting point for our twice monthly bird walk called the "Tour de Torrance". The Marsh's Nature Center is also used for our Chapter's twice yearly Youth Environmental Service award ceremonies.

We have all taken in the seasons there one by one and watched each season unfold it's mysteries that are locked away in the Marsh. Without the dedicated staff, with their varied experience base, many citizens will never be able to visit and take away the joy of discovery. There are thousands of children and adults who have learned for the first time the joys of watching nature there at the Marsh. Each hour of the day yields magical vistas that the staff helps each of us discover.

The Torrance City Council has allowed a Transit Center to be built. This is very forward thinking of you all. You are aware of the needs of your citizen's and the general public's need for a transit center close to the yet to be built Green Line depot. We are asking for that same forward thinking to be used for the Madrona Marsh complex of buildings, gardens and marsh.

This is an environment that cannot be duplicated in the whole of Los Angeles County and the membership is united in our need for the Madrona marsh to remain open and staffed. The Palos Verdes/South Bay Chapter of the Audubon Society is asking that the Madrona Marsh complex be left open and staffed so that this unique habitat and its Nature Center and its gardens be available to the next generation of citizen scientists to explore and wonder over the joys of discovering nature in their own back yard.

Respectfully,

John Nieto

President,

Palos Verdes/South Bay

Audubon Society

310-544-2714

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Friday, August 17, 2012 12:08 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: BirdsnMor@aol.com [mailto:BirdsnMor@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 12:45 AM
To: Scotto, Frank
Cc: Numark, Cliff; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Brewer, Tom; Furey, Pat; Sutherland, Bill
Subject: Madrona Marsh

Dear Mayor & City Council Members,

Please do not take away the only real and natural place our wild life has to call it's own. If you stop the funding you will be depriving all the children of a place of natural beauty where the inhabitants feel safe and children and adults alike can see nature thriving.

Please don't try to fix it, it is not broken. It is a grand place for children, adults and visitors from all over to come and see and brings revenue into the Torrance area. Promoting it, possibly letting the public school groups go in as to better it as a school project, thus learning more about the wild life and its care and needs.....Please think about it, please don't take away the funding. Let's develop its beauty, and be proud we have such a sanctuary for the wild life, and a place of learning for the people.

Sincerely,

a business owner and resident in Beautiful Torrance,
 Karen Lee Allen



Karen The Parrot Lady

Birds & More
 1637 Cabrillo Ave.
 Torrance, Ca. 90501
 310-320-9495 <http://www.birdsandmore.com>

Live so that you wouldn't be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town Gossip. **Will rogers**

Words I live by:

It's my Life, I live it, I love it, Criticism be damned. AND

Never Explain, your friends don't need it and your enemies won't believe you any way.

John Jones

Community Services Director

City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |

JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Friday, August 17, 2012 12:09 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: Gary E. SWINSON [mailto:GarySwinson@Verizon.net]
Sent: Sunday, August 12, 2012 7:35 PM
To: FScotto@; CNumark@; GBarnett@; SRhilinger@; TBrewer@; PFurey@; bsutherland@
Cc: Gary E. SWINSON
Subject: Madrona Marsh

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

We understand that, for financial reasons, the City of Torrance is considering closing or curtailing funding for Madrona Marsh.

We view the marsh area as a local treasure for our area and for the State of California due to its undeveloped and protected nature. We also believe it is more cost effective to maintain the status quo at the Marsh than it would be to attempt to restore it at a later date.

Please, we request that you reconsider any measures that would impact its continuance.

Kind regards

- Gary & Mary Ann Swinson

=====

Gary & Mary Ann Swinson
20705 Wood Avenue
Torrance, CA 90503-2755, USA

Home:
+1 (310) 542-8091

Cell:
+1 (310) 365-8040

Gary:
GarySwinson@verizon.net
Mary Ann: MASwinson@verizon.net

Alt.:
GSwinson@yahoo.com

=====

John Jones

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