

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) Minutes Graham Visitors Center – October 9, 2013

The Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee is a Joint effort of the Arboretum Foundation, Seattle Parks Department, and the University of Washington, and designated by Seattle City Council Ordinance 65130, approved December 27, 1934, and Ordinance 116337, approved September 8, 1992.

Voting Members

Arboretum Foundation

- Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director
- Craig Trueblood, Arboretum Foundation Board President

City of Seattle

- Kenan Block, Mayoral Appointee
- Jack Collins, Mayoral Appointee
- Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks, Projects & Planning Division, Director

University of Washington

- Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Asst. Vice President for Regional Affairs
- Sarah Reichard, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG), Director
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington, Associate Professor, Dept. of Landscape Architecture

Washington State

- David Towne

Other Staff Present:

- Fred Hoyt, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG), Associate Director
- Andy Sheffer, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Planning and Development Division
- Rachel Acosta, Seattle Parks and Recreation, ABGC Coordinator

Standing Committees

Building Committee:

AF: Paige Miller; City: TBD; UW: TBD

Partners Committee:

AF: Paige Miller & Craig Trueblood
City: Donald Harris & Christopher Williams
Michael Shiosaki & Leah Tivoli
UW: Tom DeLuca & Sarah Reichard

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG): AF: Paige Miller & Roger Williams

City: Michael Shiosaki (lead) & Andy Sheffer

UW: Fred Hoyt & Sarah Reichard

SR520 Technical Committee:

City: David Graves; UW: Theresa Doherty & Fred Hoyt

Opening Items

The October meeting of the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee is called to order at 8:33am. Jack asks for approval of the October agenda and the September minutes; Michael moves to approve the consent items, Sarah seconds and the minutes are approved.

Budget, Personnel and Other Items

Parks

Acting Superintendent Williams is presenting Seattle Parks and Recreation budget to City Council; there are no substantive cuts in the budget. The Legacy Plan Citizens Advisory Council is holding a public hearing on Thursday, November 7 at Miller Community Center. Michael feels it is important for the ABGC to attend and present to the committee. There is a specific initiative that is a match fund from which major projects will be funded.

Candace Damon event on October 22nd from 6-7pm at the Belltown Community Center sponsored by Seattle Parks Foundation and Associated Recreation Council. Candace Damon is Vice Chairman of [HR&A Advisors](#) (New York), a firm dedicated to creating vibrant cities that sustain a high quality of life for diverse communities.

Arboretum Foundation

The Arboretum Foundation is spending a lot of time planning the party for the opening night of the flower/garden show on February 4. There is discussion with the steering committee to create an even better event through combining the two donor parties into one great party. This year's garden will be in honor of Ginny Ruffner's garden in Ballard. This will bring in a new crowd that is more connected to the art community.

Paige spent a lot of energy on the proposal for the Weyerhaeuser Bonsai collection and the committee agreed she and the Berger Partnership did a fantastic job, especially given the limited amount of time.

Jim Faulstich totem pole donation and dedication has been put on hold for the time being. Seattle Park's staff are prepared to assist with the logistics and placement when the time comes.

Paige has not yet written the letter to the Governor regarding a state appointment to the ABGC because she is still in the process of attaining viable candidates for David Towne's replacement. C. David Hughbanks has been offered as another name to give the Governor – he's been on the board of the Arboretum Foundation and he ran Magnuson for some time. Jack mentions John Howell and Paige agrees to talk with him.

The Arboretum Foundation Board is having a retreat in October for strategic planning and priority-setting purposes.

University of Washington

No updates on the budget. The UWBG is close to signing the maintenance agreement on the undercrossing that goes under SR520.

Paige plans to call the Dean of the UW School of Environmental Sciences to discuss the outcome of the UW/SR520 mitigation funds to provide a status update for the Arboretum Foundation at their upcoming retreat. Theresa adds the University knows how much money they are getting but no documents have been finalized.

The loop trail interpretive signs are in production. Kenan suggests doing a story with the wayfinding signs, loop trails and interpretive trail signs. Sarah says they should be ready for a story next week. The Daily is doing a story on the New Zealand garden.

Garfield High School hazing – Garfield kids were massing on Yew Hill in the afternoon to perform hazing rituals. UWBG staff called police who drove down Azalea Way. There was no physical damage to the Arboretum.

Sarah wonders if it would be a good idea to write a letter to the high school principal and ASB asking them if they would like to participate in some volunteer activities; this would enable them to learn more about the Arboretum and perhaps learn a little deference for their local park. Although there was little damage to the park, the ABGC concurs with Sarah that having the kids come and do something positive at the Arboretum may prove mutually beneficial.

Paige adds there are a handful of Garfield High School kids who volunteer at the Arboretum already. Kenan makes a motion to send a letter to Garfield principal and the Associated Student Body President to acknowledge the positive relationship that currently exists between the Arboretum and the student body. The ABGC would like to further encourage and foster a better relationship with the students through potential volunteer opportunities. Michael moves and Dave seconds, and the motion is approved. Paige and Kenan will work on a letter.

The UWBG is concerned about the reputation of the Arboretum; Parks added bollards to the parking lot on Lake Washington Boulevard to make access to certain areas of the Arboretum more difficult after park hours. The closure of Arboretum drive has helped a lot with vandalism. There is less to damage at Yew Hill then in other areas of the Arboretum. Fred comments that vandals tend to bother young, small plants, which explains why the New Zealand garden was affected by vandals more than other areas.

MPIG

Multi-use trail design continues – submitting JARPA (2 weeks out); next steps: holding a public meeting in March 2014. Start construction early 2015.

Undercrossing – Theresa sent Michael the agreement for maintenance of the undercrossing; UW will take on maintenance under the new bridge; including this in the package for funding to the provost for compensation. UWBG and the ABGC have a vested interest in keeping it looking nice. WSDOT is now taking into account what the undercrossing will look like during the interim between WABN and the south bridge construction, which could be an extended period of time.

Old/New Business

Bonsai Collection – The RFP response was terrific and they only had 9 days to do the RFP! Kenan adds that Paige did a great job. The Arboretum Foundation has not heard from Weyerhaeuser. Paige will contact Weyerhaeuser for an informal response. Weyerhaeuser will let us know officially by the end of the year. The Arboretum Foundation is moving forward with the feasibility study; need a scope on the business plan. The Arboretum Foundation is hoping for interviews and case studies of other bonsai gardens in the study. This study will assist the ABGC in making a decision about whether the bonsai garden is achievable. Weyerhaeuser needs to determine which choice makes more sense for them as there are pros and cons for each site.

Retreat - Michael passes out a draft agenda. The committee decided not to spend a lot of time on reviewing what was done in the past year. Jack asks whether or not the retreat needs a facilitator and advises the ABGC to think about that as they review the proposed agenda. Michael states that they will discuss the master plan; review the priorities set in April 2013 and set priorities for 2014. There will be a discussion about funding including Parks Legacy, the Arboretum Foundation fundraising and the UW capital campaign. The next piece will be outreach – frustration about the general public's lack of knowledge about the Arboretum. Roger Nyhus is a really smart, public relations person who would add a lot of knowledge, Kenan adds. Kenan observes that the ABGC has not done a great job reaching out to the general public but that there have been great improvements in this area.

Kenan would like to discuss vandalism and security at the Arboretum at the retreat. He wonders how other cities deal with security and vandalism issues in their arboreta? Dave jokes they fence it, but Sarah says that is true. Kenan feels that researching how other arboreta deal with security and vandalism is worth examining. Sarah will put it onto the university listservs to see what others say. Andy feels meeting with SPD about the security issues could result in new ideas. He also says that, once built, the multi-use trail will add more people to areas that are less accessible at this time.

In terms of logistics, Theresa offers to pay for the food for the event and Rachel will coordinate. The committee decides that they expect those that come will stay for the duration. MPIG and the Master Plan will be sent out along with the invitations for review with instructions to invitees to think about the outreach portion of the program. Michael asks for alternatives to Roger Nyhus if he isn't available and Sarah offers Stanley Asah who is a professor and social scientist; he understands the social science component of parks and natural areas. Michael will ask Roger if he's available. Dave adds that since there is nothing very controversial, a facilitator will not be needed for the retreat. The committee agrees.

Andy Sheffer – Presentation on multi-use trail

Parks contracted with the Berger Partnership; they are working toward 2 main milestones - submitting the JARPA and 65% construction documents. They will be providing detailed drawings to reduce the number of comments received once the JARPA is submitted. Building permits could take up to 4 months; this includes doing improvements within 200 feet of the shoreline. There will be a meeting with all the stakeholders and boards, as well as a public meeting by the end of February.

Focus of the design asks 2 questions:

What is the heart of the Arboretum? What is the concept behind the design?

The design commission asked us to replicate the past through the materials used. The design is similar to existing structures that are sustainable and durable; looking to have no major maintenance for the next 30 years. Parks did a thorough maintenance assessment which helped us realize that it will serve as a maintenance spine throughout the Arboretum; allowing maintenance workers to use this trail to access areas that are not currently accessible.

Andy reviews the maps of the trail which can be found [here](#). Michael emphasizes that the Wilcox Bridge is the connection between SR520 to the Washington Park Arboretum via the multi-use trail. Construction cost is in the \$5million range. Parks rec'd 7.8mil from WSDOT. They are hoping to spend less than \$5million on this part of the trail so that they have a surplus when it is time to complete the north end of the project.

UWBG is assessing the impact to the collections; the impact will be minimal. There will be substantial tree removal but the visual impact will be negligible. The path is 10-feet wide but with grading and retaining walls, 20 feet is a better estimate.

Bidding starts in July 2014; Parks is hoping to have an executed contract by October 2015. They don't want to do significant grading in the winter, however, if they can find work to do over the winter then delaying construction wouldn't be necessary and construction costs may be less. There are many factors that will contribute to the decision on whether to start the construction in the fall or spring.

Andy will send an email inviting people to walk the trail.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourns at 10:15am.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____

John B. Collins, ABGC Chair