

## Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) Minutes Graham Visitors Center – August 13, 2014

*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
- Jim Reid, 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:

- *Excused*, Fred Hoyt, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG), Associate Director
- Rachel Acosta, Seattle Parks and Recreation, ABGC Coordinator

### Standing Committees

Building Committee:

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

Partners Committee:

AF: Paige Miller & Jim Reid

City: Donald Harris & Christopher Williams

Michael Shiosaki & Leah Tivoli

UW: Tom DeLuca & Sarah Reichard

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG): AF: Paige Miller & Craig Trueblood

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 August meeting of the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee is called to order at 8:32am. There is no MPIG report because they have not met yet this month. Jack mentions that Communications fell off the Agenda but has been put back on.

Michael thanks everyone for their support on Proposition 1. Kenan feels the leadership and courage the Mayor showed was really fantastic.

The ABGC decides to discuss all the consent items separately. April 9 had some revisions in the ARCH testimony portion; which have been corrected. Theresa moves, Jim seconds and they are approved. June 11 minutes: Theresa moves, Michael seconds and the June 11 minutes are approved. The ABGC decides to postpone July 9 minutes approval until next month.

## **SR520 – Westside Design Refinements**

*Presented by Kerry Pihlstrom (WSDOT) and Lyle Bicknell, Seattle Department of Planning and Development*

Last time WSDOT came to the ABGC they talked about the rest of the west; today they will update the ABGC and unveil some concept renderings as they prepare for public outreach and a meeting with the Seattle City Council.

Kerry reviews the history of the work and the Memorandum of Understanding between WSDOT and Seattle as it relates to the work. The public design process was lead by WSDOT, communicated to the public, and received great public feedback to better integrate it into the community and better utilize space. Since then, they have incorporated the feedback into the design; which was documented in a resolution by the City Council. The key areas that the City Council asked them to work on were 1) a smarter Montlake lid 2) better connections in the corridor (including adding a bicycle and pedestrian path on the Portage Bay Bridge), and 3) the Portage bay bridge: what type, box girder or cable stayed. WSDOT consulted with design professionals to refine their design and incorporate feedback. They are now ready to share and receive ABGC feedback prior to their presentation at City Council.

Now, WSDOT is preparing to seek City Council action starting in September with a presentation. They are hoping the City Council will endorse and resolve to incorporate these designs. WSDOT will need to update cost estimates and hope to have that done by December for the next legislative session. Kerry introduces Lyle Bicknell from Department of Planning and Development for the City of Seattle.

Lyle Bicknell, DPD, feels the collaboration with the state has been unprecedented with a more engaged partnership; the city objectives will be folded into the designs moving forward. WSDOT hired SVR, a landscape architecture and urban design background to help develop the Montlake lid. VIA architecture also came back to help. The city brought on the Berger Partnership; Jason Henry is here to refine the design based on feedback. They met with the Seattle Design Commission and have one final meeting planned with them at the end of September for final feedback on the lid.

Jason Henry from the Berger Partnership: The Montlake lid will reconnect nature and city. The Seattle Community Design Process (SCDP) goals are: quality open space, better connections and sustainability. The new lid design meets these goals.

The lid has been reduced in size from 1400 feet to 800 feet and the land bridge is 75 feet. There were sightline and safety issues with the baseline design so they removed ventilation stacks and shrunk the lid; this provided better visibility. The new land bridge is now much more intuitive and

under 5% grade. The views of the freeway are restricted but the visibility of the surrounds is better from Lake Washington Boulevard. The land bridge will provide views of Husky Stadium and obscure the freeway underneath.

Iain asks about whether the trees will be visible when driving east and Mr. Henry responds that yes, they are hoping to have really beautiful conifers and big trees to make it look lush.

Storm water facility will remain where it is. The Bill Dawson undercrossing was 14 feet and will be 20' with slanting walls instead of vertical; better visibility and better sightlines. They have changed the design of the lid to remove the switchbacks and stairs and tall walls, which makes it more safe.

The SR520 off-ramp going eastbound will exit onto 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Working with SDOT traffic staff; there will be all-way stops which will create a better pedestrian experience. The new design has improved sightlines and intuitive wayfinding. The minimum width of the land bridge is 75.' The design emphasizes trees and greenspace when exiting the freeway. Iain asks about whether the trees will be visible when driving east and Mr. Henry responds that yes, they are hoping to have really beautiful native conifers and big trees to make it look lush. They have not decided the types yet.

The Shoreline trail will continue with the network of boardwalk and their plan is to increase the height of the undercrossing to 12 feet tall and maintain kayak access. Will the entire waterfront trail be brought up to code? Michael cautions that the design team needs to make sure the boardwalk is environmentally feasible and he wants the connection to be there with the existing waterfront trail.

Changes to lid: Quality over quantity; added structure where it adds more value and usability and contributes to better connections. The former lid design was not active, open space.

New vision maintains the integrity of the historic boulevard and preserves the Olmsted legacy. The highway is buffered; noise and sight of freeway will be limited. The urban design team is pushing the engineers.

Right now they are working on new cost estimates, materials, and square footage.

Timeline: Present to City Council on September 23. By year's end, WSDOT will have Resolution for the "rest of the west" design. The \$1.4 billion construction budget will start as early as 2017 with proper funding. WSDOT needs funding next legislative session to continue the design process and for construction contracts. The construction will last approximately 6-years with steady funding.

Jack feels they have done a lot of great work; Jack thinks the new design really fits well with the Arboretum. Iain feels the design needs further refinement.

Jack mentions that the ABGC will be meeting with Sound Transit to discuss significant Arboretum exhibit and wayfinding.

## **GIS Mapping Demonstration**

*Presented by Tracy Mehlin*

Sarah Reichard introduces the GIS Mapping tool. The UWBG got a grant to integrate the database and do GIS mapping. Next step will be to build the phone application. The program is very cool because it provides access to a lot of information about the collections. Tracy Mehlin is the technology librarian and has been the project manager for the last two years.

The grid was originally installed in the 1950's and re-done in the 1970's so the monuments mark points and edges of grids on paper. They would go out with tape measures and document accession numbers, plant names and monuments. Paper is impossible to search, difficult to update and inaccessible to public and most staff. There are over 500 grid squares, which equals over 500 pieces of paper.

To play with the GIS Mapping tool please click [here](#).

The interactive map contains different layers: pathways, benches, buildings, parking lots. Each of these layers can be turned on and off and viewed separately using the toolbox.

Tracy will have the bench names input into the system so they can be seen.

Jack mentions the Japanese Garden should be included.

The plant icon will give you information about that plant and may include the original accession cards. These cards have written comments on them and promote a richer history of the life of the plants. There is some discussion about concerns over publicizing digitized cards because at one point there was a volunteer who wrote things on the cards. Sarah and Fred thank The Arboretum Foundation because they helped pay for this project. Kenan thinks the cards are really cool.

At this point, the program has been optimized for desktop use. One can run a search or create a tour in order to see certain plants. It can be used internally for plant management or for the average Arboretum patron who wants to know what plants they saw on their walk.

They have a link to do a google image search since they haven't finished adding photos. Joy was the volunteer official photographer of the Arboretum plants, she left the slides to the Arboretum Foundation. The UW will digitize them and link them to the GIS Mapping system.

Tracy demonstrates the search function – one can input any field and it will show where to find it in the Arboretum. It is then possible to measure the distance from one point on the map to another; for example, from the Graham Visitors Center to a particular plant. The program is capable of saving favorites on the computer; there is no user name or password. One can create customized pathways by drawing on the map and then print it for using it at the Arboretum.

Example of staff use: Newly planted can be plotted and then staff are able to see the plants that need extra irrigation and extra attention.

UW Information school students designed the mobile application; it is primarily the desktop application but optimized for phone use. It has a history of the Arboretum and links to a calendar of events. One will be able to create customized walks and tours. It has not been coded yet. They have put out a request to computer science students.

Kenan thinks this is a great media opportunity and cannot wait for the phone application comes out. Jack adds that this will be a benefit to so many different groups of people. Sarah states that Tracy did a great job!

The Horticulture crew walked a large portion of the Arboretum Loop Trail for areas of added maintenance.

The two new interpretive trails have been added but the interpretive information has not yet. David Campbell and Ryan Garrison were critical in creating the GIS website.

Jack wonders about outreach and marketing. Sarah mentions it went out in their newsletter. There have been no real staff trainings yet, but Paige would like her staff to be trained so that they can use it with potential donors and visitors to the Arboretum.

Iain thanks the Arboretum Foundation for the matching grant because without them, this would not have happened. Paige acknowledges that Sarah wrote the grant. The grant totaled \$118,000 and that was matched. Everyone agrees it was money well spent!

## Budget, Personnel and Other Items

### **Parks**

Proposition 1 passed which is great for sustainable Parks funding; full funding doesn't start until 2016. Parks will borrow money from the city for the bridge year. Key to the Arboretum is the challenge fund at \$1.6million/year to partner with non-profits on significant projects; receiving this money will be competitive. There is also \$18million year for major maintenance, which will be used to address the major maintenance backlog. Paige asks about the maintenance barn because it needs major renovation. How do we get into the queue for that to be a project? Michael responds that the barn improvements needs to get into the asset management plan in order to be considered. The electrical has been updated; so he will talk with Kathleen about it and will have it assessed. Kathleen Connor manages the asset management plan.

### **Arboretum Foundation**

There will be a bench in Cascadia that honored Pops Warner \_\_\_\_\_. There will be 20 people coming at 11am.

Olmsted standard bench costs \$800 but the cost for a dedication is \$5500. Sandy Bollard is interested in a wonderful spot in the New Zealand garden for a bench.

## University of Washington

Sarah updates the ABGC on the issue regarding unfunded raises. She talked with Stephanie Harrington – activity based budget – more ABB money in bigger more well established colleges; College of the Environment did not have money for the raises. University of Washington will ask the legislature for more money. Sarah will ask the ABGC to push the legislation for money. Lobbying will be a critical role because of the role the UWBG plays in the community and UW.

Broadmoor: Sarah states that Broadmoor printed instructions on the back of the parking passes that reads: please don't block the road. There is a photo that shows their security guard directing people to park on Arboretum Drive; Ian, the Director of Security said he had told the security guard to not allow people to park there. There are now signs that say no stopping on Foster Island Road. Parking enforcement doesn't start until 8am and the problem is between 7am and 8am. Next step is to have someone outside with a loud speaker telling people not to park on Arboretum Drive. Ian will take it to the Homeowners Association at their next meeting. UWBG staff continue to document.

Kenan moves for Broadmoor on the next agenda.

## Old/New Business

>>Retreat planning committee: Jim, Fred and Michael; Michael chairs the committee and will call the first meeting. Rachel will email Michael and let him know.

Canoe tour: Rainer Metzger offered a canoe tour for the "Ramps to Nowhere" art installation. The tour would take place after the September meeting. Rachel will email everyone to get a headcount.

Meeting with Sound Transit: Fred, Jim, Paige, Jack and Kenan will be meeting with Sound Transit. Kenan and Paige would like to know what it would take for them to change the name of the Sound Transit station to include the Arboretum. The ABGC agree that having an exhibit and/or wayfinding in the Sound Transit station at a minimum.

Rachel will get Kenan contact information for Daphne Cross at Sound Transit so he can do research on the following:

- Policy on naming
- Meeting minutes on naming the UW station

There being no other business the meeting adjourns at 10:29am.

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

John B. Collins, ABGC Chair