

APPROVED

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC)

Web site: <http://depts.washington.edu/wpa/abgc/>

The ABGC is also closely monitoring the WSDOT SR520 project for impacts to the Washington Park Arboretum. Please see

<http://depts.washington.edu/wpa/520.htm>

Joint effort of the Arboretum Foundation, Seattle Parks, and the University of Washington (UW)

Location: Graham Visitors Center

December 10, 2008

Voting

Members

Present:

Arboretum Foundation

- Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director
- Barbara Wright, Arboretum Foundation President

City of Seattle

- Jack Collins, Mayoral Appointee
- Kjrjs Lund, Mayoral Appointee
- Donald Harris, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Property & Acquisition Services Manager

University of Washington

- Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Assistant Vice President for Regional Affairs
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington Associate Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture

Washington State

- Dave Towne, Washington State Governor's Appointee

Excused:

- Sandra Lier, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG) Acting Director

Others

Present:

- Stephanie Brown, Seattle Department of Transportation, Liaison to SR520 Project
- Lisa Chen, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Natural Resources Unit
- Cheryl dos Remedios, City of Kent, Parks, Recreation & Community Services and also a member of the Arboretum Foundation
- Fred Hoyt, UWBG, Facilities & Grounds Manager
- Helen Payton, Arboretum Foundation Development Director
- Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks Deputy Director, Project and Planning

WSDOT Presentation Team

Julie Meredith, Program Director, SR520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project

Lawrence Kyle, Program Engineering Manager, Consultant – HDR

Dave Warren and Michael Horntvedt of WSDOT

Staff:

- Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Standing Committees

Funding Requests to State Legislature:	John (Arboretum Foundation), Jack (City), Dave T (Washington State)
Naming Recognition Guideline:	Paige (Arboretum Foundation), Donald (City), Sandra (UW)
Mission Statement:	Kathleen Pierce (Arboretum Foundation), Donald (City), Sandra (UW)
SR520 Mediation (Group of 34):	Paige, representing both the ABGC and Arboretum Foundation
Joint Fundraising Policy:	AF: Allen Ferrin, Julia Maywald, John Johnston, Paige Miller & Barbara Wright
	UW: Fred Hoyt, Wendy Kelley, Sandra Lier, & Greg Sheridan
	City: Donald Harris & Tim Gallagher
	Staff: Sandy Brooks & John Howell (Assistant & Facilitator)

ABGC Chair Dave Towne called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. The first half of the meeting focused on a presentation on the SR520 project by Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) staff. WSDOT is asking for direction from the ABGC prior to the ABGC's next meeting on January 14. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session and discussion by the ABGC group. Dave stated that the ABGC would discuss whether it wants to (1) take action today or (2) take action later this month via e-mail vote.

Paige introduced the WSDOT team and gave a brief update on the project. She stated that the project is moving very quickly at this point and needs the ABGC to weigh in and give further direction. Various community/mediation team groups are being asked to weigh in on the project and give their feedback during the next month. Paige noted that a major challenge is a lot of decisions are being made without all the environmental information.

Calendar/Deadlines:

12/12:	WSDOT to make presentation to the full Seattle City Council on the SR520 project and the three Options
12/16:	final mediation team meeting to review the project implementation plan
12/23:	individual mediation members (including Paige as the ABGC rep) are to submit written comments to WSDOT
01/06:	City Council to hold open comment period
01/20:	City Council will discuss the project and Options
Jan-Feb:	Governor Gregoire is expected to review the three alternatives, select a preferred alternative, and forward her selection to the State Legislature for review
--	The implementation committee will recommend when SR520 tolling will begin and what rates would be charged
--	The implementation committee will recommend when SR520 tolling will begin and what rates to charge
--	The Draft EIS may be published by the end of 2009.

Paige next introduced members of the WSDOT presentation team:

- Julie Meredith
- Larry Kyle, Program Engineering Manager, Consultant - HDR
- Dave Warren
- Michael Horntvedt

The presentation team brought a number of large displays, with various views of the three alternatives. They also gave a Powerpoint presentation. Mr. Warren reviewed all three options in terms of how they function and some possible impacts on the Arboretum. He estimated the cost of the alternative as:

Option A: \$4.5 to \$4.8 billion

Option K: \$6.5 to \$6.67 billion

Option L: \$5.06 to \$5.14 billion

He added that all three options assume that the SR520 bridge will be tolled. Theresa stated that the UW has also looked at the three options and laid out how each will impact the UW's property. WSDOT stated that they are at today's meeting to ask both the UW and ABGC to give input into the EIS and mediation processes.

Cheryl dos Remedios, a member of the Arboretum Foundation Board, asked how the bridge shown in the three options might affect the Arboretum and Mr. Warren stated that WSDOT staff are still evaluating each bridge and that each would have a different effect on the Arboretum.

WSDOT staff gave a great deal of statistical information on traffic estimates for the three projects and pointed out where they expect traffic to increase and decrease as a result of the various options. ABGC members asked a number of questions on how different intersections and streets would be affected by each option and expressed strong concerns that as much traffic as possible be diverted from Lake Washington Boulevard, which runs through the middle of the Arboretum.

Mr. Warren distributed a handout titled "Comparison of Aerial Traffic Operations" and ABGC members had a number of questions on the information. Jack commented that he thinks Option A would be a traffic disaster. Ms. dos remedies urged that WSDOT develop three-dimensional models of the three options, instead of using flat, paper graphics.

Kjris stated that she is troubled that traffic could be diverted to Lake Washington Boulevard instead of to the nearby main arterial of 23rd Avenue. Paige responded that she and Nancy Belcher, who is working closely with Paige to represent the Arboretum Foundation and ABGC, have spent many long hours working on this issue. The most difficult component has been traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard (LWB.) Dave asked if any of the Options really eliminate traffic there and Paige responded that Option A would have the least impact, traffic-wise. However, traffic studies have concluded that it would gridlock traffic in the area and consequently would not gain approval from the Governor and Legislature. There is no easy answer and Paige and Nancy are looking for trade-offs to get the best plan possible for the Arboretum.

All three Options include some traffic that would exit from/enter onto SR520 from LWB. She and Nancy are looking for additional ways to divert traffic from LWB. She referred to a proposed change in the traffic light configuration at 23rd and Madison to divert some of the traffic from "Pill Hill" (Capitol Hill) that now goes onto LWB. She and Nancy are also working to find a better solution than the "keyhole" as presented in today's meeting. Kjris added that the best solution is to push traffic to 23rd and 24th Avenues and away from LWB.

Keyhole Discussion: Paige distributed a handout showing the keyhole and gave additional information on it. Prior to development of the keyhole, Option K included very visible ramps. She believes the keyhole is a better option to the ramps and clarified that the keyhole is not located on Arboretum property. Iain stated that the ramps are not as troubling to him as is the volume of traffic that gets diverted onto LWB. He recommends that the ABGC support whatever Option will most minimize traffic through the Arboretum.

Dave thanked Paige and Nancy for their hard work on this project. It is a very difficult role and they are trying to represent many interests. He distributed a copy of the "ABGC Guiding Principles for SR520 Project" and reminded ABGC members that this is the guide that the group gave Paige to follow in her work on SR520. Paige then referred to the politics that are also involved in the project. A strong coalition has come together to push Option K forward and to help protect the Arboretum. If the ABGC does not support Option K, the coalition will not be as strong and may not represent and help protect the Arboretum as much, as the project moves forward. Theresa asked the ABGC to review these guiding principles and noted that neither the City nor UW have yet taken a formal position on the three Options. She urged that WSDOT ensure that all three Options give the Arboretum the most protection possible.

Jack asked that the ABGC not be silent on supporting one of the Options. It is clear to him that Option K is the best for the Arboretum; however, the "keyhole" in that Option must be re-thought. He believes the ABGC

should take a strong stand on this and give the City Council advice as it meets to discuss the SR520 project. He also noted that the coalition has spent a great deal of money to help protect Foster Island and the ABGC should respect and honor this additional support for the Arboretum.

Dave added that, while the keyhole solves some problems, it creates many others. He believes it is appropriate for the ABGC to take a stand at this point and would entertain a motion for Paige and other ABGC members to develop a resolution to send to WSDOT and to City Council prior to its discussion of the Options. Jack asked if the ABGC's interests are different from the coalition's interests. Paige answered that the two mostly agree on Option K and the coalition supports many of the components to help protect the Arboretum; however, the coalition is in support of the keyhole. Option K is obviously the least onerous option to the Arboretum at this point, but there are still issues with it.

Jack moved that the ABGC prepare a resolution supporting Option K, with further discussion to be contemplated on the keyhole. Kjrjris seconded. Iain made a friendly amendment to support Option K but require replacement of the keyhole with a completely different ramp design that does not favor putting traffic onto Lake Washington Boulevard, rather than onto the city arterial 23rd Avenue. Jack accepted the friendly amendment. Paige also made a friendly amendment to include other surface traffic improvements at 23rd. Jack accepted that friendly amendment. The vote was taken with all voting in favor, except Theresa, who abstained. Motion carried.

Paige will take the lead on drafting the resolution, with Jack and Theresa assisting. They will circulate the draft to the full ABGC for edits. Dave asked that the resolution be finalized and distributed by Tuesday, December 23, and the committee agreed to do so. Paige and Nancy will also prepare a separate statement on the Project Impact Plan, and will include a statement from the ABGC stating its interests -- separate from the coalition's interests.

Dave moved that Paige continue to represent the ABGC and its interests on the SR520 project, and Donald seconded. Discussion: Jack stated that Paige is very valuable in this effort. Dave recognized that this project is consuming a great deal of Paige's time, as she works to represent both the Arboretum Foundation and the ABGC. However, he believes that her role is nearing an end. Jack commented that the SR520 project and its impacts on the Arboretum is one of the most significant issues to come before the ABGC. Theresa noted that Paige is a great spokesperson for the Arboretum in this process, but there is some confusion that Paige has also taken the lead role in supporting and developing Option K. She believes that Fran Conley, a community activist, should be the lead. Paige agreed and stated that as long as the State Legislature-mandated mediation committee was active, Fran was not a member and thus not allowed to speak at the meetings. Now that the mediation committee's work is nearly finished, Fran can take on the lead for advocating Option K. **The vote was taken and all members voted in the affirmative. Motion carried.**

Paige, Theresa, Iain, and Jack agreed to draft the resolution and distribute to the ABGC for input. Dave asked that the resolution be finalized and distributed by Monday, December 22.

Updates

Pacific Connections

Phase I: Michael reported that staff are working to close out the final details of Phase I.

Phase II: The Berger Partnership expects to have completed 95% of the design plans for Phase II in early January.

Japanese Garden Entry Project: Framing on the shelter started today, with the roof expected to be on in early 2009. While the entry is expected to open to the public in the spring, an exact date is not yet known.

Joint Fundraising Committee: Barbara reported that this Committee held six meetings prior to the presentation by facilitator John Howell at the November ABGC retreat. An additional meeting was held in early December, with the work of the facilitator nearly complete. The three partners are now reviewing the draft agreement. The Arboretum Foundation Board will vote on the agreement at its January 2009 meeting. A major concern for the Foundation is how this agreement affects the future of the UWBG Guild.

A Joint Oversight group has been formed, with two representatives from each of the three partners. Tim will chair the group, with the first meeting scheduled in early February. Two sub-committees will present information to the Oversight group, which will then jointly prioritize fundraising efforts for the UW Botanic Gardens and the Arboretum.

Dave congratulated the Committee on its work to come to this agreement.

UWBG Director Search: Sandra Lier has agreed to continue working as the UWBG Director for an additional 2-1/2 years. She will work a 40% schedule.

New/Old Business

Elections of 2009 Officers: The usual succession of ABGC officers is that each serves one year and then moves to the next highest position. Paige has served as 2008 vice chair and is slated to chair in 2009. However, she is heavily involved with representing the ABGC and Arboretum Foundation on the SR520 project. Dave discussed the elections with Paige and Theresa and they are agreeable to serving another term in their current positions, as is Dave. **Jack moved that the following three members be elected to hold their same office for another year:**

Dave Towne, Chair

Paige Miller, Vice Chair

Theresa Doherty, Secretary

Barbara seconded the motion. The vote was taken and was unanimous in favor. Motion carried.

Broadmoor Pond/Drainage Issues: Donald reported that Seattle's Department of Planning and Development has determined that the Broadmoor Golf pond/drainage system/large concrete wall have all met permit requirements. The 30' concrete wall is located just adjacent to the Arboretum's Graham Visitors Center. There is concern about the aesthetics of this large wall on the park. This will be an agenda item at the January meeting.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be on January 14, 2009.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Theresa Doherty, ABGC Secretary