

# APPROVED

*Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC)*  
*[www.wparboretum.org](http://www.wparboretum.org), then select ABGC*

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

*February 7, 2007*

## *Voting*

### *Members:*

#### **Arboretum Foundation**

- Neal Lessenger, Arboretum Foundation Representative

#### **City of Seattle**

- Jack Collins, Board of Park Commissioner
- Donald Harris, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Property & Acquisition Services Manager

#### **University of Washington**

- Sandra Lier, University of Washington, Associate Vice-president of Business Services
- David Maberley, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG) Director
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington Professor

### *Others:*

- Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Assistant Vice President for Regional Affairs
- David Graves, Seattle Parks, Project Planner
- Fred Hoyt, UWBG, Facilities & Grounds Manager
- Elizabeth Loudon, UWBG, Education and Outreach Manager
- Debera Carlton Harrell, Seattle Times News Reporter

### *Staff:*

- Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Chair Donald Harris called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. The November 8, 2006, minutes were approved as presented. The December 14 retreat minutes will be reviewed and approved by e-mail.

New Members: Donald introduced new members Iain Robertson and Theresa Doherty from the University of Washington. Iain is replacing John Wott, who retired at the end of December. Theresa is replacing Sandra Lier, who is retiring at the end of March. This is Sandra's last meeting and Donald presented her with a bouquet of flowers and spoke about Sandra's contributions to the ABGC. She has been instrumental in developing the excellent relationship now enjoyed by the Arboretum Foundation, City, and University in their oversight of the Arboretum. A hearty round of applause followed. Theresa's first meeting as a voting member will be March 7.

Current ABGC members are:

Arboretum Foundation:	John Johnston; Neal Lessenger
City of Seattle:	Margaret Ceis; Jack Collins; Donald Harris
University of Washington:	Theresa Doherty; David Maberley; Iain Robertson
Washington State:	Dave Towne

Meeting Dates: The meeting date has now officially been changed back to the first Wednesday of each month, 8:30-10:30 am, at Graham Visitors Center. The 2007 retreat date was set for November 7, 8:00 am-1:00 pm.

Election of Officers: The following officers were elected for 2007:

President	Donald Harris, City of Seattle
Vice-President	Neal Lessenger, Arboretum Foundation
Secretary	David Maberley, University of Washington

The ABGC's operating procedures for electing officers is that the City, Arboretum Foundation, and UW shall each have an officer. Officers are to rotate yearly; however, it was agreed that Donald Harris has done an excellent job as chair and was re-elected for a second term. In 2008, officers must rotate so that the president represents either the UW or Arboretum Foundation.

Summary of Retreat: Donald asked members to critique the December 14 retreat. What went well; what should be changed?

Jack stated that it was the best ABGC retreat he has attended. He thought all the attendees were very engaged in the topics being discussed and thought the two sessions worked very well. A number of difficult issues were aired.

The retreat was the last for Seattle Parks' Superintendent Ken Bounds, who is retiring at the end of February. A national search is planned to secure his replacement. Deputy Superintendent B.J. Brooks has been named Interim Superintendent. **Jack moved that the ABGC recommends the University of Washington President appoint David Maberley or Theresa Doherty to be on the national search committee. Iain seconded. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.** Theresa is in frequent contact with Deputy Mayor Tim Ceis and will discuss this with him.

ABGC members stressed that the 10-15 hours per month that the Superintendent authorized Sandy Brooks to staff the ABGC is critical for its continued success. This includes taking minutes, preparing agendas, assisting with retreat planning, maintaining contact and term information, and ensuring that documents are posted to the web page, among other duties. Members were urged to contact B.J. Brooks, Interim Superintendent, asking her to extend these additional hours for Sandy. Recently four Board of Park Commissioners resigned and four new Commissioners will join the Board over the next few months. It was agreed that David Maberley will brief the Board and the new Superintendent on the issues faced by the Arboretum.

### **Goals & Objectives:**

Members next reviewed the Goals & Objectives, the ABGC's work plan. Additions, deletions, and corrections were made. At the March 7 meeting, the 2006 Retreat minutes will be reviewed for any additional work items to add.

### **SR520 Project:**

David M made opening remarks on a new alternative plan for the SR520 project and showed a drawing of the plan. He stated that a great deal of damage was done to the Arboretum in the 1960's when SR520 was built. The Washington State Department of Transportation is now planning to re-build the highway and he has been looking for some opportunity to be positive about this project. He believes the new Union Bay Alternative Plan (Craig Dolby Plan) is a huge opportunity to undo the harm to the Arboretum caused by SR520. In addition, with this plan, there is no need for WSDOT to build a temporary bridge to keep traffic moving. The Union Bay Plan doesn't require lower grades, the Montlake community won't have to look at a bridge, and this plan is good for the salmon. This plan would appear to be better for the Montlake community than the Pacific Connections alternative, and in addition, it could accommodate light rail.

The disadvantages of the Union Bay Plan are that it moves SR520 closer to the University of Washington Botanical Gardens and closer to the Laurelhurst community.

Donald commented that a good idea is never too late. Jack commented that seeing this new alternative has evoked the first positive emotion he has had since the SR520 discussions began. However, it requires a tunnel — and discussion of a tunnel has previously fallen on deaf ears. David M commented that in the Union Bay Plan, the tunnel is much more modest and would be built under terra firma — not under water, as proposed in the previous tunnel plan.

David M stated that just before Christmas WSDOT cancelled a meeting to discuss why this plan hadn't been evaluated and has not re-scheduled the meeting.

Iain commented that from a designer's standpoint, the Union Bay Plan has three excellent assets:

- Balance — it doesn't impose on any one group
- Integration — it will accommodate light rail integration for increased public transportation
- Elegance — there is opportunity for wonderful views of the city from this plan

This plan resolves issues that were unresolved by every other proposal and it breaks out of the "SR520 tunnel vision." He thinks the ABGC should strongly recommend this plan.

Sandra stated that the ABGC has previously written letters of concern and opposition on the other SR520 alternatives to the City and the Governor. It should now send a letter of support for this plan.

David Graves reviewed the EIS process and stated that it would not be out of the ordinary to request WSDOT to prepare a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to review the Union Bay Plan and accept public comment on it. This would be especially appropriate after the Department of Interior wrote its concerns to WSDOT regarding the other alternatives. A letter to WSDOT should include this request.

Jack voiced his fears at the December retreat that not enough time has been spent considering mitigation costs for the damage to the Arboretum. He is very concerned that the State is making the decision on the SR520 project by itself. The viaduct is the State's other major transportation project in Seattle and the City has strong financial interests in that project. Donald commented that in watching the viaduct process in the media, it is evident that there is a great deal of politics and pressure at work.

The ABGC must move quickly to get the SR520 project in the forefront of the City's interest. The following suggestions were made:

- Need to know additional design information and costs of the Union Bay Plan.
- Stress that building and removing temporary bridges (as would happen in the other alternatives) is very costly.
- Need to portray the Union Bay Plan in a way that captures the public's imagination. This is a great opportunity to build a beautiful road leading into and out of Seattle — instead of compromising with a dismal one.

**Jack moved that the ABGC adopt a resolution to be accompanied by a very strong letter supporting the substance of the Union Bay Plan. David M seconded. The vote was taken and was unanimous in favor.** David M, Iain, and Elizabeth will prepare the letter and resolution, which will be sent to WSDOT, City Council members, Governor Gregoire, the UW Regents, Mayor Nickels, and the ABGC members.

Jack suggested that the ABGC take the lead and invite community groups to discuss this new plan before the groups take a formal stand. He also suggested inviting the Mayor's SR520 Task Force to meet at the Center for Urban Horticulture to discuss the plan. Donald suggested using the letter and resolution as a segueway to help the community understand the ABGC's excitement for this new plan.

Theresa commented that it is important to get this message out quickly. She suggested meeting with the three community groups in Montlake, Roanoke Park, and North Capitol Hill. Invite proponents of both the Union Bay and the Pacific Interchange Plans. Donald and Parks staff will take the lead in setting up the meetings and inviting the community.

### **MPIG Report:**

**Pacific Connections:** Staff are analyzing the budget. The Arboretum Foundation believes it will have the needed funds raised by June. Donald stated the City is planning to celebrate the centennial of the 1909 Alaskan Yukon Pacific

(AYP) Expedition in 2009. He has learned from the Office of Intergovernmental Relations that there is interest in submitting a federal funding request for \$1 million and the Arboretum Pacific Connections project has been identified as a candidate project, given the common ties between the Washington Park Arboretum and AYP. The celebration is focused on making connections for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and confirming the 100-year tradition of Seattle as a gateway. David M suggested that the Chilean garden be proposed for funding. Neal suggested that it is important to focus on an Alaskan connection in keeping with the Alaskan Yukon Expositions' 100-year anniversary.

Irrigation Mainline: Arboretum Drive will eventually be re-paved, and staff are now doing some temporary paving. Members discussed that when the road is re-paved and the numerous potholes are gone the road may become a "speedway." Methods to avoid this will be determined.

### **Old/New Business**

- Due to time constraints, several agenda items will be carried forward to the March meeting.
- Donald H thanked the UW for providing the new carpet in the Visitors Center.
- Sandra Lier, who is retiring at the end of March, has sent her ABGC records to the UW records management division.
- Jack stated that a citizen recently approached him on ways to improve a bikeway through the Arboretum. Donald will contact City staff to help with this request. Currently-planned paths should be referred to as multi-use paths, and not as bike trails. This will be discussed further at the March meeting.
- Iain will lead a tour of the Arboretum's winter garden on Sunday March 4, 1-2:30. He invited the ABGC to attend the tour.

The meeting concluded at 10:30 am.

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
David Maberley, ABGC Secretary