

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)
January 9, 2008*

Voting

Members:

Arboretum Foundation

- Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director
- John Johnston, Arboretum Foundation President

City of Seattle

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

University of Washington

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

Absent:

University of Washington

- David Maberley, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG) Director

Washington State

- Dave Towne, Governor's Appointee

Others:

- Nancy Belcher, Arboretum Foundation Staff
- Fred Hoyt, UWBG, Facilities & Grounds Manager
- Wendy Kelley, University of Washington, College of Forest Resources
- Neal Lessenger, Former Arboretum Foundation President
- Andy Sheffer, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Project Manager
- Larry Sinnott, Citizen & Friends of Olmsted Parks Board Member

Staff:

- Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Standing Committees

Funding Requests to State Legislature: John (Arboretum Foundation), Jack (City), Dave T (Washington State)

Naming Recognition Policy: Paige (Arboretum Foundation), Donald (City), Teresa (UW)

Mission Statement: Kathleen Pierce (Arboretum Foundation), Donald (City), Elizabeth (UW)

SR520 Mediation (Group of 34): Paige Miller, representing both the ABGC and Arboretum Foundation

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am at Graham Visitors Center by Acting Chair Donald Harris. Dave Towne, elected chair at the December meeting, is working out of state for two months and has asked Donald to chair the January and February meetings. Donald welcomed the newest member to the ABGC, Kjris Lund, who was recently appointed to the mayoral position previously held by Margaret Ceis and vacant since early 2007. Introductions were

made. Ms. Lund worked for the King County Parks Department in the 1970s acquiring park land. She also worked for the King County Arts Program, and has spent the past 20 years working as a consultant.

The minutes from the November 7 retreat and the December 12 meeting were approved, with minor corrections.

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG) Updates

Pacific Connections Gardens

Andy reported that:

- The Pacific Connections project is on schedule, under budget, and moving forward. Staff are moving ahead to procure plants for the exhibits.
- The Cascadia pathway is re-graded and the wall is under construction. The sample section of wall looks good, with no erosion problems so far. The contractor has used four weather days. Andy explained that weather days are when the contractor can't work due to inclement weather. Each weather day extends the contract's completion date by one day. The project is now 17-20% complete. There are no change orders yet; however, the project will have some.
- Fred and Andy and the oversight group meet with the contractor weekly and Andy meets with them more often.

Plant Procurement

Paige and Andy reported that some plant substitutions are being made at the entry area. Staff are trying to get the plants from as few sources as possible. The ribbon cutting is scheduled for June.

Publicity/Outreach

Paige reported that KOMO TV is doing a promotional segment about the Northwest Flower and Garden Show. The Show's gala will be the Arboretum's biggest fundraising event of the year, with 800 attendees expected.

Japanese Garden Entry Project

This project is on schedule and within budget. All of the needed funds have been raised except for \$50,000. Staff are waiting to see if the grant applications for an additional \$400,000 are awarded. If so, the funds will be used to build additional storage. Construction begins in April. Andy met with Berger on Cascadia Garden on Monday. He has requested a fee proposal before interviewing them. Fred agreed that this project is moving ahead very well.

Arboretum Drive

Andy reported that a transportation engineer has looked at Arboretum Drive as a possible one-way route with a bike path. Jack commented that this would be a change in the Arboretum's Master Plan and he was previously unaware of this. He believes this proposal should have first come to the ABGC. Fred stated that the grounds maintenance staff would want to be a part of this discussion, too. Donald stated that the proposal would be a change to the Master Plan and would have to go through a public hearing process. This initial step is to lay out a proposal that could be considered by the ABGC and to determine how it would impact the Master Plan.

SR520 Update

Today's discussion focused on Paige's direction from the ABGC as she meets with the SR520 Mediation Group (aka the Group of 34). Paige represents both the ABGC and Arboretum Foundation at this group. Theresa represents the UW, and Larry Sinnott, who attended today's ABGC meeting, represents the Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks. There are 31 other members of the Group, including 6 mayors from the East Side of Lake Washington and 25 community organization representatives.

Paige first distributed copies of "Principles Guiding Representation of the Arboretum in the SR520 Mediation Process" to the ABGC. The "Principles" reads:

“Within the guidelines established for the mediation by the State legislature and the adopted mediation protocols, do everything possible to minimize the harm to the Arboretum and, if possible, to reverse the damage inflicted on the Arboretum by the original SR520 Bridge. Work to reduce the impacts of traffic, noise, and water and air pollution on the Arboretum.

To further these goals:

1. Oppose the Pacific Interchange options and any similar options that make Lake Washington Boulevard the sole or primary southern access point to SR520.
2. To the extent that ramp access to Lake Washington Boulevard must be accommodated:
 - a. Work to move any ramps westward, out of the heart of the Arboretum
 - b. Work to reduce traffic flow through the Arboretum to and from such ramps through ramp-metering and/or differential pricing of tolls
 - c. Make sure the Montlake interchange is 4-lane (this was added following ABGC discussion)
3. Support viable options to put SR520 in a tunnel in the section crossing the Arboretum to reduce the impact of the roadway and restore the park.
4. Support reasonable accommodations for mass transit to reduce the pressure for future highway expansion.

Paige stated that her efforts are to (1) avoid further harm to the Arboretum; and (2) try to heal damage incurred previously. She has strongly opposed the Pacific Interchange alternative and any variations of it.

Fred asked if part of her effort is to define what the “6 lanes of through traffic” means. Paige answered yes, that she is working to ensure that it means 6 lanes and not 6 lanes now plus 2 lanes in the future.

At the last 520 Mediation meeting, Paige gave each of the other 33 members a copy of “Into the Wild”, a book about the Arboretum. There is tremendous support in the group for the Arboretum.

She next distributed to the ABGC a copy of the SR520 Mediation group’s January 15 agenda and explained that four of the various options will be discussed at that meeting: Options, G, D, J, and A. Paige proposed Option G. She explained that none of the various options have yet been removed from consideration; however, those that have received the most interest are being reviewed at the January meeting. It is good for the Arboretum that the Pacific Interchange is not one of those that has received the most interest and is not being considered at the January meeting.

Paige spent some time describing the various alternatives and stated that the tunnel is a very expensive alternative and most likely will not be the one chosen. Maurice Cooper of the Madison Park community has proposed a retrofit alternative. Jack commented that he spoke recently with Speaker of the House Frank Chopp, who is **very** interested in the retrofit.

Alternative F was put forth by Larry Sinnott and is not on the January agenda. Paige encouraged support of this alternative but does not believe the group will support an alternative that has no access to Lake Washington Boulevard. She proposed alternative G, but the engineers drew the hybrid tunnel across the Arboretum. She was not allowed to have input into the engineer’s drawing. This alternative moves the ramps farther west and eliminates ramps through the heart of the Arboretum. A lid at Montlake would be more expensive but is still on the table for consideration. She stressed that her expertise, from her years at the Port of Seattle and involvement with public transportation and politics, is what will be the most likely alternative to garner political approval. She does not believe a plan that allows no access to Lake Washington Boulevard will garner that approval. She is trying to put forth a proposal that will both benefit the Arboretum and have the most chance of succeeding.

Kjris noted that Lake Washington Boulevard is a park road and nearby 23rd Avenue is a city street. The group spent several minutes discussing these streets, as well as the Boyer intersection. Paige will keep the Mediation Group focused on the impact of ramps to Lake Washington Boulevard and the Boyer intersection and urge that neither of these become a thruway. Donald commented that the City traditionally supports transportation projects over park usage.

Donald summarized the discussion, as prior to today's meeting there was concern that Paige's position is inconsistent with that of the Friends of Olmsted Parks and some other Arboretum supporters. Iain weighed in yesterday via e-mail. Jack commented that he was on the Mayor's SR520 Stakeholder's Committee and continues to meet with the neighborhood groups. He believes Paige makes an excellent case for her proposal (Alternative G.) He does not want this to split the ABGC or to weaken Paige's position at the SR520 Mediation meetings. Paige stated that her proposal, Alternative G, is more expensive and both the ABGC and Arboretum Foundation must support it or it cannot move forward. She noted that there are serious issues with this alternative: 1. cost; 2. impact on fisheries; and 3. risk of disturbing Native American artifacts on Foster Island.

Paige stated that she will ask the Mediation Group to give further consideration of Alternative F2 (Larry's proposal to not have any ramps that lead to Lake Washington Boulevard) and ask the neighborhood groups to support Alternative G and ask for the option of studying removal of the ramps. Nancy, who is a lobbyist working for the Arboretum Foundation on the SR520 issue, added that all the Mediation Group members selected the four alternatives they wanted brought forth at the January meeting – it wasn't Paige's decision.

Iain suggested the grade of the tunnel could be changed to a different one; soil could be brought in and rounded over the tunnel so the cut would not need to be so deep/low (which could be less expensive.)

Discussion continued for some time on the two alternatives. Dave Towne sent a message from Tucson that it is important that the ABGC support Paige and that her hands not be tied as she works with the Mediation Group. Iain added that it is also essential that the Mediation Group understands that the ramps are more of an impact on the Arboretum than the direct footprint of a wider bridge.

The ABGC agreed that Paige should move forward with Alternative G, while asking that the Mediation Group study Alternative F2. Paige stated that she understands that the ramps are more of an impact but it isn't yet clear to her that any new ramp would be worse than the current ramps. Paige understands that her direction from the ABGC is to push forward alternative G to be altered to add 'if at all possible avoid ramps to Lake Washington Boulevard because of traffic impacts all the way through the Arboretum'. At the January 15 SR520 Mediation Group meeting, she will advocate for this.

State Legislation

State Senator Ken Jacobsen has introduced SB6226 that among other things would create an endowed curatorship for the Washington Park Arboretum, with \$1 million to be funded by the State and to be matched by \$1 million raised privately. This position was eliminated a number of years ago and is critical to the successful management of the Arboretum.

Fred, David, Kjris, & Wendy will attend the State committee on Natural Resources, Ocean and Recreation at 8:00 am on January 23 to testify in support of this legislation.

New/Old Business

City Council Committees: Donald reported that Council member Tom Rasmussen is the new chair of the Parks and Seattle Center Committee (formerly Parks, Education, Libraries & Labor Committee.) Other committee members include Council members Drago and Conlin, with Council member Burgess as alternative.

ABGC Vacancy: With the addition of Kjris as the Mayor's third appointment, all voting positions on the ABGC are filled. However, David Maberley's position will be vacant after mid-February, when he moves to England to work at Kew Gardens.

Invite UW Provost to ABGC Meeting: Theresa invited the Provost to the ABGC's March 12 meeting.

Naming/Recognition Update: No report today. This will be added to the February 13 agenda for a report.

Fundraising: John, Paige, Dean Bare, and Superintendent Gallagher have met to talk about mutual interests. Paige is working with Tom and Wendy to set up a meeting to focus on the fundraising procedures. Paige was happy to report that the Arboretum Foundation has hired a new development director who will begin work the following Monday.

Work Plan Goals: Donald and Dave recently reviewed the Work Plan goals in depth and Donald will report on this at the February meeting.

Seattle Public Utilities Presentation: Madison Valley Drainage Project

Recently Jack Collins discussed the Madison Park drainage project, currently a very high priority Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) project, with SPU staff. Donald contacted SPU and asked that their staff brief the ABGC on this project to determine whether the project (which will use land at Washington Park) might also benefit the Arboretum. For more information on the project, see

http://www.seattle.gov/util/About_SPU/News/Current_Issues/MadisonValleyFlooding/

Today Celia Kennedy of SPU and Rick Ballard of RH2 Engineering gave a brief history of the drainage and flooding problems in the lower area of Madison Valley. The area was flooded in both 2004 and 2006 and even with the improvements that SPU has already made to control the water runoff, more must be done. Additional storage space for runoff water is needed for the future, especially with the impacts of global warming.

SPU has developed two proposals, with one including the purchase of 17 homes at the lowest part of the basin (many of the homeowners are unhappy with this proposal); and the second is that 1/3 of the flow would be captured at 30th and John and directed to a new storm drain and the excess water stored underneath the south end of Washington Park Playfield. In addition, there would be bermed areas for even more capacity when the worst storms hit. The water would be stored in these areas for a matter of hours and then moved on. This water could be used to feed a stream or for irrigation needs in the Arboretum.

Ms. Kennedy and Mr. Barnett distributed a map and pointed out the playfield and the proposed berm area. The proposal includes a 750,000 gallon above-ground tank and a 2 million gallon below-ground tank. Jack asked if the plan is that the water would not go into the Arboretum Creek or Japanese Garden stream and Mr. Barnett agreed, although the water could be diverted there, if desired. Along with building the water storage tank systems and berms, SPU will provide \$1 million to rebuild the playfield. Ms. Kennedy and Mr. Barnett pointed out that the tanks cannot be full of water for summer irrigation because some of the worst storms have happened in the summer and the tanks must have capacity for storm runoff at all times of the year.

Jack pointed out that the Arboretum Creek (which now runs through culverts) could be daylighted and the water used for that purpose and for irrigation. This project is of no benefit to the Arboretum if the excess water cannot be accessed.

Donald commented that the ABGC does not want the water to flow through the Japanese Garden, but rather to bypass the garden and then go to Arboretum Creek. Mr. Barnett showed a very large drawing of where the consolidated sewer pipe will run and a possible route for the water to run to Arboretum Creek. Swales would be needed to clean the storm water before it could run into the Creek – and eventually into Lake Washington. There are water rights and water discharge regulations that must be satisfied. Paige asked if the swaled water would be clear enough to daylight the creek and to reintroduce salmon to Arboretum Creek. She believes that if it is “Long Live the Kings” (salmon support group) would support funding for this project.

Iain suggested that SPU staff visit the City of Kent’s project at Mill Creek Canyon, which includes berming that has received international attention. The berming could become an earthwork sculpture and Jack suggested that King County’s 1% for Arts might help fund the project. Rick added that Seattle Parks would like bleacher seating at Washington Park and the berming could possibly work for that element, too. Iain asked if the fill on the south side of

Washington Park is stable enough for this project. Rick answered yes. Although the playfields are located on previous landfill, it does not present a problem for the water storage as the storage facility will be very shallow. Iain commented that this project could result in multiple benefits. Paige is looking at this as a public/private partnership – SPU would not be expected to fund the entire project. Jack suggested that the ABGC make sure that each partner’s higher authorities are aware of and involved with this project, including Superintendent Gallagher, Dean Bare, and SPU Director Chuck Clarke.

Donald stated that SPU, which is being directed by City Council ordinance on this project, is on a timeline and it is important that the ABGC not come in at the last minute with a different option. The emergency situation in Madison Valley is the top priority and SPU must focus on that. ABGC members agreed that its request cannot impede SPU; however, it requests SPU to take its requests into account during the design process. Fred stated that the ABGC doesn’t want to change SPU’s design, it wants to attach its design to the project. Rick agreed that this is doable. The project can be designed in a way that daylighting of the creek could become a later component. He and Celia are both maxed out on projects they are working on. Staff must be found who can work on the feasibility of this project. ABGC members suggested that once a feasibility study is prepared, it will then be sent to Chuck Clarke and other policy makers to help make this exciting opportunity happen.

Celia stated that SPU will likely know during the first quarter which alternative the City will select. Paige asked that Celia ensure that the Mayor and Council know of this other benefit and Celia agreed to do so. Funding for the project could come from several sources.

The ABGC thanked Celia and Rick for the good presentation. A copy of the graphics will be attached to the minutes from this meeting.

The next meeting will be held on February 13 at Isaacson Classroom at Center for Urban Horticulture. There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 10:40 am.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Theresa Doherty, ABGC Secretary