

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
June 11, 2008

Voting
Members:

Arboretum Foundation

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

City of Seattle

- Jack Collins, Mayoral Appointee

University of Washington

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

Washington State

- Dave Towne, Governor's Appointee

Excused:

- Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Assistant Vice President for Regional Affairs
- Donald Harris, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Property & Acquisition Services Manager
- Kjris Lund, Mayoral Appointee
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington Professor

Others:

- Tim Gallagher, Seattle Parks Superintendent
- Fred Hoyt, UWBG, Facilities & Grounds Manager
- Andy Sheffer, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Project Manager

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), Sandra (UW)
Mission Statement: Kathleen Pierce (Arboretum Foundation), Donald (City), Sandra (UW)
Provost's Presentation: Tim, Paige, Sandra, & Dave
SR520 Mediation (Group of 34): Paige Miller, 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)

Upcoming Events:

July 10: City Council public hearing on new park levy, 5:30 pm, City Council Chambers

July 22: Meet with UW Provost, 11-12 am, Gerberding Hall, Room 301

September 18: UW Regents, briefing on Arboretum

September 20: Pacific Connections, ribbon cutting - afternoon

ABGC Chair Dave Towne called the meeting, held at Graham Visitors Center, to order at 8:30 am. Barbara Wright, incoming Arboretum Foundation President, was welcomed as the ABGC's newest voting member, replacing John Johnston, outgoing Foundation President. **The agenda was accepted as revised. Sandra Lier moved approval of the May 14 minutes, as corrected, and Jack Collins seconded. The vote was taken and the motion was approved.**

Project Updates

Pacific Connections Phase I: Andy reported that:

- Phase I is on schedule with some modifications;
- Current work includes upgrading the walls, completing some aesthetics, and vegetation is being planted;
- Expected completion is in early August;
- The tree spading part of the project has gone well;
- Several sod companies donated, or sold at a lowered cost, soil for the project;
- The construction contingency remains at 85-90%; and
- Berger Partnership has made recommendations to decrease the costs of several elements in the design of the Cascadia and New Zealand Gardens.

Pacific Connections Phase II: Work is going well on the "Splash of Chile" segment of the project. The goal is to complete this project and the Holmdahl Rockery, both at the south entrance, as soon as possible to interest people in what is going on at the Arboretum. The bids will be opened in 1-1/2 weeks and then staff will have a good idea of the budget status. Most of the bids are coming in through a web bid process, with Roy E. Dunn showing the most interest. This company has completed a number of projects for Seattle Parks and Recreation.

Bike/Traffic in Arboretum Survey: Tim requested that he review the survey for the Arboretum bike lane as it is being developed and Andy agreed. Andy, Paige, Randy Bare, and Phil Miller had a very good meeting to discuss the pilot which would include "sharrows" to show that Arboretum Drive is a designated bike share road. Phil will present recommendations on the pilot at the group's next meeting. The proposal will go through Seattle Parks' regular review process.

Jack asked that the ABGC be kept up to date on this proposal. It was agreed that both Jack and Kjris will attend the meetings as representatives of the ABGC. Andy is working directly with Pete Lagerway, Seattle Department of Transportation's bicycle coordinator. Barbara asked that Andy also work directly with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT.) Paige is also sharing information about the proposal with WSDOT at the SR520 meetings.

Japanese Garden: The groundbreaking for the new entry is scheduled for Monday, June 16, 10:00 am.

Powerpoint Presentation: Paige presented the Arboretum Powerpoint show she has been showing at various meetings.

Updates

Broadmoor Project: Sandra reported that she has not yet set up meetings with the Broadmoor Community Club and the Broadmoor Golf Club. Paige has met with the Broadmoor Community Club; however, the large (25-30' tall) wall being built by the Golf Club directly in front of the Graham Visitor's Center, was not discussed. Fred reported that he met with the Golf Club's gardener and they do have a landscape plan, although it will not hide very much of the wall from the Arboretum. The two will meet again and continue reviewing the plan.

Paige and Donald Harris are working with the City's Department of Planning and Development on concerns with the height of the wall. The permit allows a 25' wall, although it appears it is possibly 33' tall – and is very obtrusive to the Arboretum. Tim noted that the City's Department of Planning and Development isn't required to consult with Seattle Parks and Recreation about the project and didn't do so. Parks and Recreation has serious concerns with the retention ponds recently constructed by the Golf Club, due to the possibility that spillage from the ponds may damage the Arboretum.

UWBG Director Search: Bruce Bare, Dean of the College of Forest Resources, will soon contact the final candidate for the University of Washington Botanic Garden Director position and begin negotiations. It is hoped the new Director will be on board in time to attend the September 18 briefing to the UW Regents. Sandra or Dean Bare will keep the ABGC posted when the position is filled.

ABGC members asked that Sandra, Acting Director of the UWBG, stay on for a training and introductory period with the new Director. Sandra is available and is agreeable to this proposal. Dave will call Dean Bare to discuss this suggestion. Paige commented that it has been great to have Sandra in the UWBG Director's position for the past several months and she believes relationships are working much better than previously.

Arboretum Mission Statement: Sandra is working with Kathleen Pierce and Donald Harris on a new mission statement for the Arboretum. She plans to send a draft to ABGC members prior to the July 9 ABGC meeting for discussion at the meeting.

UW College of the Environment: The UW is moving ahead with plans to create a College of the Environment, with the Regents scheduled to vote on the proposal later this week. The proposal has raised controversy at the University. Dean Bare has some concerns. The Seattle Times had a detailed story about the proposed new school on June 7: http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2004464871_enviroschool08m.html. The ABGC spent some time discussing the proposal, which could be of help to the Arboretum. It was noted that Dean Bare plans to retire some time in the next year, resulting in a new Dean of College of Forest Resources.

Provost Visit to ABGC: Dave reported that UW Provost Phyllis Wise will meet with ABGC representatives on Tuesday, July 22, from 11-12 am at Gerberdring Hall at the UW. Tim, Sandra, and Paige will work together to develop the presentation, which will focus on the Arboretum and its budget needs.

Donor Recognition Policy Committee: Sandra and Paige have been working together on a donor recognition policy for the Arboretum that satisfies the UW, Arboretum Foundation, and City's donor policies. Sandra recently discussed the policies with the State Attorney General's office. The City and UW's policies are more alike than the policies of the UW and Arboretum Foundation. The policies are not in conflict with each other and none will be re-written; however, some small decisions need to be made. Paige commented that the committee has more work to do, especially on the endowment portion of the policy. The Pacific Connections ribbon cutting is scheduled for September 20. The committee plans to have the Arboretum's Donor Recognition Policy in place by that date.

Sandra will draft a summary of the committee's recommendation and send to Dean Bare. She noted that signage must also be addressed, as the Dean wants to review that portion of the policy, too. Jack urged that the ABGC be asked to approve the outcome of the committee's final product.

Responding to a question from Dave on whether the Arboretum Foundation Board has discussed giving 1% of donor gifts towards endowment of the project, Paige answered yes. She reported that last week the Arboretum Foundation received a donation of \$500,000 and a second donation of \$25,000 for endowment of the Pacific Connections gardens.

Joint Fundraising Policy: (See Page 1 for list of committee members.) John Howell from the Cedar River group has been meeting individually with the partners over the past few weeks and the kickoff meeting for the committee is now being scheduled.

Paige reported a successful example of the Arboretum Foundation and UW staff working together with potential donors, rather than on a separate basis, as has been the past policy. Recently a donor wanted to add to his/her parents' previous gift to the Arboretum. Wendy Kelley (UW's Major Gifts Officer for the College of Forest Resources) and Julia (Arboretum Foundation's Director of Development) jointly visited the donor who gave a gift of \$200,000. The Arboretum Foundation staff members have been notifying donors that the Foundation and UW are working on a joint fundraising policy.

City Council Considering New Park Levy

Seattle City Council and the citizen committee it convened to determine interest in a new park levy have held several public meetings and the committee will accept public testimony on June 17, beginning at 5:30 pm, in the Lopez Room at Seattle Center.

Paige reported that she sent the ABGC's letter of support to the committee and to the nine Council members. Within 10 minutes of e-mailing the letter, she received a positive response from City Council Chair Richard Conlin, who will support funding the Arboretum if the levy is successful. She also heard from Council member McIver, who does not support it.

She has heard that the Arboretum would be slated for \$2.5 million if the levy succeeds. Jack commented that if this happens, it is important to focus the funds to help implement the Master Plan. Tim commented that the Mayor also opposes the levy and Seattle Parks and Recreation is not involved in determining its feasibility. He has heard that it would be a \$140 million levy with \$2.5 million earmarked for the Arboretum and another \$5 million earmarked for daylighting creeks, including Arboretum Creek. He understands that City Council will need seven yes votes for the levy to move ahead. Dave noted that Council must act quickly for the levy to be on a fall ballot.

Union Bay Master Plan

Fred briefed the group on the Union Bay Master Plan. He displayed a large map of the gardens and described the preliminary plans. The original plan was designed by Jones and Jones in 1974, with the current update designed by Berger Partnership. He described the various elements, including a Children's Garden and Children's Arboretum, new trails, and maps to help the public move from one garden to the next. There is a strong focus on signage and wayfinding elements and a goal of the Master Plan is to get a clear message out to answer the question: What is the University of Washington Botanic Garden. Dean Bare of the College of Forest Resources likes the plan and hopes to find funds for its implementation. Jack suggested that UW staff utilize a graduate student to compile information on the gardens and hopes this Master Plan gardenstays in the forefront of consideration by the University.

SR520 Project Update

Bob Corwin, Virginia Gundy, and Eliza Davidson attended this meeting. Mr. Corwin addressed the ABGC and stated that he has been a Capitol Hill resident for 40 years, is an urban planner, and now an activist for Livable Cities. He attends many of the community meetings that are focusing on the SR520 replacement project and speaks to the issues; however, he is not representing any particular group.

He presented a handout to the ABGC and voiced his concerns with the SR520 replacement plans and asked the ABGC to lend its support for a four-lane alternative to be considered in Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS.) He believes that all the alternatives currently being considered by WSDOT are damaging, as they contain six lanes. Although the State Legislature declared its intent for a six-lane alternative, the declaration is not binding.

He stated that the transportation models WSDOT is using (which determine that a six or more lane replacement is needed) are decades old. He asked WSDOT why it isn't more optimistic about the adequacy of four lanes and was told that the replacement lane needs are based on increased auto usage, rather than a focus on people switching to mass transit. He believes the 6-8 lane alternatives will encourage more traffic to use the bridge. He believes most people in the area do not realize how damaging the 6-lane alternatives will be. He would like to see the damage done to the Arboretum when SR520 was built through it undone, and that the replacement plan be for the most efficient movement of people and goods – and not focused on the movement of vehicles.

Dave thanked Bob for addressing the ABGC and asked him to keep in mind that this group's only concern is for the Arboretum.

Paige next reported on the Mediation Committee, which met for 2-1/2 hours the day before. She commented that the Committee was formed to work under the confines of a six-lane alternative. Many of the members would prefer fewer lanes, but are confined to the six lanes. The group is trying to do as little damage to the Arboretum as possible and asking that the ramps in the Arboretum be removed, SR520 be in a bermed tunnel as it crosses much of the Arboretum land, and that traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard is minimized. The group is meeting every two weeks with State Speaker of House Frank Chopp and Rod Judd, Senior Advisor to Governor Christine Gregoire.

At every meeting, the six-lane alternative is high on Speaker Chopp's priorities. Transportation engineering specialists worked for three days on developing a design that would have a 600 foot low berm over Foster Island and a tunnel under the Montlake Cut from the Museum of History and Industry to the UW. Good news from that would be lower impact to the Montlake Cut. This plan would avoid issues with the Fish & Wildlife Agency as it wouldn't damage the fish environment and with the Environmental Protection Agency. WSDOT believes the design is feasible.

University representatives are attending meetings to determine how best to connect SR520 with the UW Sound Transit Station. This design does not give much additional traffic capacity and there will still be backups. The next Mediation Committee meeting is on June 17, with a review of Alternatives A and K planned. These two options have had little technical design.

The preferred alternative for the EIS will be chosen in November. Responding to a question on whether Seattle Mayor Nickels prefers one alternative over another, Paige responded that the Committee has had no contact from the Mayor's office. Bob added that his personal opinion is that the Mayor would not object to the 4-lane option. Bob commented that this is an enormous opportunity to look at how we move around in a different way. Jack thinks there is strong support for the 6-lane or 8-lane alternative.

Dave added that the SR520 replacement project will be a major issue for years to come. He hopes that the project can be mitigated to the best interests of the Arboretum. He thanked Bob, Virginia and Elizabeth for attending the meeting.

New/Old Business

Due to time constraints, no new or old business was discussed.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:25 am.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Theresa Doherty, ABGC Secretary