

APPROVED

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC)
www.wparboretum.org, then select ABGC

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

March 7, 2007

Voting

Members:

Arboretum Foundation

- John Johnston, Arboretum Foundation President
- 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

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

Washington State

- Dave Towne, Washington State Representative

Others:

- David Graves, Seattle Parks, Project Planner
- Fred Hoyt, UWBG, Facilities & Grounds Manager
- Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks, Pro Parks Levy Manager
- Citizens: Jean Amick, John Barber, Paul Gibson, Kit O'Neill, Larry Sinnott

Staff:

- Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Chair Donald Harris called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. There were several guests in the audience and everyone introduced themselves. This was the first ABGC meeting for new voting members John Johnston of the Arboretum Foundation and Theresa Doherty of the UW. The agenda and February 7 minutes were approved.

Public Comments

Donald stated that the ABGC is pleased to have several members of the public at this meeting to talk about the SR520 project alternatives. The ABGC is finalizing a letter to Paul Krueger of WSDOT, as well as a resolution. These will be distributed soon.

At its February 7 meeting, the ABGC received information on the Craig Dalby alternative plan for the SR520 project. Debra Harrell of the Seattle Post Intelligence attended that meeting and wrote a news story. Several citizens read the story, contacted the ABGC, and asked to comment.

John Barber: He introduced the Green Alternative as another alternative for the ABGC to consider. (For more information on the Green Alternative, see <http://www.noexpansionofsr520.org/>.) Mr. Barber stated that this plan provides real transit advantages and a moderation of traffic. It removes ramps from the Arboretum and places long ramps through Montlake to I-5. There would be no ramps at Lake Washington Boulevard. He urged the ABGC to request Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to study the Green Alternative, as well as the Dalby Plan.

Jack Collins commented that the ABGC has not talked with Craig Dalby and wants to see more on his plan, as well as information and detail on the Green Alternative. It is very exciting that the ramps would come out of Lake Washington Boulevard.

Larry Sinnott: The key element to the Green Plan is that transit stops are not needed in these new alternatives and gave extensive information about this. He is a member of the Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks, which voted unanimously to support the ABGC's letter asking for both alternatives to be studied. He believes WSDOT's Environmental Impact Statement on SR520 is flawed. Impacts to traffic have only been studied as far north as 65th.

Kit O'Neill: She attended the City Council hearing held in October and first saw the Dalby Plan there. However, it was one dimensional, with no vertical or horizontal aspects. Craig also sent her a copy of the plan. She read the recent article in the Seattle PI that the ABGC is excited about this plan and wanted to speak to the ABGC. She thinks the Dalby Plan has beautiful lines, but no details on how it would impact the UW, salmon, and north end communities. This plan needs more study before the ABGC supports it. With the global climate change, trees in the Arboretum will not survive the global warming over the next 30 years. We must change how we do things now. Let's see what the fundamental issue is and not just figure a way to move people from end of the lake to the other.

Next week, the citizens of Seattle will vote on the Viaduct replacement and she thinks that plan will have to go back to the drawing board. And, she thinks there is no viable plan yet for the SR520 project. This replacement needs deeper and broader thinking before a commitment is made. Avoid building something dreadful that the citizens must then live with.

Additional comments from guest speakers and ABGC:

- the role of the ABGC is to protect the Arboretum — not the East Side or the north end traffic.
- expand the letter to WSDOT to include global warming and that moving traffic is not the end all be all in this project. The ABGC should advocate for a larger environmental mission.
- host a meeting of the neighborhoods and the Mayor's Stakeholder Advocacy Committee; take boards showing both the Dalby and Green Alternative. Listen to how neighbors react and convey this to WSDOT.
- When 10 of the 12 members of the Stakeholder Advocacy Committee opposed the Pacific Interchange Alternative, the tactics were changed. It is an unbalanced setting when only one neighborhood is influencing such a decision.
- State Senator Ed Murray has nearly finalized plans to hire a mediator to pull the neighborhoods together on SR520.
- The UW is still concerned, even with the Dalby plan.
- Ask WSDOT to do a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to analyze these new alternatives, stressing that more environmental work is needed. Favor alternatives that protect the long-term environment of the Arboretum. John Milton of WSDOT is leaning towards this — send the letter to help push him towards.
- Parks staff have had no recent contact from WSDOT.
- City Council did not pass a resolution in December officially supporting the Pacific Alternative because there was no mitigation commitment from the State.
- Laurelhurst Community Council will meet the following Monday and may discuss these alternatives.
- Neal will revise the letter and resolution and send to members for review.

MPIG

Pacific Connections: Michael reported that the consultants received a notice to proceed this week and construction work should start in the fall at Lake Washington Boulevard and Arboretum Drive. The project is 12 acres, with the first phase being three acres. He will bring the plan to the April 4 meeting. Donald commented that work on the rockery has been de-emphasized due to budget constraints. Staff are working to get volunteers to help clean this. There would also be difficulty in preparing construction specs to clean the rockery.

Irrigation Project: The road is currently re-opened and will close again during dry and warm weather for a top coat. The water hookup has been a challenge, as the records for the McGraw Street service connection were not as accurate as hoped. However, the project has had other cost savings which have evened the budget. Overall, the project has been a great success.

Neal recently had a friend ask when the road would re-open so he could use it to avoid the heavy traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard. Might speed bumps be added? Michael answered that it is a park road and speed bumps will be added, as well as a sign that no trucks are allowed.

Holly Relocation Project: Staff are doing a SEPA checklist on this and the Pacific Connection. Iain is assisting with this.

Donor Recognition: MPIG discussed the donor recognition policy and will bring that forth to the ABGC soon.

Graham visitor Center Operations: Donald, Fred and Neal discussed who does what (UW or Parks staff) at the Visitor Center and will bring this to the ABGC, if it results in a policy change.

Japanese Garden Entry Structure: Last year, the major donor for this project pulled out. Recently she called Donald and is interested in revisiting the project. Donald will arrange a meeting with those involved, to see if we can move forward. Iain commented that the Japanese Garden Advisory Council would like copies of the schematic and want to be involved in this project. Michael will send the schematic drawings.

Old/New business:

Federal budget: Good news! Donald distributed copies of a letter to Senator Patty Murray, stating that \$1 M is being requested for the Pacific Connections project in federal funds. Senator Maria Cantwell has expressed interested in the project.

State Legislature Funding: Dave T stated that he missed the boat on this State budget session. He made contact with Representative Helen Sommers and sent a letter to her. He travels a lot and didn't make further contact. He realizes this was a key opportunity that was missed and suggested looking at the next legislative session.

Bikeway: Jack brought forth a proposal from Lisa Anderson and Ron Reed of Madison Park. Lisa believes that bike access in the Arboretum is very poor and retained an architect who has put together a bike proposal. She has spent a great deal of time and some money on this plan. She (1) met Jack for coffee; (2) met with Erin Devoto, Donald Harris, and Michael Shiosaki of Parks; (3) met with David Maberley of the Arboretum; (4) met with UW staff; and (5) met with the City's bike staff, Pete Lagerway. Jack asked that Lisa and Ron come to the ABGC's April 4 meeting to give a presentation on their proposal.

MPIG discussed this proposal briefly at Monday's meeting. It would move the bicyclists to the west side, would require some trees to be removed, and require additional asphalt. There would be a significant cost. Michael stated that MPIG discussed the proposal and determined that it would be a significant change to the Master Plan. A bikeway was discussed during the Master Plan process and the compromise was for a lane on the east side. MPIG decided not to bring this to the ABGC for further discussion. Jack stated that the ABGC needs to listen to new citizen proposals.

A lengthy discussion followed. Members were extremely concerned that these citizens not get a false sense of hope in presenting to the full ABGC. **Jack moved that the ABGC listen to the proposal and Iain seconded, in the interest of not alienating groups who ask to come before the ABGC.** More discussion followed: this proposal would result in many impacts to the Arboretum; there is no funding for the trail; the Master Plan would have to be amended; and it would cause many impacts to the Arboretum. Theresa urged that Jack be upfront with this group when he invites them to attend the April 4 meeting that the Master Plan will not be re-opened. **The vote was taken and motion carried.** Jack will send an electronic version of the plan to the Coordinator, who will forward to the ABGC.

David Graves, a park planner and, an avid bicyclist, stated that the City's bike master plan shows "sharrows" (share the road with bicyclists) on Lake Washington Boulevard. Jack stated that Pete Lagerway defers to Parks when bike trails are on park property. Paul Gibson stated that bike riders help slow traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard and made some suggestions for curb improvements to improve safety conditions of LWB for bike riders. David G will take these suggestions to the City's bike staff.

Washington Park Arboretum Mission Statement: This will be discussed at the April meeting. A copy of the statement will be distributed.

Superintendent Search/Interim Superintendent: B.J. Brooks, Parks' Deputy Superintendent, has been named as Interim Superintendent while the national search is in process. As a former deputy mayor, Jack found this process generally takes about a year to complete. Dave T stated that Bill Artntz, former Park Board Chair and former Seattle Aquarium Director, has been selected by the Mayor to head the citizen search committee. Donald will invite Interim Superintendent Brooks to an upcoming ABGC meeting.

Approval of Retreat Minutes: Dave T moved approval of the December 13, 2006, retreat minutes. Neal seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion carried.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 10:30 am.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
David Mabberley, ABGC Secretary