

DRAFT

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)

May 2, 2007

Voting

Members:

Arboretum Foundation

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

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

Washington State

- Dave Towne, Washington State Representative

Absent:

University of Washington

- Iain Robertson, University of Washington Professor

Others:

- David Graves, Seattle Parks, Project Planner
- Susan Golub, Seattle Parks, Strategic Planner
- Fred Hoyt, UWBG, Facilities & Grounds Manager
- Elizabeth Loudon, UWBG, Education and Outreach Manager

Staff:

- Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am. **Dave T moved approval of the May 2 agenda, as amended, and March 7 and April 4 minutes, as presented. Jack seconded. The vote was taken and all were approved.**

During the course of the meeting, new attendees to the ABGC were welcomed and everyone introduced themselves. Paige Miller is the new Executive Director of the Arboretum Foundation and a voting member of the ABGC. Susan Golub from Parks will replace Michael Shiosaki as a regular, non-voting representative of Seattle Parks to both the ABGC and Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG.) Michael, formerly the Pro Parks Levy Manager, recently accepted a position as Deputy Superintendent of the Sammamish Parks Department. In addition, David Goldberg, Seattle Parks' project manager who worked on several of the Arboretum's projects, recently accepted a position with Sound Transit.

Reports were given on a number of projects and issues. Staff assignments are bulleted after each report.

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG) Updates

Arboretum Drive Re-paving: Fred reported that Arboretum Drive is currently closed in anticipation of the paving project.

Pacific Connections Project:

Donald reported that the recent meeting with Portico on this project was successful. The construction documents are 65% complete and on target. The next steps are to secure the permits, send it out for bid in August, hold the groundbreaking in October, with project completion anticipated for spring 2008. Dave Towne asked if construction costs are increasing. Donald answered that costs have risen, but there is no crisis yet. Much of this project is landscaping; the major increases in construction costs are in sheetrock, lumber, and other building materials. A donor base is in place for this project; all donations to the City must also be approved by the Mayor and City Council. Paige and the Arboretum Foundation will now raise the funds that were previously committed to by donors. The Pro Parks Levy funds designated for this project can help with flexibility during the fundraising.

SEPA Process: David G reported that after review of a completed environmental checklist, a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) was issued for this project. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not therefore required. Comments on the DNS must be submitted by May 10 to David. The appeal process closes on May 17 and no comments have been received to date. The information is posted on several websites. Seattle Parks' Interim Superintendent Brooks has asked David Maberley, Paige Miller, and some DPR Staff to meet with her and Mayor Nickels to discuss this project. The meeting has been delayed until next week.

Holly Relocation: Fred met yesterday with four vendors for a walk-through of the tree removal at the holly re-location project. Mid-June is the target date for the Request for Proposals.

Outreach: Donald commented that the next challenge is the May 30 public workshop. Extra outreach effort is needed so that when the holly relocation aspect of the project begins, the public is not surprised. Previous workshops have drawn low turnouts and he doesn't believe the general public is aware of the Master Plan projects. Jack commented that not all members of the public were part of the Master Plan agreement process and, in addition to being unaware of the Master Plan, may disagree with the projects agreed to in the plan.

Outreach suggestions included an article in The Seattle Times newspaper explaining the project; an article by local plant and garden writer Valerie Easton; contact Seattle Channel for coverage of the workshop; and press releases listing the following items from David M: the message should be a positive one; show photos of the hollies being moved to their new location; stress that the new location promotes the sustainability of the holly collection; pinpoint the educational aspects of the project; relay that the current location is overgrown and attracts negative behaviors.

There was a brief discussion on how the City Council-ordered audit of Seattle Parks Department's public involvement policy will affect this public outreach process. Donald noted that Parks is only one of several entities involved in this regional project. The others are the Arboretum Foundation, University of Washington, and the State.

Members also discussed ways to involve Mayor Nickels in this effort, especially at the groundbreaking event in October.

- Elizabeth will contact Seattle Parks' communication staff members Dewey Potter and Joelle Ligon to strategize the outreach effort.

Rockery: Work at the rockery was referenced at the April 4 ABGC meeting. Donald clarified that Parks' crews will lift up the rocks and clean under them. This work is not scheduled in the first phase of the project.

Irrigation Mainline: Donald and Fred reported that this project is essentially complete. The last portion of the project is to wait for dry weather to complete the paving. Speed control bumps will be installed throughout, with consideration for bicyclists and maintenance crew's carts.

Japanese Garden Entry: Donald reviewed the history of this project, which is slated to receive some Pro Parks Levy proceeds. A donor was very interested in funding this project but backed off after the City commissioned an architect for the schematic design and the cost was double what the donor had hoped. The donor is once again interested in funding the project and met with Parks' staff two weeks ago and is again discussing ways to fund the project, possibly by doing it in phases. If the donor commits in a formal process, the City will fund the rest of the design. The City is working on the wording of the agreement. Steve Gerber of the Arboretum Foundation will chair the effort to raise the remaining needed funds to complete the project. Paige commented that she has many connections in the Japanese community, both in Seattle and in Japan. Donald stated that the City's sister city, Kobe, has also shown interest in this project.

- Donald will give an update report on this at the June meeting.
- Paige will work closely with Donald and David M to garner additional funding support in the Japanese community.

SR520 Update

Community meetings update: There have been two community meetings on the SR520 project, with representatives from the ABGC, UW, and Arboretum Foundation in attendance. The meetings were called by Ted Lane (tube alternative) and facilitated by Fran Conley. Jack and Theresa attended the first meeting, representing the ABGC and UW. Theresa attended the April 20 meeting, representing the UW, while Judy Phillips represented the Arboretum Foundation. Any interested community members could attend and vote on issues. There were 16-20 people present; Montlake and Eastlake community councils were not represented at the second meeting.

The first meeting focused on a list of statements regarding the SR520 project on which those present could vote. The April 20 meeting had very focused questions and discussion. The consensus is that (1) the majority of those present oppose the Pacific Interchange alternative (the two groups who support this are Montlake and North Capitol Hill); and (2) some of those present want more information on the tube alternative and the Dalby alternative.

Washington State Legislation: Theresa also reported that State Resolution 6099 passed, requiring a mediator be hired by the State Office of Financial Management to oversee the impact plan of this project. OFM is now looking at national public relation firms for this role. It also requires Governor Gregoire to convene the UW, Sound Transit, Metro, and WSDOT to look at a multimodal transportation plan at the Sound Transit Station at Husky Stadium and a height cap plan for the Montlake area. Governor Gregoire has 20 days to sign the resolution; some businesses are requesting her to veto.

Jack commented that neighborhoods are pleased that WSDOT must find all the money for the project by the end of the process, and that there was specific reference to \$250,000 committed to examine the tube/Dalby/green alternatives. Theresa clarified that the reference to funding is that WSDOT must submit a finance plan, but may only be required to have the plan in place – not all the funds in place.

Jack was heartened that Seattle City Council recently passed its SR520 resolution and focused mostly on mitigation. The resolution did not voice favor for the Pacific Interchange — last fall all nine voted in favor of that alternative. The discussion next turned to the ABGC's representative in any mitigation matters. City and UW staff are somewhat compromised from representing the ABGC and Arboretum at the mitigation table, as the agencies they work for have a number of interests in the SR520 project. After discussion on the best route to take, **John J moved that Paige, as Executive Director of the Arboretum Foundation, represent the ABGC at any mitigation discussions. Dave T seconded.**

Discussion followed as to how Paige best represents the interests of the ABGC during the mitigation process. David M stated that the ABGC has to represent only the interests of the Washington Park Arboretum and it will be Paige's responsibility to do so at the mitigation table. He also stated that the 'gold standard' for Paige's role in the mitigation is two-fold: (1) Remove, not just minimize, the impact of the SR520 project from the Arboretum. Several alternatives (Dalby Plan and tube tunnel) do this by moving the SR520 freeway out of the Arboretum. (2) Ensure that any mitigation funds from impacts to the Arboretum will be used to fund Arboretum Master Plan projects. **The motion was voted on: six votes yes, with Paige abstaining. Motion carried.**

- Teresa and Jack will meet with Paige to brief her on the community and Mayoral meetings and will send her copies of the meeting notes.

City Update: David Graves recently met with representative from WSDOT, UW, National Park Service, and the Interagency Committee (IAC) to discuss whether a 6F rating can be applied to the north end of the Arboretum and whether IAC water conservation funds were used on the Waterfront Trail in that area. Wherever the funds were used, the land is protected from conversion to the SR520 project. It is now unclear for which parcels of the property the funds were used.

- David will forward a letter on this meeting to Theresa for assistance from UW property records.
- Donald manages Seattle Parks' property management and will have Parks' staff search the property records.

Others who may help in the effort to protect the Arboretum:

Fred asked if the Duwamish tribe has yet commented on the SR520 project. Elizabeth answered that verbal historical accounts are that the Duwamish used the area as a burial ground. They reportedly hung bodies in the trees; however, no evidence of this has yet been discovered. In addition, the Duwamish are not a recognized tribe, making it problematic for the tribe to protect the property.

Discussion then turned to the Sierra Club, which was represented at the April 20 community meeting. Jack explained that it has national clout and frequently opposes ballot measures that have a negative impact on the environment. It has money to invest in campaigns and environmentalists look to the organization for leadership.

Old/New business:

Washington Park Arboretum Mission Statement: David M has asked the ABGC to assist in revising the mission statement, as it states facts about the Arboretum and not its mission.

- Elizabeth, Donald, and Paige will review the suggestions from the April 4 meeting, draft a new version, and bring to the June 6 meeting for consideration.
- Jack asked that they also e-mail around the version to get consensus.

Arboretum Proposed Bicycle Route: Two citizens brought forth a proposal for an alternative bike route through the Arboretum at the March and April meetings. A quorum was not present at the April meeting and the vote on this proposal was held over until this meeting. Jack briefly reviewed the proposal. **He moved and David M seconded the following amended motion: that the recommendations included in the Anderson-Reed introductory concept of a new bicycle route in the Washington Park Arboretum be considered whenever plans to resolve the bicycle/vehicle conflicts are re-considered. However, any bicycle route needs to be consistent with the adopted Washington Park Arboretum Master Plan. After discussion, the vote was 7 in favor of amended motion, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.**

- Donald will send a copy of the adopted motion to the two citizens.
- He will also work with Seattle Parks Project Planning and Development Director Erin Devoto to send a letter to Pete Lagerway, City of Seattle bike path coordinator, stating Seattle Parks' position on this proposal.

ABGC Operating Procedures and Election of Vice-chair: **Jack moved that Paige replace Neal as vice-chair.** After a brief discussion, members asked that a copy of the Operating Procedures first be reviewed to determine if new members automatically fill the role of officer if their predecessor was an officer. **Jack withdrew the motion.**

- Members will review the Operating Procedures and elect the Vice-chair at the June 2 meeting.

Goals & Objectives: Assignments were briefly reviewed, with names of recently retired/resigned staff replaced by new ABGC members and staff attendees. The group spent about 10 minutes discussing the next and critical steps to lobby for funds for maintenance and operations (one of the Goals and Objectives.)

- Jack will ask State Representative Frank Chopp to tour the Arboretum.
- Begin lobbying initiative in early 2008, as soon as the new legislature takes office.
- Send letter to Seattle Mayor Nickels and UW President Emmeret that this is an opportunity for funding. All donations to the City must go through City Council and the Mayor for acceptance.
- The ABGC will review the work items in more detail at the June 6 meeting, for the benefit of the new members.

Orientation Packet:

- The Coordinator was asked to send an orientation packet to Paige Miller and Susan Golub.

Announcements:

—David M announced that the importance of the Arboretum’s collections was recently recognized at the Canadian/USA Consortium where several of the collections were noted as being the best of their kind. He recently met with U.S. Representative Jay Inslee and related this honor to him.

—David M will be on a panel of the American Public Gardens Association national meeting in Washington, DC, in June.

—Jack recently attended the University of Washington Botanic Gardens open house and found it to be a great event. He especially enjoyed the 15 minute description of the Arboretum Master Plan’s Pacific Connection project.

—Paige reported that the recent Arboretum’s “Florabundance” plant sale will probably enjoy a record breaking amount of gross receipts.

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

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
David Mabberley, ABGC Secretary