

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
May 14, 2008**

**Voting
Members:**

Arboretum Foundation

- Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director

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

Washington State

Excused:

- John Johnston, Arboretum Foundation President
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington Professor
- Dave Towne, Governor's Appointee

Others:

- Tim Gallagher, Seattle Parks Superintendent
- Kelly Goold, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Project Manager
- 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)
SR520 Mediation (Group of 34): Paige Miller, representing both the ABGC and Arboretum Foundation
Joint Fundraising Policy: Allen Ferrin, Barbara Wright, John Johnston, & Paige Miller (Arb Fdn)
Bruce Bare, Fred Hoyt, Wendy Kelley, Sandra Lier, & Greg Sheridan (UW)
Donald Harris & Tim Gallagher (City)
Sandy Brooks & John Howell (Assistant & Facilitator)

Upcoming Events:

June 16: Japanese Garden Entry project, groundbreaking 10 am
September 18: UW Regents, briefing on Arboretum
September 20: Pacific Connections, ribbon cutting - afternoon

ABGC Chair Dave Towne was out of town. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am at Graham Visitors Center by Paige Miller, Vice-chair. **The agenda was accepted as revised. Donald Harris moved approval of the April 9 minutes, as corrected, and Sandra Lier seconded. The vote was taken and the motion was approved.**

Updates

Sandra Lier had to leave the meeting early and requested to report on several items at the beginning of the meeting.

Broadmoor Project: A very large maintenance barn is being constructed just to the east of the Graham Visitor Center and adjacent to the Arboretum. In addition, the City's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has issued a permit for construction of a 25' tall wall on the border separating the golf course from the Arboretum. Another element of the project includes retaining ponds. ABGC members were unaware that the large wall was to be constructed until just recently. The members expressed strong concerns about the wall and its negative affect on the aesthetics of the Arboretum. Jack stated that he, David Maberley, Andy, and Fred discussed how best to screen the wall from the Arboretum and the 25' height makes it very difficult to do so. Paige recently met with the Broadmoor Community Club Board and learned that the Community Club is not affiliated with this project. It is the sole responsibility of the Broadmoor Golf Club, a separate entity.

Sandra Lier, as acting director of the UW Botanical Gardens, will meet with both the Golf Club owners and the Broadmoor community. Her intent for the meeting is to keep both groups informed of what is happening at the Arboretum, invite them to ABGC and other meetings, and develop a dialogue. The Arboretum wants to be a good neighbor to the Golf Club and Broadmoor community, but not at the risk of allowing damage to the Arboretum. Fred noted that the Broadmoor Community Club is interested in paving the Foster Island Road and Sandra will discuss the prospect of jointly-funded projects at the Arboretum with them. She will discuss the enormous maintenance barn and wall with the Golf Club. The Arboretum holds a number of classes and other events at the Visitors Center and noise from the maintenance barn must be abated by the Club. Kjris will also attend the meetings.

It appears that the wall is even taller than the 25' allowed by the permit. Donald will ask DPD staff to measure it to ensure it conforms to the height restriction. Donald cautioned Sandra that Seattle Parks is very concerned with the construction of the retention ponds which, if they overflow, could damage the Arboretum. City attorneys have notified the Golf Club that if the ponds are not maintained and overflow, the City will sue the Club. Because City attorneys are dealing with this issue, any discussions of the retaining ponds should be limited.

Briefing to UW Regents: Sandra has scheduled a briefing to the University's Regents on Thursday morning, September 18. Dean Bare, College of Forest Resources, will attend and Sandra is working to schedule this on Superintendent Gallagher's schedule. All ABGC members are also urged to attend.

UWBG Director Search: The four finalists for the vacant director position have visited Seattle and the Arboretum and several ABGC members met all four. The search committee will meet on Thursday (May 15) to make its selection. After discussion, the ABGC agreed that it favors Meg Lowman. **Jack moved that the ABGC inform the selection committee today that it favors Meg Lowman as the candidate. Sandra seconded. The vote was taken, with all present voting in favor except Kjris who abstained.** Paige will write the letter and send it today.

Arboretum Mission Statement: Sandra is working with Kathleen Pierce on revising the Arboretum's Mission Statement. She will send a draft version to the ABGC by June 15.

Pacific Connections Ribbon Cutting: The ribbon cutting is scheduled for Saturday, September 20. This will be a large public event, with the Mayor and Governor invited. It was suggested that the invitations note that Pro Parks Levy funds are being used to support both the Japanese Garden entry project and Pacific Connection projects.

Donor Recognition Policy Committee: Sandra is working with the University's legal staff to develop a joint Arboretum Foundation and UW policy. John Howell of the Cedar River Group has been hired to facilitate development of the policy on fundraising, which has a September completion deadline.

Committee members include:

Arboretum Foundation: John Johnston as current Foundation president (term expires in June), Barbara Wright as incoming president, Allen Ferrin, and Paige as Executive Director

University of Washington: Sandra Lier as acting UWBG director, Dean Bruce Bare of the College of Forest Resources, Wendy Kelley as major gifts officer, and Greg Sheridan of the Development office

City: Tim and Donald Harris will be invited to attend the meetings

Staff: John Howell will facilitate and Sandy Brooks will assist with organization, minutes, etc.

Seattle Parks Department Updates

Seattle Parks has completed its national search for three new directors for the Department. Tim reported that Kevin Stoops has been selected for the Project & Planning Division; Sue Goodwin for the Recreation Division; and Rob Courtney for the Parks Division.

Paige complimented the improved appearance of the Arboretum since Parks assigned an additional gardener. She has heard compliments from several community members who have also noticed the improvements.

Project Updates

Phase I: Andy reported that construction is 70% complete, with an early completion expected in July. He has contracted with Restoration Logistics to remove invasive species from the Cascadia project area to help complete the focal forest on time. He/staff are doing as much early work in the Cascadia project area as possible.

Shelter: Construction is going well on the shelter project and should be completed within a couple of weeks. Some minor problems have occurred but staff and the contractors are working through them. 55% of the plants have been procured and Fred, Randall, and Andy continue working to procure the remaining plants.

Responding to a question from Jack on the amount of remaining contingency funds, Andy answered that there is about \$10,000 left in the shelter's construction contingency fund. There is also \$200,000 in the General Fund to use as seed money for Phase II, which includes the "Splash of Chile", restoration and replacement in the Camellia collection, and the restoration of the Holmdahl Rockery. Jack reflected that the Rockery is at the entrance to the Arboretum and needs to look good. It is a bonus that the funding has allowed for this work, as well as the other projects that were scheduled. Andy agreed that restoring the Rockery is a priority. Donald noted that Pro Parks Levy funds were used to support both the Japanese Garden and Pacific Connections projects.

Traffic Study: Andy reported that SVR, a civil engineering firm specializes in traffic studies, has been hired to facilitate a pilot project on Arboretum Drive to determine the feasibility of bicycle usage on the road. Tim added that he wants Arboretum Drive closed on two days per week to vehicles. It would remain open for pedestrians and bicyclists to encourage citizens to get outside, exercise, and meet their neighbors. Golf carts were also suggested for people who are walking impaired, but still want to utilize the road when no vehicles are using it. Andy also expressed excitement that the Broadmoor community is interested in paving the Foster Island road.

Japanese Garden Entry Project: Andy had much good news to report on this project. Last night (May 13) Seattle sculptor Jerry Tsutakawa presented a new design for the Garden entry gate that was overwhelmingly accepted by the Japanese Garden Advisory Council. The project recently went before the Architectural Review Board, where it was unanimously approved, and it goes before the Landmarks Preservation Board on May 15. He expects the City's Department of Planning and Development to issue the permit within the next two weeks.

Seattle Parks has had several project managers leave the Department, as a result of the Pro Parks Levy ending. Andy introduced Kelly Goold, Senior Project Planner, as the new lead for the Garden entry project. Kelly briefly told about his background and has been doing similar project work for the past seven years.

Paige announced that the Garden entry groundbreaking is scheduled for 10 am on Monday, June 16. In addition, the very successful fundraising campaign for the new entry is officially completed.

City Council Considering New Park Levy

Seattle City Council has convened a citizen committee which has scheduled three public meetings to determine public interest and the feasibility of adding a parks levy for either November 2008, 2009, or 2010 ballot. The first meeting was held at Northgate Community Center and the second is scheduled for Rainier Community Center on May 15. Superintendent Gallagher has attended the meetings, which have three themes: green legacy, healthy living, and vibrant neighborhoods. The green legacy was explained as green infrastructures, green connections, and the legacy of past generations.

The Mayor does not support a new parks levy at this time, and has proposed a Pike Place Market levy for the ballot. However, Parks staff can provide information to Arboretum Foundation or UW members of the ABGC on Arboretum projects which could be targeted with new levy funding. These include: (1) daylighting Arboretum Creek and restoring it as a salmon stream (Parks staff could estimate the cost and provide a list of possible sources of funding); (2) accommodate bicycle usage of upper Arboretum Drive, including a bridge over the wetland stream area (Parks staff could provide cost information); and (3) Pacific Connections project (Parks staff could cost out some piece(s) that could be included in a new levy.) Jack asked if these projects are all part of the Master Plan and Paige answered that they are.

It is important that the ABGC put forth its interest in a new parks levy to assist with Arboretum projects. Kjris asked about the timeframe and how can the ABGC give constructive input to the citizen committee. Donald answered that the Pro Parks Levy, which is now sunseting, designated \$2.5 million for the Arboretum. No particular projects were designated. For purposes of a future levy, a similar amount could be requested. If there is sufficient interest for the levy to go on the ballot, it could be as early as November of this year. Theresa suggested that the ABGC write the committee a letter supporting a levy and including language that the Arboretum has a number of unfunded projects that are in accordance with the Master Plan. **Jack moved that Paige write the letter, indicating interest in implementing more Master Plan projects and that the Arboretum receive funding from the levy equal to or higher than the funding received in the Pro Parks Levy. The motion was seconded. The vote was taken, with Paige, Kjris, Theresa, and Jack voting in favor. Donald abstained. The motion carried.**

UW Provost Briefing on Arboretum Master Plan

Theresa has invited the UW Provost to the July, August, or September ABGC meeting to help educate her on budgetary issues at the Arboretum. Bruce Bare, Dean of the UW's College of Forest Resources, will also be invited to attend. ABGC members will prepare a briefing paper ahead of time which will focus on: The Working Together Agreement; next phase of the Master Plan; possible new parks levy; and Arboretum budget (how to best work with the University to address Arboretum budgetary needs and how to ask for funding from the State legislature without violating the UW's state monies policy.)

Union Bay Master Plan

Fred will report on this at the June 11 meeting.

SR520 Project Update

Paige stated that the mediation meetings of the "Group of 34" are no longer happening. Instead, a smaller group is refining two proposals that have emerged as the frontrunners – Option A proposed by Larry Sinnott and the Parkway Plan, put forth by Paige. She is now meeting every two weeks with a team from Washington State Department of Transportation members, State House of Representatives Speaker Frank Chopp, Ron Judd of Governor Gregoire's office, proponents of the plan, and others to develop the policy and engineering segments of the Parkway Plan. Paige reported that the group is working well together. David Dye, WSDOT's Urban Corridors Administrator, attended the last meeting. Paige stated that David understands and can easily explain the "big picture" of transportation projects – it is very helpful when he attends the meetings.

Paige gave a very brief description of the Parkway Plan and believes it to be a good design. The highway would be a 20' high lidded berm under the land surface of Foster Island, about 600 feet long. The berm would include only the dry part of Foster Island and not the wetlands. Currently, the only way to access Foster Island by land is through an uninviting tunnel underneath the SR520 highway; the Parkway Plan would allow pedestrian access to the Island above ground. Responding to a question on whether the design would allow emergency vehicles access to the Island, Paige stated that she will take the question back to the team. A panel of bridge experts will be in Seattle next week to discuss the two plans.

Next, Paige described where the berm/tunnel would be located in relation to the Sound Transit tunnel and the ABGC spent some time discussing this relationship, as well as the constructability, timing, and financing for the Parkway Plan. The group will give the Parkway Plan its best shot of moving forward. WSDOT is gathering more information on both the Parkway Plan and Option A and will then prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS.) Jack commented that he believes the ABGC is already a winner in its efforts to protect the Arboretum during the SR520 project.

Kjris asked how this plan fits with the UW's redevelopment of Husky Stadium. Theresa reported that the University is not excited about a tunnel under the Montlake Cut; however, its representatives will be at the table to help with a design. ABGC members continued a short discussion of the impacts of the tunnel to the UW.

Jack asked if any of the community leaders who oppose widening the bridge to six lanes might file a lawsuit. Theresa has not heard of any plans to do so.

Paige will bring drawings of the Parkway Plan to the June ABGC meeting.

New/Old Business

Goals and Objectives: Due to time constraints, members were asked to review the latest version of the Goals and Objectives (ABGC Work Plan), and mark any changes for discussion at the June 11 meeting.

Madison Valley Drainage Project: Parks staff will invite Seattle Public Utilities staff to attend the June 11 ABGC meeting to give an update on this project. Mayor Nickels recently announced his proposal (for more information, see http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2004382158_madisonvalley30m.html.)

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:20 am.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Theresa Doherty, ABGC Secretary