

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

October 8, 2008

Voting

Members

Present:

Arboretum Foundation

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

City of Seattle

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

University of Washington

- Sandra Lier, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG) Acting Director
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington Associate Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture

Excused:

- Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Assistant Vice President for Regional Affairs
- Dave Towne, Washington State Governor's Appointee

Others

Present:

- Bob Corwin, Arboretum Neighbor/SR520 Project
- Tim Gallagher, Seattle Parks Superintendent
- Paul Gibson, Arboretum Neighbor
- Fred Hoyt, UWBG, Facilities & Grounds Manager
- Helen Payton, Arboretum Foundation Development Director

Staff:

- Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Standing Committees

Funding Requests to State Legislature:	John (Arboretum Fndation), Jack (City), Dave T (Washington State)
Naming Recognition Guideline:	Paige (Arboretum Foundation), Donald (City), Sandra (UW)
Mission Statement:	Kathleen Pierce (Arboretum Fndation), Donald (City), Sandra (UW)
SR520 Mediation (Group of 34):	Paige, representing both the ABGC and Arboretum Fndation
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:

October 14: Joint Fundraising Committee Meeting (5:00-8:00 pm)
October 28: Joint Fundraising Committee Meeting (5:00-8:00 pm)
November 12: Annual Retreat (8:00 am-12:30 pm), Laurelhurst Community Center

ABGC Chair Dave Towne was out of town. Paige called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. Introductions were made and Helen Payton, Development Director for the Arboretum Foundation, was welcomed. Helen will be a regular attendee to ABGC meetings. **The minutes from the July 9 meeting were approved as presented.** (Note: the August meeting was cancelled.)

There was a brief discussion on the proposed agenda and list of people to invite to the annual retreat, which is scheduled for November 12 at Laurelhurst Community Center. ABGC members agreed to send the names and contact information for any additional guests to Sandy by Monday, October 13. John Howell, facilitator for the Joint Fundraising Committee, will give a short presentation on the progress the group has made. Paige will be on vacation and unable to attend; Nancy Belcher will present information on the SR520 project.

Updates

Pacific Connections

Phase I: Fred reported that staff are working to wrap up Phase I. Andy Sheffer is monitoring the punch list, with only a few minor items left to complete.

Phase II: Fred reported that Berger Partnership has completed 65% of the design construction documents.

Jack asked about the Holmdahl Rockery and whether its restoration had been moved lower on the priority list. A lengthy discussion followed on when prioritization decisions are made by the project manager, by MPIIG, and by the full ABGC. Jack believes that MPIIG is sometimes acting on its own. Donald stated that the protocol is that when a decision made by the project manager or MPIIG affects either the schedule or the budget scope that the decision is to be brought to the ABGC for discussion/approval. Sandra suggested that MPIIG's recommendations be presented in writing at the ABGC meetings.

The group agreed to have a more lengthy discussion on the relationship of MPIIG and ABGC and the specific Phase II projects.

Reminder: MPIIG/ABGC decision-making process scheduled for the January meeting.

Phase II – continued:

Andy and Fred will give an update on Pacific Connections, including Phase II, at the annual retreat. Allen Ferrin of the Arboretum Foundation will report on the fundraising effort.

Fred noted that Paul Gibson, interested Arboretum neighbor, suggested that a pathway be added near the holly collection. This has been done and turned out well. Kjrjris added that she believes the pathway is a huge improvement.

Arboretum Drive Survey: Arboretum Drive has been closed to traffic for several months during project work. Tim previously reported that the closure has received many positive comments and there is some interest in keeping it closed permanently. Donald reported that the closure was discussed at Seattle Parks' ProView Committee (the Department's internal project review team) and ProView does not recommend keeping Arboretum Drive closed.

Discussion: Seattle Parks Superintendent Gallagher (Tim) supports keeping the road closed to traffic. He stated, however, that he does not support the proposal to install a bollard mid-way to make it a non-thru street. Seattle Parks is moving ahead with public meetings on closing a number of park roads to traffic to encourage

walking, biking, etc., as part of its "A Walk in the Park" initiative. Responding to a question from Paige on whether he plans to make the decision to close Arboretum Drive, Tim responded that he is seeking the ABGC's input. Jack stated that the decision should be made in the context of the Arboretum's Master Plan and Sandra agreed. Donald noted that this would be an operational change and the road would not be re-located. Paige stated that many who use the Arboretum are aging and cannot access the park by walking through it. Some of these are donors and they may be reluctant to donate to Arboretum projects if they cannot access the park. Tim asked Paige and Barbara to discuss the possible road closure with the Arboretum Foundation. Kjrj added that this is an important issue and should be adequately vetted before a decision is made. Tim asked that the group reflect on the Arboretum's mission and whom it is trying to serve and then consider how all are best served. The Arboretum's users include donors, kids, those there for educational purposes, and others.

Paige referred to previous discussion about the possibility of "sharrows" (large yellow symbols spray painted on streets to symbolize that cars and bicycles are to share the roadway) being painted on Arboretum Drive. This idea should also be discussed as part of Tim's proposal to close Arboretum Drive and in relation to the Master Plan.

Reminder: Paige and Barbara to discuss the road closure with the Arboretum Foundation; report back at the January 14 meeting.

Restrooms: Fred noted that restrooms are needed at the Arboretum's south end, if the public is invited there for educational purposes. Donald responded that the Master Plan has a strict guideline on how many restrooms are allowed in the Arboretum and it depends on the square footage in the various buildings.

Foster Island: Donald reported that Andy has had two meetings with Broadmoor community members (Broadmoor is located just to the east of the Arboretum.) They have offered to pay for half the cost of paving Foster Island Drive; however, they do not want any additional stop signs at the Foster Island intersection. Barbara noted that the Montlake, as well as the Broadmoor community, must be considered in this proposal. Tim added that this idea must be discussed with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in relation to the SR520 project. Paige noted that all three WSDOT alternatives for SR520 affect the SR520/Foster Island configuration. After discussion, it was agreed that Paige would write a letter to Governor Gregoire that this area is an immediate safety concern and should be added to the mitigation list for the SR520 project and its impacts to the Arboretum.

Reminder: Paige to write letter to Governor Gregoire voicing ABGC's concerns.

Japanese Garden Entry Project: Is on schedule and budget.

September 20 Ribbon Cutting: Sandra reported that, although it rained on the day of the Pacific Connection ribbon cutting, there was a great attendance and the event was successful. Mayor Nickels, Dean Bare, and the UW Provost Wise were present, as well as a number of Arboretum Foundation and ABGC members and many members of the public. The event also enjoyed a great deal of publicity, with a story in the Seattle Times and Seattle PI newspapers and the celebration was taped by Seattle Channel.

Jack stated that he had a wonderful time and met a number of people. Donald spoke with one donor who described the event as "fabulous." Sandra, Paige, and the planning team are holding a de-briefing later in the day. Fred added that a slide show of the event is also being developed.

Naming Recognition Guideline: The committee continues its work on this policy. Jack noted that some plaques have already been installed in the Arboretum, although the policy is not yet developed. Committee members responded that the ABGC agreed this could be done while the committee develops a naming recognition guideline for adoption by the ABGC.

Joint Fundraising Committee: Sandra reported that the committee is making some progress and has had frank discussions on roles, responsibilities, advocacy, and interests of the three parties (Arboretum Foundation, City, and UW) in the Arboretum. The focus of a joint funding process is on private funds, but would include some government lobbying efforts. This effort will help make it clearer as to which partner is responsible for what at the Arboretum. Kjris and Jack reminded the ABGC that they do not work for the City or State and can sometimes lobby for State funds, where the City and UW's ABGC members cannot.

September 18 Meeting with UW Regents: Sandra and Paige reported that UW Provost Wise is interested in the Arboretum and pleased with the ABGC's efforts. Donald responded that that is good news. He voiced some concern that Dean Bare unexpectedly presented the entire briefing to the Regents and focused on the high amount of funding needed for the Arboretum. This left no opportunity for Arboretum Foundation or City representatives to speak and to stress that that the Arboretum is also an educational site.

UW Regents appeared very interested in the Arboretum and ABGC members suggested that, to supplement the briefing, the Regents be invited to tour the Arboretum, with a focus on the educational elements. Sandra will work on scheduling this tour.

Reminder to Sandra: Invite UW Regents to tour the Arboretum in 2009.

UWBG Director Search: Still in progress.

Councilmember Rasmussen Tour: City Councilmember Rasmussen, chair of the Council's Parks and Seattle Center Committee, and his three staff members recently toured the Arboretum with Jack, Paige, Donald, and Fred. The tour included the new Pacific Connections project and the SR520 project. They pointed out potential impacts to the Arboretum of the SR520 re-build project by WSDOT. Jack thought the tour went very well. Councilmember Rasmussen was very interested and asked many good questions. The group invited him to attend an ABGC meeting in 2009. Dave Towne will follow up on the invitation.

ABGC members are also pleased with the interest in the Arboretum shown by Superintendent Gallagher, who regularly attends ABGC meetings.

Reminder to Dave: Invite Councilmember Rasmussen to a meeting in 2009.

SR520 Project Update

Paige referred to the three options currently being considered, Options A, K, and L, and gave brief descriptions of each. The ABGC needs to focus attention on Option K, which she has been supporting as the preferred alternative. She has been working on the design of a berm over Foster Island with Iain Robertson and Susan Black. She will meet with WSDOT representatives tomorrow (October 9) at 10:00 am, and has been focusing her effort on how to redirect and configure traffic away from the Arboretum.

Responding to a question from Kjris on whether there will be archaeological testing for burial grounds at Foster Island, Paige stated that the Duwamish Tribe used the south end of Foster Island and not the north end, where the SR520 road will be located. The Duwamish Tribe is not federally recognized and wants no part of the mediation process about the new road.

Responding to a question from Donald on recent input from the Friends of Olmsted Park (FoSOP), Paige reported that the mediation group isn't hearing anything new from FoSOP. She believes the UW's issues with Alternative K have been worked out and she thinks the planning ideas are working well. However, there are still many large challenges ahead.

Jack wondered whether the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is allowed to present all three alternatives without stating a preferred alternative. Paige stated that the Draft EIS could do a mix and match of the three alternatives. She reviewed the EIS timeline and stated that the Draft EIS is due in February 2009 and then the

governor will select a preferred alternative. The governor's proposal then goes to the State Legislature, with input from Paige and others on the committee. Speaker of the House Frank Chopp is very engaged in the SR520 project and is supportive of the Arboretum.

Kjris asked that Paige flag the tolling configuration on the bridge so it does not impact the Arboretum. Paige agreed to do so and has also asked for early tolling on SR520 to pay for quiet pavement.

Bob Corwin, a retired activist and Urban Living specialist, addressed the ABGC earlier this year on WSDOT's SR520 project and asked to do so again today. He distributed two handouts and stated that the project is missing an ingredient -- serious consideration of a 4-lane alternative. He does not believe that the 4-lane alternative has been as closely evaluated as it should be, and in order to make the EIS legitimate with both national and State environmental guidelines, it must be included for consideration. The Chair thanked him for attending the meeting and sharing his perspective.

New/Old Business

Paige reminded the group that in lieu of a regular meeting in November, the ABGC will hold its annual retreat. The next regular meeting will be on December 10. There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:20 am.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Theresa Doherty, ABGC Secretary