

ABGC Retreat Minutes – Draft version dated 12/18/03
South Lake Union Facility
December 4, 2003

Attendance: Deb Andrews, Jan Arntz, Bruce Bare, John Behnke, Susan Black, Ken Bounds, Margaret Ceis, Ashley Clark, Cindy Duryee, Bob Edmond, Jerry Ernst, Paul Gibson, David Goldberg, Fritz Hedges, Tom Hinckley, Fred Hoyt, Fred Isaac, Neal Lessenger, Sandra Lier, Cara Mathison, Tom Mentele, Sarah Neilson, Sue Nicol, Maureen O’Neill, Sarah Reichard, Michael Shiosaki, John Wott

INTRODUCTIONS

The second annual retreat of the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) was called to order at 1:05 pm by Facilitator Jerry Ernst. The retreat was held in the Officer’s Club at the South Lake Union Facility, with 26 attendees. A correction was made to the agenda and introductions were made.

REVIEW — ABGC PRIMARY ROLE AND 2002 RETREAT

Sandra Lier, ABGC Chair, reviewed the ABGC’s primary role and gave a brief review of the 2002 retreat. Five major goals were established at that retreat:

1. Increase public awareness and participation in ABGC and in the Washington Park Arboretum
2. Improve internal and external communication
3. Improve ABGC’s organizing effectiveness and efficiencies
4. Support Master Plan implementation
5. Develop and implement a coordinated funding plan

Another result of the 2002 retreat was The Working Together Agreement, a Memorandum of Agreement signed by the University of Washington, the City of Seattle, and the Arboretum Foundation to work together to implement the Washington Park Arboretum Master Plan adopted in May 2001.

The ABGC sponsored the public process associated with the Implementation Plan, hosted a public open house, requested the Parks Board to conduct a public hearing, and endorsed briefings of the UW Board of Regents, Arboretum Foundation Board of Directors, and Seattle City Council. Both the Parks Board and ABGC have recommended approval of the Implementation Plan by the UW Dean of College Resources, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, and Arboretum Foundation Board President.

The purpose of today’s retreat is to review progress made in 2003 on goals set at the 2002 retreat and to define goals for 2004.

UPDATES ON IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Updates were given on four topics. Retreat attendees asked questions and made a number of comments.

— Foundation’s Major Gifts Campaign, Attachment #1

Deb Andrews, Executive Director of the Arboretum Foundation, and Ashley Clark, Arboretum Foundation Director of Development, distributed and gave a brief review of “The Arboretum Foundation Funding Plan for First Major Gifts Initiative”, Attachment #1. The first priority project of the Master Plan is the South Entry-Madrona Terrace project. The Foundation has approved a Major Gifts Initiative to raise \$5 million toward the South Entry-Madrona Terrace implementation. The Arboretum Foundation is very supportive of the Master Plan and, at its last meeting, the Board voted to approve the Implementation Plan and set the \$5 million goal. This is the largest fundraising goal the Arboretum Board has undertaken.

Jerry Ernst stated that three projects need to move forward concurrently: the South Entry-Madrona Terrace project; Arboretum Wayfinding and Interpretive Plan; and main irrigation lines.

— **Wayfinding and Interpretive Plan, Attachment #2**

John Wott, Director of the Arboretum, distributed a handout, “Arboretum-Wide Interpretive and Wayfinding Plan Discussion for ABGC Retreat”, Attachment #2. He described the Wayfinding Plan as one of the most critical items facing the ABGC in 2004. The Plan addresses: the overall system of naming of pathways and various ways of guidance (not physical layout); the message the Arboretum wishes to communicate to visitors through interpretive materials; the types, methods, and styles of communication of this message; the major themes in the various sections of the Arboretum; the overall context to each project design; and guidelines for project implementation.

John also discussed how to determine the “big picture” through interpretation, the steps to be used to implement the Wayfinding and Interpretive Plan, the timeline, and funding.

No funding for this project has yet been identified. Sandra Lier stated that the UW has given approval that its Capitol Office may be contacted to request assistance on this project from one of its staff members.

— **520 Update**

Sandra Lier gave an update on a meeting she, Tom Hinckley, and John Wott attended earlier in the day on the proposed Washington State Department of Transportation’s (WSDOT) Trans-Lake (Highway 520) project. This project will impact the north end of the Arboretum and affect several Master Plan projects. Some of those present at the meeting were Laurie Parker, who works for an environmental firm and is assisting WSDOT with environmental issues associated with the project, Julie Meredith, WSDOT’s Trans-Lake project manager, and Lindsay Yemen, Parametrics, who is also assisting WSDOT.

Tom Hinckley and John Wott gave a presentation at the WSDOT meeting on: the history of the Arboretum’s Master Plan, up to the current time; the Historic Review; stressed that Lake Washington Boulevard is an Olmsted Boulevard; and discussed the R.H. Thompson Interchange and other modifications. They also described the Master Plan, its components, and process.

Prior to the meeting with WSDOT, Tom and John met with Dennis Meyer of Portico (consultant working on the Master Plan implementation), then brought eight concerns to the WSDOT meeting. Both Tom and Sandra felt that the meeting had positive results and gave both WSDOT and ABGC representatives a better understanding of issues both entities are dealing with. WSDOT suggested that they meet again with ABGC representatives in the spring.

WSDOT’s timeline for the 520 project is 2008-2014, if there are no delays caused by the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The draft EIS is due in 2004 and must identify any priority plans (such as those already approved for the Master Plan.) The Master Plan underwent a public process and already has certain approvals, which will be used by Ken Bounds and other City staff in their discussions with WSDOT on the Trans-Lake project.

Deb Andrews and Fred Isaac have met twice with a very active group of Montlake residents.

Jerry Ernst stated that it is important to identify the ABGC as having the key stewardship role for the Master Plan Implementation and also that the Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG) should be at the table when dealing with the State and other constituents.

It is critical that MPIG and the ABGC meet regularly and work closely with WSDOT staff on this project to be proactive on issues and developments. This discussion will continue at the next ABGC meeting and it is urged that MPIG meet with WSDOT representatives earlier than next spring.

— **ProParks Planning, Attachment #3**

Michael Shiosaki, Pro Parks Development Manager for the Department of Parks and Recreation, displayed a large chart showing the timeline of Arboretum ProParks projects. He also distributed a handout, “Washington Park Arboretum – Pro Parks Levy Funding”, Attachment #3. He gave a description of the Pro Parks Levy Language, the total projects levy funding, spending to date, funds remaining and spending recommendation options.

Michael met with representatives of the Japanese Garden Society on their first proposed project, which is to improve the south slope at the Garden. Part of the work will be done inside the Garden and part of it affects the Arboretum hillside outside the garden.

Total estimated costs of the three projects are:

- Historical Resources Strategy \$ 20,000 estimate
- South Entry/Madrona Terrace \$4,080,000 estimate
- Irrigation Mainlines \$1,783,000 estimate

A brief discussion of ProParks funding followed. Paul Gibson stated that the Arboretum's boundary next to Broadmoor may be incorrect and requested that it be surveyed during the South Entry/Madrona Terrace project.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

(1) Project Review and Approval — Jerry Ernst

Fritz distributed a two-page handout, Attachment #4

Jerry asked the group to discuss the ABGC's role in review and approval of Master Plan projects. Possible roles include reviewing and approving recommendations from Master Plan Implementation Group:

- *project design program, scope, and budget*
- *project review team membership*
- *public involvement plan*
- *future maintenance plan*
- *schematic design and design development*

The group spent approximately one hour discussing this topic.

NAME

Previously, representatives from each of the three partners have been working on the Implementation Plan. This group is referred to as the Client Group. It is now time to change the name and objectives of this group to reflect its focus on the Master Plan, and determine and designate its authority in the Master Plan's project review and approval process. Master Plan Implementation Group (M-PIG) has been suggested as a new name for the group. It was suggested that a different acronym be considered.

OBJECTIVES

Retreat attendees spent some time discussing the importance of establishing a well-organized system for soliciting for and accepting donations, and for the project review and approval processes. Each of the three partners should follow the established system when soliciting funds or having discussions with donors. Donors must be assured that the three partners have a cohesive and well-defined, and consistent project review and approval process.

It is very important that the relationship of the three partners be clear to the public, especially donors. Which partner will be the long-term stewards of these projects must be made very clear to donors, (e.g., for the landscape elements of the collection, the UW will be the lead.)

It is critical that the first Master Plan project, South Entry/Madrona Terrace, progress smoothly. A highly successful first project will give the Master Plan effort credibility. Jerry suggested that these steps be used for this first project and for subsequent projects:

(1) establish a project review team; (2) designate one of the three partners as the lead agency; (3) establish the design team; and (4) establish the public involvement policy. These same steps would be followed for all subsequent projects.

It was recommended that there be an overall architectural continuity between designers for the various projects. At least part of this role can be performed by the Design Commission. The Landmarks Board will also be involved in any of the major projects.

AUTHORITY

Currently, approval authority belongs to Fred Isaacs, President of the Arboretum Foundation Board of Directors; Ken Bounds, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation; and Bruce Bare, Dean of the UW College of Forest Resources. The City Attorney has advised that Ken cannot delegate his authority to a committee (such as the ABGC); however, he can delegate it to one of his City staff who is a member of the ABGC.

Fritz read a proposed policy from Attachment #2. This document is the outline for putting together the three partners next Working Together Agreement to determine how projects will flow. If anyone has concerns or comments, please let Fritz know.

Small Group Breakouts

Attendees were asked to split into two groups and spend 30 minutes to discuss and make suggestions on these subjects.

(2) Historic Elements and Landmark Designations (David Goldberg)

Discuss the pros and cons of 2-3 options for addressing the need to respect the history of the site, including existing Arboretum elements considered eligible for landmark status

David distributed a paper titled “Addressing Historic Resources When Implementing the Master Plan”, Attachment #5. The group discussed this topic and, while it did not make individual recommendations, David stated that the group seemed to be in agreement with the following proposal:

“Parks staff proposes addressing potential impacts to historic resources at the project level. Although permitting requirements cannot necessarily be scripted at the start of a project, sufficient forethought should be given to historic resources issues in order to best anticipate reviews. This could be best accomplished by developing an historic resources strategy that would accompany the Master Plan Implementation Strategy.”

Jerry asked the group if they agreed with David’s summary and the reaction was positive. This is a big step in the process.

(3) Enhanced Maintenance for Completed Projects (Jerry Ernst)

Discuss how the three major partners could work together to ensure sustainable enhanced maintenance levels for newly-completed projects and how such consideration could be part of the project planning and design process.

This group identified and discussed the following ideas, which were presented by Jerry with a brief explanation of each:

Possible Sources

- Direct State funding
- City levy
- Corporate sponsorship
- Pledges

Single joint maintenance crew

- Joint work plan
- Shared facilities

Fees

- Not admission fees
- Maybe parking fees
- Rentals

- Sales of logo items
- On-site donation sites

Requiring enhanced maintenance funding up front

- Design needs to include accurate estimate of maintenance cost
- Endowed-maintenance staff positions
- Do not use the term “enhanced” – get back to par or adequate maintenance levels
- 10-15% of construction costs needed annually for maintenance – need ongoing funding source
- Must create an endowment as foundation for funding
- Capitalize higher costs of plant establishment
- Emphasize in fundraising!
- Programmatic maintenance enhancement
- Allocate a portion of each gift for endowment
- Require City/State to commit to basic maintenance before proceeding
- Assure that endowed dollars don’t just replace previously budgeted dollars
- Policy agreement between three partners regarding maintenance fund – or project-by-project agreement

2004 ABGC Work Plan

Fritz distributed a two-page background paper, Attachment #6

The group was asked to discuss whether there are there any operations, maintenance, or educational programming issues we should add to the 2004 work plan?

Jerry asked if any of the Goals and Objectives should be modified or abandoned, which should be carried over and what should be added to 2004.

The group spent approximately one hour to review the most recent version of the Goals and Objectives, dated November 24. A number of the goals and objectives have been accomplished. Others are ongoing, and a few items from the December 2002 retreat have unclear objectives and will be removed from the list. See attached updated Goals and Objectives.

Page 1: “Increase public awareness and participation in ABGC and in the Washington Park Arboretum”

The discussion focused on goal #3/4, media coordination process; public awareness; and external communication and funding.

Accomplishments

- The ABGC now has a website which is regularly updated, with its minutes, agendas, and other documents posted on a regular basis.
- A visible marketing campaign is being developed for the ABGC.

To be continued in 2004

- Continue media coordination efforts. Each of the three partners currently distributes lots of good information about the Arboretum.
- To assist with fundraising efforts, it is important that the three partners (Arboretum Foundation, City of Seattle, and University of Washington) stress their joint effort on behalf of the Arboretum.
- An ABGC letterhead logo has been developed which reflects the three partners. The UW must still approve use of its logo for this purpose.
- Along with the logo, a governance paragraph will be added at the bottom of all ABGC correspondence and publications that reflects this joint effort.
- If a Master Plan newsletter is developed, the ABGC would be the appropriate group to manage this. Ken Bounds stated that the Parks Department will contribute some of the resources for a newsletter.
- Deb Andrews will work with David Takami of the Parks Department on joint press releases between the Arboretum Foundation and Parks Department.

Page 2: “Improve internal and external communication”

It is critical that the Arboretum has a communication strategy and that the ABGC approves the strategy (Ken Bounds.)

Accomplishments

- ABGC agenda and minutes are distributed in advance and available to the public on a regular basis and posted to its web page.

To be continued in 2004

- Update the annual work plan.
- Schedule quarterly operations meeting.
- Continue the annual retreat and add this requirement to the Operating Procedures.

Page 3: “Improve ABGC’s organizing effectiveness and efficiencies”

Accomplishments

- Parks Department filled one vacant position.
- Mayor filled one vacant position.

To be continued in 2004

- When the new director of Center for Urban Horticulture/Arboretum, he/she will be appointed to the ABGC.
- Develop an organization chart and description of roles and responsibilities.

The retreat adjourned at approximately 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Brooks
ABGC Coordinator