

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) Minutes

Web site: <http://depts.washington.edu/wpa/abgc/>

The Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee is a Joint effort of the Arboretum Foundation, Seattle Parks Department, and the University of Washington, and designated by Seattle City Council Ordinance 65130, approved December 27, 1934, and Ordinance 116337, approved September 8, 1992.

The ABGC is closely monitoring the WSDOT SR520 project for impacts to the Washington Park Arboretum. Please see <http://depts.washington.edu/wpa/520.htm>

Meeting Location: Graham Visitors Center, April 11, 2012

Voting Members

Present:

Arboretum Foundation

- Della Balick, Arboretum Foundation Board President
- Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director

City of Seattle

- Jack Collins, Mayoral Appointee
- Donald Harris, Seattle Parks Property Manager

University of Washington

- Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Asst. Vice President for Regional Affairs
- Fred Hoyt, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG), Associate Director

Washington State

- Dave Towne, Washington State Governor's Appointee

Excused:

- Iain Robertson, University of Washington Associate Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture

Other Staff Present:

- Hillary Burgess, UW Intern
- Barb DeCaro, Seattle Parks, Natural Resources Manager
- Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks, Projects & Planning Deputy Director

ABGC Staff: Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Standing Committees

Building Committee:

AE: Paige Miller; City: Donald Harris; UW: TBD

Partners Committee:

AE: Paige Miller & Della Balick

City: Donald Harris & Christopher Williams
Michael Shiosaki & Barb DeCaro

UW: Tom Hinckley & Sarah Reichard

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG):

AE: Paige Miller & Roger Williams

City: Michael Shiosaki (lead) & Rick Nishi

UW: Fred Hoyt & Sarah Reichard

SR520 Technical Committee:

City: David Graves; UW: Theresa Doherty & Fred Hoyt

This meeting was held at Graham Visitors Center at the Arboretum. ABGC Chair Theresa Doherty called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. **The minutes from the February 8 meeting were approved as presented. [Note: The March meeting was cancelled.]**

SR 520 Discussion

The WSDOT team was scheduled to attend this meeting; however, Theresa received an updated version of the Term Sheet and other information late yesterday and will forward to the ABGC for review, then the WSDOT team will attend the May meeting for discussion.

Term Sheet

Theresa focused on two major points in the latest version:

1. ABGC members had asked WSDOT to add language to make the Term Sheet a legally binding document and that language has been included.
2. Exhibit E "Preliminary Cost Estimate" now includes a new \$20 million figure and includes an escalator clause if the project isn't built for some time. However, WSDOT is not committed to any particular amount for each project. Members spent some time discussing the amounts for each project, with projects due to impact mitigation and some enhancements to the Arboretum. It was agreed that amounts for individual projects will be negotiated by the small group (Michael, Donald, Fred, Paige, and David Graves), which will meet prior to the May 9 ABGC meeting and not by the full ABGC.

ABGC members agreed to send comments to Sandy no later than Wednesday, April 25, and she will forward to Parks staff David Graves, Donald, and Michael; David will incorporate the changes into the document. The goal is to complete the Term Sheet by end of summer.

WSDOT TIFIA Loan and Possible SR 520 Project Impacts

Theresa distributed a WSDOT handout titled "How will we fund I-5 to the floating bridge?" Earlier this year WSDOT applied for a \$200 million federal Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan, which would provide funding to construct the north half of the West Approach bridge. WSDOT recently learned the application was successful. This funding has created an unanticipated interim delay in the project.

Enhanced House Bill 2814:

Theresa distributed a copy of EHB 2814, approved by the State House and Senate and sent to Governor Gregoire on March 7 for signature, which "*amends the Shoreline Management Act to remove the construction stay for only the floating bridge portion of the I-5 to Medina project, and only those elements common to both a four-lane and six-lane alternative.*

The legislation allows WSDOT to launch critical work necessary to keep the floating bridge project on schedule and on budget. It also prevents WSDOT from constructing any element west of the floating bridge until 'the Legislature has authorized the imposition of tolls on the I-90 floating bridge and/or other funding sufficient to complete construction of the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program.' These restrictions expire on June 30, 2014."

Dave asked that, along with the Term Sheet discussion, WSDOT present a project update at the May 9 ABGC meeting and include any impacts HB 2814 might have on the project. Paige voiced concern about the light sentinels being proposed for the project, which are art deco style and would like discussion on the design. Fred would also like information on the design of the bridge where it runs through the Arboretum. Michael and Donald noted that the design group met on May 8.

Budget Updates

Arboretum Foundation:

Paige reported the Foundation has a deficit of \$230,000 for 2012 and must cut its budget. Some of the deficit is due to bequests being at their lowest ever level. The Foundation also provides \$300,000 in support to the UW and pays for some one-time support to the City.

The Foundation helped fund the Parks Funding Study and Paige reported there may be a new park levy proposed for 2014. Seattle Parks Foundation recently completed a polling of Seattle residents and found that 87% see parks in a positive light, while the rest of the City of Seattle averages only 56% favorability.

City:

Donald reported that Acting Superintendent Williams recently shared employee suggestions for ways to reduce the Department's expenses. None of the employees suggested cutting funding to the Arboretum.

The Department will receive its 2013 budget direction from Mayor McGinn and the City Budget Office on Friday, April 13. Preliminary estimates are that Parks may be asked to take a cut of \$8-10 million, on top of the cuts it has taken over the past several years. If the estimate is accurate, this would be the biggest cut ever for the department.

University of Washington:

Good news! For the first time in four years, the UW Botanic Garden will not take any cuts. Sarah reported the University is now interviewing for the director of the UW's School of Environmental and Forest Sciences, with several strong candidates. This position has been filled for the past several years by Tom Hinckley, who will retire this summer.

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG) Update

Michael reported that MPIG met this past Friday and gave several updates:

New Zealand Garden: The bid is almost ready to go out, after being delayed by the bus turnaround design. Construction is tentatively scheduled for June-July. Fred has talked with the original New Zealand Garden's designer/donor, Mr. Ballard. He is now 90 years old and seems agreeable to plans to expand the garden. This Friday, UW staff will visit Cistus Nursery for an update on the New Zealand Garden plant propagation.

Interpretative/Wayfinding Signs: The Parks and Greenspaces Levy is funding \$50,000 for this project, which includes signs and maps to help people more easily navigate the Arboretum. The work is being timed with the new crosswalks and traffic calming modifications and lighting installation along Lake Washington Boulevard.

Japanese Garden Operations: Barb Decaro reported formation of a new committee with Steve Garber of the Japanese Garden Committee (JGC), Japanese Garden Advisory Council members, and Acting Parks Division Director Dan Johnson to look at ways to use the \$350,000 donation recently received by JGC and controlled by Steve Garber. Acting Parks Superintendent Williams has recommended 10% of the donation focus on developing a governance structure for the Japanese Garden. Barb will periodically report to the ABGC on Japanese Garden revenues.

Proposed Totem Donation: Paige reported that Jim Sulsic, Seattle Center Foundation chair, has offered a totem pole to the Arboretum. The City has an arts acceptance policy and the totem would need to be vetted there, as well as have agreement from the Tribes. The ABGC is

interested, but wants to hear the results of the arts policy and discussions with the Tribes. MPIG will work on this and report back to the ABGC.

Graham Visitors Center Front Desk Remodel: Michael reported this project is underway and more complicated than originally thought. He will report again in May.

Music of Trees Art Installation: This is planned for a September installation.

Lake Washington Boulevard Lighting Project: Della reported a number of Arboretum Foundation members have asked about the status of the stalled Seattle City Light lighting project along Lake Washington Boulevard. Michael and Donald stated Parks is pushing Seattle City Light, which ran into complications with the lighting bid, to complete the project. The delay has also impacted the crosswalk installation and other traffic calming measures to be performed by Seattle Department of Transportation. The Arboretum Foundation will write a letter to Seattle City Light in the near future if the project doesn't soon move forward.

Florabundance Plant Sale: This annual plant sale is scheduled for the weekend beginning Friday, April 27 and through Sunday, April 29. Due to restrictions on holding the large plant sale at Magnuson Park's Building 30, it is being held at Graham Visitors Center (the last choice.) However, permitting for the event is going well and Foundation staff are working to arrange parking and shuttles. Volunteers are still needed to help manage the sale.

The Early Bloomers plant sale is scheduled for this weekend, April 13-16. The UW and City are planning some Mother's Day events, while the Foundation's focus is on plant sales.

Old/New Business

ABGC Work Plan: Theresa updated and distributed the ABGC Work Plan. ABGC members will review and discuss at the May 9 meeting.

UW Regent and Provost Tour of Arboretum: Sarah will work to schedule this in July.

City Council Annual Briefing: Michael and Donald will discuss this with Acting Parks Superintendent Williams. ABGC members agreed it is good to do this briefing and keep the Council informed about the Arboretum. The briefing will most likely be to Council's Parks and Neighborhoods Committee.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Theresa Doherty, ABGC Chair