

ABGC 2005 Annual Retreat Minutes – Draft
Graham Visitors Center
December 7, 2005

Attendance:

ABGC Voting Members: Deb Andrews (Arboretum Foundation), Margaret Ceis (City of Seattle), Jack Collins (City), Donald Harris (City), Neal Lessenger (Arboretum Foundation), Sandra Lier (UW), David Mabblerley (UW), and John Wott (UW)

Others: Jan Arntz (UW), Royal Alley-Barnes (City), Bruce Bare (UW), Della Balick (Arboretum Foundation), Ken Bounds (City), Ashley Clark (Arboretum Foundation), Rory Denovan (City), Belinda Gigliotti (City), David Goldberg (City), David Graves (City), Fred Hoyt (UW), Fred Isaac (Arboretum Foundation), Tom Mentele (UW), Duane Penttila (City), Peggy Pullen (City), Judy Phillips (Arboretum Foundation), Sarah Reichard (UW), Michael Shiosaki (City), and David Zucherman (UW)

Voting Members Excused: John Behnke (Washington State representative)

INTRODUCTIONS

The fourth annual retreat of the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by ABGC Chair Sandra Lier. The retreat was held at Graham Visitors Center, with 27 attendees representing the Arboretum Foundation, City of Seattle, and University of Washington (UW). Sandra welcomed everyone and each person introduced herself/himself and gave their name, title, and affiliation to the ABGC.

Sandra served as the facilitator, distributed a copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, and briefly reviewed the Implementation Roles and Responsibilities. In 2006, ABGC officers will carefully review these documents to ensure that the ABGC is in compliance with each.

REVIEW — ABGC 2005

Donald Harris commented that the Master Plan implementation is a complex integration of the Arboretum Foundation, City of Seattle, and University of Washington's efforts. The annual retreat is the one time each year when a broad-based constituency of each of these three agencies meet to discuss the Arboretum. It is a great opportunity for ABGC members to receive feedback and suggestions on the Arboretum's Master Plan implementation.

Next, Sandra reviewed some of the ABGC's major accomplishments of the past year:

- A significant amount of the Pacific Connection project's implementation has been planned and agreed upon.
- The ABGC website (<http://depts.washington.edu/wpa/abgc/>) has been completely redesigned by UW staff. The next step is for the Seattle Parks' webmaster to assume responsibility for maintaining the information including ABGC agendas, minutes, goals and objectives, and names of voting members.
- Another success is the transition of Dr. David Mabblerley as the leader of the University of Washington Botanic Gardens, which includes the Washington Park Arboretum, Center for Urban Horticulture, Union Bay Natural Area, Elisabeth C. Miller Library, and the Otis Douglas Hyde Herbarium.

UPDATES ON 2005 PROJECTS

The Master Plan Implementation Group, a subcommittee of the ABGC, is chaired by Michael Shiosaki. He gave a brief summary of the Arboretum Master Plan capital projects currently in progress.

— Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG)

(1) Madrona Terrace Project:

- (a) The schematic plan of this 12-acre site was finished in early 2005. 30% of the fundraising has been completed and the design and development are now in progress.

- (b) The holly collection relocation is moving forward and being handled in house. This project encompasses four acres, with the plant relocation scheduled for fall of 2006.
- (2) Japanese Garden Entry Structure Project: The Pro Parks Levy is funding the schematic for this project, while an anonymous donor is funding the construction of the building. The project is moving forward very quickly. One of the next steps is for the project to go through the City's Landmark Preservation process.
- (3) Interpretive and Wayfinding Plan: The Pinetum is the first Master Plan project to utilize this new signage system. Fred Hoyt is the lead.
- (4) Irrigation Mainline Project: This is now in the design development phase and is a key component of the infrastructure project. The design is nearly complete and installation is scheduled for fall of 2006 and winter of 2007.
- (5) Historic Resources Plan: The method used to implement this plan is very important. The strategy is to take projects one at a time through the Landmarks Preservation process, with the Japanese Garden Entry Structure Project as the first test. The Landmarks Preservation Board understands this approach, but hasn't yet fully embraced it. David Goldberg is the lead.

Following Michael's report, there was a brief discussion on the need to educate the Landmarks Preservation Board more fully on the plant collections in the Arboretum, as these must be treated differently from the structural components of the Arboretum. Sandra pointed out that the University (which is State owned) has its own historic element policy and David Mabberley stated that the collection is owned by the State of Washington.

Action item:

- ❖ *Continue working closely with the Landmarks Preservation Board on the different levels of historic policies that govern the Arboretum.*

OVERVIEW OF FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

Deb Andrews, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director, gave an overview of fundraising efforts for implementation of the Master Plan. This is the largest fundraising effort ever undertaken by the Arboretum Foundation and it has created lots of excitement. Foundation members and staff have been working behind the scenes, creating the campaign structure and talking to people who haven't previously been closely associated with the Arboretum. The Foundation recently hired an additional development coordinator to assist the current staff members, as campaigns of this size require support from a number of staff.

The Board has set a goal to raise \$6 million. Forty three donors have already given \$1.7 million, with \$ 500K of that for endowment. The Foundation is now writing grants to assist with the fundraising. The goal is to have raised \$2-1/2 to \$3 million by the end of 2006, and have groundbreaking on the first projects in 2007. The projects were selected from the "high priority" lists and have received a great deal of interest from donors. Other high priority projects include Azalea Way, the Japanese Garden Entry Structure, and a multi-use trail.

Deb gave details on the extensive efforts that go into a fundraising effort of this size, including strategy, campaign title ("Arboretum Anew"), and other components. The Board hopes to have 100% Board donor participation by June 2006. In July 2005, an anonymous donor gave \$1 million, stating that they were glad to see "something happening" at the Arboretum. Fundraising efforts are greatly assisted when donors see progress being made. Both the Foster Island and Pinetum projects are now being pointed out to donors.

Seattle Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds asked if there is an effort to obtain State funds for the South Entry project. Bruce Bare, the Dean of the UW's College of Forest Resources, answered that the State currently supports the Arboretum through funding to the UW. He has written the legislators to ask for increased Arboretum funding in 2006 during the State's current supplemental budget process. If approved, the funds would be used for maintenance and operations. The Superintendent asked Dean Bare to keep the City and Seattle Parks apprised of progress on this request.

A lengthy discussion followed on the importance of ensuring that State legislators are interested in the Arboretum. It is very important that the Arboretum be brought to world class status and look great when the Master Plan is implemented. Broadening the scope of funding to a State and national level would help accomplish this. Suggestions/comments included:

- An Arboretum tour should be arranged for the legislators
- Look at the breadth of government opportunities and also involve national legislators
- UW staff cannot lobby State legislators; however, the City and Arboretum Foundation can do so
- Arboretum Foundation is in touch with several State legislators and will increase this contact
- City lobbyists are currently lobbying for federal dollars for the Arboretum
- Keep both Dean Bare and Superintendent Bounds informed of any lobbying
- State funds could give some relief to Master Plan fundraising efforts

A focused and directed effort is needed to involve State legislators in the future of the Arboretum. However, those lobbying for the Arboretum must be very knowledgeable as to which Master Plan projects are the most likely candidates for State funding and know which legislators would be most interested in helping fund these projects. “Who, what, where, and when” must be determined before someone picks up a phone and calls a legislator to have lunch to discuss the funding. The Arboretum Foundation’s information/training tool box can be utilized as a foundation for this effort.

Action item: Develop a focused and well-directed plan to lobby State legislators in support of the Arboretum and its Master Plan.

ARBORETUM PARTNER’S REPORT

The University of Washington, through UW Botanic Gardens, manages the Arboretum’s plant collections. The City of Seattle’s Department of Parks and Recreation holds title to most of the land and cooperates in its management. The Arboretum Foundation manages fund raising, membership, and volunteer services. The leaders of these three partners gave brief comments.

Ken Bounds, Seattle Parks Superintendent, believes the retreat is a good opportunity to review progress that has been made on goals and what has been accomplished. He briefly reviewed some major changes in the Parks Department, due to 2005 budget cutbacks. The Department reorganized and streamlined staff and now has two resource managers. One of those is Royal Alley-Barnes. She is manager of the Northeast District, which includes the Arboretum. Even with the budget cuts, Seattle Parks funded an additional maintenance laborer position at the Japanese Garden for six months during 2005. In 2006, this position will be allocated to the Arboretum. The Superintendent stated that he is proud of the Parks staff and their focus on the Arboretum.

The Arboretum has a broad mission and serves a large community. The partners must continue efforts to draw attention to the Arboretum and its Master Plan, especially from Washington State legislators. He suggested a tour be arranged for some of the legislators. He is very pleased with the participation of the City’s two high-profile ABGC appointees, Margaret Ceis and Jack Collins.

Bruce Bare, Dean of the University of Washington’s College of Forest Resources, is proud of the ABGC’s accomplishments and of the progress being made. The Working Together Agreements were signed by the Superintendent, the Dean, and the Arboretum Foundation president in 2003 and amended in 2004. Each wants the Arboretum and its Master Plan to succeed and these documents are a means to that success.

In 2005, Dr. David Mabberley became director of the Arboretum and Center for Urban Horticulture, now combined as UWBG. It was a major accomplishment to recruit Dr. Mabberley to join the UW, especially with his scientific background. Within three months, Dr. Mabberley successfully formed the University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG) and serves as its director. In other good news, the UW is hiring new faculty and will add positions at the UWBG.

Dean Bare noted that Dr. John Wott, Arboretum Director from 1998 until 2005, will retire as a UW professor at the end of 2006.

Dean Bare and Dr. Mabberley, in an unusual approach, have requested Washington State to budget \$500,000 annually for Arboretum maintenance and operations. He asked the City and Arboretum Foundation to assist in lobbying for approval of the request. The Superintendent stated that the City is happy to support this effort. Dean Bare stated that efforts are now under way for an endowment to fund a curator and another endowment to fund ongoing maintenance at the Arboretum.

Neal Lessenger, Arboretum Foundation President, reviewed the Arboretum's history. As early as 1924 the University of Washington was involved at the Arboretum, which was owned by the City. In 1934, an agreement was signed with the City that formally established the University's presence. This enabled Work Projects Administration (WPA) funds to be used at the Arboretum, as federal laws prohibited those funds from being directed to a local entity (the City). The funds could, however, be directed to the State (University.) The Arboretum Foundation was created in 1934 and is an all-volunteer organization, with a very small staff. Past Foundation Board members are giving a great deal of assistance to help raise funds to implement the Master Plan. The Foundation's sole focus is on the Arboretum and it has donated funds to both the City and the University.

ARBORETUM REPORT – DR. DAVID MABBERLEY

Current State of Arboretum

Dr. Mabberley displayed an aerial photo of the University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG) which showed the footprints of all the components that comprise the Gardens: Washington Park Arboretum, the Center for Urban Horticulture, Elisabeth C. Miller Library, Union Bay Natural Area, and the Otis Douglas Hyde Herbarium. He distributed a copy of his vision for the Gardens, as well as a fact sheet on the Gardens. He spoke on the relationship of the Garden components to each other and the components' individual roles. A major goal of UWBG is to be a regional leader in water and soil conservation and pest management.

He stated that the Arboretum Master Plan attracted him to move to Seattle as Arboretum director. It is quite visionary that Washington Park Arboretum has its own Master Plan; many arboretums around the world don't have one and that lack leads to much strife.

He commended the work of the City and University crews who do such a great job at the Arboretum. He briefly reviewed various projects that have already been accomplished and others that are under way. He stated that these are all good news.

The bad news is that there are not enough staff members or space to accommodate additional staff. He commented that he has received congratulations from around the world on becoming director of the Washington Park Arboretum. However, it is an embarrassment that the Arboretum cannot be maintained to a world-class standard because it currently has too few staff and too little funding. He referred to efforts by Dean Bare and himself to secure funding from the current Washington State supplemental budget process.

Now is a great opportunity to build on what is already in place. There is lots of work ahead to secure adequate maintenance funding, involve the nearby community more closely in the Arboretum, secure a curator, and develop a strong Pacific Northwest identity for the Arboretum.

STAFF AND SPACE NEEDS

Enhanced Volunteer Program

In fall of 2005, Jack Collins volunteered to work with David Mabberley to develop an enhanced Arboretum volunteer program, as the current number of staff and volunteers is inadequate to maintain the Arboretum. Early discussions on ways to enhance the volunteer program include: (1) volunteers without professional landscaping skills would work at a set area of the Arboretum on a weekly basis, leading to a sense of "ownership" by the volunteers; (2) professional landscapers would be encouraged to volunteer four hours per month as volunteers and also donate four hours monthly of paid time of their crew members; and (3) the current volunteer program would also continue and be enhanced.

The major factors to be considered in implementing an enhanced program are: (1) the City's union rules; and (2) supervision for the volunteers, to ensure the work is done correctly. Jack stated that the program must include how it is to be structured, who will manage it, and where the program will be housed. Several more ABGC members volunteered to work on this program. Jack will serve as chair and members will be David Mabblerley, Donald Harris, Kelley McCarter, Rory Denovan, and David Zuckerman. Both Parks and UW have volunteer coordinators and Jack will gather information from them.

Other comments:

- UW grounds crew chief David Zuckerman and Seattle Parks' grounds crew chief Rory Denovan met yesterday and believe they have great ideas for both the volunteers and their supervision. They stressed that the Arboretum, with its highly-regarded tree and plant collections, has a body of work that volunteers cannot do without proper supervision. A volunteer coordinator is needed who both interfaces with the volunteers and works closely with Rory and David before assigning any work. It is important that the volunteer program works well for the existing grounds crews. This is a great opportunity to involve high school, college, and university students at the Arboretum.
- Superintendent Bounds agreed that the program must be well managed and expectations be clear.
- Duane Penttila has worked in the horticulture division of Parks for 25 years and worked extensively with Parks' volunteer efforts. He has observed that the following works well: (1) volunteers do a great job of removing invasives, etc.; (2) affected unions must be notified of each work party; (3) volunteers must be closely supervised; and (4) Earth Corp successfully supervised a number of work parties, after being hired by Parks to do so. There are two types of commercial landscape companies: (1) the mow, blow, and go type; and (2) those who do shrub bed work.
- Judy Phillips commented that Bellevue Botanical Garden has a great program where volunteers receive internet reminders and work at the garden one Sunday per month.
- Royal Alley-Barnes suggested a search for a mid-size "green" company as corporate sponsor for the Arboretum. This could be a great opportunity to involve intergenerational volunteers.
- Della Balick recommended that the committee clarify the program's goals early in the process.

Action item: Committee should continue discussions about this program, add the enhanced volunteer program to the ABGC's Goals & Objectives, and develop a plan to get both a volunteer coordinator and a corporate sponsor.

Space Needs

Deb Andrews stated that both the Arboretum Foundation staff and the UWBG staff are out of space. The Education program is doing very well but cannot be expanded due to this lack of space. Dr. Mabblerley stated that the grounds crews are also out of space. He proposed utilizing some type of container/trailer to be set up in the parking lot for an extra people to be taken on.

One member suggested that staff look into renting space at the vacant Montlake library. Deb had already checked into this and the rental costs at that site are prohibitive.

Discussion focused on the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI) building. UWBG and the Arboretum Foundation and Education program staff had hoped they could utilize space at this building to help solve their space crisis; such space allocation was allowed for in the Master Plan. With the impending SR520 widening project, which includes demolition of the MOHAI building, those hopes have been dampened. Superintendent Bounds stated that MOHAI will remain in the current building until it is demolished by WSDOT, which probably will not be until 2010. Seattle Parks is the landlord of the MOHAI building and he will get the timeframe of MOHAI's eventual move from the building (sometime within the next 3-4 years) to Dr. Mabblerley. MOHAI remains a possible source for temporary space needs relief.

SR520 PROJECT & BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS' PUBLIC HEARING

Timing/Schedule and the Role of the ABGC, Arboretum Foundation, City, and UW

The ABGC has asked the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners to hold a public hearing on January 12, 2006, on the impacts of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) State Route 520 expansion project and its potential impacts to the Arboretum. David Graves, Seattle Parks' project manager, gave an update on WSDOT's project timeline. WSDOT is currently assembling a draft EIS, which is expected to be released in May or June of 2006. It will most likely choose its preferred alternative in that same time period. David stated that WSDOT is considering the 4-lane and 6-lane alternatives. A new community-led proposal, referred to as the Pacific Interchange, has emerged and WSDOT is currently studying this proposal, which is of the greatest concern to both the ABGC and Arboretum. There is community support for this new proposal. David pointed out where the ramps would be located and stated that the Coast Guard requires the ramps to be 110' above the water surface, which is a significant height. Donald asked if the State has determined whether the Pacific Interchange proposal is feasible. David answered that the proposal had made it through the State's first screening. He talked at length about the traffic revisions that could come as a result of this alternative. [WSDOT project website: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/>]

The City of Seattle has a number of areas of interest in the SR520 project. The University's interests are much clearer and its Regents reviewed the Pacific Interchange proposal and wrote a letter to WSDOT that it does not support this alternative.

David briefly reviewed the 4F designation [for more information on the federal designation of Section 4F, please see <http://environment.fhwa.dot.gov/projdev/pd5sec4f.asp>] and stated that Arboretum supporters cannot depend exclusively on a Section 4F designation to protect the Arboretum from this project. A neighborhood group supporting a tunnel under Lake Washington has also recently emerged. Jan Artntz commented that neither the tunnel nor the soaring expansion is feasible.

Discussion then focused on strategizing the presentation of views held by ABGC and other organizations at the Park Board's public hearing to emphasize to WSDOT the negative impacts this proposal would have on the Arboretum. Suggestions/comments included:

- Stress the traffic impacts on the Arboretum; important to have traffic figures for the public hearing
- If the Pacific Interchange is selected as the preferred alternative, there will be significant negative impacts to the Arboretum
- Educate the community on the value of the Arboretum
- Encourage participation at the hearing (ABGC, Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks, Japanese Garden Society, Seattle Audubon Society, UW, etc.)
- Along with the support of these organizations, must get individual citizens engaged in protecting the Arboretum
- Be very organized
- It is critical for all retreat attendees to attend the public hearing — send agenda to all retreat attendees
- Stress that the taking of Arboretum land impacts historical elements of the Arboretum

The ABGC concurred that, while it resists any proposal that has a negative impact on the Arboretum, it must also prepare financial mitigation measures in the event the State of Washington prefers one of the alternatives and moves forward with the project. Sandra stated that UW staff are working on mitigation for the loss of natural areas; Deb and Donald stated that both the City and Arboretum Foundation have had some preliminary mitigation discussion. Attendees suggested that each entity stress that the Arboretum and its resources are non-renewable and that the widening project changes the use of both the environment and habitat.

Action items:

- *Attend January 12 public hearing*
- *Continue work on mitigation measures*

2006 WORK PLAN PRIORITIES

New goals that were discussed and agreed to previously in this retreat are:

1. Expand the Arboretum volunteer program
 - a. Enlist sponsors
 - b. Develop a subcommittee to lead in this effort
2. Olympia Committee
 - a. Make the ABGC's case to the State Legislature
 - b. Identify resources already expended
 - c. Citizen's approach to legislature
3. Space
 - a. MOHAI
 - i. Arboretum Foundation
 - ii. University of Washington/City of Seattle
4. Park Board public hearing on SR520 project, scheduled for January 12
 - a. Speak for the Arboretum
 - b. Review who will speak, what will be said, at the January 4 ABGC

Action item:

Add these items to the ABGC work plan.

CLOSING REMARKS

The next retreat date is tentatively scheduled for December 6, 2006, [since changed to December 13, 2006] which is the regular meeting date for the ABGC. Sandra thanked all those present for their participation. The retreat adjourned at 12 noon.

Action item:

Schedule 2006 ABGC retreat on December 6 [13], 8:00 am – 12:00 pm

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
David Mabberley, ABGC Secretary