

APPROVED

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, December 9, 2009

Voting Members

Present:

Arboretum Foundation

- Barbara Wright, Arboretum Foundation President
- 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) Director
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington Associate Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture

Absent:

- Dave Towne, Washington State Governor's Appointee

Other Staff Present:

- Tim Gallagher, Seattle Parks Superintendent
- David Graves, Seattle Parks, Project Manager
- Fred Hoyt, UWBG, Associate Director
- Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks, Planning & Development Deputy Director

Members of the Public Present:

- John Barber, Advocate for SR 520 Alternative A+
- Bob Corwin, Interested

Staff:

- Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Standing Committees

Funding Requests to State Legislature:	John (AF), Jack (City), & Dave T (Washington State)
Fundraising Policy:	AF: Paige Miller & Barbara Wright City: Tim Gallagher (Chair) & Donald Harris UW: Tom Hinckley & Sandra Lier
Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG)	Michael (lead), Donald, Fred, Julia, Paige, Sandra & Tom
Mission Statement:	Kathleen Pierce (AF), Donald (City) & Sandra (UW)
Naming Recognition Guideline:	Paige (AF), Donald (City), & Sandra (UW)
SR520 Mediation:	AF, David Graves (City), & Theresa Doherty (UW)

Known Absences:

January: Jack Collins & Dave Towne
March: Dave Towne

Chair Dave Towne was out of town. Vice-chair Paige Miller called the meeting to order at 8:30 am and the agenda was approved, as amended, as well as the October 14 minutes, as corrected.

Update: SR 520 Project

The Arboretum's Guiding Principles for the SR520 project, adopted in November 2009, were distributed to City Council Chair Richard Conlin, City Councilmembers, Mayor Nickels, and ABGC members by Sandy Brooks and to the appropriate WSDOT and legislative members by Theresa Doherty. The Principles are included at the end of these minutes.

The City Council held a public hearing on SR520 in December, with Council chambers filled with members of the public. Donald reported that Kjriss Lund did a good job testifying on behalf of protecting the Arboretum from this project. It was heartening to hear many others speak on behalf of the Arboretum. Many argued for a delay on this project and asked that it not be rushed into. A second public forum was held at the Center for Urban Horticulture. The Friends of Olmsted Parks gave great support for developing an option that does not include ramps into the Arboretum.

The Legislative Workgroup Committee met on November 11 and voted 11-2 to move forward with Option A+. The report and correspondence is on the internet at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/partners/sr520legislativeworkgroup/recommendations.htm>. The Legislature has a short meeting calendar and their 2009 work session is nearly finished.

There was some discussion whether A+ included ramps into the Arboretum. Theresa responded that the Workgroup recommended A+ with ramps into Lake Washington Boulevard, and that option was supported by King County Metro. Paige commented that would be consistent with the drawings she has seen. The drawings' ramps are not shown going into the Arboretum but would still facilitate traffic to Lake Washington Boulevard – which then would flow through the Arboretum. Barbara mentioned there may be some conflict between the County Council supporting Alternative A+ and Seattle City Council going in a different direction. City Council Chair Richard Conlin does not support additional traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard.

Jack stated that Alternative A+ violates five of the ABGC's guiding principles and, once the Draft Environmental Impact Statement has been released, the ABGC should speak up on these violations. Sandra added that the public expects the ABGC to be stewards for the Arboretum and the Guiding Principles reflect its stewardship.

Paige has been asked to be one of three members on a panel on Seattle Channel on December 14 to discuss the Sr520 project. The other two members are State Senator Judith Cliburn, who supports Alternative A+, John Dubman who opposes A+. (See the program at the following link: <http://www.seattlechannel.org/issues/sr520.asp>.) Paige plans to voice the Arboretum Foundation's position and principles and speak for protecting the Arboretum. She asked if the ABGC agreed with this approach.

ABGC members spent some time discussing the most effective approach for Paige to take, with **Tim moving that she stress that none of the proposed alternatives address the ABGC's Guiding Principles, adopted November 2009, and that transportation decisions are being made in total disregard of the value of open space in favor of traffic. Sandra seconded. The vote was taken and was unanimous in favor.**

Iain offered up several quotes for Paige's use: The ABGC is a proponent of public open space over concrete! Tire tracks are over Mother Nature forever! Cherish open space and value it over traffic!

Donald added that 50 years ago when the R.H. Thompson Freeway was scheduled to cut through the Arboretum, the ABGC did not take a strong enough stand and the resulting ramps and heavy traffic through the Arboretum were the result. Barbara asked Paige to note that this is the Arboretum's 75th anniversary.

Tim commented that the train is coming and cannot be stopped. David Goldberg is working on the compensation for the project and the ABGC's Guiding Principles will help with that discussion.

Paige agreed and moved the discussion to the proposed tolling bill. This toll would encourage drivers to avoid using Lake Washington Boulevard, by adding a toll. This, in turn, reduces traffic through the Arboretum. The UW is working on the bill and will introduce it soon. Sandra added that she is working with State Senator Ken Jacobsen. This bill recognizes damage done in the past and helps repair that damage; the term "mitigation" will not be included.

Jack asked that the draft be circulated to ABGC members for a vote at the January meeting. He noted that the State Legislature will be in session at that time. Sandra will forward the draft bill this week.

David Graves referred to the tolling and added that drivers would have to travel on both city (Lake Washington Boulevard) and State roads (SR520) to incur a toll. Donald noted that Larry Sinnott of Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks stated that tolling is abhorrent; however, that sentiment hasn't been heard that from anyone else.

Bob Corwin – North Capitol Hill

Mr. Corwin is a retired urban planner who opposes freeway expansion and has addressed the ABGC at a previous meeting. Today he heard that the ABGC is saying “take a stand on what the Arboretum means to the people” and noted that Tim believes the SR520 project is a train headed towards the Arboretum. He stated that City leaders could take a much stronger role in this project and distributed a one-page handout to the group. He does not believe that WSDOT has developed the best plan for the replacement project and when the public realizes what is really happening, there will be a “meltdown.” He believes in the ABGC and that it has an enormous opportunity to protect the Arboretum from this project.

Following Mr. Corwin’s comments, Kjris asked if it is timely for a new opinion/editorial piece. Paige responded that it is. She will forward the last one and asked ABGC members to polish the wording and then vote on its distribution.

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG) Update

Donald noted that there will be a view trip at the Holmdahl Rockery at 10:00 am on December 10. Fred, Susan Black, Jack, and members of the Berger Partnership will be there. Jack has been reviewing a recent historical report of the rockery and learned that its original design is now covered by non-planned vegetation, resulting in its design being lost to history.

Donald announced that there will be a public meeting on the Master Plan Implementation on January 13 to showcase the projects. Signs have been posted to this effect. He added that Andy Sheffer, Seattle Parks’ project manager for Pacific Connections, attended a Friends of Seattle’s Olmsted Parks (FSOP) meeting on Monday night. Members were critical of the Gateway to Chile garden and believe that the Arboretum is being modified from an Olmsted design to a geographical-centric design. Paige responded that the Olmsteds did not design the Arboretum’s plantings. Donald will follow up on this, as the ABGC wants a strong relationship with FSOP.

Plant Propagation: Fred reported that the contract with Cistus Nurseries has completed both the UW legal process and the Arboretum Foundation review process, with only minor tweaks requested. Once Cistus approves the contract, work will move forward.

Brief UW Regents and City Councilmembers: Sandra reminded the group that the ABGC is required to brief both the Regents and Councilmembers annually and suggested this be planned for spring 2010.

Jack added that it’s important to build a relationship with Mayor-elect McGinn and incoming Parks and Seattle Center (PASC) Chair Sally Bagshaw about the Arboretum. Kjris asked if Tim has met with Councilmember Bagshaw. Their first meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 10. Donald noted that Councilmember Rasmussen will remain on PASC as its vice-chair.

Good News on Fundraising: Paige reported that the Gateway to Chile fundraising has only \$50,000 remaining to raise of the \$600,000 budget. She believes the goal will be met by the end of the year, the project will go to bid in 2010, the garden be installed in summer, and a celebration held in the fall. This project has had extraordinary support!

Budget & Event Reports:

Arboretum Foundation:

- Received a grant from the Peach Foundation, which will more than meet the UW's 2010 education goal and is double what was received last year.
- The Gifts and Greens Galore event was held this week and was successful.
- The Arboretum's 75th anniversary party was very successful. Dr. John Wott gave an especially humorous speech, with Barbara, Tim, and Tom Hinckley giving good talks about the Arboretum. Barbara added that it was a lovely event and thanked Paige and her staff for all their work to make the event a success.

UW:

- The Miller Library will celebrate its 75th anniversary in June 2010. Sandra invited everyone to stop by the Library.
- The UW is expected to have another \$21 million cut from its 2010 budget by the State.
- The UW is cutting the Husky Promise program, which supports 7,000 students who attend based on need.

City:

- Parks had an additional \$800,000 taken from its budget in November to fund the City's libraries.
- Five City Councilmembers have since apologized for this action.
- The City expects a \$40 million budget shortfall in 2011, with rumors that half this amount will come from the Parks Department's budget, which would be devastating to the Department.
- Paige is working to organize support on behalf of Parks.
- Tim commented that citizens voted for the Park Levy to build new facilities; however, Council is not supporting the projects with any maintenance funds. He would recommend that no additional new levy projects be built until the maintenance funding is secured.
- Tim will have his first meeting with Mayor-elect McGinn on Monday and will discuss this with him.
- Kjris will attend the Mayor-elect's Retire the Debt party tonight and will speak with him about the importance of parks, as well as the SR520 project and its effect on the Arboretum.

Parks has contracted with the Trust for Public Lands (TPL) for a six-month study on Seattle's parks. TPL recently studied Philadelphia's park system. For more information, see http://www.tpl.org/?gclid=CKr_wPngnZ8CFQJaagodg0r9Ug.

Iain, UW Professor Lynn Mazino, and a group of UW students are now researching, at a request from the Seattle Parks Foundation, how to determine if a park is successful. Sandra is interested to hear a report on this research.

November 4 Retreat

Jack stated that John Howell did a fabulous job as facilitator and really helped create new ideas. He helped the members work through two tasks and four more were identified for work in

2010. Barbara agreed with Jack's praise and added that there was good participation, with both regular ABGC attendees and non-regular staff at the retreat.

Retreat Outcome/Next Steps:

- Review the four tasks and develop a work plan for 2010, including dates/milestones, etc.
- Determine what resources are available for the tasks with shrinking resources.
- It is a real challenge to deliver on all these, especially ramping up outreach on SR520 and protecting parks.

Retreat Costs:

Donald negotiated a contract with John for \$800; however, the number of hours required resulted in a bill of \$1,760. In addition, the UW provided the meeting space and the foods for breakfast and lunch. All but one previous retreat was facilitated by staff, Parks provided the locations at no cost, and a continental breakfast was served, which kept costs much lower. It was agreed that a budget will be determined prior to the November 3, 2010, retreat. Members voiced that the Laurelhurst Community Center location worked especially well for the retreat. Parks staff will work to schedule it and send the date to ABGC members' calendars.

New/Old Business

Elect 2010 Officers: Jack moved to appoint Barbara Wright as Chair; Sandra Lier as Vice-chair, and Tim Gallagher as Secretary. Kjris seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Lake Washington Boulevard Traffic Calming Update: Donald reported that Luke Korpi of Seattle Department of Transportation will have a walk-through of the Arboretum in early 2010. Fred, Kjris, and Paige volunteered to accompany him on the walk. Donald will notify them of the date and time, and Luke will report his findings to the ABGC at an upcoming meeting.

Thanks to Donald, Paige and Dave T for Serving as Officers: The ABGC gave a rousing round of applause to Donald for his many years of service to the ABGC, with two of those spent as its chair. Thanks were also given to Dave for chairing for two years and to Paige for serving as an officer for several years. All three members are stepping off the Board, with Paige and Dave remaining as voting members. Donald's term as a voting member is now complete; however, he will continue to attend ABGC meetings.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Theresa Doherty, ABGC Secretary

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee Guiding Principles for the SR520 Expansion

Introduction

The Washington Park Arboretum is a stunning gem of the Seattle Park system, a 230-acre oasis of gently rolling land, bucolic watery islets and home to the best of the City's wildlife. It provides respite, scenery, recreation and solace to thousands of visitors in every season of the year. It provides educational and volunteering opportunities to thousands of friends, sightseeing to thousands of visitors and cultural enrichment in gardening styles and distant ecosystems to those who seek it out.

Proposed upgrades to State Route 520, the *SR 520 I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project*, across the north end of the Arboretum threaten significant impacts to the park over a number of years, and a base set of impacts for the life of the freeway corridor.

The Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC), comprised of representatives from the State of Washington, City of Seattle, University of Washington and the Arboretum Foundation, has established the following Guiding Principles as a way for the ABGC and interested parties to review and comment on the *SR 520 I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project* and for the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to consider as they move the project forward.

Guiding Principles – The proposed SR 520 project in and around the Washington Park Arboretum should:

1. Enhance the Washington Park Arboretum through the design, construction and operation of SR 520 and the *SR 520 I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project*;
2. Avoid harm to the Washington Park Arboretum and its collections;
3. Respect the historical, aesthetic and design integrity of the Park;
4. Fully compensate the Arboretum for loss of property and function if harm is unavoidable;
5. Reduce traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard below levels that exist today on the boulevard between Montlake Boulevard and East Madison Street; and,
6. Preserve and restore the Arboretum as an accessible place of quiet and respite.

11/19/2009