

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC)

www.wparboretum.org then select ABGC

Joint effort of Arboretum Foundation (AF), Seattle Parks and Recreation (Parks), and the University of Washington (UW)

Minutes – February 2, 2005 — Extended Meeting 8:30 am-11:00 am

Members:

Arboretum Foundation

- Deb Andrews, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director
- Neal Lessenger, Arboretum Foundation President

City of Seattle

- Donald Harris, Parks and Recreation Department Manager
- Margaret Ceis, Mayoral Appointee
- Jack Collins, Board of Park Commissioner

University of Washington

- Tom Hinckley, University of Washington Professor
- Sandra Lier, University of Washington Administrator
- John Wott, Arboretum Director

State of Washington

- John Behnke, Washington State Representative

Guests:

- Royal Alley-Barnes, Parks North & Central East Resources Manager
- Karen Bech, Consultant, Lehrman Cameron Studio
- Mindy Lehrman Cameron, Consultant, Lehrman Cameron Studio
- Ashley Clark, Arboretum Foundation Director of Development
- Nancy Davis, UW College of Forest Resources
- Rory Denovan, Parks Northeast District
- Jerry Ernst, Consultant
- David Goldberg, Parks Department Project Manager
- David Graves, Parks Department Project Planner
- Fred Hoyt, Arboretum
- Jon Martin, Parks Northeast District Crew Chief
- Tom Mentele, Director of Development, UW College of Forest Resources
- Iain Robertson, Japanese Garden Society
- Michael Shiosaki, Parks Department Pro Parks Manager
- Larry Sinnott, Board Member, Friends of Olmsted Park Board
- Sarah Westbrook, UW College of Forest Resources

Guest Speakers:

- Stephanie Brown and Brian Jones, Washington State Dept of Transportation (WSDOT)
- Corrie Parker (WSDOT)

Staff:

- Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Chair Sandra Lier called the meeting to order at 8:30 am for an extended meeting scheduled until 11:00 a.m. Several citizens were in the audience, as well as those listed above.

WSDOT Presentation on SR520 Widening Project

Three representatives from Washington State Department of Transportation gave an update briefing on the State's proposed SR520 Widening Project. Corrie Parker presented a powerpoint slide show and distributed hard copies of all the information presented on screen.

The presentation included a project overview; description of temporary detour bridge; profile; bicycle/pedestrian/visualizations; noise; stormwater recovery; recreation; and ecosystems.

Ms. Parker described the vulnerable points of the existing Evergreen Point Floating Bridge and its approach spans — especially in the event of an earthquake; the estimated work schedule; and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) alternatives. The three listed EIS alternatives are:

- ❖ No build
 - Continue operating Evergreen Point and Portage Bay bridges in place through 2030
 - Risk of catastrophic failure; both bridges fail due to earthquake or storm
- ❖ 4-lane alternative
- ❖ 6-lane alternative

The temporary detour bridge showed photos of the site of the proposed temporary bridge from a west approach 4-lane and a west approach 6-lane bridge. Reasons listed for choosing a detour bridge:

- ❖ Safety – separates traffic from construction
 - Protects the traveling public
 - Protects construction workers
 - Keeps traffic flowing
- ❖ Schedule – shortest construction schedule
 - Fewest in-water work windows; less risk to schedule
- ❖ Environmental Effects
 - Fewer years of effects on trail use in Arboretum (Foster Island)
 - Fewer effects to fish because less time in water

The profile section included photos of a west end (where the bridge reaches land and crosses the Arboretum) profile. WSDOT believes the proposed 4-lane replacement bridge balances many factors:

- ❖ Fish – less shading
- ❖ Wetlands – less shading
- ❖ Arboretum – does not bisect Foster Island; reduces noise dramatically
- ❖ Stormwater – drains to treatment facilities
- ❖ Visual – below tree line to reduce effect

A number of photos were shown regarding bicycle/pedestrian areas. Deb Andrews asked about the width of the bicycle pedestrian lane and Corrie answered 14 foot. Rory Denovan asked if WSDOT has plans to help deter the illegal encampments below the freeway. Corrie answered that WSDOT is not looking at that type of operation aspect.

WSDOT staff next presented the noise analysis:

- ❖ Assumed worst case — peak period traffic volumes moving at posted speed
- ❖ Washington State Noise Abatement Criteria – 66 dBA or greater — level at which conversation between two people three feet apart would be impaired
- ❖ Human perception of noise level changes
 - three dBA change is the minimum ear can perceive
 - 10 dBA change halves or doubles the sound level

Drawings of sound walls were displayed of both the 4-lane and 6-lane alternative. A short discussion on sound walls followed.

The next subject was the ecosystems of the wetlands, fish resources, and wildlife and habitat. Drawings were shown of the effects from both the 4-lane and 6-lane alternative.

Fish resources would have the following long-term benefits:

- ❖ Less shading over water and shoreline improves habitat
- ❖ Fewer columns reduces habitat for predators
- ❖ Generally better water quality
- ❖ Fish-passable culverts remove fish barriers

Fish resources would have the following long-term adverse effect:

- ❖ Potential loss of sockeye spawning site

Fish resources would have the following short-term adverse effects:

- ❖ Sound pressure from pile driving could harm fish
- ❖ Water turbidity and sediment from construction

Wildlife and Habitat

- ❖ Three bald eagle nests in Broadmoor/Arboretum area
- ❖ Two bald eagle nests on eastside
- ❖ Pile driving could be restricted during the early part of nesting season

ABGC members and guests asked WSDOT staff a number of questions. WSDOT will come back to the April ABGC meeting to discuss the Environment Impact Statement, which is due out in June. Larry Sinnott stated he is concerned that WSDOT is presenting skewed views and asked for costs estimates and a list of who will benefit from this project. Who will be using these ramps?

At the end of the meeting, Neal Lessenger read aloud the draft letter from the ABGC to WSDOT. A number of changes were suggested on content and who should receive the letter. Deb Andrews urged that WSDOT pay attention to the pedestrian trail/bike trail.

Actions:

- ◆ *WSDOT to attend April meeting to discuss the draft EIS.*
- ◆ *Neal Lessenger and Sandra Lier to finalize the letter to WSDOT and cc: Mayor, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, and the UW Dean of College of Forest Resources*
- ◆ *Tom Hinckley and Sandra Lier to write op-ed piece for Seattle Times/P-I*
- ◆ *Larry Sinnott to send written comments to Sandy Brooks*

MPIG Report

Tom Hinckley distributed a summary report from the most recent Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG) meeting. He asked for approval of the Interpretive and Wayfinding Plan and South Entry/Madrona Terrace Project. Members were very complimentary of the Wayfinding Plan and look forward to an eventual brochure created from the information. It was suggested that the Plan be posted on the website.

Tom Hinckley moved approval of the plan; Jack Collins seconded. The vote was taken and was unanimous in favor.

Donald Harris thanked the University's funding support, which enabled this project to move forward. Sandra Lier asked that a final copy be sent to the UW. Iain Robinson commented that this has been a good cooperative effort of the Arboretum Foundation, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and the University of Washington. Sandra Lier will take this back to the UW Regents and asked that any other suggestions be sent to her. Tom Hinckley suggested that Neal Lessenger (Arboretum Foundation President), Ken Bounds (Seattle Parks and Recreation Superintendent) and Bruce Bare (UW Dean of College of Forest Services) be invited to speak before the Regents, stressing the good partnership.

Next, the South Entry and Madrona Terrace Project was reviewed. A short discussion followed. Iain Robinson stated he is still concerned with the design of the trail. Donald commented that this is a schematic design and is not the last chance to consider alterations. There are still details to be determined. Kate of Portico noted the concern and stated that this could be corrected in the design development. **Neal moved the ABGC approve schematic design of the South Entry and Madrona Terrace Project and adopt the narrative. Margaret seconded. The vote was taken and was unanimous in favor.** Sandra thanked Tom Hinckley and Pro Parks for their efforts on these projects.

Action: Tom H asked that a press release be developed for the Wayfinding Plan.

Action: Arrange for Neal Lessenger, Ken Bounds, and Bruce Bare to meet with the UW Regents.

Old business/new business

- **Neal Lessenger moved approval of the January 5 minutes, Tom Hinckley seconded, and the vote was unanimous in favor.**
- Donald Harris introduced David Graves, who is a new Seattle Parks and Recreation planner, and is working with the SR520 project.
- Officers for 2005 were re-elected: Sandra Lier remains as Chair; Donald Harris remains as Vice-chair; and Deb Andrews remains as Secretary.
- Jerry Ernst briefly reviewed the agenda for the March 2 retreat.
- Tom Mentele introduced two staff members from the College of Forest Resources: Nancy Davis and Sarah Westbrook.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Deborah Andrews, ABGC Secretary