

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, July 14, 2010

Voting Members

Present:

Arboretum Foundation

- Barbara Wright, Arboretum Foundation Board
- Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director

City of Seattle

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

- Sally Bagshaw, Seattle City Council, Chair of Parks and Seattle Center Committee
- Fred Hoyt, UWBG, Associate Director
- Luke Korpi, Seattle Department of Transportation, Planner
- Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks, Planning & Development Deputy Director

WSDOT SR 520 Team Present:

Rob Berman, Planning Manager; Jenifer De Young, Environmental Manager, Katie D'Leary, Communications Manager for SR520 Project, Karrie Ruth, Engineering Manager West Side; Heather Catron, Operations Manager; and Michael Horntvedt; Transportation and Operations Manager
Consultants: Andrew Barash and Bruce Jamieson, WSDOT Transportation Consultants

Members of the Public Present:

- Jorgen Bader, University District Community Council
- Nancy Belcher, Arboretum Foundation's SR 520 Committee
- Susan Black, Arboretum Foundation's SR 520 Committee and Vice-President of Arboretum Foundation Board
- Anita Bowers, Montlake Community Council President
- Maurice Cooper, Madison Park Community Council
- George & Virginia Gunby, Ravenna-Bryant Community Council
- Roy Stamper, Madison Park Community Council

ABGC Staff: Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Standing Committees

Building Committee:

Paige (AF); Donald (City); & Sandra (UW)

Joint Fundraising Committee

AF: Paige Miller & Della Balick

City: Donald Harris & Christopher Williams

UW: Tom Hinckley & Sandra Lier

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG)

Michael (lead), Rick Nishi, Fred, Paige, Sandra & Tom

SR520 Technical Committee:

AF, David Graves (City), & Theresa Doherty (UW)

Barbara Wright, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:00 am and introduced Seattle City Councilmember Sally Bagshaw, chair of the Council's Parks and Seattle Center Committee. Barbara next asked everyone to introduce themselves and share their particular interest in the Arboretum with Councilmember Bagshaw.

Councilmember Bagshaw spoke on several topics of interest to the ABGC, including the SR 520 project and its impacts on the Arboretum, and traffic calming to increase pedestrian safety on Lake Washington Boulevard, maintenance and operations funding for Seattle Parks Department, and her long-term vision for the Seattle's park system.

SR 520 and Pedestrian Safety/Traffic Calming for Lake Washington Boulevard: She has met with WSDOT staff several times on this project and recently met with its SR 520 project coordinator. She also toured Washington Park Arboretum with Fran Conley, a neighborhood activist very involved in the project. Councilmember Bagshaw will help ensure that WSDOT and the ABGC are working smoothly together and will set up a roundtable with members of both, as well as Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) staff. She assured ABGC members that WSDOT and the City are listening to them and taking their input very seriously.

Councilmember Chair Richard Conlin is the current Council lead for the SR 520 project. During the spring, he met weekly with Councilmembers Rasmussen and Bagshaw. The Council hired Tim Payne, a transportation consultant, with an excellent reputation. She noted that it has been several months since Council members have met with UW staff regarding the project. Barbara invited Councilmember Bagshaw and her staff to regularly attend the monthly ABGC meetings.

SDOT is holding formal meetings with WSDOT and she believes the Council will also schedule similar meetings with WSDOT. Paige asked that the City and WSDOT actively study whether a portion of the Lake Washington Boulevard traffic can be effectively diverted to 23rd/24th Avenues. She noted that the State has shown interest in this plan; however, a recent news article stated that Mayor McGinn is calling for these streets to be put on a "road diet" to lessen the amount of traffic. Councilmember Bagshaw acknowledged that studies are underway regarding the most effective way to handle traffic on 23rd and 24th Avenues.

Jack hopes Councilmember Bagshaw, as chair of the Council's Parks Committee, recognizes the challenges the ABGC is facing with this project. Several of the ABGC's voting members also work for the City of Seattle and University of Washington. Those agencies have many issues to focus on — and the Arboretum is not necessarily their top priority. However, the ABGC has two voting members from the Arboretum Foundation and their sole agenda is the Arboretum. He suggested that one or both of those members meet with Councilmember Bagshaw and the SR 520 roundtable.

Councilmember Bagshaw commented that it is difficult to reduce traffic along Lake Washington Boulevard (LWB.) She recently tried to cross it on a Saturday morning and was appalled by the volume of vehicles. Barbara accompanied the Councilmember on the Arboretum walk and noted that, at the same time, traffic was very light on nearby 23rd Avenue. Councilmember Bagshaw added that a number of representatives from

nearby neighborhoods attended this meeting and they are also impacted by the project and traffic. All have their issues and the solutions will not make everyone happy. Jack agreed there are many considerations.

Donald noted that Parks Department staff is part of an interdepartmental SR 520 team with SDOT; however, Park staff is subordinated at the meetings. Sandra added that it is important to recognize that the governor appoints a representative to the ABGC. Responding to Sandra's observation that State Legislators generally don't have a clear understanding that the Washington Park Arboretum is the State's designated arboretum — and not just a Seattle park — Councilmember Bagshaw agreed and urged to ABGC to continue stressing this distinction to the Legislature. She asked the ABGC to call on her for assistance if it doesn't get information it needs.

Responding to a question from Kjris whether the City is considering a bike-share program, Councilmember Bagshaw responded that she observed such a program in Copenhagen where bikes are rented in one location and may be returned to another. She met with City staff just yesterday to discuss this idea for Seattle.

Kjris and Iain agree that it is crucial to give disincentives to drive through the Arboretum and to offer alternative forms of transportation. Iain urged that the SR 520 shoulders not become future traffic lanes as Seattle's population grows by as many as 200,000 new people.

Sandra noted that the ABGC has proposed that a portion of the SR 520 toll be used for benefit of the Arboretum. Councilmember Bagshaw stated this is a great idea and the ABGC must keep promoting it. She cares deeply for the Arboretum and will do all she can for its benefit.

Maintenance and Operations for Parks: Councilmember Bagshaw noted that the Department's budget includes only \$46 million for maintenance and operations and this is spread very thin. She met with Parks Acting Superintendent Williams for 1-1/2 hours on July 13 to discuss this. The City is facing a \$56 million deficit for 2011 and is being lobbied by human resources groups and others to maintain their funding. However, she feels strongly that parks bring a high quality of life to a city and help promote good health. Sandra noted that the UW's new Dean of the College of Environment is very interested in health research and the benefits of the Arboretum on health. Councilmember Bagshaw urged the ABGC to keep focusing on the Arboretum's health benefits.

Long-Term Vision: Councilmember Bagshaw wants to redefine Seattle's parks to a more linear design where people can easily connect by bikes. Seattle Parks Foundation is currently working on a Lake (Union)-to-Elliott Bay route to connect the new Lake Union Park, Seattle Center, and Myrtle Edwards Park. This has been funded; however, the Mayor pulled the funds for the third time in five years.

ABGC members thanked Councilmember Bagshaw for attending today's meeting.

WSDOT Team and SR 520

Rob is the team leader and is a planning manager for traffic and environmental analysis. His role is to ensure the ABGC gets the technical and other information it needs, Jenifer is the lead on environmental issues, and Karrie is the lead on engineering issues.

Rob and the WSDOT team introduced themselves and Rob briefly reviewed what he expects will happen and when, as well as what might not happen. (1) WSDOT will bring Michael Minor, a noise analyst, to the September 8 ABGC meeting. (2) ABGC members had requested a three-dimensional model of the SR 520 project. WSDOT leaders have not agreed to this request, due to time constraints, and will do a computer model instead. (3) A drive-through simulation will be ready for viewing within the next few weeks. (4) Bruce Jamieson, transportation consultant, is here today to review the project construction elements adjacent to the Arboretum.

Paige and Jack expressed concern that a three-dimensional model will not be provided. ABGC members want to see how the project will look from "the ground" and not from a "flyover." Barbara suggested the ABGC make a more formal request and Kjrjris asked that a letter be sent voicing this request.

Rob commented that WSDOT is preparing a work plan for cultural resources and tribal interests. Karrie distributed a timeline and reviewed the various dates. WSDOT must develop a written document by December 13, 2010, based on the outcome of the various meetings shown on the timeline. Rob and the WSDOT team will take information from the ABGC to the Technical Team and back to the ABGC. A key discussion is traffic management. Parks technical team will meet next week and the WSDOT team will take ideas from today's meeting. He suggested WSDOT hold some additional meetings with the ABGC through November. The dates of July 26, August 23, September 27, and October 25 were set for these meetings, 3:00-5:00 pm, at Graham Visitors Center. The schedule was distributed to the ABGC distribution list. The WSDOT team will also attend the ABGC's regularly-scheduled meetings on August 18, October 13, and November 10 and will plan on two hour segments at these meetings. These meetings will be expanded from their regular 8:30-10:30 am time to 8 am to noon.

WSDOT staff rolled out a very large engineered drawing of the SR 520 preferred alternative. Meeting attendees reviewed the drawing and made a number of comments. Bruce Jamieson pointed out the various elements, with a focus on the west approach area. ABGC members asked several questions.

Kerrie showed a series of drawings:

1. an engineered elevation of the bridge
2. what the ramps now look like and what the area below will look like when the ramps are removed (drawing showed grass and trees)
3. fencing and location of the WSDOT right-of-way
4. a visualization of the new bridge & its columns
5. location of columns

ABGC comments/recommendations and WSDOT response:

- the column design should mesh well with Arboretum's historic design. WSDOT asked that ABGC members submit ideas for this.
- asked if some of the columns can be removed for better public access under the bridge. WSDOT responded that the column locations cannot be changed.
- include more of what will be seen and not just what won't be seen. WSDOT agreed and will create new drawings as they are requested.
- after Bruce described the west approach and the width of the bridge and the gap, Paige and Iain asked a number of questions on what plants will grow underneath the area. The bridge is 24' high and 200' wide. Jenifer responded that WSDOT's natural resources unit will work on this and asked ABGC members for additional input. Iain asked that WSDOT members spend some time under the ramps to best determine what will be under the bridge. WSDOT members referred to the vegetation under the I-5 Colonnade Park (under I-5 Freeway.) ABGC members pointed out that the Colonnade Park has very little vegetation and voiced further concerns on what will be under the new bridge.

Bruce next spent some time describing the "Draft I-5 to Median Project Scheduling 2012 Funding – Bid and Build Scenario", and briefly described how WSDOT plans to keep traffic moving during the construction phase. The ramps are scheduled to be removed in 2014. A temporary trestle will be built, with 10' shafts drilled into the ground and others driven in. Responding to noise concerns voiced by Paige, Rob stated that WSDOT will follow best management practices. The September meeting will focus on project noise.

Bruce noted that any extended construction time (e.g., if construction hours are shortened due to noise concerns) will add to the project costs. Barbara asked that the work schedule for this be shared with the ABGC.

Iain expressed strong frustration with the information presented today and believes WSDOT is being deceitful. Jack was concerned that the WSDOT staff were not noting ABGC member's concerns and requests. Jenifer next addressed Iain's frustrations and stated that WSDOT is still gathering information for mitigation purposes. The team is here to get ideas from the ABGC members. She stated that the team may be disorganized with some of its presentation, but it isn't deceitful.

She referred to Foster Island, where one acre of park land will be taken for right-of-way and described the Washington Wetland Mitigation, Section 45, and its impacts on the project:

- wetlands are affected by the bridge columns – must determine how much of the area to restore and how much to mitigate
- land and aquatic habitat are affected
- appearance of area is affected – ramps go away, but a larger and wider structure will be built over Foster Island
- Arboretum Creek is to be day-lighted and restored at north end

ABGC members requested that, as part of the restoration, Arboretum Creek outfall be increased to help salmon move through the creek; stream flow be enhanced at Japanese Garden, and the combined sewer overflow be utilized for summer stream enhancement to help salmon.

Responding to a question from Jack on whether WSDOT will work closely with the ABGC to determine the new plantings where the ramps will be removed, Jenifer and Rob agreed that it will do so. Michael noted that this new planting area was not anticipated when the Arboretum's Master Plan was developed and approved in 2001.

Michael asked that an upcoming meeting include a grid, showing the width and height of the entire SR 520 road as it crosses Foster Island.

Kjris and Paige asked for additional information how WSDOT will interface/connect the lid with the Arboretum and Center for Urban Horticulture. Kjris asked if the mitigation funds will be adequate to pay for all the topics being discussed. Jenifer responded that the project includes an amount for mitigation; however, it is not limitless and the projects must be prioritized and budgeted for.

Sandra noted that the Arboretum has a Master Plan, and those projects are already ranked as high and low priority. Jenifer responded that WSDOT will look at these priorities as the mitigation is being determined and thanked Sandra for this reminder. Sandra responded that the Arboretum's Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG) has discussed the need for a bike trail in the Arboretum. ABGC members agreed to discuss this with WSDOT at the August meeting.

Fred and Barbara noted that the Arboretum and UW have wayfinding plans and requested that WSDOT tie the SR 520 wayfinding signage in with those existing plans so the public can easily find the Arboretum from SR 520. Jenifer agreed to this suggestion.

Jack noted that WSDOT recently awarded the Museum of History and Industry \$40 million from the SR 520 mitigation funds to build its new facility at Lake Union Park. The Arboretum's Master Plan included that 2,500-4,000 feet of office space was to be located at the current MOHAI building, which WSDOT will demolish for the SR 520 project. The Arboretum has not been compensated for the loss of this space. Jenifer noted this.

Iain voiced concern that the mitigation funding in other major public projects was absorbed into cost overruns and vanished. What happens if the SR 520 project has cost overruns? Jenifer responded that the State Legislature has directed WSDOT to immortalize the mitigation in one document. She believes this creates a

funding package and speaks to the commitment WSDOT has to mitigate the project's impacts. Paige responded that some mitigation is required by law and asked that the mitigation be broken down as to whether or not it is legally required. Jenifer responded that this breakdown has been left off for now, but the discussion will continue. Rob added that, once the ABGC has prioritized the Master List projects, the mitigation will be linked to legally-required mitigation. If agencies won't agree to the requested mitigation (e.g., daylighting Arboretum Creek), then the ABGC and WSDOT must determine how to package the mitigation.

Kjris asked that all the information from today's meeting be pulled together by WSDOT for the next meeting in an organized, non-random manner. Jenifer responded that WSDOT will break down the information by topics and keep adding new information. The categories will become more and more specific as these meetings progress. Kjris thanked the WSDOT team for this "out of the box" approach and believes this is breaking new ground. Barbara agreed with her. Jenifer responded that the WSDOT team has focused a good amount of time preparing for and discussing the meetings with ABGC.

Next Steps

The July 26 and August 18 meeting will include a continuation of today's discussion. In addition, Jenifer will bring more information on mitigation, the group will review the Arboretum's Master Plan and a list of its priorities, and the group will work together on a plant list for the shaded area under the new bridge. Andrew is a consultant with WSDOT for roadways and urban areas. He will work specifically with traffic issues in the Arboretum. Kjris requested the design focus on good connections from the bridge to the Arboretum.

Andrew will discuss the LWB traffic-calming plan with Luke Korpi. He noted that Nelson Nygard has also prepared a report for City Council on ways to manage traffic in the Arboretum, which suggests a layered approach based on vehicle speed and volume. Andrew noted that his ideas for traffic calming mesh well with Luke's. He cannot address where the funding will come from (SDOT, SR 520 mitigation, etc.)

Paige asked that the traffic calming make it painful to drive through the Arboretum and give drivers an incentive to use alternate route. She asked that WSDOT prepare a study to accomplish this, explain it to the ABGC, and design it so it works. The study should also include the Madison and 23rd intersection and note where traffic is coming from and going to, and how to divert it from LWB. Andrew responded that he is gathering information at today's meeting and he, Rob and the Technical Working Group will continue looking at the LWB traffic.

The WSDOT team remained at the meeting during the Lake Washington Boulevard pedestrian safety/traffic calming presentation from Seattle Department of Transportation to gather additional information.

Traffic Calming for Lake Washington Boulevard

Luke Korpi, transportation planner from Seattle Department of Transportation, has attended several ABGC meetings to discuss new pedestrian safety and traffic-calming improvement for Lake Washington Boulevard. Prior to this meeting, he forwarded a number of diagrams and aerial photos showing intersections, crosswalks, and proposed signage. He reviewed various aesthetics of the proposed crosswalks and signs.

This fall a crosswalk will be installed near the parking lot just north of the Interlaken intersection. Future plans are for this to be converted to a raised crosswalk; however, there is no funding for this and suggested SR 520 project mitigation funds be used for this purpose.

He continued describing the locations of the crosswalks, as well as the type and location of signage required. SDOT would mark each pedestrian crossing and install 2 signs for each approach to the crosswalk. A raised crosswalk is not necessary for safety, but it does enhance safety and traffic calming. Responding to a

question from Michael on the cost, Luke answered that each raised crosswalk costs an average of \$60,000. They are built on concrete and have drainage impacts, as well as traffic control implications.

The signs will be fluorescent. One sign would be installed 150 feet in advance of a crosswalk, with a second one at the crosswalk. Both would be installed on posts on the side of the street.

Luke briefly described speed cushions. While they can slow traffic, there are also some disadvantages: noise impacts from vehicle braking and acceleration, as well as suspension systems squeaking while crossing the cushions. A radar sign is a possibility at the north end of the corridor, but this idea may be unpopular. Andrew added that there are a number of elements involved: management and strategy, speed or volume, and safety overrides.

Rob anticipates that a list of traffic mitigation issues will be developed from SR 520 impacts on the Arboretum and that the ABGC should prioritize these. Karrie added that WSDOT could help with the prioritization. Various ABGC members expressed strong opposition to SR 520 mitigation funds being spent on LWB pedestrian safety measures or traffic calming and believe an adequate number of safe pedestrian crossings is the responsibility of SDOT to fund. Kjris urged that SDOT take immediate steps to fund and implement pedestrian safety for LWB.

She questioned why the plans do not include a stop sign at the Boyer/LWB intersection. Luke responded that SDOT follows federal guidelines in installing stop signs. Their intent is to determine who has the right of way or they are installed at an intersection that has experienced a high number of collisions. They are not installed to control speed and can be counter-productive, if a driver is forced to stop "artificially." When this happens, drivers don't stop and just roll through the intersections, which can be detrimental to pedestrian safety.

Paige stated that the ABGC has requested that drivers who use Lake Washington Boulevard (a park road) to get to or from SR 520 to pay a toll to be directed to the Arboretum. This method would require that two transponders be tripped: one on Lake Washington Boulevard and one on SR 520.

Luke will attend the July 26 ABGC meeting with an update on SDOT's efforts for pedestrian safety and traffic calming for the Arboretum.

Next Meeting

The ABGC will next meet on Monday, July 26, 3:00-5:00 pm. WSDOT and SDOT staff were asked to bring 25 copies of all handouts to accommodate both the ABGC and members of the public. Several members of the public asked to be added to the ABGC's agenda distribution list.

Master Plan Implementation Group

Michael Shiosaki reported on the following:

- MPIG met in June and are focusing on pedestrian crossings and traffic calming in the Arboretum.
- Work is underway on the Gateway to Chile, with an expected completion of October to mid-November.
- Work is under way on the Lake Washington Boulevard replacement lighting project, with half being installed in 2010. He distributed photos of the light fixtures. City Light will install new, brighter lights at all crosswalks. Some crosswalks aren't scheduled for permanent light replacement until 2011 or later; however, City Light will install temporary, brighter lights at these locations to increase pedestrian safety. Parks Levy funds will pay \$55,000 of the light standard costs.
- MPIG members are looking at the composting toilet installed at Picardo Farms as a possible solution for the need for restroom facilities at Pacific Gardens.
- MPIG will review the Master Plan implementation list and send out a new priority list to ABGC several days prior to the August 18 meeting.
- Rick Nishi, Seattle Parks and Greenspaces Levy Manager, is replacing Donald Harris on MPIG.

- Michael distributed a map of the property referred to as "KING-TV site" and located on the waterfront between Portage Bay and Lake Union. The property is being considered as replacement for the temporary loss of use of the Arboretum's Waterfront Trail. WSDOT will mitigate this as part of the impacts of the SR 520 project. Several other sites are being considered, including property at Edgar Street near the Cheshiahud Trail in the Lake Union area. Sandra noted that the UW's police department is housed at the KING-TV property and the UW is asking for additional funds to move these staff to another site.

Budget Updates

Donald noted that City Departments have submitted their proposed 2011 budgets to the Mayor. He is now in discussions with the Departments, with his proposed budget due to the City Council at the end of September. Sandra reported an additional \$70,000 cut to the UW Botanic Gardens. She has laid off one person and reduced the hours for three others.

The Arboretum Foundation approved its 2011 budget, which includes funding for a new $\frac{3}{4}$ time gardener for the Arboretum to be hired through the UW. The Arboretum is very understaffed for the amount of gardens it includes and this new position is greatly needed and appreciated.

Old/New Business

- Arboretum Foundation Director of Development: Julia Maywald resigned this position earlier this year and the Foundation is in the process of hiring a new director. Paige reported that she has offered the position and the person has accepted. She is pleased that the new director is very experienced and expected to start work on Wednesday, August 1.
- Regents Briefing: This briefing is scheduled for Thursday, September 16; however, a time has not yet been given. Dr. Lisa Graumlich, the new Dean of the College of the Environment, will do the presentation. Paige noted that Lisa is the best person to stress to the Regents that the Arboretum is an educational center, as well as a horticultural center.
- City Council Briefing: Sandy will confirm the August 5 briefing date with Councilmember Bagshaw's staff. Barbara and Donald will present.
- Maintenance & Volunteers: Volunteers from Qwest Pioneers have adopted the Arboretum's Holly Collection and will provide over 400 volunteer maintenance hours in 2011, with a possible \$50,000 grant from Qwest included.
- Building Committee Update: Donald, Paige, and Sandra are continuing the work of this temporary committee. They are working on six items on the work list and are making progress on several items.
- Letter re: MOHAI Building and Space for Arboretum Needs: Paige and Sandra have drafted a letter to the Mayor and City Council's Parks Committee. The letter asks for the City's support in finding the 4,000 sq. ft. of space allotted to the Arboretum in the 2001 Master Plan. This space was not accommodated in the City's recently-signed agreement with the Museum of History and Industry in its move to the South Lake Union Armory. ABGC members received a copy of the draft and were asked to submit comments to Sandra no later than July 29. She will finalize the letter and send it to the Mayor and City Council's Parks and Seattle Center Chair, Sally Bagshaw. The draft will also be sent to those ABGC members not present during this discussion.
- Letter to UW Provost Phyllis Wise re: SR 520 Project: Sandra will also draft a letter to UW Provost Wise to remind her to involve the ABGC in discussions and decisions on the KING Broadcast mitigation site and that 100% of any funds the UW receives for the taking of Arboretum should be directed to back to the Arboretum for Master Plan projects. Responding to a question from Paige on whether the UW purchased the property or it was donated to the UW, Fred answered that he would research this and let the ABGC know. Iain added that if the property, which is along the working waterfront, is polluted the cleanup could be a drain on SR 520 mitigation funds.
- UW Comments on SR520 EIS: Jack understands that the UW did not reference the Arboretum in its response to WSDOT on the SR 520 EIS. UW staff will follow up on this and report back. [Note: following this statement, Sandra sent information to the ABGC with a link to the UW's comment letter,

which does include the Washington Park Arboretum,
<http://www.washington.edu/community/files/UWSR520SDEISComments.pdf>.]

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 12 noon.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Sandra Lier, ABGC Vice-Chair