

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, June 9, 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

State of Washington

- Dave Towne, Washington State Governor's Appointee

Absent:

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

Other Staff Present:

- Sara Belz, Seattle City Council Central Staff
- Stephanie Brown, Seattle Department of Transportation, SR 520 Project and Lake Washington Boulevard Traffic Calming
- Terry Dunning, Seattle Parks, Senior Property Agent, SR 520 Project
- David Graves, Seattle Parks, Senior Project Planner, SR 520 Project
- Fred Hoyt, UWBG, Associate Director
- Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks, Planning & Development Deputy Director
- Paul Smith, Seattle Parks, Arboretum Grounds Maintenance Crew Chief

WSDOT SR 520 Team Present:

Rob Berman, Planning Manager; Jenifer De Young, Environmental Manager, Katie D'Leary, Communications for SR520 Project, Kerry Ruth, Engineering Manager West Side; and Heather Catron, Operations Manager

Members of the Public Present:

- Nancy Belcher, Arboretum Foundation's SR 520 Committee
- Susan Black, Arboretum Foundation's SR 520 Committee and Vice-President of Arboretum Foundation Board
- Paul Gibson, Arboretum neighbor

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), Donald, Fred, Paige, Sandra & Tom
SR520 Technical Committee:	AF, David Graves (City), & Theresa Doherty (UW)

Barbara Wright, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. **Donald moved, and Sandra seconded, approval of the agenda and May 12 minutes, as corrected. The vote was taken and the motion carried.** Introductions were made and everyone was welcomed to the meeting.

SR520 – WSDOT Team Presentation

Rob Berman and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) SR520 team introduced themselves. Rob reviewed the goal of Washington State ESSB 6392 which is to “coordinate with the ABGC, regulatory agencies, the UW, and City of Seattle to develop a plan to address mitigation required by law for the I-5 to Medina: Bridge Replacement and HOV Project at the Washington Park Arboretum.”

As part of this direction, Rob and the team will attend ABGC meetings at regular intervals to share information with the ABGC, as well as take information from the ABGC to share with other groups. Beginning with the July meeting, WSDOT will focus on more discussion and less presenting of information.

Rob and the team next distributed a 12-page handout with a proposed schedule for the meetings and topics for the work sessions. [A copy of this information is attached to the approved copy of these minutes.] The packet included:

- ABGC’s Guiding Principles and the Key Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) Comment Areas;
- Arboretum Mitigation Goals, Objectives, Approach and Participants, and the ABGC Coordination-Proposed Work Session Schedule and Topics;
- Chart showing Arboretum Mitigation Coordination and Approval Process;
- Arboretum Mitigation Regulations and Types of Impacts; and
- Maps showing the
 - Preferred Alternative West Approach Design;
 - Construction Elements and Durations in the West Approach Area; and
 - Permanent Property Acquisition in the Washington Park Arboretum

The handouts include names and affiliations of the members of the Technical Working Groups (TWGs) and a monthly schedule of 2010 topics as follows:

- May Preferred alternative review
- June Coordination process, background, impacts, and mitigation
- July Arboretum effects and potential mitigation opportunities
- August Refined Arboretum mitigation opportunities
- September Draft Arboretum mitigation outline review
- October Draft Arboretum mitigation plan
- November Final Arboretum mitigation plan

WSDOT has received numerous comments about the Arboretum during the SR 520 process, and will work to follow the ABGC’s Guiding Principles. During the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the most frequent comments in relation to the Arboretum included:

1. remove SR 520 ramps from the Arboretum

2. toll vehicles that use Lake Washington Boulevard to enter or exit SR 520
3. consider the Arboretum's historic elements
4. implement traffic calming for Lake Washington Boulevard (Donald noted that this is an immediate need and must be dealt with quickly. Rob agreed; however, it must first be discussed in these sessions.)
5. impacts to Foster Island
6. the west approach
7. noise impacts on the Arboretum
8. bicycle access
9. air and water pollutants

Barbara commented that the list of Regulations and Types of Impacts is especially informative and thanked WSDOT for preparing the package. Jenifer reviewed the regulations: Section 4(f), Section 6(f), Section 106, Sections 404 and 401, Seattle Critical Areas Ordinance, and FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria. She noted that Fred, Theresa, David Graves, and Terry Dunning are all members of the Technical Working Group which is examining these regulations and their impact on Arboretum mitigation resulting from the SR 520 project.

ABGC Questions & WSDOT Answers

Traffic Study/Traffic Calming

Responding to a question from Paige on which groups/agencies the WSDOT team is working closely with to move traffic from Lake Washington Boulevard to 23rd Avenue, Rob answered that WSDOT will work with Stephanie Brown of Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and the ABGC. Paige referred to the transportation study and requested that the ABGC be involved with this. Rob answered that WSDOT is working with many groups and will share information between them.

Paige commented that a complete traffic study of the area is needed in order to analyze traffic in the Arboretum. She questioned where WSDOT is in this effort, who is doing the traffic study, and if ABGC be involved in designing it. Rob responded that WSDOT is working on the traffic study with the results expected in September. He noted that Lake Washington Boulevard traffic calming is part of the July discussion with the ABGC. This was Stephanie's first time to meet with the ABGC and she suggested that SDOT meet with the ABGC after the July 14 meeting.

Mitigation

- Jack is very concerned about mitigation for SR 520 noise impacts to the Arboretum.
- Paige asked if there will be a separate analysis of the through road and on/off ramps as part of the consideration. Jenifer responded that WSDOT is doing an overall review and will look at both options.
- The Arboretum Water Trail was developed using Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF). The SR 520 project will use the area for more than 180 days. Because of the length of time the Trail will be used during the Project, Section 6(f) considers this a conversion and the area must be mitigated through replacement with property of at least fair market value and equivalent usefulness and location. Jenifer clarified that the Arboretum Water Trail will be returned as a waterfront trail when the project is finished; however, the law requires the mitigation. The end result will be acquisition of a new park property, as well as regaining use and retaining ownership of the Arboretum Water Trail. However, McCurdy Park and some other park land areas will be lost permanently to the project. The UW-City Technical Working Group have considered 87 properties as mitigation for the temporary loss of the Trail and selected the top 4 for further consideration. One of those is the 4.2 acre King Broadcasting waterfront property at Bryant Street. The other three are privately-owned properties. Responding to a question on how the dollar value was calculated, David Graves answered that WSDOT appraised the Arboretum Water Trail's value and the City and UW are discussing the proposed value. He added that the mitigation requires property for property; WSDOT cannot mitigate the loss with money.

- Section 106 protects the historic and cultural elements, including the Arboretum, Foster Island, and Lake Washington Boulevard.
- Sections 404 and 401 are part of the federal Clean Water Act and administered by the Army Corp of Engineers.
- Seattle Critical Areas Ordinance: Responding to a request from Jack to bring information to the July 14 meeting on how the project height will affect fish and wildlife, Rob answered that there is differing opinions on this and no solid science.
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Noise Abatement Criteria: Rob stated that the noise level on the Arboretum Waterfront Trail has been tested as high as 70 decibels. When levels reach 66 decibels, the noise must be mitigated. In Washington State, the only effective mitigation for this is noise walls. WSDOT is also working on the use of quiet concrete, as another option. Jenifer added that WSDOT also measured the noise decibels within the Arboretum and those did not meet 66 decibels. Nancy stated that noise walls in the Arboretum are not prudent. Jenifer responded that WSDOT is committed to noise mitigation and the noise walls are on the table. Fred asked that WSDOT consider how the walls would affect the aesthetics of the Arboretum and Rob agreed. WSDOT will bring a noise expert to the ABGC meeting, as well as information on wall height ranges and the affect that various heights would have on the Arboretum.
- Paige asked if WSDOT will provide a physical model of the preferred alternative. Jack added this will help determine if the walls will block views. Barbara added that seeing a model is very important. She also commented that the noise walls fit into the aesthetics of the Arboretum and not have an industrial appearance.
- Jenifer stated that WSDOT staff will bring full visuals and results of the noise impact study to the ABGC.

Requests for Additional Information/Materials

- Nancy asked that WSDOT bring three-dimensional models of the Preferred Alternative to the July and following meetings to better understand the design of the footprint. WSDOT agreed to do so, as well as bring the results of the noise impact study.
- Barbara asked the WSDOT team to send any future materials to the ABGC several days in advance of the meeting. WSDOT agreed to do so.
- Susan Black asked WSDOT to bring updated graphics that show the project's construction impacts.
- Jenifer will provide details on the "Construction Elements and Durations in the West Approach Area" (second from last page diagram in the handout packet) at the July 14 meeting.
- Terry Dunning will bring a map of the King Broadcast property, considered in Arboretum Water Trail mitigation, to the July 14 meeting.

July 14 Meeting

ABGC members agreed to an extended July 14 meeting, from 8:00 am to noon, with the WSDOT/SR 520 discussion scheduled from 8:45 to 11:15 am. ABGC members should plan on meeting from 8:00 am to noon. Stephanie Brown of SDOT will attend all the ABGC meetings during the 520 discussions.

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG)

- Michael reported that MPIG met on May 20 and is on a regular meeting schedule.
- He reported good news on the construction bids for the Gateway to Chile. Bids were recently opened, with the lowest one \$177,000 under the project engineer's estimate. This new garden's grand opening is scheduled for Friday, June 11, 4:00 pm.
- MPIG is now looking at other models to determine an effective method of funding maintenance and operations at the Pacific Connections gardens. This plan needs to be in place before moving ahead with the project. Jack wants to help develop a plan to engage more volunteers at the Arboretum. He worked on this several years ago; however, the UW did not agree with his plan. Sandra responded that volunteers provided 10,000 hours at the Arboretum in 2009.

- Andy Sheffer is investigating a composting toilet as a possible solution to the need for restroom facilities at Pacific Connections. A composting toilet was installed at Picardo P-Patch several months ago and, so far, has been a success.
- Parks staff recently updated the Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks on the Arboretum's Master Plan.
- Parks staff also met with Seattle Department of Transportation and City Light last week regarding the lighting project along Lake Washington Boulevard. Currently, 18 of the 64 light fixtures are missing. The current posts are spaced sporadically, while the new ones will have a set space between, with 20% shorter posts used at pedestrian crossings. The new fixtures will also decrease in intensity from 1.5 to .6 foot candles, use low energy, and emit a brighter light. The work will begin at Graham Visitors Center and proceed southward. The project is scheduled in three phases, due to City budget reductions. Barbara anticipates some negative public reaction to the phasing. Responding to a question from Jack on which City department's budget will pay for the lights, Michael will verify this and also bring photos of the new fixtures to an upcoming ABGC meeting.
- Sandra stated that MPIG will revisit the implementation plan for the Master Plan, re-prioritize which projects are not completed, and bring this list to the ABGC. This information will assist in mitigation considerations from the SR 520 project, as well as assist the Joint Fundraising Committee in its review of fundraising priorities. Dave added that the lack of maintenance and operation funds affects this prioritization.
- Donald reported that Mayor McGinn wrote Cheryl Trivison in response to her concerns about the removal of trees for the Gateway to Chile project. The Mayor was very supportive of the project and wrote Ms. Trivison that he will not advise Seattle Parks to change its practices in regards to this project.

Joint Fundraising Committee:

The Committee met on June 3. The agreement that formed the Joint Fundraising Committee calls for the Parks Superintendent to attend the meetings. The meeting dates are being modified to accommodate Acting Superintendent Christopher Williams' availability. Sandra noted that the agreement also calls for the Dean of the School of Environment and Forest Sciences (formerly the College of Forest Resources) to attend the meetings. Tom Hinckley is the Acting Dean and attends. The Joint Fundraising Committee shares information about the three partners' events, appeal letters for fundraising, and discusses a broad range of topics.

Donald added that the catalyst for forming the Committee was the discord between the UW and Arboretum Foundation's separate fundraising efforts. Great progress has been made, with the two groups working closely and well together. Sandra observed that donors are hesitant to give money to bickering groups and she is pleased with the new working relationship.

The Miller Foundation did not donate to the Arboretum this year, as expected, because it gave a large amount to the Chinese Garden. After learning this, Paige made a presentation to the Miller Foundation and heard positive comments about the increased cooperation between the UW and Arboretum Foundation's fundraising staff.

Paige reported that the annual Arboretum Circle Dinner was a great success and reflected the three partner's collaboration.

Budget Updates

Arboretum Foundation: Paige reported the Foundation recently adopted its 2011 budget, which includes \$90,000 for a ¾ time gardener to help maintain the new projects. It will also increase the vacant development director position from half-time to full-time. Over 70 people applied for the position, with many highly qualified candidates now being considered. Paige will give an update report at the July 14 meeting.

UW: Sandra reported the UW Botanical Gardens received a letter on May 26 with the bad news that it will have an additional \$70,000 decrease in State funding and a \$100,000 decrease in endowment funding for 2010. She is preparing a response paper, showing what the UWBG has already reduced and is having discussions with Interim Dean Tom Hinckley.

City: Donald is fairly certain that the City's mid-year cuts will not affect the Arboretum in 2010; however, the City's Budget Office forecasts much larger cuts for 2011 that may well impact the Arboretum. Parks has requested an additional half-time gardener for the Arboretum. He noted that Tim Gallagher's resignation as Superintendent resulted in much public attention to, and support of, the Park Department and its budget. Acting Superintendent Williams has since been in a number of budget meetings with Mayor McGinn. Donald will send Barbara information on the Department's budget in anticipation of the July 15 briefing that she and Donald will present to City Council's Parks and Seattle Center Committee.

Building Committee

Donald, Paige, and Sandra comprise this temporary committee focused on 14 maintenance and oversight issues at Graham Visitors Center. They are making steady progress, with good results from the space planning review. Donald reported that Parks crews recently connected the backup pump, which should eliminate any future basement flooding. The committee is now considering re-striping the parking lot to accommodate the need for additional parking. Fred reported that rental of the facility continues to do well and rates will soon increase. The Committee will distribute the 14-item list to the full ABGC.

Old/New Business

UWBG Strategic Action Plan: Sandra reported the Plan has been distributed, and she has received positive comments and helpful feedback.

2009 Retreat "To Do" List: Jack requested this list be discussed at an upcoming ABGC meeting, with a progress report. Several members responded that the ABGC must focus its energy on the SR 520 project over the next several months, and then it can re-focus on the "To Do" list.

Upcoming Tours and Briefings:

July 14 ABGC Meeting: Councilmember Bagshaw will attend from 8:00-8:45 am. Barbara will prepare a summary for the ABGC and distribute several days before the meeting so members come prepared to talk about the ABGC's most important issues – and make good use of the 45 minutes. Topics include the City's budget issues and how those might affect the Arboretum, the SR 520 project's impacts, cooperation with Seattle Department of Transportation for Lake Washington Boulevard traffic calming, and any other issues and problems.

July 15: Donald and Barbara will present the ABGC's annual briefing on the Master Plan to Seattle City Council's Parks and Seattle Center Committee (PASC.) Donald will send Barbara information on the Park Department's budget, in particular funding to the Arboretum, prior to the meeting.

September 16: The briefing to the UW Regents has been rescheduled to this date, with Sandra as lead. The briefing should include the Parks Superintendent; however, it is important that the Regents not look at the Arboretum as just a park, but also as an educational center.

New Dean: Sandra has scheduled a tour of the Arboretum for Dr. Lisa Graumlich, the new Dean of the College of the Environment. Tom Hinckley, as well as City and Arboretum Foundation members will join the tour. Sandra has requested time on Dean Graumlich's calendar to discuss the UWBG and Arboretum and will also invite her to an upcoming ABGC meeting.

Bio-Blitz: Sandra reported a great amount of publicity focused on the recent Arboretum Bio-Blitz. UW staff is now preparing a report of the findings, which she will forward to the ABGC. A second Bio-Blitz may be scheduled for this fall.

Parks Superintendent Update: Parks Superintendent Tim Gallagher resigned in April. Mayor McGinn appointed Christopher Williams, the Department's Deputy Superintendent, as Acting Superintendent. Responding to a question about a search for a new Superintendent, Donald reported that a search has not begun.

Annual ABGC Retreat: The retreat is generally held at the November meeting date. Due to the SR 520/WSDOT/ABGC process, it was agreed to re-schedule it to the January meeting date.

ABGC Standing/Temporary Committees: Jack noted that some of the committees are no longer meeting and asked that the list be updated to reflect this.

Japanese Garden Celebrates 50th Anniversary on Sunday, June 6: Paige reported that this was a lovely event with good press coverage. The new gatehouse is a wonderful facility and makes a great entry into the Garden.

Arboretum Foundation 75th Anniversary: This celebration will be held in conjunction with the annual meeting on Friday, June 11. Noted gardening expert Duane Kelley will be the guest speaker.

UWBG Director Position: Sandra noted that her contract with the UW to serve as the Interim UWBG Director, as well as her role on the ABGC, expires on June 30, 2011.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Sandra Lier, ABGC Vice-Chair