

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, June 8, 2011

Voting Members

Present:

Arboretum Foundation

- Della Balick, Arboretum Foundation Board President
- Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director

City of Seattle

- Jack Collins, Mayoral Appointee
- Donald Harris, Seattle Parks Property Manager
- Kjrj Lund, Mayoral Appointee

University of Washington

- Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Assistant Vice President for Regional Affairs
- Fred Hoyt, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG) Associate Director
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington Associate Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture

Washington State

- Dave Towne, Washington State Governor's Appointee

Other Staff Present:

- Cheryl Fraser, Seattle Parks, Natural Resources Manager
- Sarah Reichard, UWBG Director
- Andy Sheffer, Seattle Parks Project Manager

WSDOT SR 520 Team Present:

Rob Berman, Planning Manager; Katie DeLeuw and Rachel Patterson, Communications Manager for SR520 Project; and Shane Cherry, WSDOT's SR 520 Environmental Mitigation Technical Lead

Berger Partnership Team Present:

Jason Henry, Principal; and Andy Mitton, Associate

ABGC Staff: Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Standing Committees

Building Committee:

Partners Committee:

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG):

SR520 Technical Committee:

Paige Miller (AF); Donald Harris (City); TBD (UW)

AF: Paige Miller & Della Balick

City: Donald Harris & Christopher Williams

UW: Tom Hinckley & Sarah Reichard

AF: Paige Miller & Roger Williams

City: Michael Shiosaki (lead) & Rick Nishi

UW: Fred Hoyt & Sarah Reichard

David Graves (City); Theresa Doherty & Fred Hoyt (UW)

This meeting was held at the Graham Visitors Center. Theresa Doherty, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. Several changes were made to the agenda. There were no minutes to approve.

WSDOT Team: SR 520 Update

Rob Berman and several members of the WSDOT team attended the meeting. Katie DeLeuw, communications manager for the SR 520 project, will be on several months' leave; Rachel Patterson was introduced as her replacement.

Shane Cherry, WSDOT's SR 520 Environmental Mitigation Technical Lead, introduced himself and gave an update on the project. The Draft Mitigation Plan was submitted in April. All comments received from the agencies and tribes have been positive and WSDOT is taking this as a green light to move ahead with the Plan. The agencies were silent on all other mitigation for the Arboretum. WSDOT is pleased with the good relationship with The Berger Partnership and Seattle Parks on the scoping of the North Entry and the Multi-Use Trail.

Rob referred to the "WSDOT peninsula" and stated it is still WSDOT's intent to convey ownership of the peninsula; however, WSDOT cannot just give it away. It must get something in return, such as mitigation credits. The 26-acre peninsula consists of 11 acres of wetland mitigation that can be easily conveyed to Washington Park Arboretum. There is also an additional 15 acres of upland; WSDOT is still working on the best way to convey this portion of the property.

Paige noted the area is 4f and must stay as park land in perpetuity. Rob agreed and added that the lower the appraisal value, the better it will be for balancing the conveyance value. WSDOT intends to convey the entire peninsula and is determining the most legal manner to do so, in response to Jorgen Bader's statements at prior ABGC meetings.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) will be available online tomorrow morning. Rob and the WSDOT team will present an update to City Council on June 9 at 2:30 pm. ABGC members were encouraged to attend, if possible.

Rob reviewed more of the project schedule. WSDOT is fully into the permitting process and will make a formal submittal when the SEPA is completed. It is working with the State Legislature to seek funding for the West Side of the bridge, will kick off fundraising, and will continue working with the ABGC. He suggested that several committees of ABGC members may need to be established to continue its focus on the SR 520 project. Responding to a question from Theresa on the project funding, Rob answered the floating bridge and pontoons will be funded by 2015. Paige asked about the MOHAI property ownership research being performed by WSDOT. Rob answered that WSDOT will put this on the list and will discuss the status with the Arboretum Foundation.

Presentation: North Entry and Multi-Use Trails

Andy Sheffer of Seattle Parks introduced Jason Henry and Andy Mitton of The Berger Partnership. He complimented their good coordination with the WSDOT team on the North Entry and Multi-Use Trail projects. Jason noted they are presenting the same information at tonight's public meeting and asked the ABGC for any feedback to enhance that presentation.

They next presented a Powerpoint presentation, which may be viewed at:

[\[http://www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/arboretum/files/north_entry_presentation_20110608.pdf\]](http://www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/arboretum/files/north_entry_presentation_20110608.pdf)

and gave a general site overview of both projects. Andy and Jason walked the trails with several ABGC members and found that some incomplete trails already exist. They showed various elements of the projects from maps, drawings, and schematic designs.

Paige asked if the drainage from Broadmoor onto the Arboretum has been tested. She is concerned whether its quality is suitable for fish habitat restoration. Fred responded that this will be looked at and swaling may be needed.

Much of the presentation and discussion centered on the North Entry project. Jack asked if any of the components conflict with the Master Plan. Andy D answered that Azalea Way the only conflict with the Master Plan that the team is aware of is that Azalea Way will dead end into a pond. He noted that the new building will be sited on the WSDOT Peninsula and the Master Plan doesn't encompass that area.

Three designs were shown for the intersection of Lake Washington Boulevard and Foster Island Drive, with two including a roundabout and one including a traffic light.

The most critical areas for ABGC feedback are:

Roundabouts: *ABGC generally likes this concept, but wants to ensure they are in scale to the surrounding area*

Parking lot and building: *ABGC prefers this to be on the east side of Lake Washington Boulevard and be built one level lower than street level*

Big mound in middle/observation tower: *Iain made several suggestions:*

- a. ensure materials are suitable for this purpose*
- b. determine how the area would have looked when ice sheets were moving over it and try to mimic that look*
- c. integrate pockets/baffles to protect the area from freeway noise*
- d. re-use/leave the ramp columns as part of the design and make the tower(s) visible from many areas. Look to Tor House in Carmel, CA, as an example. <http://www.torhouse.org/>*

Lid: *ABGC prefers Option B, with the crossing located at Madison Avenue. Rob noted this area gets a lot of attention from the neighborhoods and an early interface with the Arboretum would be positive. Paige asked the Broadview neighborhood association chair to attend tonight's meeting to hear The Berger presentation.*

At tonight's meeting, the plans are for the audience to pick out the best elements. Staff will record the perceived pros and cons of each element, and Berger staff will describe the next steps of the process.

Donald suggested the team give additional background on the SR 520 project and why the North Entry and Multi-Use Trails projects are being scoped at this time. Other suggestions included turning all the maps in the same direction and to anticipate that some Arboretum neighbors may not be well informed of the SR 520 project. ABGC members complimented the presentation and the good work.

Budget Updates

Arboretum Foundation: Paige reported the Foundation will adopt its 2012 budget on June 15 and expects a deficit of \$150,000 next year. The Foundation will do an aggressive fundraising campaign, however, it doesn't want to do this year after year.

The Foundation has used Building 30 at Magnuson Park for its annual plant sale and that site is no longer available. The City is working on an alternative site, as the Foundation depends on proceeds from the sale to help fund its budget.

Parks: Acting Superintendent Williams is recommending no further cuts to maintenance in the proposed 2012 budget; however, the City Council will make the final determination. Cheryl noted that Parks maintenance staff are adapting to cuts already made in the Arboretum's budget. Some good news is that Paul Smith, former head gardener at the Arboretum, has decided to go on a years sabbatical, rather than retiring from the City and may be back at the end of that time.

UW: Sarah reported there are a lot of unknown with the UW's budget, until the decision is made on a tuition increase. Lisa Graumlich, Dean of the College of the Environment (COE), is in the process of determining cuts to COE. Sarah is working with Tom Hinckley, former Acting Dean, to develop a survey on Arboretum use, which can be helpful when cuts are being considered.

UW staff will ask Lisa to contact Senators Murray and Carlisle and thank them for their support of the 2012 budget line item for the Arboretum in the amount of \$187,000. Sarah also gave an update on the UW's new budgeting system.

Old/New Business

Arboretum Vandalism: Fred reported approximately \$6,000 in vandalism to the Arboretum plant collection was discovered about two weeks ago. He and Sarah noted that vandalism has decreased with the closure of Arboretum Drive.

Upcoming Public Meetings

June 8: The Berger Partnership will present information on the North Entry and Multi-Use Trails. Most ABGC members will attend. A recurring theme will be "imagine the Arboretum without ramps!"

June 29: Master Plan Update at Graham Visitors Center, 6:30-8:00 pm, with Andy Sheffer as the lead presenter

Traffic Noise at Japanese Garden: Paige noted that traffic noise is very loud at the Japanese Garden from 4:00-6:00 pm in the southbound lane. She suggested Arboretum Foundation members/staff dress in kimonos and carry signs to read "don't pollute with noise." Some ABGC members expressed doubt this would be affective way to slow drivers and decrease the noise.

Meeting with Broadmoor Representatives: Paige recently met with the Broadmoor homeowner's association president, the golf course manager, and president of the Broadmoor board of directors. They voiced agreement with the ramps being removed from the Arboretum, the quieting of Lake Washington Boulevard, and tolling on Lake Washington Boulevard. They prefer a traffic circle at the intersection of Lake Washington Boulevard and Foster Island. She invited them to attend tonight's public meeting and will meet again with them to continue discussions.

SR 520 Project: Paige has also clarified some SR 520 project misinformation being discussed in the community, and which was attributed to Fran Conley.

July 13 Meeting: Sarah and Jack will be absent at the July 13 ABGC meeting.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Theresa Doherty, ABGC Chair