

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) Minutes  
Graham Visitors Center – June 12, 2013

*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.*

**Voting Members**

**Arboretum Foundation**

- Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director
- Craig Trueblood, Arboretum Foundation Board President

**City of Seattle**

- Kenan Block, Mayoral Appointee
- Jack Collins, Mayoral Appointee
- Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks, Planning and Development Division, Director

**University of Washington**

- *Excused:* Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Asst. Vice President for Regional Affairs
- *Excused:* Sarah Reichard, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG), Director
- Lynne C. Manzo, University of Washington, Associate Professor, Dept. of Landscape Architecture

**Washington State**

- *Excused:* David Towne

**Other Staff Present:**

- Fred Hoyt, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG), Associate Director
- Andy Sheffer, Seattle Parks, Planning and Development Division
- Rachel Acosta, Seattle Parks and Recreation, ABGC Coordinator

**Standing Committees**

Building Committee:

AF: Paige Miller; City: TBD; UW: TBD

Partners Committee:

AF: Paige Miller & Craig Trueblood  
City: Donald Harris & Christopher Williams  
Michael Shiosaki & Leah Tivoli  
UW: Tom DeLuca & Sarah Reichard

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG):

AF: Paige Miller & Roger Williams  
City: Michael Shiosaki (lead) & Andy Sheffer  
UW: Fred Hoyt & Sarah Reichard

SR520 Technical Committee:

City: David Graves; UW: Theresa Doherty & Fred Hoyt

**Opening Items**

At 8:33am the meeting is called to order. Michael approves the minutes as written, Craig seconds. The Minutes are approved. There are no additions to the Agenda.

Joined in the meeting by Sandy Brooks and Michele Daly for the New Zealand Garden tour.

## **Budget, Personnel & Other Updates**

### **Parks:**

Budget - Michael informs the ABGC that Parks has received its budget instructions from the City's Budget Office; it is all good news in terms of operating and capital, which is a significant change. Revenues are up citywide; Kenan thinks this is reassuring. Paige adds the housing market is going up which is good for city revenue.

Personnel - No significant personnel changes. Dewey Potter is retiring in a couple of months. Donald Harris will retire sometime next year.

### **Arboretum Foundation:**

Budget – The Arboretum Foundation budget was passed by the Board. Paige adds they received \$53,000 more for a new gardener for the New Zealand forest. The Annual meeting is coming up on June 19, 2013.

Arboretum Foundation received a Miller Foundation grant for \$20,000 so Rhonda Bush will continue the Stewards Program.

The Arboretum Foundation received \$25,000 from the Seattle Garden Club for the Overlook Shelter Renovation. In addition to that sum, there is \$30,000 coming from SR520 section 106 mitigation funds, plus city levy money and additional funds from the Arboretum Foundation from New Zealand forest funds. The Overlook Shelter Renovation is expected to be finished in September in coordination with the rest of the New Zealand Forest project. Andy adds that the dollar amount from the city contractor is below estimate.

Personnel – There are 2 candidates for the Volunteer Manager job. Paige had 2 panels interview 3 candidates and rotated the candidates through; both panels were unanimous for different candidates. Some of the Arboretum Foundation's most important volunteers were adamant and vocal in opposite directions. Paige will figure out whom to choose.

### **University of Washington:**

Budget – Fred and Sarah are trying to figure out how the UW Botanical Gardens will be getting money allocated from the University of Washington. Fred and Sarah are looking at proposals for funding. This is from the regular state budget; Fred says the budget is a moving target.

Canal Reserve - The meeting on the Canal Reserve has been postponed. The contested money is coming out of the Bryant building site. The Provost and Dean have put off their meeting to talk about it all. We're looking toward August sometime before we know anything. It's a live issue, says Jack, which is hopeful. Fred concurs that it's very much a live issue and that Fred and Sarah will continue discuss it.

UW Farm - Fred and Sarah hired a farm manager who will be housed at Center for Urban Horticulture and Mercer Court buildings. The UW Farm is a vegetable farm with over an acre of land between the location at the CUH and Mercer Court. There is a lot of student involvement and it's a big deal for the Dean and Provost. Tilth pays the University rent but keeps the revenue it generates selling produce at the local farmer's markets. Tilth produced and sold over \$18,000 worth of vegetables last year. The students are expected to generate revenue also. Jack adds the Farm is public so everyone can enjoy the Tilth educational elements.

## **MPIG**

Multi-Use Trail - Legislation is being prepared for the city to accept a \$7.8million check from WSDOT. Parks and Recreation hopes to be able to appropriate the money before the end of the month. Michael states the negotiation just finished with Berger, which had the successful proposal to design it, so the timing with the funding has worked out really well. Design is set to begin!

Speaking of WSDOT, Paige adds, she sat behind Paula Hammond at Dick Ford's Memorial. Paula received the letter and thanks the ABGC very much. She seems to be doing fine. Jack emailed Kerry Pihlstrom about the contents of the transportation budget in terms of the impact to the Arboretum but didn't receive a response. Jack will follow up when the budget is passed; the House and Senate are waiting for another revenue forecast. Michael adds that within the transportation budget there is \$200 million dollars to be used for all of the design for the area from Lake Washington to I-5. This \$200 million would be used to complete the design and tee up the package for funding all the rest of the construction. This has not been approved yet. Jack adds that this money doesn't help the Arboretum in terms of ramp removal but Michael states that the Arboretum will get 2 out of 3 ramps removed with West Approach Bridge North (WABN) – which is the next phase of the SR 520 project on the Seattle side of the lake.

Foster Island – The ABGC reached agreement with WSDOT regarding artificial lighting under the bridge. The trail location undercrossing would shift to the east where there is more natural light. MPIG had a meeting with the Muckleshoot and other tribes and all appear to be on the same page. The tribes gave a nod to remove the grading. Fred adds they have agreed to a design but they haven't agreed on an interim trail while they finish the southern part of the bridge. It won't be a great experience until they get the new bridge done. The ABGC does not know how long this will take. Jack asks about the big piles of dirt under the ramps and Andy adds the soil will go when the ramps get taken out.

Globe Inlay/New Zealand Garden – New Zealand planting started yesterday. The replacement globe that goes under Pacific Connections shelter has been ordered. It is designed and under construction. Andy adds they used the bronze medallions from the original Globe Inlay. It cost approximately \$24-25,000. All options were in same budget realm. This will be ½ in thick cast iron and fireproof. Jack inquires about his idea of rubbings of the new globe inlay and using those to create a poster for selling at the Gift Shop. Andy says that there are graphics from the original that could be used.

At this point Michael Shiosaki introduces Doug Critchfield, the new Natural Resource Manager for the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation to the committee.

Interpretive and Wayfinding Signs - The Interpretive and Wayfinding signs have been ordered and they will be here in 3 or 4 weeks. Andy says they will be installed as soon as they come in and he will coordinate with Kenan for a photo and press opportunity.

Interpretive trail loops - The Arboretum has received a Stanley Smith grant for 3 loop trails: Pinetum loop, History loop, and a kayak loop – they are still in design. Fred interjects that the kayak loop trail will require too much permitting to put signs around the water's edge. Instead, at each kayak landing (4) there would be a welcome sign and maybe some interpretive signs that explains the area and let's them know they

are in the Arboretum. Fred will bring visuals to the next ABGC Meeting of the trail loops and of the new signage also.

Educational Kiosk planned near Arboretum Drive – One idea talked about would be to have a naturalistic play area to be part of the experience near the educational kiosk. Fred comments that after much discussion they may hesitate to call it a play area due to safety issues and intent. Jack adds that he wouldn't want a playground there and Fred agrees saying the intention is to provide a space for the young kids to gather and be on logs and rocks.

Ridgetop Trail – A key place to implement the Ridgetop Trail is in Woodland Garden; Andy is looking at a proposal from Karen Keist, Landscape Architect and Bob Hoshide, Architect to design a bridge and trail segment because that is the one part of the Ridgetop trail that is not fully accessible. Paige adds this is a pedestrian, natural pathway.

### **Legacy Plan**

Jack and Kenan went to the Legacy plan meeting at a community center in West Seattle. Jack thought it was going to be a hearing/meeting where the letter and summary could be presented. Jack was able to submit the letter and summary to the Legacy Committee although submitting testimony was not the purpose of the meeting. It wasn't a meeting at all; instead, it was small groups talking about priorities for the future of the parks system. Kenan and Jack participated. Jack noted that each person in the group wanted to talk about their particular interest for parks and not so much the future of the Parks department.

Kenan clarifies the Legacy plan is the blueprint; Parks and the City are finalizing a plan that will be the backbone for the large funding mechanism. The Legacy public meetings were to gather public reactions and input to work them into a new draft of the Legacy Plan. This second draft will be done in a couple of weeks and will, hopefully, contain and reflect some of the public and our suggestions. Michael adds that the Citizen's Steering Committee will make the recommendations that go into the package that goes to the Mayor and Council. Jack mentions that the question barely came up about the structural issue: park district or stay the way it is. The Citizens Steering committee will recommend a funding mechanism to the Superintendent, Council and Mayor. Jack didn't think the meeting was very productive; everyone was there arguing for their cause. Kenan says he believes the people at Parks are acutely aware of the needs/challenges of the public and savvy about all of the special interests. Michael interjects everyone wants to fund new development and not necessarily maintaining existing structures. Kenan says that the public is starting to understand that we need to maintain the parks. The message appears to be resonating.

Paige asks if we want to get more specific or stay general. Jack talked to Donald Harris about that, and he said it was important to stress maintenance, not capital. Kenan asks Andy and Michael how important it is to ask for specific maintenance needs. Andy says it's good to be clear about priorities because there are specific areas of deferred maintenance at the Arboretum. Kenan agrees and suggests creating an addendum to the letter specifying maintenance needs. Michael thinks that the ABGC does not need to give that level of detail at this point; there will be opportunities because the Citizen's Advisory Committee is meeting from June to December.

Doug Critchfield, NRU Manager, chimes in that it would be very valuable to have a detailed list as soon as possible. The Citizen's Advisory Committee is currently speaking in generalities but there are so many issues on the table; they are looking at overarching goal statements to address deferred maintenance. There is capital work that can take place to reduce the amount of maintenance that the Arboretum needs to put in the facilities in the first place. When the discussion comes up we can speak directly to that rather than waiting until September.

Jack requests MPIG to make a list of priorities with estimates of cost to discuss at the August ABGC meeting. Kenan is concerned about time and suggests electronic review would speed things up. Michael emphasizes that other sites are not making the specific lists of projects at this time because staff does not have the time to create these for every park; Michael thinks there will be allocations for different sites. Doug counters that in divvying up allocations, we are more likely to get a larger piece if we have a specific list. The ABGC agrees September is the latest for MPIG to give a list of priorities and estimates. Paige feels they should give the Committee the answer to: What are the truly critical priorities that are at the top? Kenan adds the responsibility of the ABGC is to be an advocate for the Arboretum despite the added workload.

### **New/Old Business**

State Appointment – Paige has not yet drafted the letter to the Governor asking for a courtesy appointment to the ABGC and providing suggestions for the appointment. The idea was to get the Governor to make a courtesy appointment and then ask for legislative authority for next time. Paige will sleuth around and figure out a connection to the Governor based on Arboretum donations. The names thrown around so far have been Tim Gallagher, Donald Harris and John Howell. The ABGC will get the letter out as soon as the legislature adjourns.

Communications – Any upcoming events? Kenan would like people to let him know at these meetings when events are happening so that they can come up with creative opportunities to market the Arboretum.

- Paige and Kenan have talked about New Zealand. Four to six weeks prior to the opening of the New Zealand Garden, Paige and Kenan will sit down and take a look at all the media opportunities.
- The new signage is a small press opportunity and a cool little story. Jack adds to tie it into the Overlook Shelter and the missing link of the Azalea trail. Everyone agrees it's a good idea to publicize all of the changes happening concurrently. Andy and Kenan will work together on this.
- Fred mentions that there was no press for Bioblitz this year. It was a big story last year but not this year.
- Paige wants to thank Kenan for passing on the information of Franklin Butler's lecture to Knute Berger because it got the Arboretum Foundation mentioned in an article in Crosscut.

Kenan emphasizes the importance of keeping him informed of all the events.

Encampments at MOHAI - Paige said that she had received calls complaining of encampments at MOHAI site. Parks is on top of that and will deal with it until the land transfer to WSDOT.

Waterfront Trail - Paige asks about the condition and status of the waterfront trail; the trail from the University to the Arboretum. She hears parts of it are impassable. Michael says this is the worst part of the year because the water level is high. Paige informs that WSDOT said they will restore it before the SR520 project is done. Andy says we need to get a schedule to work on it from WSDOT but it will be 2 to 4 years before there is any replacement. Jack emphasizes it's a park problem but not an Arboretum problem. It is going to be taken care of by WSDOT but not by Arboretum mitigation money. Jack asks for a permanent solution to the waterfront trail being constantly flooded and Michael states that it would have to be rebuilt completely and there is no money for major maintenance. Today, a trail through the wetland would not be allowed. Kenan asks if there is an interim plan to make the trail better, since the SR520 project has 3 to 4 years before completion. Michael says Seattle Parks occasionally adds more chips to the trail to diminish the muddiness and closes it when the lake level is too high.

**The next regular ABGC meeting is scheduled for 8:30 am, Wednesday, July 10, 2013, at the Graham Visitors Center.**

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 am for a tour of the New Zealand Garden.

APPROVED       /s/Jack Collins       DATE       7/10/13        
John B. Collins, ABGC Chair