

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, May 8, 2013

Voting Members

Present:

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, Projects & Planning Division, Director

University of Washington

- Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Asst. Vice President for Regional Affairs
- 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
- Hillary Burgess, UW Intern
- Rachel Acosta, Seattle Parks, 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

Jack points out that writing these minutes was Michele's last act as interim ABGC Coordinator. Michael has a few tweaks to the Cascadia master plan future priority discussion section of the minutes. Paige mentions the plan is evolving slowly. Michael will submit changes to Rachel regarding Cascadia confusion. Kenan moved to approve the minutes subject to Michael's edits; Michael seconded. No further comments. Everyone said aye!

Jack asked if anyone had anything to add to the Agenda at which point Paige asked if anyone had received a response to the letter that Jack and Paige had written to Paula Hammond, former Secretary of Transportation for WSDOT, regarding the SR520 mitigation. Jack stated that Paula has yet to respond, nor have any of the people copied on the letter. The Committee agreed the letter was great.

Introduction of New ABGC Coordinator:

Rachel Acosta is a Husky graduate in Anthropology. Rachel comes from a legal background but has spent the last four years working in human resources in a variety of industries, from non-profit to manufacturing. Rachel is so thrilled to work for Parks and Recreation. Rachel was interested in this position because she loves Seattle Parks and Recreation and wants to serve her community. Jack and Rachel met the day before the ABGC meeting to talk about the Pacific Connections exhibit and the history of ABGC. Rachel is recording minutes with her phone and using her laptop for taking minutes.

Budget, Personnel & Other Updates

Parks Legacy plan:

Michael updated the committee on the status of the Legacy Plan. The draft plan is out. Public meetings are happening; six meetings in the next week and a half. Comments from the public and the Committee are due by May 22. This gives them time for a 2nd draft plan. Kenan adds the Legacy Plan is the 5 to 10 year blueprint for Seattle Parks and that public outreach is the focus at this point in the process. They are really trying to get attendance by regular users and focused advocates. Anything the committee can do to really help drive attendance would be great. Comments can be submitted on line or via email. The schedule of meetings is on the Parks and Recreation website. Michael noted some of the meetings are more targeted; for instance the May 16 meeting focuses the discussion on Environmental Programs, Open Spaces and Maintenance. Kenan notes the May 16 meeting would be a good one for the ABGC to attend. Michael Shiosaki emphasizes the purpose of the Legacy Plan meetings is to tee up discussion points. Jack adds that we need to take a position and write a letter and testify at one of the meetings.

Personnel:

- Parks Personnel: Doug Critchfield, the new NRU, will be attending June meeting. The Natural Resources Unit Manager oversees specialty gardens, greenbelts, horticultural unit, and his office is in the Parks Division; the operations part of the Maintenance department.
- Arboretum Foundation Personnel: Paige mentions that the Volunteer Resources Manager position for the Arboretum Foundation is not filled. She has selected 6 people to interview and hopes to do interviews by late next week.
- UW Personnel: The Farm Manager position is open at the University of Washington and Sarah will start reviewing applications by the 15th. Anyone with urban farming experience is encouraged to apply.
- UW Personnel: The ½ time curator has been hired for the University of Washington Botanic Gardens.
- UW Personnel: Iain is in Norway. He should be back by the end of June.

City Budget:

Jack said the budget process is getting underway. Jack asked Michael to be kept in the loop regarding impacts to the Arboretum. Michael agreed.

Arboretum Foundation:

Craig Trueblood reports the board reviewed the budget last month and will look at final budget next Wednesday. The Foundation is trying to find a way to increase revenue; their expenses are under control nicely. They should be able to do a lot of things Sarah wants.

Paige announced the Arboretum Foundation got a significant gift from a major donor to pay for the salary of a gardener for a year; \$50,000. As a thank you gift, the donor wants to meet the gardener. The donor said they will do it again. Paige says the intention is to get an endowment for the gardener position. This works well to meet the need for the New Zealand forest. Sarah hopes to hire someone to start sometime in July. She is very excited for the new gardener position because the New Zealand garden will be high maintenance as it is a big, new garden. Sarah emphasized that if New Zealand is not done right, there will be a problem with Australia, Chile and China. Kenan added that this is a good story to share with the public.

UW: Canal Reserve:

No change in operating budget. As far as 520 mitigation money goes, Dean Lisa Graumlich was supposed to have a meeting with Vice Provost Paul Jenny and Provost Ana Mari Cauce on Friday but someone was sick so the meeting was postponed and not rescheduled yet.

Paige added the Arboretum Foundation has done their behind the scenes effort and Dr. Wott has done a more public effort. Dr. Wott is angry that the University of Washington is considering redirecting the funds away from the Arboretum. He has threatened to write the UW out of his will. Sarah says donors, including her, are angry about what is happening. Donors are threatening to pull their support of the University of Washington. Kenan mentions it is in the interest of the UW to give the money back to the Arboretum and not let it become a newsworthy, adversarial issue. Sarah loves the UW and doesn't want this issue to get in the press; she emphasizes the ABGC wants to support the UW but she and the Committee feel the money from the Canal should go to the Arboretum and not redirected to the UW police department.

MPIG Update by Michael Shiosaki:

- Multi-use trail project – A selection committee interviewed three firms for the design of the trail and they selected the Berger Partnership to continue work on the trail; the vote was nearly unanimous for Berger.
- Interpretive and Way finding signs: The signs will not be up in time for Mother's Day. They are close to finishing them but keep making little changes. Paige mentions it would have been nice to have them in time for Mother's Day because it is the busiest day at the Arboretum. They have designed the Place Identification signs for the main collections. Michael showed the Committee mockups of the Place Identification signs. Fred Hoyt mentioned that they are reminiscent of the old Forest Service signs but they are made out of powder-coated steel. The signs show the place name and an icon related to the specific area of the arboretum; for example, there is a pine cone icon on the Pinetum Place Identification sign.

Michael says there are 6 of the "you are here" maps which are giant, table type maps and will be placed in major areas and identify the main collections.

- During the discussion of the signage, there was a discussion about the crowds at the arboretum over Mother's Day weekend. Jack inquired as to whether the road would be open for cars and The UWBG confirmed there would be people managing the road.
- Pacific Connection Shelter Globe Inlay: Michael says that they are moving forward with the cast iron map with bronze detail to replace damaged terrazzo one. It will cost \$24-25,000 dollars. The terrazzo

was damaged when someone set a campfire on it. This new one will be much more durable. Jack showed the Committee an example of a cast iron utility access cover. Michael explained the inlay will be a large interpretation of the Pacific Connection garden. It will show the globe and how the gardens are represented around the Pacific Ocean. Jack thought it would make a good fundraiser to make a rub of it, shrink it down and sell it at the opening of the Pacific Connections. Michael says it's a shame the fire ruined the Terrazzo Globe Inlay because they are now forced to use the dwindling levy funds to make this replacement. The goal is to get it replaced before the September Opening of the Pacific Connections.

- The Committee celebrated that Cinco de Mayo went by without any incidence; last year a UW Fraternity caused over \$40,000 worth of damage to the palm trees.
- Overlook Shelter Renovation: Michael said they are moving forward with this. Jack noticed they have poured the concrete. They are making improvements to the shelter. Michael said it looks like the Arboretum will be getting section 106 money. Skanska had mentioned sending in volunteers but there has been no further word from Skanska.
- Ridge Top Trail Project: Michael says they are moving forward on focusing on accessibility for the Woodland Garden. They will focus their efforts on what kind of bridge is needed and how they can improve accessibility.
- Paige asked if it would be possible to pull electrical service through existing service to the meadow or Pacific Connections and wondered whether they could get it onto the MPIG agenda or onto the levy. UW seems interested. Paige thinks it would help with revenue generation and public events. Jack thinks lights would help with security. Michael said he will research what the cost would be and that the new levy is about major maintenance and fixing existing things so this might qualify.
- Foster Island Undercrossing: ABGC and WSDOT have reached an agreement that we may not need to add supplemental lighting under the bridge. The trail would be shifted to the east side of the undercrossing where the bridge will be higher. The amount of light by supplemental lighting would be negligible. The ABGC is happy that they and WSDOT are in agreement and have a preferred option that everyone can embrace. Fred says in lieu of lighting the Arboretum wants to ensure they have good soil, additional and replacement plants, and reflective paint. The Arboretum is looking towards using that money in other ways to help the same area. The height range of the bridge is 12-20 feet; the bridge goes lower as you go west. Michael says the biggest worry is when westbound lanes are done and there is no light underneath eastbound lanes because they sit low on the land. Fred adds we could be living with an interim condition for 10 years easily. ABGC representatives will be meeting with tribes on the 30th of May to discuss the undercrossing. The representatives felt it was important to have an agreement with WSDOT before going to the Tribes to discuss the options. Paige asked more about interim conditions. Fred said that the Arboretum will maintain the trail the way it is and Michael added that it will be a terrible connection in the interim.
- Jack asks about a Transportation Bill capital budget that can be used for 520. There was confusion about whether the amendment passed. Jack will chase down this information for next meeting.

Legacy plan:

- Jack passed out the specific reference to the Arboretum in the first draft of the Parks Legacy Plan. Page 129 mentions that the arboretum is a museum and the ABGC agreed that they do not like that nomenclature attributed to a living, ever-changing park. Jack thinks the description of the Washington Park Arboretum in the Legacy Plan is a flat but, accurate description and that it could use a good editorial review. Fred mentions the University has verbiage of the Arboretum in a book and they can re-

work it. Jack will write the letter to the Parks Legacy Plan Committee while Fred gets better language regarding the Arboretum description.

- The Committee discussed what else they would want in the plan. The ABGC feels their priorities for the Legacy Plan are the maintenance needs and their thoughts on what they feel is important for the Arboretum. Kenan says the letter needs to emphasize all of the maintenance needs and appeal to the public to get their support to ensure future funding. Jack points out that gardening and maintenance positions were cut out of the budget in the Legacy Plan but the Arboretum has additional maintenance needs.
- Paige points out the Arboretum Foundation and other partnerships are not mentioned; the Legacy Plan deemphasizes the partnerships and volunteerism in the Arboretum. Kenan suggests emphasizing the amount of partnerships and volunteerism may create a sense with the public that more tax dollars are not needed. Michael points out the city usually pays for major maintenance projects. Paige agrees that it's hard to get fundraising dollars for electrical wiring. Kenan thinks the Arboretum Foundation should submit its own comments in addition to the letter submitted by the ABGC.
- Jack will draft a letter as quickly as he can and send it around to all members of the ABGC for comment/critique. This letter will include Fred's specific language describing the Arboretum and include MPIG priorities that were adopted last meeting. Michael adds that most of those projects are new things. The electrical wiring to Pacific Connections would be a good example as a priority. Jack feels we need to mention that we're trying to grow while other parks around the state and country are shrinking. Paige adds that people are less inclined to give to the Arboretum because of the money coming from the 520 deal. Kenan believes that the ABGC letter needs to specify for what exactly the Arboretum funding would be used. Sarah mentions that there are years of deferred maintenance and that there is a backlog of things that need to be done; they are losing trees because of it. The real issue is lack of staff.
- Kenan thinks they should get the letter out before May 22nd; the sooner, the better. Michael thinks the letter should be submitted beforehand but talked about at the meeting on the 21st.
- There's a citizen steering committee that has been put together; Barbara Wright is co-chairing the steering committee and she's on the Park Board. After May 22nd deadline, there will be a final version that will include the citizens input; this will be the foundation for the Parks Levy.
- The first draft of the Legacy Plan asks a series of questions. The steering committee will discuss and look at the information from the public. The committee will take all of the public comments and incorporate those into their "Final" version of the Legacy Plan. In December, it will be put to the city council. Kenan reiterates the importance that the ABGC go to the May 16 meeting at the Jefferson Community Center. Jack will get after the letter as soon as he can and try to make the May 16 deadline.
- In terms of priorities for the Legacy Plan and the Arboretum, Paige points out that whenever there are budget cuts the buying of new equipment is typically deferred. At mention of new equipment, Sarah interjected that the price of the tractor had increased by \$20,000 and was now \$61,000.

State appointment:

Jack summed up the current knowledge about the state appointment. There is a search underway for David Towne's appointment letter from the Governor. The city ordinance has specific verbiage regarding the appointment by the Governor. However, the city has no authority over the governor because there is no legislative authority for the ABGC appointment. Historically, the appointment has been done as a courtesy.

Jack asks 2 questions:

- Are we agreed that state appointment is good? Paige thinks it's a good idea because the Washington Park Arboretum is the only state Arboretum. Fred agrees, especially when the Committee goes to the state for support; it would be good to have someone there. Michael agrees that it is good but questions what good it does without the legislative link.
- Is it worth the amount of work to get the legislation passed? Jack feels it would be easy to get legislation passed. Kenan makes a point that we should have someone in the position that has state influence. Michael does not think it would be easy to get it through the legislature. A line to the governor is good even if it's a courtesy appointment. Paige agrees with Michael that getting the legislation passed is a lot of work for little reward.

Jacks sums it up: yes, the ABGC would like another state appointment to the committee. The ABGC will try for a courtesy appointment from the Governor, based on tradition. Kenan says he sees it being a "kudos" to a donor who loves the Arboretum. Lynn emphasizes that the person have "teeth". The ABGC will pick out some candidates who have political savvy and a direct link with the Governor – perhaps a donor to Inslee's campaign with an interest in protecting and preserving the Arboretum. Fred adds that Inslee is a "green" governor, who has been to the Arboretum many times.

Kenan believes a pro forma legislation track is a good angle; why not make the effort? And it would add value.

Paige and Kenan will work on a letter with a 2 month soft deadline. This letter will offer names for potential appointees. Fred Hoyt says the ABGC letter should reference the legislation that talks about it being a state Arboretum and point out the statewide education coming out of the Arboretum. Kenan adds the letter should emphasize that the Arboretum has some nationally recognized collections of trees.

Jack mentions that the City Ordinance articulates the appointee keeps working until a replacement is found so time isn't really an issue. Kenan emphasizes that the ABGC should have a person who will be an advocate in Olympia for future funding. Jack sums up that the ABGC will have a run at the Governor for a courtesy appointment so they don't have to worry about legislative authority. He will talk with Frank Chopp about how hard it would be to get through legislation. Deadline set to have a request written to the Governor by the July meeting.

Communication:

The New Signage and Loop Trail – Kenan states the new signage is newsworthy and there should be a press release of when the signs will be up. Sarah thinks the loop trails are going to be done in August and they should publicize the new signage with the new loop trails. Kenan and Sarah agree that they will coordinate the press releases for the new signage system with the new loop trails. Fred is in charge of the loop trail project. All of the materials will be ready to be "unveiled" by August 1.

Communication Plan - Paige and Kenan are going to sit down and figure out the communication plan for the next six months to tee things up to incorporate all events that are happening. Kenan says that the opening of the new gardens is a huge story. Paige mentions they are going to finish the gravel path for Azalea Way.

Jack suggests a communication meeting to include: Kenan, Michael, Paige and Fred in June or July to discuss the coordination of the 2 major newsworthy pieces – the Loop Trail and new signage in August and the opening of the Pacific Connection Gardens in September.

Sarah mentions that Bioblitz is going on now. Bioblitz is an event that uses citizens to inventory specimens in the Arboretum; it has received good coverage in the past. The Seattle Times may come to do a piece on

Bioblitz this weekend. Kenan thinks KUOW is a good venue for discussing Bioblitz and encourages Sarah to reach out to them.

Paige says she believes the Arboretum is getting more visitors; Sarah confirms they documented 2000 more people in the Arboretum. All agreed that the Arboretum is looking great. Sarah took alumna to Pacific Connections; they were amazed at how great it looks.

The Seattle Times is coming to Sarah's house to photograph her garden. Kenan suggests she tell the Seattle Times that Mother's day is the busiest day of the year at the Arboretum.

Next meeting: Keep business meeting to an hour to leave time for the Tour of New Zealand garden.

The next regular ABGC meeting is scheduled for 8:30 am, Wednesday, June 12, 2013, at the Graham Visitors Center.

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

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
John B. Collins, ABGC Chair