

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC)

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Joint effort of Arboretum Foundation (AF), City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation (Parks), and the University of Washington (UW)

Minutes – November 3, 2004

Members:

Arboretum Foundation

- Deb Andrews, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director
- Neal Lessenger, Arboretum Foundation President

City of Seattle

- Donald Harris, Parks and Recreation Department Manager
- Jack Collins, Board of Park Commissioner

University of Washington

- Tom Hinckley, University of Washington Professor
- Sandra Lier, University of Washington Administrator
- John Wott, Arboretum Director

Excused Members:

- John Behnke, Washington State Representative
- Margaret Ceis, Mayoral Appointee

Guests:

- Ashley Clark, Arboretum Foundation Director of Development
- Jonathan Dubman, Mountlake Community Council Vice-president
- Jerry Ernst, Consultant
- Chris Leman, No Expansion SR 520 Committee

Staff:

- Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Chair Sandra Lier called the meeting to order at 8:40 am, with a quorum present. **Donald moved approval of the minutes and agenda as presented. Tom H seconded. The vote was taken and the motion was approved.**

The next ABGC meeting will be on December 1. A copy of the 2005 meeting schedule was distributed, along with a draft version of the Arboretum Governance Statement.

Master Plan Implementation (MPI) Group Update

Tom H gave an overview of the Wayfinding and Interpretive Signage and South Entry projects. Jerry Ernst and David Goldberg gave more detailed reports later in the meeting. The MPI Group has been working on several issues: the design of the shelterhouse at the south entry project; the Communication Committee's report; defining the nature of donor recognition; and staffing issues (if the communication plan goes into effect, additional staffing will be needed for web support and other communication strategies.)

A brief discussion was held on the possibility of restrooms at the Japanese Garden. No determination has yet been made as there are serious funding issues.

Communications Strategies

Deb distributed a draft “Washington Park Arboretum Master Plan Communications Plan.” She reviewed the first half of the draft, which contains the Communications Committee’s goals and concerns. Several issues being looked at for resolution are: (1) the web page — designation of the Washington Park Arboretum as the main web site, with other entities’ web pages minimizing the Master Plan information and instead link to the Arboretum’s main web site; (2) lack of common editor; (3) timing issues; and (4) coordinating mailings. Resolving all these issues requires additional staff and a determination of who does what.

Deb next reviewed the second half of the draft, which gives information on the four documents or committees referenced in the first portion of the draft document: (1) Public Involvement Plan; (2) Public Meetings and Notification; (3) Design Input Group; and (4) Decision Making.

Sandra asked Deb to develop time estimates at the MPI Group’s November 8 meeting and report to the ABGC at the December 1 meeting.

WSDOT SR 520 Widening Project Update

Jonathan Duncan, Montlake Community Council President and Chris Leman, No Expansion SR 520 Committee, came before the ABGC to discuss their involvement in this project. Jonathan distributed a drawing of what the existing and proposed 4-lane and 6-lane alternatives would look like. They discussed the potential impacts to the Arboretum and urged that the freeway be kept as narrow as possible to lessen these impacts. If the road must be elevated, ensure that it has sensitive landscaping underneath to look like I-90 around the Mercer Slough. Both Jonathan and Chris reviewed the history of how SR520 was originally built so that it took up part of the Washington Park Arboretum and believe local authorities did leverage to lessen the impacts. This time, they urge UW, Parks, and the ABGC to speak out against the 6-lane alternative and to try to leverage the least possible impact. The Chair thanked Jonathan and Chris for their information.

Donald distributed copies of a letter from Parks and Recreation to Paul Krueger of WSDOT describing the significance of Seattle park properties affected by the SR520 Widening Project proposal. Sandra sent Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds an e-mail, updating him on the UW’s efforts on this proposal.

Jack recommended that the ABGC take a stand on this issue. Neal suggested that choosing the proper timing to do so is important. Sandra will invite WSDOT representatives to the December 1 meeting to give an update presentation. She and Parks staff will invite Dean Bare and Ken Bounds to this meeting. Members will further discuss what action the ABGC will take next in response to this project.

Signage and Wayfinding Project

Jerry reported that a great deal of progress has been made on this project since he reported at the October ABGC meeting. A public meeting was held on October 21, with 8 citizens present. He is meeting with Portico staff later today. The general consensus is that it is important to minimize the number of signs. Some of the signs need to be of significant size; however, the placement of these must be very selective. The overall tone should be subdued. The project is scheduled for completion on December 21. At the December 1 ABGC meeting, members will go outside to view a sample.

Sandra reported she spoke to Dean Bare on this. John W stated there may some funds left from the Duck Bay project which can be used for the Signage and Wayfinding Project. (Note: at the December 1, 2004, meeting it was reported that this will not happen.)

South Entry Project

David Goldberg gave a detailed report on this project. He brought a colored diagram which was distributed around the table for review. He reviewed the changes that have occurred since the project report at the November 6 ABGC meeting. (1) He has been working with the Signage and Wayfinding Project as it relates to the Entry project. (2) A brief discussion was held on the educational shelter as shown in the original Master Plan. David discussed work on the shelter design to make it both modern and sensitive to the WPA-era elements in the Arboretum. (3) Expand New Zealand Exhibit and add Australian Exhibit: He has had many detailed discussions with Portico on this portion of the project. Their next meeting is on November 22 and he will distribute details of the meeting to the ABGC.

(4) He has been attending the Montlake Community Council meetings and has been trying to contact Madison Valley Community Council. Jerry will send David his list of attendees from the Signage and Wayfinding workshops.

Arboretum Governance Statement Draft

A draft of the Statement was distributed, with a brief discussion on the purpose of this document. The basic intent is that consistent information is given out on the governing group. Members made one or two suggestions to change wording.

Amend Original Working Together Agreement

Neal reported that the agreement is near completion.

Conduct second phase of Historic Resources Assessment

David Goldberg gave a brief update on the Assessment. He is currently working with Kathy Wickwire of the City's Historic Preservation Office. He will next meet with her supervisor, Karen Gordon.

Old business/new business

— Determine Yearly ABGC retreat date & location: John W suggested that the group wait until Dave Maberley is on board before the retreat is scheduled. Jack Collins urged the date be selected in the near future. The March 1 ABGC meeting was suggested as a possible date.

— Review Goals & Objectives: Deferred.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Deborah Andrews, ABGC Secretary