

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, October 12, 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

University of Washington

- Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Asst. 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

Excused:

- Kjris Lund, Mayoral Appointee

Other Staff Present:

- Sarah Reichard, UWBG, Director
- Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks, Projects & Planning Deputy Director

Washington State Department of Transportation Team (WSDOT) Team

Rob Berman, Planning Manager; Kerry Pihlstrom, Engineering Manager West Side; and Rachel Patterson, Communications Manager for SR520 Project

ABGC Staff: Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Standing Committees

Building Committee:

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

Partners Committee:

AF: Paige Miller & Della Balick

City: Donald Harris & Christopher Williams

UW: Tom Hinckley & Sarah Reichard

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG):

AF: Paige Miller & Roger Williams

City: Michael Shiosaki (lead) & Rick Nishi

UW: Fred Hoyt & Sarah Reichard

Retreat Planning Committee:

Theresa Doherty (UW); Donald Harris (City); Paige Miller (AF)

SR520 Technical Committee:

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

This meeting was held at Graham Visitors Center at the Arboretum and called to order at 8:30 am by Theresa Doherty, Chair. **Dave Towne moved approval of the September 14 minutes, as corrected, and the October 12 agenda, as presented. Donald seconded. The vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.**

WSDOT Team - SR 520 Update

Kerry Pihlstrom, WSDOT Engineering Manager West Side, distributed the "*Draft – Washington Park Arboretum: Potential Mitigation Project Implementation*" document, which has a timeline for 2011-2013 for the following: Permitting, Floating Bridge, West Approach, Implementation Mitigation Plan including Agreements, Scoping, and Mitigation. Kerry gave a brief update on the timeline, reviewed the project elements included in the 2010 Arboretum mitigation plan, as listed on the handout, and distributed three draft maps, noted below:

- A. Foster Island improvements (*included draft map*)
- B. North Entry/WSDOT Peninsula (*included draft map*)
- C. Multi-Use Trail, Habitat Improvements, and Arboretum Creek (*included draft map*)
- D. Implementation of Interpretive and Wayfinding Plan Not (*not shown on map*)
- E. Other (WSDOT Peninsula land transfer, support for traffic management evaluation and calming, noise reduction, enhancement fund) (*not shown on map*)

The handouts also included:

- *"Attachment A: Arboretum Mitigation Plan Costs Funding Concept – Summary Vision";*
- *Draft version of the Arboretum Mitigation Project Implementation Term Sheet;*
- *WSDOT and Seattle Parks and Recreation, State Route 520 bridge replacement and HOV program, Washington Park Arboretum – mitigation projects – Foster Island Improvements, WSDOT GCB1067 (9 pages)*
- *WSDOT and Seattle P&R – State Route 520 bridge replacement and HOV program – Washington Park Arboretum – mitigation projects – North Entry of Arboretum, WSDOT: GCB 1068 (9 pages)*
- *WSDOT and Seattle P&R – State Route 520 bridge replacement and HOV program – Washington Park Arboretum – mitigation projects – Multi-use trail in Arboretum, WSDOT GCB 1069 (9 pages)*

Kerry reviewed the draft Term Sheet, with its purpose "*to confirm the common understanding of the general terms and conditions that the above-named parties believe are necessary to implement Arboretum Mitigation project elements. The parties agree these projects have both regional and individual agency benefits. Recognizing that the current economic environment is difficult, the parties agree to work collaboratively to arrive at solutions that will enhance the benefits and value of these projects, while still remaining within the budget parameters.*

This Term Sheet will provide a framework for completion of negotiations of the final terms and conditions in agreements that would be subject to final approval by XXX. As the agreements are prepared, additional issues not addressed in this Term Sheet may be identified and will be negotiated in good faith and included in the agreements.

The parties agree to the general terms and conditions described in this Term Sheet and will, upon execution, begin to enter into negotiations to produce agreements. Any information in the agreements to be developed would supersede all prior agreements related to Arboretum mitigation."

Responding to a request from Paige that project direction be kept at the ABGC level, Kerry stated the Term Sheet will include language stating the ABGC will review and approve the projects. The Term Sheet may be signed by year end; however, that would require extra meetings of WSDOT and ABGC [WSDOT instead is working with Master Plan Implementation Group members and will return to the full ABGC at the January 11 meeting for discussion.]

WSDOT asked the ABGC to help determine the scope and budget for the Multi-Use Trail, Habitat Improvements, Arboretum Creek, and Wayfinding Plan.

WSDOT must do an accounting exercise and develop cost figures for Foster Island improvements, North Entry/WSDOT Peninsula, Multi-Use Trail, Habitat Improvements, Arboretum Creek, Implementation of Interpretive and Wayfinding Plan, WSDOT Peninsula land transfer, support for traffic management evaluation and calming, noise reduction, and enhancement fund, as 4f mitigation. The 106 mitigation will be calculated in the same way.

The discussion next turned to funding for the West Side of the SR 520 project. Kerry stated the funding is needed by the 2013 legislative session, as the project is scheduled for completion in 2018. The unsecured funding is a very big question at this time.

Jack asked if State law requires the mitigation be paid at the beginning, and not the end, of the project. Kerry agreed that it does; however, the permits for the mitigated projects are likely to be issued for a six-year timeframe and WSDOT cannot do all the mitigated projects before the re-build is completed.

Responding to a question from Paige whether the contractor will build the new road from west-to-east or east-to-west, Kerry answered the contractor will make the determination. The ramps leading into the Arboretum must be demolished earlier in the project to clear the way. Paige observed it may be more expensive to do the ABGC projects at separate times during the project, rather than simultaneously. Kerry agreed; however, WSDOT will include a clause to adjust for inflation and will set up a contingency clause to cover any project increases. Paige suggested the contractor could do a trial and begin projects from Madison northward as work in that area doesn't intersect with the re-build project.

Iain asked that WSDOT clearly spell out in the agreement what condition the peninsula will be in when WSDOT turns it over to the City. Kerry responded that part of WSDOT's project cost will be to grade and clean up the peninsula before turning it over and agreed to include language to this effect. Responding to Iain's question on assessments, Donald answered the City will accept WSDOT's appraisal and may also do its own, as will the UW.

Kerry next reviewed Exhibits A, B, & C, listed above. Once the extent of the project, their costs, and the leads for each are determined, WSDOT will sign a Memorandum of Agreement for each project showing the lead.

Donald stated the Waterfront Trail (located outside the Arboretum) is in dire straits and he believes it will be further impacted by the SR 520 project. He asked if WSDOT will consider improving it as part of the mitigation, as the Trail has a strong connection with the Arboretum. Kerry stated this is unlikely. WSDOT deliberately minimized SR 520 project impacts to the Waterfront Trail. If it is rolled into a mitigation project, the 6f mitigation process would have to be re-opened. An alternative is that WSDOT would give the City or UW 4f funds to do the work, but that may knock something else off the mitigation list. Donald replied that early inclusion of the Waterfront Trail in the mitigation was an ABGC oversight. It should be added to the list, scoped, and costs estimated; however, he understands it may not be repairable as part of the SR 520 mitigation.

Paige observed that, while WSDOT is not closing the Waterfront Trail, the project will nonetheless impact it, and believes it should be improved as part of the mitigation. Sarah added the public complains frequently about the condition of the Trail and it needs to be dealt with. Theresa asked if it was built with Washington State Recreation Conservation Office funds and Donald answered that it was. To enlist their help with improvements, the partners would need to supply matching funds. Paige asked if the scoping cost could be paid from Parks & Levy funds and Michael agreed it could. Kerry stated the water depths at the Waterfront

Trail are very shallow. Repairing it would require work bridges to be built in the water. Further discussion of funding the repairs will be held at an upcoming meeting.

Donald, Fred, Paige, and Theresa, plus Michael as lead, will form a subcommittee to work with WSDOT to complete the Term Agreement and finalize it for signatures. Rachel and Sandy will ensure the signature lines are correct before the document is signed. Kerry added it is critical to have all the agreements in place by summer of 2012.

ABGC members thanked the WSDOT team for their good work on the Term Sheet and Dave complimented them for the great working relationship.

Update: Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG) Update

Michael is MPIG lead and he and other members gave several updates:

New Zealand Garden:

- Parks and UW staff removed 55 trees this past month, in preparation for the new garden. No complaints were received from the public. Most of the wood will be used in the new garden.
- Andy Sheffer has updated the plant costs, which are higher than the estimated \$200,000. The Pacific Connection Garden Stewards will help with the planting and that will save some on costs.
- Fred visited Cistus Nursery in Portland on Friday afternoon. He is very pleased with the status of the plantings for the New Zealand Garden and reported the plant material looks very good.

North Entry and Multi-Use Trail Project Update: The Berger Partnership is doing updated cost estimates for the North Entry project. **Jack moved that the ABGC approve Berger's designs for the Multi-Use Trail and North Entry as presented at the September 2011 ABGC meeting. Donald seconded, the vote was taken, and motion passed unanimously.** Responding to a question from Theresa on the costs, the North Entry is estimated at \$11 million and the Multi-Use Trail at \$3 million.

Theresa asked if Parks is getting any pushback from WSDOT on these projects. Michael responded there hasn't been any so far, but WSDOT suggested some minor changes. Iain asked if there are any downsides to the ABGC partners doing both the cost estimates and the work. Michael responded that Parks wants to do part of the work. Paige added that WSDOT will put some funds into the project budget and Parks will do the work. This is a good approach for the ABGC, as the additional WSDOT funds are separate from the pot of mitigation funds.

Lake Washington Boulevard Traffic Calming: Seattle Department of Transportation is installing wheelchair ramps on Lake Washington Boulevard as part of the traffic calming/pedestrian improvements. The crosswalks will be installed in summer 2012 as City Light is running behind schedule to install the new street lights along the Boulevard. Estimated completion time for the lights is March or April.

Signage & Wayfinding: Park Levy funds will be used to scope this project.

Arboretum Parking Needs: The parking stalls at Graham Visitor Center are being realigned to maximize parking spaces.

Budget Updates

City of Seattle

- Concerns were voiced that Sandy's position with Seattle Parks remains funded at only three-quarters time for 2012, with no funding for her support of the ABGC. The Arboretum Foundation funded one-fourth of her position in 2011 to provide staff support for both the ABGC and the Partners Committee.

Arboretum Foundation

- The Arboretum Foundation is moving ahead to raise funds for the New Zealand garden.
- The Pacific Connections Steward program is quite a success! Staff report the Stewards accomplish the work of one person for a full week at each work party.

University of Washington

- The UW announced another round of budget cuts in July. As a result, the UW Botanic Gardens reduced its plant recorder documentation staff and is trying to find a way to fund the position.
- The Music of Trees project is moving ahead. The UW has required an injured wildlife plan to be in place before the installation opens. UWBG staff will ensure the wildlife plan is ready.
- Sarah is developing 2012 priorities for Center for Urban Horticulture.

November 9 Retreat

The 2011 ABGC retreat is scheduled on November 9. Paige, Donald, and Theresa will draft the agenda and send it and the list of people to invite to Sandy. The retreat is scheduled for the Isaacson Classroom. ABGC members asked it be re-scheduled to a larger site and Sandy will do so.

Old/New Business

ABGC Vacancy: Due to health reasons, mayoral appointee Kjris Lund recently resigned. Any suggestions for her replacement should be sent to Donald and Michael and they will submit to Acting Parks Superintendent Williams for discussion with Mayor McGinn. Theresa will invite Kjris to an upcoming meeting to present her with flowers and thank her for service to the ABGC.

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

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
 Theresa Doherty, ABGC Chair