

APPROVED

## ***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  
September 9, 2009**

*Voting Members  
Present:*

### **Arboretum Foundation**

- Barbara Wright, Arboretum Foundation President
- Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director

### **City of Seattle**

- Jack Collins, Mayoral Appointee
- Donald Harris, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Property & Acquisition Services Manager
- Kjris Lund, Mayoral Appointee

### **University of Washington**

- Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Assistant Vice President for Regional Affairs
- Sandra Lier, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG) Director

*Excused:*

- Iain Robertson, University of Washington Associate Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture
- Dave Towne, Washington State Governor's Appointee

*Other Staff Present:*

- David Graves, Seattle Parks, Project Manager
- Tim Gallagher, Seattle Parks, Superintendent
- Fred Hoyt, UWBG, Associate Director

*Members of the Public Present:*

- John Barber, Advocate for SR 520 Alternative A
- Larry Sinnott, Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks, Advocate for SR 520 Alternative A

Staff:

- Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

### **Standing Committees**

Funding Requests to State Legislature:	John (AF), Jack (City), & Dave T (Washington State)
Fundraising Policy:	AF: Paige Miller & Barbara Wright City: Tim Gallagher (Chair) & Donald Harris UW: Tom Hinckley & Sandra Lier
Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG) Hinckley	Michael (lead), Donald, Fred, Julia, Paige, Sandra & Tom
Mission Statement:	Kathleen Pierce (AF), Donald (City), & Sandra (UW)
Naming Recognition Guideline:	Paige (AF), Donald (City), & Sandra (UW)
SR520 Mediation:	AF, David Graves (City), & Theresa Doherty (UW)

### **Attendance at Upcoming Meetings:**

- Tim will be absent from the Oct 14 meeting
- Nov 4 meeting is scheduled for annual retreat, 8:00 am-3:00 pm

ABGC Vice-chair Paige Miller called the meeting to order at 8:30 am and the agenda was approved, as well as the August 5 minutes.

### **Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG) Update**

Donald reported that MPIG has not met since the August 5 meeting. The next MPIG report will be presented at the ABGC's October 14 meeting.

### **Discussion on Arboretum Roadways**

ABGC members are very interested in traffic-calming measures for Arboretum roads, including Lake Washington Boulevard and the intersection of Arboretum Drive and Foster Island Drive that leads into the Broadmoor community. This interest was voiced to City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen at the August 5 ABGC meeting.

*Arboretum Drive/Foster Island Drive intersection:* Donald reported that Parks project manager Andy Sheffer is working with the paving contractor on cost estimates for repaving Foster Island Drive. The ABGC partners are interested in adding a stop sign at the intersection of Foster Island Drive and the north end of Arboretum Drive to increase pedestrian safety. The paving and sign installation could be treated as two separate projects; however, the paved area must be modified if a sign is installed and it is more efficient and less costly to do both at the same time. The Arboretum Master Plan calls for providing better pedestrian crossings and ABGC members believe this stop sign is an important element. Another suggestion was to add a roundabout at the intersection. Donald will take this topic back to MPIG for further discussion.

*Lake Washington Boulevard Traffic Calming Measures:* Following the August 5 traffic-calming discussion with Councilmember Rasmussen, Donald has worked with Luke Korpi of Seattle Department of Transportation on various traffic calming measures for Lake Washington Boulevard (LWB.) Luke's initial response was that SDOT can install pedestrian crosswalks, evaluate the issue of speed, and/or add electronic speed monitors. Paige asked about a stop sign at Boyer and Donald responded that he hasn't yet discussed that with Luke. Barbara and Paige strongly urged that the left turn arrows from Madison to Lake Washington Boulevard – which allows as many as 25 cars to turn onto LWB during one light cycle – be eliminated or at

least shortened, and that the left turn arrow at 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave be lengthened. This modification would change driver's behavior to use 23<sup>rd</sup>, an arterial, rather than LWB and could result in a big drop in traffic through the Arboretum. Barbara also asked that the large electronic "how fast are you going?" signs not be placed in the Arboretum.

Tim, as Parks Superintendent, agreed to write SDOT Director Grace Crunican and ask her staff to review traffic at 23<sup>rd</sup> and Madison, as well as the traffic on Foster Island Drive headed to Broadmoor. The letter will also state that the area of LWB at the Japanese Garden and Pacific Connections is the ABGC's main traffic-calming priority. Barbara noted that this will be a timely request, as the Arboretum and Japanese Garden's fall colors attract high volumes of traffic. Kjris asked, if in the interim, the cross walks could be re-painted. Donald responded that SDOT will first want to verify that the current crosswalks are in the proper locations.

### **Update: SR 520 Project**

Paige reported that there has been a great deal of discussion, but little action, over the past month. The Arboretum Foundation has established a policy committee which is working on the "principles" of the project, and it will report to the Foundation the week of September 14. The policy committee is not focused on any particular one of the three alternatives.

Jack commented that he received a flurry of e-mails from the coalition committee supporting Alternative K. Paige added that this committee is looking at a potential "hybrid" option, particularly the keyhole element. The ABGC has voiced support of Alternative K, contingent on resolving the keyhole issue. The coalition committee will meet soon with Governor Gregoire.

Theresa is a member of the Legislature's work group and reported that it is next scheduled to meet on September 15, 9 am-noon, in the Fidalgo Room at Seattle Center. She reviewed the meeting agenda. David Graves reported that Parks staff will meet with WSDOT staff on September 10 to discuss regulatory and technical issues. They will also discuss mitigation issues including wetlands, Chinook salmon, and properties.

Tim stated that he recently requested David Graves to prepare a paper describing the mitigation and compensation for SR520 impacts to Seattle's parks. David will forward the paper for distribution to the ABGC. He also asked David to include the 25 cent tolling idea suggested by Paige that would benefit the Arboretum. Paige commented that it will be helpful to see the City's mitigation and compensation paper, as well as the UW's. Sandra responded that the UW has not yet completed this. Theresa added that the UW must consider the Arboretum Master Plan, Center for Urban Horticulture, and long-term maintenance and education programs, among other items.

Jack noted that the SR520 project has a budget of \$4.65 billion, which includes up to \$1 billion for mitigation and compensation costs. A brief discussion followed. David stated that the west side SR520 construction won't begin for a number of years and there is a real potential for the west side to determine the mitigation and compensation. Jack and Paige believe the east side groups are united in their support of an option and want the project to begin sooner on their side, rather than later.

Kjris stated that the idea for 25-cent tolling to exit/enter SR520 from the Arboretum is brilliant. Jack, Paige, and Kjris agreed to write a motion that encompasses the idea to be voted on at the

October meeting. The motion will then be forwarded to WSDOT, Governor Gregoire, members of the State Legislation, and its tolling commissioner. Tim commented that other Seattle parks will be affected by the project and he would like more information on how the collected tolls would be used.

Larry Sinnott, a member of the audience, stated that the idea of a 25 cent toll is abhorrent and the Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks (FSOP) oppose this idea. Option A, which he and FSOP support, would reduce Arboretum traffic. He doesn't believe the City and State leaders should accommodate this tolling and should aim to keep as few cars as possible from using Lake Washington Boulevard.

John Barber, another member of the audience, stated that the ABGC is not holding a transparent process. Its web site shows a position paper on the alternatives dated three years ago and the recent meeting agendas and minutes are not posted to the web site. ABGC members will review the web page and post newer information. Staff will check why the agendas and minutes [which were sent to the web master for posting] have not yet been posted. Paige and Jack reminded John that the ABGC is still in discussions on the 25 cent tolling proposals.

Barbara noted that the 25 cent toll could be an equity issue, as more affluent drivers can afford the 25 cent toll and it could put an undue burden on lower-income drivers. It was pointed out that no one has to drive through the Arboretum, as there are a number of alternative routes to avoid paying the toll. Paige added that those who have an economic issue with tolling of SR520 may decide to drive across I-90 instead. Jack commented that ABGC members must wear the ABGC hat at these meetings and consider what is for the best of the Arboretum – rather, than what is best for individuals.

Larry Sinnott then requested that FSOP present new information on the alternatives at the ABGC's October 14 meeting. Jack asked why the ABGC would only hear information from FSOP and not all the other community groups engaged in the SR520 project. Paige agreed and stated that the ABGC should look at the overall bigger picture and have supporters of all three alternatives present information. Speakers could include: mitigation and compensation-David Graves; Alternative A-Larry Sinnott; Alternative K-Fran Calhoun and Paige Miller'; and the UW's perspective-Theresa Doherty.

### **Councilmember Rasmussen's Walking Tour of Arboretum**

ABGC members suggested that Councilmembers Rasmussen and Conlin, as well as all Council candidates, be invited on an October walking tour of the Arboretum. The purpose of this tour is to tour the site of the Madison storm drainage project near the Japanese Garden, as well as impacts to the Arboretum and Japanese Garden from traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard. Tim suggested the tour take place at 4:30 pm, during rush hour traffic, to demonstrate the full effect. Paige added that the group could see, firsthand, the difficulty pedestrians have trying to cross Lake Washington Boulevard to travel from the Pacific Connections gardens to the Japanese Garden. Dave Towne will be asked to issue the invitation. The tour should coincide with the maple leaf viewing, when the Arboretum enjoys high levels of visitors.

When the 2010 Parks and Seattle Center Committee (PASC) members are announced, the ABGC will discuss inviting the PASC committee chair to attend periodic ABGC meetings.

**November 4 Retreat**

The retreat is now scheduled to begin at 8:00 am and conclude at 3:00 pm, at the Center for Urban Horticulture. Paige, Donald, Sandra, and Jack volunteered to plan the retreat; Paige will schedule the first meeting.

The suggested format is for the committee to formulate 2-3 issues that affect the Arboretum's future. Those attending the morning session would then split into 2-3 groups to work on solutions for each issue. When the groups come back together, additional staff and interested parties would join the retreat and all would discuss the recommendation solutions. These suggested solutions, if agreed to at the retreat, would be taken back to the partners for consideration. Sandra suggested that one topic could be the Joint Fundraising Committee. It was established as a one-year pilot during 2009, and retreat attendees could discuss its effectiveness and next steps.

**New/Old Business**

*Graham Visitors Center Management Agreement:* Sandra reported that a great deal of work has gone into the agreement; however, the City and UW signed the agreement and didn't include the Arboretum Foundation. The parties are now working to address the Foundation's concerns so that the management agreement is agreeable to all three parties.

*Suggestion for Banner in Arboretum:* Sandra reported that the UW President's spouse has suggested a permanent banner be hung from Wilcox Bridge in the Arboretum. Sandra showed a draft of what the banner would look like to read "Enjoy and Support Your Arboretum." ABGC members were pleased that the President and his wife are supportive of the Arboretum; however, there is concern with displaying a permanent banner in the Arboretum. Sandra will relay these concerns.

Paige attended a UW Husky football game this past week and an idea occurred to her that could increase interest in the Arboretum and its events. She suggested that, during the highly-attended football games at Husky Stadium, information on the Arboretum be included on the stadium's reader boards.

*Fundraising Report:* Paige reported that a September 30 kickoff fundraising party will be held for the Gateway to Chile, with a guest list of 200 people. The Foundation has already raised \$240,000 of the \$400,000 campaign and is very hopeful to complete fundraising by the end of 2009. Construction is expected to begin in summer 2010.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
**Theresa Doherty, ABGC Secretary**