

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 12, 2012

Voting Members

Present:

Arboretum Foundation

- Craig Trueblood, Arboretum Foundation Board President

City of Seattle

- Kenan Block, Mayoral Appointee
- 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

Excused:

- Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington Associate Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture (on leave)
- Dave Towne, Washington State Governor's Appointee

Other Staff Present:

- Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks, Projects & Planning Director
- Sarah Reichard, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG), Director
- Leah Tivoli, Seattle Parks, Acting Manager, Natural Resources

ABGC Staff: Sandy Brooks, Seattle Parks, ABGC Coordinator

Standing Committees

Building Committee:

AF: Paige Miller; City: Donald Harris; 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) & Rick Nishi

UW: Fred Hoyt & Sarah Reichard

SR520 Technical Committee:

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

The meeting was held at Graham Visitors Center at the Arboretum and called to order at 8:30 am. **Jack Collins moved approval of the July 11 minutes. Donald Harris seconded. The vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.**

Introductions

Kenan Block joined the ABGC at this meeting, as one of three positions appointed by Seattle's mayor. He fills a position vacated by Kjris Lund, with his term running through December 31, 2017. The chair asked all present to introduce themselves.

Updates

City Council Briefing: On August 16, Sarah, Michael, and Paige presented the annual briefing on the Arboretum to City Council's Parks and Neighborhoods Committee. Councilmembers Sally Bagshaw and Jean Godden were present and both were very engaged and interested in the Arboretum. ABGC members discussed their serious concerns with (1) WSDOT's delay in finalizing the Term Sheet and (2) WSDOT's lack of commitment on a mitigation dollar amount for the SR 520 project's impacts on the Arboretum. Councilmember Bagshaw was already scheduled to meet with WSDOT on the SR 520 project and will address these concerns. Kenan, whose background includes investigative reporting for national news outlets, offered to help write a news story to ensure the public understands the project's impacts on the Arboretum.

Jack suggested the ABGC's July 16 letter to Paula Hammond, State Secretary of Transportation, now be forwarded to State Senator Ed Murray and Speaker of the House Frank Chopp to ensure they are aware of the delay, as well as the ABGC's concerns. ABGC members received a response from Ms. Hammond on September 11. While the letter didn't address ABGC concerns with the delay, Ms. Hammond did commit to settling the final mitigation dollar figure by the end of 2012.

The vandalism at Pacific Connections Garden in spring of 2011 and again in 2012 was also discussed with the Councilmembers. The most recent vandalism resulted in \$43,000 damage. ABGC members were unhappy with Seattle Police Department's (SPD) slow response and sent a letter of concern dated July 16, 2012. While an officer met with David Zuckerman of UW staff in September, no written response has been received (as of October 3, 2012.) Councilmember Bagshaw will contact SPD and follow up on this.

Budget & Other Updates

City Budget: Donald reported Mayor McGinn has released positive news on the City's budget, with revenues increasing. The Arboretum isn't expected to take any further cuts in the City's 2013 budget.

Arboretum Foundation: Craig reported the Arboretum Foundation is interviewing for a new Development Director, following the resignation of Andrea Meyer, who recently accepted a new position.

The Foundation will celebrate long-time Arboretum supporter Nancy Davidson's 100th birthday. Ms. Davidson was editor of Sunset Magazine in the 1940's. Fred reported the Center for Urban Horticulture is donating a tree in Ms. Davidson's honor to be planted at Graham Visitor's Center.

UW: Sarah reported good news - no budget cuts to the UW Botanic Gardens in 2013. The new Director of the UW School of Environmental and Forestry Sciences, College of the Environment and Forestry, Tom DeLuca, recently joined the staff and will attend the October 10 ABGC meeting.

Volunteers

Sarah and Fred reported the National Association for Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP) spent the previous Saturday volunteering at the Center for Urban Horticulture, contributing approximately 1,000 hours and \$50,000 in materials. The volunteers weeded, cleaned the stairs and stamped concrete, and completed a number of other projects at CUH. The buildings and grounds look great!

MPIG

Lake Washington Boulevard Lighting Project: ABGC members gave a brief background on this project for Kenan's benefit. After residents complained to the mayor that Lake Washington Boulevard (LWB) was dark and felt unsafe (a number of lights no longer worked), City Light began a re-lighting project, with input from the Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks and Seattle Parks. In conjunction, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) received some funding from WSDOT and with extensive input from ABGC and Seattle Parks, began a traffic calming project on LWB to include speed bumps, crosswalks, and quiet pavement. The traffic calming project is complete and City Light expects to complete the lighting in November.

New Zealand Garden: Planting is expected in June 2013.

Greenhouse at Graham Visitors Center: Sarah described an idea to convert the footprint of the greenhouse just to the south of the Visitors Center for use as an educational center/rental space/small café. Part of the design focuses around the gates sculpted by George Tsutakawa. Discussions will continue with MPIG and the outcome brought back to the ABGC.

Washington Park Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Project: Kenan asked about this project; part of the Henderson Basin CSO project. Parks staff will forward information from Seattle Public Utilities.
<http://www.seattle.gov/util/EnvironmentConservation/Projects/DrainageSystem/SewageOverflowPrevention/SOReductionProjects/NorthHendersonBasin/index.htm>

Signage & Wayfinding: Following a comment from Jack that one of the maps of the Arboretum that should point to the Graham Visitors Center doesn't, Fred stated the maps are out of date and have been pulled. Nine new maps are now being readied. Jack also asked about the lack of wayfinding information at the end of the new gravel path at Azalea Way. Fred responded that MPIG has discussed this and is working on a solution.

Sarah added that during a recent visitor survey, many respondents asked for better signage and wayfinding for the Arboretum. However, a few want to "wander" and do not want more directional signage. She has applied for a \$20,000 interpretation grant for the Arboretum. In addition, Patrick Mulligan, CUH staff, recently received an interpretive scholarship grant.

Upgrades/Other Grants:

- Fred announced the electrical system at the maintenance shop, just north of the Graham Visitors Center, is being upgraded with Park Levy funds.
- Fred applied for a grant to the Japanese Consulate for cherry trees for the Arboretum.
- He stated the big news for grants is that CUH staff applied last fall for an In Museum Library Services grant – and won! The funds will be used to electronically convert the CUH paper map grid to a digital system. All the plants will be shown on the grids, along with their succession data. UW staff are working with the City's survey crews on this project. The information will be available for public access when the project is complete.

Media Outreach for Arboretum and CUH: Donald recalled the ABGC previously had regular updates on media outreach by the three partners and suggested it be added back to the agenda. Members agreed. Jack added that journalist Bob Royer is currently preparing a story on the Arboretum. Fred shared a recent wildlife interest story of an injured heron at the Arboretum. The bird is recovering and has been spotted flying around the Arboretum.

SR 520 Discussion

On July 17, ABGC sent a letter to State Secretary of Transportation Paula Hammond about the Term Sheet and mitigation funding, and asked for information by August 15. Theresa later called Kerry Pihlstrom, WSDOT's SR520 Project Engineering Manager West Side, who agreed to a conference call. This has not yet

happened. Jack asked if the letter has been forwarded to House Speaker Chopp and State Senator Ed Murray. The ABGC coordinator will do so.

Jack asked how the ABGC will proceed if WSDOT proposes a "lowball" figure for the mitigation funding. Craig responded it will require strategic negotiation; often the law dictates one thing, while budget realities cause a different response. Theresa stated WSDOT has saved money with the decision to not build a second bascule bridge at Montlake, which could have a positive effect on the pot of mitigation funding.

Responding to a question from Sarah whether the City will pay WSDOT for the 28-acre peninsula area, where the SR 520 ramps will be removed, Donald stated the City must regain ownership of the land and is working with WSDOT.

Jack reflected that WSDOT told ABGC the citizen lawsuit was holding up the determination of the mitigation funds and that is settled. It also said the uncertainty of the federal TIFIA loan for the SR520 project was contributing to the delay and that will soon be settled. Theresa agreed; however, the ABGC's letter asking for a concrete dollar amount of Arboretum mitigation funds remains unresolved.

The ABGC coordinator will also forward the September 7 WSDOT Friday e-mail to ABGC members. The e-mail has information on WSDOT's design presentation to Seattle City Council, scheduled for late September.

Old/New Business

Kayak Tours of Arboretum: Both Craig and Sandy recently participated in the kayak tours sponsored by the Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH), with kayaks supplied by Agua Verde. Patrick Mulligan, Arboretum Education Supervisor, led one of the tours and received high marks for explaining the impacts of the SR 520 project on the Arboretum. Sarah stated all proceeds go to the CUH youth scholarship fund.

Provost Tour: On Monday, July 16, Sarah and Fred led UW Provost Ana Mari Cauce and Dean Lisa Graumlich from the College of the Environment on a tour of the Arboretum. The new Provost said she has visited the Arboretum and CUH on several occasions and acknowledged both are important living classrooms for the University.

Japanese Garden:

- *Kobe-Seattle Japanese Garden Outreach:* Leah Tivoli has been working with the City's Office of Intergovernmental Relations, which promotes the interests of the City of Seattle with local, regional, State, federal, and international governments. Leah has discussed the possibility of a Kobe-Seattle "sister" Japanese garden. She will report any progress at the October 10 ABGC meeting.
- *Revenue at Japanese Garden:* Leah stated both the Arboretum and Japanese Garden have sustained approximately 40% in budget cuts over the past few years and she is working with staff on ideas to raise revenues. However, there are strong event restrictions that include no folding chairs, no fences, and no alcohol allowed." Kenan asked if the ABGC has the authority to change these restrictions. Donald answered it doesn't, but it advises the UW and City on anything that affects the two sites. This could be a collaborative revenue effort.

ABGC Retreat: The annual retreat is scheduled for November 14, 8 am-2 pm. Theresa, Donald, and Paige volunteered/were appointed to the planning committee. Location is the Isaacson Classroom at the Center for Urban Horticulture.

ABGC Vacancy: One of the University's three representatives, Iain Robertson, is on leave until June 2013. Sarah is working to fill this position.

Miller Library 2013 Annual Lecture: For the past 18 years, a free memorial lecture has been held to remember the legacy of Mrs. Elizabeth Carey Miller, dedicated to the education of gardeners and the namesake of the

Miller Library at CUH. This year's event is on September 13 and features President Emeritus, Dr. Peter H. Raven of the Missouri Botanical Garden as the guest speaker. Kenan asked for the invitation to be forwarded to him and the ABGC coordinator will do so.

Next ABGC Meeting: Scheduled for Wednesday, October 10, 8:30 am at Graham Visitors Center.

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

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Theresa Doherty, ABGC Chair