

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) Minutes Graham Visitors Center – May 13, 2015

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.

Voting Members

Arboretum Foundation

- *Excused*, Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director
- Jim Reid, Arboretum Foundation Board President

City of Seattle

- Kenan Block, Mayoral Appointee
- *Excused*, Jack Collins, Mayoral Appointee
- Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks, Projects & Planning Division, Director

University of Washington

- *Excused*, Theresa Doherty, University of Washington, Asst. Vice President for Regional Affairs
- Sarah Reichard, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG), Director
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington, Associate Professor, Dept. of Landscape Architecture

Washington State

- David Towne

Other Staff Present:

- Fred Hoyt, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG), Associate Director
- Rachel Acosta, Seattle Parks and Recreation, ABGC Coordinator
- Daniel Sorensen, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG)

Standing Committees

Building Committee:

AF: Paige Miller; City: TBD; UW: TBD

Partners Committee:

AF: Jim Reid & Paige Miller

City: Christopher Williams & Michael Shiosaki

UW: Tom DeLuca & Sarah Reichard

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG): AF: Paige Miller & Jason Morse

City: Michael Shiosaki (lead) & Andy Sheffer

UW: Fred Hoyt & Sarah Reichard

SR520 Technical Committee:

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

Opening Items

The meeting is called to order at 8:40am. Jim asks for approval of the March 11 and April 8 meeting minutes – Kenan moves and Sarah seconds and the minutes are approved.

MPIG

Mixed use trail – Parks is close to getting the Army Corps of Engineers permit and expect to get the project out to bid in early June.

The plaque recognizing John Wott in the New Zealand Garden has been approved.

Education building is on hold for now.

Water quality studies: The first study shows the Arboretum is getting a bunch of silt from Broadmoor but no fertilizer and nutrients; Parks staff to deal with them directly. There are parts of their property that are eroding and flowing into the Arboretum.

Future Projects Committee: MPIG went through prioritization and identified 7 projects. The mixed-use trail, education building, parking lot improvements, azalea pond/camellia garden/summer garden/rhododendron glen as a part of the major project challenge grant; education shelter; lighting improvements at the Graham Visitors Center parking lot, and the bridge at woodland garden. Azalea way pond – will require some tree removal and is a big project.

Next step: The committee will figure out the scope of each priority.

Vibernums renovations will happen concurrently with the construction of the mixed use trail.

Summer garden – Found a location for the summer garden immediately south of crabapple meadow. Trying to decide if this is a priority for this year or next? Daylight stream as part of it? Iain has volunteered to design it.

Ridgetop trail – MPIG went and looked at the Suspension Bridge at the Bellevue Botanical Gardens and have decided it is too impactful to the environment.

Rhododendron glen – make this part of the major project challenge grant that can be applied for through the Seattle Park District. Michael clarifies that they will need to have maintenance and operations dollars to fund these projects; so focus on maintaining gardens currently in the Arboretum as opposed to creating more.

It is easier to fundraise for one major project at a time. Currently they are raising \$250,000 for pre-design for the education building.

Renovations of the Arboretum Waterfront Trail; the trail is currently under water. Some of the floating boardwalk sections are uneven. Use major maintenance money to stabilize the trail. Michael adds they are still not sure of the status of the ALEA grant. Parks will match \$450,000 from WSDOT mitigation money with the ALEA grant.

Iain wonders if there's a way to nudge more collections – native plants in the wetlands. There is a collection on Foster Island and there are interpretive materials at the 3 kayak landings.

2015 Work Plan

Parking study – Due date: September 2015; this is one of the Arboretum’s most pressing problems. Iain feels adding parking beyond the greenhouses is a bad design. He suggests rearranging the space around the Graham Visitors Center to create better usage. Kenan feels like this is a good time because the economy is getting better.

Identify office space – adding a new fiddleheads pre-school program means University of Washington Botanic Garden staff are at maximum capacity. Space committee to review space and discuss efficiencies.

Education program would like to increase more shelters to expand programs.

Composting toilets – figure out if it’s viable to do. The bathrooms are an issue; Sarah will email a professor at the College of Built Environments for composting toilet design ideas and Rob Pena.

Water going down to Fiddleheads program – Fred to follow up with David Graves regarding status of water pipes.

Iain asks if they thought about doing the Pomegranate Center to build the education shelter. Fred says they didn’t do it that way the last time but they could look into it.

Public Outreach Committee – to meet quarterly. They will invite Chris Pendel to sit on this committee to utilize his skills; Paige to introduce him to the committee.

Communications plan – Kenan says the plan would consist of the major events for the year and the partners would work together to create a media plan for each event. Kenan mentions the following events as newsworthy: Groundbreaking of loop trail; new light rail station and its accessibility; and GIS application for the Arboretum.

Wayfinding – The pedestrian entry to the Arboretum from the North is not clear. There are no greetings for pedestrians when entering the Arboretum on most sides. Signage to pedestrians should be in keeping with the Arboretum aesthetic. The ABGC discusses where they could put signage to allow for more clear entry into the Arboretum. There is the potential of changing Pinetum trail to accommodate signage.

Talk with SDOT regarding signage on the right of ways surrounding the park. MPIG will discuss this. Fred and UWBG will look at wayfinding for pedestrian access. Deadline: January 2016.

GIS application – Students aren’t coming through and UWBG will probably have to pay for it. They are trying to figure out where the money will come from. Kenan asks if there are other parks/gardens that have an application. Sarah responds there are but she prefers the one that the UW students designed.

Budget, Personnel and Other Items

Parks

Jesús was confirmed by the City Council on Tuesday. His first day is June 1. Michael and Rachel will work to get Jesús on a tour.

Arboretum Foundation –

Jim gives the Arboretum Foundation update since Paige is out of town.

Rhonda Bush's last day is Friday. Pamela Givens has accepted the position and she's been working as a steward here. Kristin Price left to go to Pacific Northwest Ballet, the Arboretum Foundation is hiring an events coordinator.

Give Big - 94 new donors from Give Big, 44 or 45 came from 98112. Sarah would like the signs to be further from Azalea way. The Arboretum Foundation earned \$7800 more than last year. The campaign was a big success. Kenan feels the signs had a tangible benefit. 240 donors total equaling \$78,000.

Paige will be leaving her position of Executive Director in 2016. They are forming a committee to hire a new Executive Director. Jim would like to involve the ABGC in the hiring process.

University of Washington –

Fred will talk with Theresa regarding whether Sally will be joining the ABGC.

UWBG promoted Chris Watson to be Assistant Manager for Horticulture of the Arboretum; David Zuckerman will be tending to the bigger picture projects happening.

The UWBG is currently interviewing for a new Facilities Manager.

Partnership Luncheon – Fred and Sarah attended a Luncheon hosted by the Board of Park Commissioners and Seattle Parks and Recreation. There were many SPR partners present. The outcome was a desire to coalesce to lift parks up and help each other. There is a fear about districting and using SPR partners to raise visibility of issues in other districts.

Old/New Business

None

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourns at 10:05am.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____

Jim Reid, ABGC Chair