

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) Minutes  
Graham Visitors Center – December 14, 2016

*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**

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

**City of Seattle**

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

**University of Washington**

- Sally Clark, University of Washington, Director of Regional and Community Relations
- Fred Hoyt, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG), Acting Director
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington, Associate Professor, Dept. of Landscape Architecture

**Washington State**

- *Excused*, David Towne

**Other Staff Present:**

- Rachel Acosta, Seattle Parks and Recreation, ABGC Coordinator
- *Excused*, Eve Rickenbaker, University of Washington Botanic Gardens (UWBG)

**Standing Committees**

Partners Committee:

AF: Sherrey Luetjen & Paige Miller  
City: Jesus Aguirre & Michael Shiosaki  
UW: Fred Hoyt

Master Plan Implementation Group (MPIG):

AF: Paige Miller & Jason Morse  
City: Michael Shiosaki (lead) & Andy Sheffer  
UW: Fred Hoyt

SR520 Technical Committee:

City: David Graves; UW: Fred Hoyt

Jim calls the meeting to order at 8:35am. Jim asks for approval of the December 14 Agenda, Michael moves and Jack seconds and the Agenda is approved by unanimous vote. Then, he asks for a motion to approve the October 12 meeting minutes, Kenan moves and Jack seconds, the October minutes are approved.

Jack compliments Fred and all those involved in getting the Education Shelter completed. Fred mentions Bob Hoshide designed it and he did a great job.

## MPIG

Centennial Garden - Jason Morse is the lead designer. It is a summer oriented garden and it will be a fabulous destination at the South end of Azalea Way. In the design, Jason put in a stone curved bench structure. Plants, included in the design, are summer flowering such as: stewartia, hydrangeas, hardy fuchsias, clematis. The garden will go up to the pond but not into it. The Committee from the Garden Club met with Jason so they are fully briefed. Paige says they hope to approve the design at the next MPIG meeting. The garden will open in September 2017. The quick timeline is possible because they made this a change order to the existing construction contract.

Bicycles - Bicycles are coming through on Arboretum Drive very quickly and going onto Azalea Way. Kenan feels a sign that educates the cyclists about the safety issues could alleviate some of the problem. Paige says their normal route was disrupted during construction which brings them through the Arboretum. There is hope that the Arboretum Loop Trail will mitigate some of these issues. Michael suggests communication with Cascade Bicycle Club and temporary signage. Jack adds it is a safety issue and it disturbs the passive recreation. The ABGC agree that adding speed bumps might be a good option for slowing bikes down on Arboretum Drive. The Arboretum Loop Trail is designed to slow people down. User conflict on the new trail is inevitable.

### **Discussion: Retreat Review**

Jim starts off the conversation by explaining that most of the retreat notes are formatted as a list of action items. Kenan suggests the ABGC hire a staff person to lead the effort going forward. Paige says there are core responsibilities of these groups and everyone is understaffed. The ABGC needs to figure out a way to bring more people power to the place. The Arboretum Foundation will work to recruit a larger, more diverse board. Fred agrees with Paige, with limited resources, the ABGC will bring in diversity through existing structure. The ABGC will use experiences and resources to do this work and bring it forward.

Jim asks the ABGC to decide on a few action items for this year. Paige suggests the Loop Trail opening would be a great opportunity to plan an event to attract a diverse crowd.

Native American tribes - Fred is working with Ross Brain, Tribal Liaison for the UW, to make a connection with the regional tribes. The UWBG is looking at indigenous food plants in the Arboretum and at the UW farm in an attempt at tying in cultural aspects. Fred will discuss opportunities to bring American Indian students and local tribes to the UWBG and the Arboretum. The UWBG is putting together a Memorandum of Understanding for their work.

East African/African American communities - Garfield High School opportunities? Outdoor Afro - an outdoor education organization that targets the African American community; was suggested as a potential partner. Although coordinating meetings is possible, Kenan voices a concern that there isn't a structure to get things moving forward after the initial visit is done.

The ABGC Agree to work on the following for 2017:

1. Loop trail opening - create outreach strategy and event that will attract underrepresented communities

2. Tribal event - Indigenous People's Day?
3. Engagement with African American Community
4. RSJI Toolkit – review and use to further equity work

Jack suggests putting together a matrix for the work of the committee; keep a list of the work plan and implementation of equity work.

Jack has volunteered to volunteer to help the ABGC, as needed.

Japanese community and Japanese garden - Paige mentions there has been record attendance at the Japanese Garden events and the events connected with a diverse group of people. They will launch the new website tomorrow. The Arboretum Foundation is engaging a new population of people. The Foundation plans to do more cultural activities at the Japanese Garden.

There is money for outreach related to capital projects.

Alicia and Wendy are identifying a community group to partner with and will figure out what they could offer the community. Christopher Williams grew up in this neighborhood and he might have ideas about with whom the ABGC should partner.

Sally suggests the Equity Committee reach out to the Department of Neighborhoods about potential partnerships.

SPR Alliance - Talk with them about this work and opportunities for partnership.

## Budget, Personnel and Other Items

### **Seattle Parks and Recreation**

The City's budget passed.

Andy Sheffer is the new Director of Facilities division which oversees skilled trades; SPR will hire a new Construction Manager. The ABGC voice concern about Andy's role on the ABGC. Michael would like to keep him on MPIG. Everyone agrees that Andy should stay as involved as possible with the Arboretum and they will lobby him to remain engaged. Jack feels this is a no-brainer since Andy really cares about the Arboretum.

New Communications manager, Rachel Shulkin. Rachel will ask her to come to a meeting.

### **Arboretum Foundation**

The Foundation sent out Save-the-Dates this week for the Opening Night Celebration at the Northwest Flower and Garden Show. The Arboretum display garden will celebrate the Japanese Garden - with a Japanese farmhouse garden during spring time. Paige is hoping to have 400 people attend. It will be a terrific party.

The Arboretum Foundation is helping plan an after-party for the Saturday night before the end of the show - the Wands will be performing. There will be music and dancing among the gardens.

Budget: The Foundation is focused on raising annual funds and also \$375,000 for pre-design work and studies for new education building. They have raised almost \$100,000 so far. Dr. Wott and Paige will make their first call this afternoon to a potential donor. Their goal is to raise the money by March.

They had their Board retreat and a great meeting with the Japanese Garden Committee.

Sally asks about how and when the show chooses a theme. Paige replies, they let people know the theme for the show in July/August. For the garden to win, it has to connect to the show's theme. This year's theme is A Taste of Spring – food-oriented and connected to the Arboretum.

Sally suggests this would be a good opportunity to work with communities of color to inform a display - create an advisory committee with partners to make a culturally relevant display.

Paige volunteers to speak with the show owners about picking a theme that could be relevant to communities of color. Jim wonders if they could then donate tickets to reach more diverse audiences.

The Mediterranean garden is being renovated - this could be a project to engage people.

## **University of Washington**

School of Environmental Forest Sciences appointed Elizabeth Van Volkenburgh to be the interim Director. Fred, Tom and Wendy met with Liz to update her on UWBG work. She is chairing the UWBG Director search. They talked needs and priorities for the UWBG. Liz values the botanic gardens and will be a good ally within the school. Search committees are moving slower than the UWBG would like. They are hoping to get an advertisement out in the new year and interviews in the spring.

Budget - UWBG staff applied for a Stanley Smith Grant and lost; it is very disappointing.

Jack wonders about asking the legislature to fund projects for the Arboretum. The ABGC do not feel there are any teed up right now that would be an appropriate ask, but agree they should keep this in mind for future years. It is worth thinking about this in February or March for 2018. Paige mentions the Japanese Garden is a possible project.

## Old/New Business

Kenan asks if there's anything newsworthy happening. The section of loop trail from Madison to Arboretum Drive will be done soon. Michael will check with Garrett about a completion date. It would be good to be able to let the neighbors know access to the Arboretum from adjacent neighborhoods is opening.

Election of Officers: Jim nominates Sally to serve as Chair, Michael as Vice Chair and Paige as the new Secretary; Jack moves for their election and Kenan seconds. The vote was approved unanimously.

### Jack's Tribute

This is Jack Collins' last meeting with the ABGC. Jack served on the ABGC for 12 years. He played an important role in the creation of the Master Plan and was instrumental in the early SR520 negotiations with WSDOT. The ABGC plays a game that goes through Jack's history with the Arboretum & Botanical Garden Committee. Jim reads his tribute to Jack. Rachel reads tributes from Sally, Kenan and Andy.

Jack says he has really enjoyed the ABGC. The fun of it has been working with ABGC members present and past. There have been interesting perspectives. Everyone is in it for the long-term. The work the ABGC is doing now will be reflected 100 years from now. The ABGC has been around 80 years. It is wonderful to be a part of that long story.

Paige states the Master Plan was important work and Jack figured out how to make it happen. Thanks, Jack.

SR520 mitigation was possible because of the Master Plan and the team behind it. Jack was surprised how much money they were able to get and that the ramps came out as part of the negotiations.

Jack might be a tour guide. The UWBG is trying to get the electric vehicle to be street legal so they can meet people at the cruise lines for Arboretum tours.

Jack will be sorely missed by all the members of the ABGC and its coordinator.

There being no new business, the meeting adjourns at 10:40am.

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Reid, ABGC Chair