

## **Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) Minutes Graham Visitors Center, Washington Park Arboretum – April 11, 2018**

The Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee is a Joint effort of the Arboretum Foundation, Seattle Parks and Recreation, 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**

- Jane Stonecipher, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director
- Jim Reid, Arboretum Foundation Board Vice President

#### **City of Seattle**

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

#### **University of Washington**

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

#### **Other Staff Present:**

- Rachel Acosta, Seattle Parks and Recreation, ABGC Coordinator
- Wendy Gible, University of Washington Botanic Gardens, Assistant Director
- Michael Bradshaw, University of Washington Botanic Gardens

#### **Standing Committees**

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

AF: Jane Stonecipher & Jason Morse

City: Michael Shiosaki (lead) & Kim Baldwin

UW: Fred Hoyt/Wendy Gible

##### **SR520 Technical Committee:**

City: David Graves; UW: Fred Hoyt

### **Call to Order**

Sally calls the meeting to order at 8:35am. The Board introduce themselves to the WSDOT representatives.

### **Update: SR520 and Montlake Project**

Dawn Yankauskas, Jackie Ptacek, and David Goldberg, WSDOT; Dawn Schellenberg, SDOT; David Graves, SPR

### **Overview and program updates**

Dawn reviews key milestones

SR520 program extends from I-5 to I-405 in Bellevue. Eastside transit opened in 2014. Pontoon construction project completed in 2015. Floating bridge opened in 2016. West Approach Bridge

North (WABN) opened in August 2017 –provided connection from high rise and the shared-use trail to the Montlake area.

### **Overview rest of the west**

Rest of the west is fully funded and construction to start in late 2018. Funding spread out all the way to 2027-29 biennium.

Montlake phase – includes the West Approach Bridge South, the Montlake Lid and the land bridge, which will provide shared-use trail connection to neighborhoods, contain a multi-modal hub and access to the SR520 trail. The east bound ramp in the Arboretum will be removed.

Request for Proposals is complete and 3 design build firms applied. The contractor selected by Fall 2018. WSDOT has conceptual plans but the design build contractor will finalize the details with input from partners.

Neighborhood traffic management plan – City and WSDOT working together to help mitigate traffic during Montlake phase of construction. Implementing traffic management plan over next 3 years.

Dawn from SDOT mentions some of the traffic calming measures they are taking in the Montlake neighborhood.

David explains that when the lid project and North Entry is done, it will be safest for people to access the Arboretum at Roanoke with a flashing crosswalk.

24th and Lake Washington Boulevard – The ABGC mention that the signal at Montlake backs up traffic all the way into the Arboretum. They express concern over the light that has been installed, but is not currently in use, on Lake Washington Boulevard at 24<sup>th</sup>. WSDOT is working closely with the city to figure out when to start using the signal. The ABGC says there needs to be more flow of the signals.

SDOT says they will be proactive and ready to have traffic solutions as things change.

New to the design of the Montlake portion of the project is the addition of a 2<sup>nd</sup> stormwater facility on the south side of SR520.

The portion of the waterfront trail that was to go under SR520 is no longer an element of the design. The only connection from one side of SR520 to the other will be the land bridge. There was not a way to do an at-grade connection while keeping it safe.

### **Foster Island Trail and Undercrossing**

This was identified in the WSDOT Arboretum Mitigation Agreement. The North portion was constructed during WABN.

Developing conceptual plans for South portion – UWBG and SPR involved to firm up design. WSDOT and UW has a Maintenance Agreement on the Foster Island undercrossing. The trail is under water many times a year and there needs to be more drainage.

The Arboretum Loop Trail is the major mitigation project that WSDOT has funded; this provides bike and pedestrian mobility. The Foster Island Undercrossing will be another big project.

Arboretum North Entry – transfer WSDOT peninsula to SPR after the construction is finished.

Mitigation area has changed a little bit. WSDOT will update the conceptual design for North Entry as boundaries change. The goal is to integrate WSDOT peninsula into the arboretum.

Bent 2 will be preserved to memorialize the protest the construction of the RH Thompson Expressway and ultimately winning.

WSDOT does not expect to make any more adjustments in terms of impacts to the land and water. Environmental restrictions are set.

North Entry concept as developed in 2012. Built after corridor construction. Met with SPR and UWBG to talk next steps. WSDOT will fund part of improvements and work with partners to find alternative funding sources.

WSDOT will work with partners to flush out the design of the North Entry.

Next steps:

>>>Return in late 2018

### **SR520 and Montlake Lid Discussion**

The Commissioners are concerned about the traffic issues on Montlake Boulevard and Lake Washington Boulevard.

There seems to be a stand-off between the City and WSDOT regarding the 2nd bridge at Montlake. The 2nd bridge conversation may start at the end of 2018.

Elimination of waterfront loop was a big change; connections will be important.

At the next meeting, ABGC will take a walk out to Foster Island.

Letter to WSDOT to thank them for partnership, highlight traffic mitigation concerns and express desire for ongoing participation with the design build contractor for the refinement decisions for final product. ABGC will cc Dawn at SDOT.

The ABGC should memorialize everything with WSDOT as soon as possible.

Jane mentions concern about the Birch Lot becoming a park and ride. The ABGC suggests limiting the parking to 4 hours to be consistent with other Arboretum parking lots.

## **Budget, Personnel and Other Items**

### University of Washington

Completed hire of Joanna Long for Cascadia gardener; she is a current Ph.D. student at the UW Botanic Gardens.

Sarah Shank will receive the Wott Fellowship Award. John set up an endowment for deserving students.

Hired new Farm Manager – Perry Acworth, she has experience operating other farms around the area.

Earth Day event – Ben Packard from Earthlab will speak for the UW. He is excited to speak with students.

Two Fiddleheads teachers are going on maternity leave – doing temporary hiring for those.

Education building – selected Mithun for the design work. They came in at the requested amount \$200,000, for predesign. They hope to have a preliminary design by the end of October. Mithun will hold 5 or 6 focus groups to gather community input.

UWBG Director search – There were 13 candidates but the panel narrowed the field down to 7 who were really qualified. There will be video interviews with 6 candidates and then in-person interviews in the 2nd or 3rd week of May. It was advertised as an either/or position – EITHER as a full faculty OR associate faculty or professor in practice. The panel will need to figure out how they will fit in to the UW. They have some candidates with real fundraising experience.

### Seattle Parks and Recreation

Michael to check with status on the replacement of the Natural Resources Unit Manager.

More budget news? Michael to check on Maintenance position for Loop Trail? Check on hiring process.

### Arboretum Foundation

Jane says they are doing follow up after the opening of the Loop Trail event on Sunday – the photos are flowing in. They will be telling social media stories and blog about the event.

Upcoming events: Leadership Tomorrow will be coming on April 12 to see wetlands area.

Early bloomers sale is Saturday, April 14

Earth day – There was a change in personnel at EarthCorps, so sign-ups are lower than other years. Any ideas about direct outreach? Jane to send link to ABGC for distribution.

Summer party will be July 12 at the Japanese Garden.

Arboretum Foundation staff are working with Lisa Chen, Fred and Amanda to determine best use of funds that have been donated to spruce up the Arboretum along Lake Washington Boulevard.

Horticultural position for the wetlands was not funded, Jane asks the partners if someone else can do it.

### **Arboretum Loop Trail grand opening**

It was great. They received feedback that people really enjoyed the festivities at the park and there was some good publicity.

### **Master Plan Implementation Group**

#### **Olmsted Landscape funds**

There is a Park District funded initiative to renovate Olmsted landscapes throughout the city. Berger created a report to help prioritize what those projects should be – one suggestion was to make improvements to Crabapple Meadow. The ABGC feel the trails around Rhododendron Glen would be a better fit for that work since it was sited in the Olmsted plan.

Main criteria: Restoring landscapes and not attached to any other projects. Emphasis on restoration.

There is potential at Crabapple Meadow with drainage and screening Broadmoor, and improving the infrastructure.

Berger partnership is doing some cost analysis and flushing out details.

Look at other funding sources that can be leveraged; think strategically about how to leverage funds.

There will be future funds from WSDOT for the north entry projects.

The funds should be referenced in the letter the ABGC is drafting.

Master plan project prioritization. Bring a list back to ABGC in the next couple of months.

## Old/New Business

### **Policy for fun runs on Loop Trail**

What requirements? How does the ABGC feel about it? What restrictions would the ABGC impose?

The size would have to be a consideration. The UWBG staff shudder at the thought. It would have to cover staff costs to clean it up and repair any damage. The Arboretum is supposed to have passive recreation; it feels inappropriate. Arboretum is different than any other trail; the purpose of the Loop Trail is different. The ABGC members think about it in terms of being a specialty garden. The idea of organized runs through the Arboretum raises concerns.

2 categories of events – 1) organizer that comes directly to the Arboretum Foundation. 2) Outside groups that go through permitting process through SPR.

SPR event scheduling needs to be told about Arboretum policy. Lake Washington Boulevard or Arboretum Drive would be acceptable. The Board seems concerned about the trail being used due to people spreading out into collections to move around slower runners.

Arboretums and botanic gardens serve a special purpose. There are parks that serve this need for the city.

Jane mentions that special events reignite the support base. Create ways to activate and make the Arboretum relevant to people while respecting the mission and the vibe of the Arboretum, and creating experiences that engage people.

Figure out the amount to charge with net profits to go into a pool for grounds staff.

Is there a policy? SPR gets to say yes or no to the permit? This group should coalesce around a decision and take it back. There needs to be more conversations about it.

>>> Michael to bring back the regulations that go into having a permit.

Points for further discussion and consideration:

- No to organized runs on the Loop Trail, but yes on Arboretum Drive and Lake Washington Boulevard
- How much is enough to charge to recoup costs?
- How many people is too many?
- What threshold for attendance would require more money?
- What is the cost? City and Arboretum staff putting time and attention to repairs instead of their usual work.

ABGC discuss doing one and seeing how it works. There are some things that cannot be mitigated. Important to consider the feelings of the public.

Michael will let events scheduling office know that ABGC needs to know about future inquiries for events at the Arboretum.

May field trip to Foster Island Undercrossing.

**Old/New Business**

There being no other business, the meeting adjourns at 10:45am.

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
Sally Clark, ABGC Chair