

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) Minutes Graham Visitors Center, Washington Park Arboretum – February 13, 2019

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
- Jason Morse, Arboretum Foundation Board President

City of Seattle

- *Excused*, Kenan Block, Mayoral Appointee
- *Excused*, 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
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington, Associate Professor, Dept. of Landscape Architecture

Other Staff Present:

- Rachel Acosta, Seattle Parks and Recreation, ABGC Coordinator
- *Excused*, Wendy Gible, University of Washington Botanic Gardens, Assistant Director
- *Excused*, Robert Stowers, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Parks and Environment Division Director
- *Excused*, Jon Jainga, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Natural Resources Unit Manager
- *Excused*, 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

The meeting is called to order at 8:39am. The approval of the January minutes are postponed until the next meeting.

Update: Environmental Education Building

MPIG met with Mithun, the architects hired to do the design study. They presented their final renderings. The project costs were considerably higher than anticipated. Fred had two meetings with internal UW staff to look at the endowment and other related realistic costs. Fred and the Arboretum

Foundation met to strategize fundraising. Some of the costs were very high, Fred is having the UW Real Estate Office review and will talk with UW Construction and Planning to review costs also.

The design is great, the renderings are breathtaking. The design answered most of the concerns although there would still be some conflict if there were two outdoor events. There would not be a visual conflict between the buildings' rentable spaces.

The business case was disappointing because it was not as in-depth as hoped and it will need to be flushed out if they are going to any government entity for funding.

Would the campaign be for a building or could it be packaged creatively to include other areas and make it more marketable to donors?

The current programs have access and scholarship components, but it is a modest amount of the overall volume. The ABGC discuss exploring partnerships/programs to boost public benefit and open the Arboretum up to a new class of funders.

Iain talks about using the Mission of the Arboretum and the need it is filling to create more funders.

The City has a project management fee of 60% of construction to run the project. Fred is looking at the UW fees for project management.

There are still many questions regarding this project. There are still more questions than answers at this point and the partners will talk with internal stakeholders.

Iain asks if what we're trying to accomplish is commensurate with the cost.

It is suggested that the ABGC asks Julie from the Burke to talk about the financial plan for the new building for the retreat in May.

The ABGC acknowledge that there is competition for donor dollars. There are many local non-profits with similar audiences working on capital campaigns. The naming could be a big deal.

Partner Updates: Budget, Personnel and Other Items

University of Washington

The UW is looking for money for research on growing marijuana and hemp. There is a potential partnership with Washington State University. Center for Urban Horticulture is offering a course on marijuana.

Meeting with Rob Johnson – Members of the University of Washington Botanic Gardens and the Arboretum Foundation met with Councilmember Rob Johnson regarding the newest version of the Tree Ordinance the City took comment on in late summer/early fall. The Arboretum would have been under the jurisdiction of this new

ordinance. They have redone the ordinance, but it is not available for public review. Councilmember Johnson said the ABGC's concerns would be addressed in the new version. There will be some language in the ordinance to exempt the Arboretum from it.

Arboretum Foundation

The opening night party is next week. It has a Mediterranean theme and the display garden will feel like a Mediterranean terrace. The party is sold out which is around 365 people. They expanded their focus on corporate sponsors to 14. Each sponsor is bringing people to the party. They have some great trips and other auction items.

Rhododendron Glen – A long-time arboretum volunteer is making a large legacy gift to help with Rhododendron Glen for \$750,000. There is some short-term ornamental work around each approach to the Glen. There will be a larger design process to evaluate water ecology and the design work will identify some phases. MPIG is trying to figure out project management of the project to make the dollars go farthest with the least amount of overhead. They will name the gift shop in their honor as recognition for the gift.

Jane says the conversations around the Rhododendron Glen project sparked a broader conversation about water ecology in the Arboretum. This project might allow for conversations to evolve around the Environmental Education Center (EEC) and using the water as another education tool.

The Master Plan priority list allowed for the Arboretum Foundation to speak with donors about the funding options.

Sally channels Kenan when she mentions that the large donation to Rhododendron Glen could be a good news story especially if/when the capital campaign starts for the EEC.

Matthew Klinge wrote a book on the history of Seattle. In the book, he talks about how in the 19th and 20th century people separated water through engineering. Iain thinks the 21st century could be about mixing land and water and the plant communities and ecosystems that thrive in those environments.

There may be grant opportunities through the Department of Ecology for water impacts and creating learning opportunities around it. How does this project satisfy King County goals for social equity? SPR will probably have a similar bent in the next funding cycle.

Master Plan Implementation Group

Olmsted Parks Project – from Park District funding – The taskforce identified 10 projects and are looking to prioritize those projects. Crabapple Meadow is the proposed location; SPR will send out a survey to find out where residents want the money spent.

Public meeting at end of January about the Montlake market. There is a survey that will be open until tomorrow.

Waterfront Trail renovation has a large price tag. Adapting tech to work over water means construction is more complicated. ABGC hopes to phase the project and receive further grant funding.

Old/New Business

Retreat planning – Sally remarks that there seems to be consensus around discussing the overall strategy and goals for the ABGC. She asks if it would be a useful focus to talk about the EEC to weigh in on next steps? Would they be interested in having the Executive Director of the Burke come in and talk about their fundraising experience?

A discussion about the larger strategy around the Arboretum's mission; how does combating climate change and water ecology fit into the Arboretum.

Roles of partners moving forward and the governance model and how that moves into the future. It is important not to create a perception that conversations have gone further than they have. Is there interest in having people from different partner organizations with the City to talk about varying types of relationships? The ABGC emphasize that they do not want to create a false impression that there are changes in governance.

The ABGC does not want to share the renderings until they are more certain to move forward.

Learning and understanding what other institutions are doing would check multiple boxes by bringing in the Aquarium and the Burke.

The Board likes the idea of an Informational/learning retreat.

Governance model and its evolution; fundraising; and mission changing to address the needs of the 21st century.

Would there be an imbalance of information in the room? A facilitator would want to ensure that information is shared.

EEC could be on the agenda for the retreat. Water ecology could be another topic and integral to the message about how the mission is evolving. It is a good idea for an interdisciplinary subject. Iain to talk with professors about organizing this.

New Business

Iain suggests instead of wood chipping all of the trees that come down in the Arboretum, they should use the wood to produce various products for decorative, educational, or fundraising purposes. There are significant trees that are part of the history of this place. In Kew gardens, they have a museum with panels of wood from the gardens. The ABGC discuss finding a partner in crafts people to create objects that could be sold. Pratt Woodworking and Coyote Central are two organizations that come to mind.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourns at 9:40 a.m.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Sally Clark, ABGC Chair