

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

- 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
- Iain Robertson, University of Washington, Associate Professor, Dept. of Landscape Architecture

Other Staff Present:

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

SR520 Technical Committee:

City: David Graves; UW: Fred Hoyt

Call to Order

Sally calls the meeting to order at 8:35am. Sally asks for a motion to approve the March 13 agenda, and the January 9 and February 13 minutes. James moves, Kenan seconds and the consent items are approved.

Presentation: SR520 Project Updates

Dawn introduces the team. Todd Harrison is Deputy Program Manager for the SR520 program. From Graham Construction, Mike Salmon and Bob Derry, Communications. Hannah Brit is from the SR520 program communications team. Amanda Sei from SDOT and David Graves from SPR.

2015 Connecting Washington package will fund the construction of the SR520.

Portage Bay Bridge and the SR520/I-5 express lane connection are 2 separate projects. Express lane project will start in 2020 and will take approx. 2-3 years. There will be a ramp connecting Mercer Street to the South Lake Union neighborhood.

Portage Bay project will commence in 2023 with an estimated duration of 6 years.

Todd introduces the Montlake Project – Graham awarded contract in January 2019. They will start construction in May. Early design investigation work – test borings, potholing for utilities. The Montlake Project includes West Approach Bridge South (WABS) and removal of eastbound on-ramp.

Highlights from Graham's Proposal

- Reduces the number of total closures on SR520;
- Maintains SR 520 flyers stops until June 2019.
- Graham will create a new temporary eastbound on-ramp from East Lake Washington Boulevard to accommodate traffic after the eastbound on ramp in the Arboretum is removed with a parallel shared-use path, providing another route for bikes and pedestrians.
- Their aesthetic design will match the West Approach Bridge North (WABN).
- Reduces community and environmental effects
- Construction schedule reduced by a year because they will use elements of the existing eastbound southern bridge to build WABS. Result in less lake impacts and over-water shading

Community engagement – They will be holding public meetings in April for design feedback.

Traffic shift –

Graham will be using 2 lanes of existing bridge to stage construction. This will impact traffic as the lanes will narrow and shoulders disappear.

Montlake Project – They have an ombudsman who will act as the community liaison, WSDOT will provide social media updates, and there is a new website: SR 520 construction corner.

Next steps –

Design is underway.

Construction starting in May. Construction Corner is up. Public meetings will occur in April and May.

Traffic Management Plan

Amanda Sei – Seattle Department of Transportation, the interagency project manager, provides an update on the traffic management plan.

Summer 2018 the City constructed a Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan for traffic calming –

- They installed speed humps on 25th and 26th Avenues East.
- They installed a c-curb extension at Lake Washington Boulevard and Roanoke.
- They have funded widening the sidewalk between Shelby and Hamlin.

SDOT received many requests for traffic calming from the community; they will review the suggestions and will return for another update.

They will improve Montlake corridor signal interconnectivity – Signal connectivity will improve flow along Montlake. 24th street light will be implemented during Montlake project, but before construction begins.

They will have the ability to make real-time adjustments and monitor from SDOT's traffic operations center. It will allow them to adjust during events.

Temporary wireless communications facility relocation

WSDOT is working with Crown Castle to relocate their cell tower. The planting around the wall incorporates Ray Larson's planting plan. Spring 2019 to receive conditional use permit.

They are working with Crown Castle to find a permanent location when land transfers to Seattle Parks and Recreation.

Nest steps for WSDOT and ABGC

- Remaining Foster Island undercrossing coordination – planted during WABN.
- Trail realignment for Montlake project upcoming;
- Working on signage as part of section 106 with the tribes. WSDOT will be funding those signs and placards.
- North entry grant work – coordinating with SPR to find fund elements of the North Entry Project.

WSDOT Peninsula Wetland Mitigation – coordinate with ABGC regarding plantings that will be included in the wetland mitigation at the WSDOT peninsula;

WSDOT Peninsula Property Transfer – upon completion of the WSDOT project, WSDOT will transfer peninsula to SPR.

Construction project

Mike Salmon, Deputy Project Director with Graham Construction speaks about the construction project.

They will be adding an eastbound loop ramp; originally, they were going to add additional ramps to Montlake Boulevard, but that constrains the work zone. This will divert traffic to East Lake

Washington Boulevard. People on Montlake should not feel the added pressure from construction until later.

The new ramp will be constructed before the old ramp will be removed. The temporary ramp will be there until 2021. There will not be additional traffic, but the existing traffic will remain the same.

There will a period after 24th Avenue will be closed and there will not be a shared-use path.

Some of the historic trees will come out during the construction of the pedestrian land bridge.

Some of the property is SPR/SDOT and some is WSDOT for the temporary on-ramp. The ABGC feels concern about this new temporary on-ramp and any unanticipated impacts. Mike mentions that the temporary onramp mirrors the footprint of the future pedestrian land bridge trail.

The ABGC mention that the lid seems to keep shrinking, they are noticing more open roadway; less openspace. King County has a Combined Sewer Overflow pipe and there were concerns about covering it. The ABGC agrees that there's always a valid reason to change the design or minimize the green space. The ABGC asks if they are tracking the amount of greenspace in the design. WSDOT says they are not, but they are tracking the size of the lid and it has not changed.

The shared-use path land bridge will not be done until the end of the project.

Bid awarded based on best value; price of all proposals was over budget.

Looking for grants for the North Entry Project; SPR will look to the Recreation Conservation Office (RCO) for openspace grants. WSDOT will look at transportation grants for the roundabout.

Graham will bring pictures of what they are doing next time.

The ABGC ask if the cell tower can stay at the market if WSDOT decides not to remove it. WSDOT says no because it will be an active construction area even if the market stays.

Jane mentions the ABGC's concern about the cell tower being left on the WSDOT peninsula after construction. Dawn says there is language written in their lease with Crown Castle specifying there will be no extensions.

Between April 17-23, there will be renderings and public meetings. There will be an online open house to give people access.

Rachel to schedule the WSDOT team to return in May.

Discussion: WSDOT Presentation

Design/Build is hard because the contractor decides on the plan.

The new eastbound loop is a surprise and it is status quo in terms of traffic, but ABGC was looking forward to the traffic removal.

Any increase in the number of historic trees being removed is unacceptable.

The ABGC discuss sending an email/letter to bring up some of their concerns and to thank them for their continued collaboration. At WSDOT's return in May, they would like to see their concerns around the bike/pedestrian connection during construction addressed and they want to see a strong connection between the Shelby Hamlin neighborhood and Montlake, which was lost during the transit hub design. The ABGC wants to remind WSDOT of the original intent of the Montlake project was to bring a sense of the Arboretum all the way to Montlake Boulevard. They also want to memorialize decisions made regarding the cell tower. WSDOT agreed the contract with Crown Castle will not have an extension, forcing them to relocate after the construction period ends. WSDOT and Crown Castle will relocate the cell tower prior to the transfer of the WSDOT peninsula to Seattle Parks and Recreation. They decide the letter should be signed by all three partners and cc UW leadership and WSDOT Ombudsman: David Goldberg.

Partner Updates: Budget, Personnel and Other Items

University of Washington

Significant tree damage during the snow storm; donor provided \$10,000 to assist with cleanup.

Fred saw Theresa Doherty, she became a realtor in retirement.

UWBG awareness with support from College around diversity and equity.

Arboretum Foundation

The Foundation received \$750,000 for the Rhododendron Glen project; ABGC is looking at project management of the design element. The Arboretum Foundation is naming the gift shop for the donor and will recognize them at the Annual Meeting on June 19.

Fred and Jane have been working with Seattle Garden Club to piggy back on that project to fund a \$40,000 grant project through Garden club of America.

Opening night party - \$320,000 record on gross receipts. It was a great evening.

Over the summer, the Arboretum Foundation received \$275,000 for Lake Washington Boulevard beautification. They recently received another \$120,000 to continue that work. This will fund the Student Conservation Association for the summer and the extra gardener position for another year.

Seattle Parks and Recreation

Superintendent Search - Michael was part of the candidate interview process for the new Superintendent. It will continue until filled. There are finalists, but he is not allowed to tell the ABGC any details. The SPR Executive Team were able to provide input.

Master Plan Implementation Group

MPIG heard a presentation from 2 community members who want to divert storm water coming off the hillside into the Japanese garden. They performed water testing and the water is clean. SPR, SDOT, and the Japanese Garden are involved. The project would increase the amount of water flow in Arboretum Creek. It is year-round because there are springs. It is early in the discussions.

The ABGC ask about the governance around this project. The water sampling was done through grant funding from King County. They have a Letter of Intent for a larger grant for \$275,000 for design work of the project. The Letter of Intent with SDOT for curbs along Prospect Street between 28th and 26th Avenue to segregate runoff from road and stream. They have been open about this opportunity but don't see themselves hiring consultants and managing a project.

How will we manage or coordinate these projects with the projects that we have going concurrently?

SPR staff need funds for project staff; this is not on our radar screen.

40,000 gallons a day begs the question of what infrastructure would be necessary? If there was clean water flowing through, would not need to use potable water for the pond.

There would be a permitting process for the work to be done. Pipe would be under the road and then daylighted.

The ABGC discuss writing a letter to community members stating the ABGC appreciates the initiative and would like to find a way to move it forward.

Separate meeting with them to move this forward? The ABGC honors the work put into this? Identifying obstacles and next steps.

Michael will schedule a meeting with David Graves and MPIG and community members. There may be further grant resources to move the process forward. They are operating as a non-profit; the ABGC wonders if it makes sense for them to become a part of the Arboretum Foundation for their funding to make them more integral to the project.

The ABGC sees a bigger theme on the watershed and individual projects, including this, Rhododendron Glen, and Arboretum Creek.

Jane and Fred are setting a meeting with David Butman, a professor in the College of the Environment who does watershed work. They will float this idea past him.

Public Comment

Paul Gibson – Last time he attended ABGC, he came about the terrible totem pole. He attended the public meeting about the Environmental Education Center and he was so pleased to learn that you had seen the wisdom and plan to keep the facilities on this side of Arboretum Drive. He knows the Master Plan calls for a canopy walk in the middle of the park; a better idea is to use the Wilcox Bridge. It's an existing structure, no new concrete, and it could be an exhibit to highlight the plants below.

Old/New Business

There being no other business, the meeting adjourns at 10:30 a.m.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Sally Clark, ABGC Chair