



**Seattle  
Parks & Recreation**

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## **Arboretum & Botanical Garden Committee**

Wednesday, June 8, 2022 9:00-10:30am, Online

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### **ABGC Voting Members**

Arboretum Foundation

Jane Stonecipher, Executive Director

Peter Rees, Board President

### **City of Seattle/Seattle Parks Department**

Kenan Block, Mayoral Appointee

James Fearn, Mayoral Appointee

David Graves, Strategic Advisor, Seattle Parks and Recreation

### **University of Washington**

Sally Clark, Director of Regional and Community Relations, ABGC Chair

Christina Owen, Director of UW Botanic Gardens

Ken Yocom, Professor, College of Built Environments

### **ABGC Attendees**

Rachel Acosta, ABGC Coordinator, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Lisa Chen, Manager, Seattle Parks and Recreation

### **9:00am Call to Order and Introductions**

David Graves, ABGC Chair

- Consent Items: June 8, 2022 Agenda, February 9 and May 11 meeting notes  
Changes to Agenda/Minutes: Will wait for the August meeting to vote on consent items.

### **9:05am WSDOT Peninsula Site Visit Discussion**

Land will be further impacted by construction staging for Portage Bay Bridge. WSDOT does not plan to mitigate the shoreline areas around the lake on the WSDOT peninsula. The ABGC question whether they could do anything with the 2-acres at the south end given the road grade. The Commissioners consider using photos of the land from before the construction to illustrate the condition of return.

What are WSDOT's plans for restoration? David will ask Dawn. Contractually, WSDOT is not obligated to do anything because they own the land.

The access road to the drainage pond in the northwest corner is a permanent fixture and it cuts off Lake Washington Boulevard from the rest of the peninsula.

The ABGC discuss pursuing an engineering study of the existing conditions and road grades to get a better understanding of what one could realistically do.



WSDOT has not received the permits yet, so the ABGC is not able to review the requirements contained therein. They need shoreline permits for the Portage Bay Bridge work to start. David says he can look to see if he has access to permit applications.

David mentions that the big areas in the WSDOT peninsula are not being restored and there is nothing to see until permits are issued. The ABGC will better be able to influence the restoration work performed by WSDOT if the ABGC has a clear plan about what they want done. The ABGC discuss the best way to prepare for negotiating with WSDOT on the mitigation dollars.

Questions the ABGC feel are valuable for consideration in terms of mitigation dollars. What's the end point for escalation -- when it is usable or when they provide the funding? What is in the mitigation bucket? Escalators? What are the principles when negotiating with Dawn? Sally lists some potential principles: 1. Condition of the property 2. Money not lose value while waiting to gain access to site. 3. Escalation dollars should reflect increase in construction costs. 4. Land should be in type of condition amenable to restoring park land.

Gerry Johnson, who is providing legal advice to the Arboretum Foundation, mentioned to Jane that WSDOT needing to control the land is the best tool in negotiations.

Kenan suggests and the ABGC concur to adding a recurring agenda item to keep all stakeholders on task and moving this process forward.

Does the city need to have an engineering study/assessment before the land transfer? David says the appraisal will review the condition of the land and legal constraints within the area, but will not provide them with detailed information about the land and steps necessary to make it useable.

ABGC discuss whether they hire external consultants, a resource team, to take on some aspects of this work due to lack of internal capacity. They agree that to provide direction to the external consultants, they will need to have a better understanding of the project.

MPIG will return to the ABGC at the August meeting with project details, including a better idea on costs and timing, and project feasibility on early work. Answering the questions: In what condition does WSDOT need to leave the property? What is needed to be done on WSDOT peninsula to make it ready for the project? Is receiving the 2 Southern acres early actually valuable?

Bring on civil engineering group to develop cost valuation for different aspects.

The ABGC will use the above information to inform the principles on which to frame the next stage of negotiation and refine them as the process moves forward.



**9:25am      Outreach Strategy**

Two processes ongoing that will contain engagement with the public. 1) Survey will start after July 1, including on-grounds survey component. The questions would be broader about what people want to see and reaching audiences that are not traditionally approached. 2) The Central Park Conservancy will have visioning exercise with existing stakeholders.

**9:45am      Partner Updates**

University of Washington:

- Work starting on the stone cottage soon. They are installing fiber optic cable and other upgrades to make it useable. Future agenda item: Stone cottage – creative and potential uses.
- Summer programs starting soon.
- Spring planting is still ongoing due to all the rain, which is great.

Arboretum Foundation:

- Annual meeting is June 15. It will be in-person. Acting Superintendent Christopher Williams and Christina Owen, UWBG Director will attend.
- Jane is working with Donnie on the Japanese Garden Operating Agreement and is hoping to get it to City Council this summer.
- The Japanese Garden will be closed to do drainage work in the meadow.
- Grant season is starting for education and general purpose.
- The plant donations nursery was renamed for its founders; longterm volunteers came back to see it. It was a fun event.
- The Tsutakawa Gates are proceeding. Incorporate 5-ft section from stolen gates; hoped to get installed in June but maybe end of summer.
- Stable from staffing standpoint from pandemic; down a few key positions; effort toward recruiting and hiring this summer.

Seattle Parks and Recreation:

- Acting Superintendent Williams is still interim.
- Hiring is happening. District crews and seasonal crews are fully staffed. More work getting done in parks!

**10:20am      Old/New Business**

Main Discussion Items/Follow-up:

**10:30am      Adjourn**