



Arboretum & Botanical Garden Committee

Tuesday, March 18, 2025 9:00 – 10:30AM, Online

Join on your computer or mobile app: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Arboretum Foundation

Elizabeth Lunney, Interim Executive Director

Maribeth O'Connor, Board President

City of Seattle/Seattle Parks Department

Kim Baldwin, Seattle Parks and Recreation Representative

University of Washington

Aaron Hoard, Director of Regional and Community Relations, ABGC Chair

Christina Owen, Director of UW Botanic Gardens, ABGC Vice Chair

ABGC Attendees

Ray Larson, Curator, UW Botanic Gardens

David Graves, Strategic Advisor, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Lisa Chen, Manager, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Peter Rees, Board Vice President

9:02AM Call to Order & Introductions

Aaron Hoard, ABGC Chair

- **Land Acknowledgement:** The ABGC acknowledges and affirms the indigenous Coast Salish as the original caretakers of our waters and landscape, who nurtured and shaped today's parkland. We honor their legacy with gratitude and appreciation and will safeguard their knowledge and stewardship as enduring treasures to promote community welfare, cultivate inclusive expressions of nature and recreation and commit to land acknowledgment for each ensuing generation.

9:15AM 520 Subgroup Update

David Graves, Seattle Parks and Recreation

- Berger team has begun field work for pre-design study this week
- Shannon & Wilson will visit the peninsula on the outside of WSDOT's construction staging area; conducting wetland inventory/flagging, survey and limited geotechnical survey work.
- Traffic study will begin and the predesign report draft should be available by June or by the next ABGC meeting.

9:19AM MPIG Subgroup Update

Ray Larson, UWBG Curator and Associate Director

- The Japanese Garden has been pushed out to next year due to budget concerns
- Waterfront Trail project waiting for permit and future funding.
- Pacific Pathway project will rely on donor funding to support project design while waiting for state funding.
- The Graham Visitor Center is working with a project manager regarding wall damage and repairs
 - Concerns include:
 - Wall/trellis is rapidly aging
 - Needing to find funding to allocate
- North Entry, priorities to focus on signage to direct visitors to the park and through construction.
 - Needing to press WSDOT on the urgency on this matter
 - Requesting ABGC to send a letter to prioritize this issue
- Urban Forest Plan Management Plan, the park has been declared a “natural area” in City report regarding canopy coverage.

9:30AM Partner Updates

UW

- Lesley Koch, a parks consultant, is interested in supporting the Arboretum. She is willing to provide expertise to help with the peninsula project by providing site planning advice on community inclusiveness.
 - Plans to visit in Mid-April for brainstorming
 - Recommends halting any new capital projects
 - Focusing only on existing projects, such as the Japanese Garden Wall and Pacific Pathway.
 - Recommends delaying work on the creek until a plan is in place; project will require a longer permitting process time
 - Need 30% of design plan to submit a permit
- UW is implementing a 10% budget cut and restrictions such as a hiring freeze and limiting nonessential travel
 - The majority of the UWBG is sourced by internal funding and philanthropic support
 - The Botanic Gardens continue to operate
- Plans to plant 15 mature trees along Azalea Way over the next couple of months
- Climate Action Plan draft will be available early/mid spring
- Cherry Blossom season in process, now until early may

Arboretum Foundation

- Botanical Bash Event was a success with 400 people in attendance.
- Partnership agreement has been finalized and sent to the University

- Acknowledging budget concerns and plans to fundraise to close the funding gap
- Will contract consultants to work with community engagement and attendance for all entities
- Councilmember Rivera has plans to tour soon this Spring/Summer
- Pacific Pathway Project has hired a lobbyist to advocate for project funding.

Seattle Park

- End of last year, Hoda Gray was hired to work with tribal relations for the city.
 - Inviting Hoda Gray to join the ABGC meeting
- Questions on the North Entry Project and whether the Master Plan needs to be updated.
 - Due to the size of the project and needing to specify the long-term visions, the Master Plan will not be updated.
- From last December, Parks is in the hiring process for various positions for Arboretum and Japanese Garden, updates will be coming soon

9:52AM Old/New Business

Ray Larson, UWBG Curator and Associate Director

Parks' designation of "natural areas" in the Arboretum

- The Arboretum on City Urban Forest Management Plan map has been labelled as "Parks Natural Areas" perhaps due to canopy cover mapping. This was done without consultation with UW or partners of the Arboretum.
- Needing to seek clarity with the city to use the same definition and guarantee that this label does not remove UW control or encroach on existing agreements.

10:07AM Adjourn