

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: March 12, 2014
6:00pm-8:00pm

Location: City Hall, Boards and Commissions Room (L280)

Members Present: Lydia Heard, Devor Barton, Anna Spooner, Jacob Struiksma, Jeffrey Linn, David Goldberg, Lillian Berticevich

Guests: Tanna Shoyo, Alex Sheldon, Doug Beeman, Dawn Bushnaq, Brian Ramey, Mary Hansen, Andy Thompson, Maribel Cruz, Paul Elliot, Terry Plum, Ken Lee

MEETING CALL TO ORDER: 6pm

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL: February meeting minutes approved

PUBLIC COMMENT: none

PRESENTATIONS

Time: 6:10

Topic: East Howe Street Park—Pedestrian Pathway and Stairs

Presenters: Brian Ramey, steering committee

- Brian lives in the Eastlake neighborhood. This project is near and dear to him, and has been working on this project redeveloping the area under the freeway for 10 years.
- This area from Eastlake to Fairview is under SDOT's purview.
- He'd like community endorsements and letters of support.
- Now: the right of way goes through a building's parking lot and there's an opportunity to take some of that land back. SDOT has given its blessing, and they expect to take the pivotal piece of land back for public use.
 - DPD says the business owner doesn't need the parking lot to meet the requirements for his occupation.
- Stairs will offer a great connection point.
- Dawn is the project architect for one phase of the project. Her architecture is setting the tone because it's the first phase. She's currently going through design review.
 - Dawn's landscaping: tremendous amount of green. Huge building windows. Focused in on E. Howe for a retail outlet, restaurant, live/work units.
- Plans include building a walkway down next to Fairview Row. SDOT requests that they move more through the right of way.
- When the walkway is done, it will offer a panoramic view of downtown.
- SDOT knows this project will help solve an important/expensive water drainage problem by their digging ditches for water drainage.
- Part of this area is used for long-term parking. Houseboats park there sometimes.
 - Jacob: That's public right-of-way, shouldn't be allowed.
- Inhabit Eastlake LLC
- Design topics:

- Will be concrete stairs
- Dawn's space: 30-ft right of way with benches, gathering people in an active space.
- Dawn: Their project at the top of the hill has received approval from the Design Commission. The planning for the stairs in the 1818 area is separate.
- Steps to Howe Street: designed to make it feel like a natural connection, an extension from the right of way.
- Wallingford steps exemplify their general vision.
 - Jacob: doesn't like Harborview Steps b/c it zigzags and is confusing.
 - Brian: That is probably one the reasons for SDOT asking for straight.
- Lydia: What kind of help would you like from the Board? Help applying for grants?
 - Brian: They would like a letter of support. They're considering grant options separately.
- David: Who would receive the grant?
 - Brian: Lake Union Council
- Dawn: clarified they are just asking SPAB for support. Her and Brian's projects are separate but connected, and they're working together to get funding/support.
- SPAB voted in favor of writing letter of support. Anna will write the letter.

Time: 6:33pm

Topic: Fairview Ave. N. Bridge Replacement

Presenters: Maribel Cruz & Jamie O'Day, SDOT

- This project is about the bridge next to iconic steam plant.
- SDOT's mission: deliver safe/reliable transportation system.
- PROJECT BACKGROUND:
 - This 65 yr old bridge needs replacement. Somewhat poor conditions, rotting timbers. Safe for travel today, but structurally deficient and seismically vulnerable. A new wider road will be better for all users.
 - Bridge is at grade.
 - Existing conditions: floating walkway, kayak launching point. Hope to keep these two amenities in place even after replacement. Cracked asphalt. Original timber piles (65 yrs old), certain percentage with temporary repairs. Limited load capacity; seismically vulnerable.
 - Legal capacity: 40 tons, or else needs special permits.
 - 9 ft space for bikes and pedestrians, shared, no height difference on W bridge. E bridge: no timber, but the beams have begun to crack. 8 ft sidewalk. E bridge is wider.
- PROPOSED
 - Wider bridge. Adding 8 ft sidewalk on W side of bridge, 2 way bike facility 12 ft on W side. Wider vehicle travel lanes.
 - Pedestrians will be buffered from moving traffic with the additional sidewalk width.
 - Will structurally be able to accommodate the streetcar if that ever gets expanded.
 - Improved pedestrian lighting, landscaping, way-finding.
 - Jacob: the trolley and Bus 70 would use this bridge to connect. This should be considered.
 - Jamie: We will talk to SDOT about this.
- PROJECT CHALLENGES
 - During construction: Would demolish W bridge because it's narrower, shifting traffic to the E bridge. Should be able to keep one lane of traffic in each direction and pedestrian access. Sometimes may have to close to everybody.
 - Noise/vibration issues

- Construction staging
- Unique/challenging soils, utilities on/near bridge, environmental permitting challenges (drives the schedules)
- Project schedule- 30% design now. 60% in spring 2014, open house around then. Final design: fall 2014. Begin construction: spring 2015 (permitting of fish, utilities, coast guard permitting will partially drive schedule)
- NEXT STEPS
- Continue outreach, coordination with SCL & County Metro
- Jacob: what are the widths of modes now and what are they planned to be?
 - Current: E bridge- 8 ft. raised sidewalk. Lanes about 10 ft. wide, 7 ft. buffer. 12 ft lane S bound. 9 ft. width ped.
 - New: 8 ft. sidewalk on E side, 12' 11' N bound lane, 12 ft S bound, 2' barrier, 12' bikes, 8' sidewalk. Raised sidewalk for peds.
 - Tanna: raised sidewalks are important so she, as a blind person knows when she's about to enter traffic.
- Probably 20 month construction
- This is the area that a bicyclist was killed.
 - SDOT: Yes, the leading trail isn't ADA compliant. The accident was at night and the bicyclist didn't see staircase.
 - So, current floating walkway plans: jog in the walkway so it's not just linear.
 - Jacob: S side will be ADA compliant. Jog b/c need more length and so need the zigzag. N bank won't be ADA compliant.
- Does SPAB get to see the staging? Yes.
 - Their goal is to maintain ped access throughout all staging.
 - Jacob: he's thinking that at some point you have to cross, so there needs to be some clarity before you get to the construction zone.
 - Yes, as the contractor puts together traffic control plans they'll need to put that together.
 - Will remove floating walkway during construction.
- Lydia: Are the Bridging the Gap funds secured?
 - Yes.

Time: 6:55

Topic: Greenways

Presenters: Terry Plumb, SDOT

- This project has been renamed since Terry last presented.
- Project goal: to provide safe access around 23rd for bikers/peds
- Greenway definition: safer traffic-calmed street. Prioritized for people, walking, bikes. Located primarily on residential streets.
- 4 routes previously studied. Study considerations: safety, access, physical conditions of road, amenities, existing ped travel, community support.
 - One primary criteria: slopes and topography. Findings: very steep areas on 21st and 22nd near Fir and Spruce & 24th and 25th by Galer.
 - Other considerations: @ south end, how to connect to I90 trail. @ north end, how to connect to Roanoke. @ Jackson and Madison, how to enhance activity hubs.
- After talking to people who use the routes, they realized: one continuous route wouldn't work as well they initially thought. So, the new hybrid route Greenway will be planned on

the E side of 23rd from Judkins to Columbia. Then, cross 23rd @ Columbia and continue on the west side of 23rd.

- This involves creating a crossing @ Columbia that doesn't exist now.
- David: will the crossing have special treatment as part of the greenway?
- No, there will be pedestrian crossing but it won't be raised or have a particular greenway look. Part of the 23rd Ave. Corridor Project is to improve ped signals, so this aspect will be part of that effort.
- 3 phases. 1st: Jackson to John. 2nd: Rainier to Jackson. 3rd: remainder of the project.
- Generally, there is extra caution at the crossing near the Safeway b/c it's congested so drivers slow down, which is better for peds and bikes. The best, safest outcome involves this composite hybrid condition.
 - This hybrid approach also plants people closer to prime shopping by switching back and forth between Madison and Jackson.
- The road between Union and Galer has a poor road and bad access, which is not good for 24th. This project will be able to do limited sidewalk improvements.
 - Not many sidewalks are uprooted by trees.
- North and South roads are gently sloping. Existing ped travel: generally pleasant.
- There is definitely community support: bikers and neighborhood influenced final decision.
- Other benefits of this hybrid plan:
 - Provides connections to several schools; utilizes existing crossing at Madison at 21st; connects a library, NWAAM, Mountains to Sound Trail.
 - Avoids: bad pavement, complicated 5-way intersection, steep slopes
- Design elements: slow speeds (down to 20mph); add speed humps; improves crosswalks, curb cuts, stop signs on residential streets; some sidewalk improvement.
- The plan is to complete Phase 1 this year.
- Also: a review of this greenway project as being developed for afterward
- Does focusing on greenways mean less investment in the 'less good' path?
 - No, it doesn't detract investment. There is not major sidewalk/road improvement money available anyway.

Time: 7:25

Topic: 3rd Ave. Corridor Improvements

Presenters: Ken Lee, SDOT

- The 3rd Ave. corridor is a long corridor and is important for transit.
 - Design activities will be planned.
- Purpose of this project: to develop a vibrant, safe, thriving 3rd Ave.
- Scope: 3rd Ave. from Denny Way to Jackson. 4 defined areas: Belltown, concept area, business core, Pioneer Square
- This corridor's daily use: 65,000 ped users, 42,000 transit riders.
- Some specific project elements: Orca card readers, ADA compliance, real time testing
- Currently at 10% design
- At the Macy's block, they are: testing construction concepts, seeing how some of these new elements work. They are planning for cohesive design, aiming for the 3rd Ave. improvements to go along w/ recent improvements in Belltown and other areas.
- The Kit of Parts for this project includes: lighting elements, bike racks, benches, trash/recycling. @ 10% design, these items have been chosen.

- Improvements designed for this project: canopy, lighting, benches, interactive kiosk
- Jacob: What is the placement like for these new features? Areas need to be clear and designated for getting on/off the bus, other areas for street furniture.
 - There will be a different sidewalk scoring pattern planned for bus areas.
- Macy's-specific improvements are on 3rd between Pine and Stewart on the E side only: Expanded bus stop proposed would allow for more bus cueing. Sidewalk extends out. Trees, lighting added.
 - Jacob: There should be no more sloping.
 - SDOT is decreasing the existing slope and will take another look at the plans.
 - Jacob: What if the sidewalks were high enough so buses wouldn't have to lower for certain users?
 - This sidewalk will be raised a bit.
- 3rd and Pine general improvements: canopy, lighting, kiosk for real-time bus arrivals.
 - Jacob: The kiosks need to talk or they're not really accessible.
- Next steps: 3/17/14, 3rd and Pine Macy's construction begins.
 - 10% design 2nd quarter 2014. 30% design 3rd quarter 2014.
- Lydia: will Macy's improvements inform other improvements?
 - Yes, that's the goal and why SDOT is moving quickly for that area.
 - Bus stops will be closed at Macy's- bus users will get on at Union or Virginia for a few months.
- Lydia: Is this still a shared project between Metro and City of Seattle?
 - Yes, through an FTA grant. They meet weekly for design.
- Anna: the new One Bus Away app feature could be a helpful resource for SDOT.

Time: 7:45

Topic: Board Updates

- Lily will plan a casual SPAB+SBAB happy hour somewhere downtown with the Bicycle Board's Get Engaged member.
- A follow-up email will be sent about our SPAB committees.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT: 8:03pm