

**MAKING THE PARKING SYSTEM WORK IN DOWNTOWN BALLARD
KICK-OFF MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 19, 2003 FROM 6:00 TO 8:00 PM
SWEDISH HOSPITAL AT 5300 TALLMAN AVE NW**

MEETING SUMMARY

OPEN HOUSE: 6:00 – 6:15

Kick-Off Meeting attendees signed in, received handouts and a comment sheet, designated the location of their residence and/or place of business on a Downtown Ballard aerial photograph and viewed boards showing existing on-street parking regulations and Flexcar locations.

THE MAKING THE PARKING SYSTEM WORK PROGRAM: 6:15 – 6:40

- Deirdre Grace, Neighborhood Development Manager in the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON), opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. She explained the purposes of the “Making the Parking System Work” program and the previous parking work done in Downtown Ballard.
- Meghan Shepard, “Making the Parking System Work” program manager in the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), presented “The Parking Puzzle.” “The Parking Puzzle” demonstrates the lessons learned from the 2000 Comprehensive Neighborhood Parking Study and subsequent neighborhood parking strategy work.

GROUP ACTIVITY: WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO IMPROVE ABOUT PARKING IN DOWNTOWN BALLARD? 6:40 TO 7:20

The participants were asked to discuss and prioritize what they would most like to improve about parking in Downtown Ballard. The individual comments have been incorporated into the Downtown Ballard Parking Matrix. Meghan Shepard facilitated and Randy Wiger (SDOT) scribed, with assistance from Tracy Krawczyk (SDOT).

GROUP ACTIVITY REPORT BACK & PRIORITIZATION: 7:20 TO 7:35

The group developed this list of parking priorities and ideas to add to existing comments already developed in various area plans and studies, all of which will be combined to form the workplan guide for the Downtown Ballard Parking Workgroup.

Business Issues:

- Businesses feel that two blocks is the maximum people will walk. You can set up pay lots close to shopping and people will just park farther away to get free parking, but not more than two blocks before they will go to another neighborhood to shop where parking is free and closer.
- Businesses need customers to perceive that there is enough parking available in order to be competitive with other shopping districts.

- Businesses perceive their competitor neighborhoods to be Greenwood, Phinney, maybe Crown Hill, but not really Fremont because of congestion there and an increase in the number of offices.
- Businesses see Ballard as similar to West Seattle - you have to “go here to get here,” e.g., it's not on the way to somewhere else.

Commute Issues:

- Attendees wanted to see the structured lot at JoAnn Fabrics established as an employee lot with key card access.
- Industrial employees park all day on Shilshole Ave. Attendees wondered whether a monthly parking pass program could be developed.
- On-street spaces on NW 57th are routinely taken-up by early morning with all-day parkers.
- Some employees and business owners are now paying for off-street parking because commuting by bus took too long to get home.

NW Market Issues:

- All-day parking here needs to stop. Attendees discussed installing meters instead of the existing 2-hour restriction because of concern that there may not be enough parking enforcement.
- People attending movies frequently park too long in spaces marked with 1- or 2-hour restrictions.
- Some attendees discussed installing 1-hour meters, but the price of these would need to be coordinated with the meters on 56th NW.
- The three meters in front of *All the King's Flags* are typically used for only 15 to 20 minutes at a time.
- Attendees questioned what would happen to parking on NW Market when the parking at the Ballard Locks becomes restricted and or reduced.

Parking Lots:

- Attendees wondered whether existing surface lot owners could be encouraged to build up to create more levels of parking.
- Investigate the lot behind the liquor store next to Archie McPhee's to see if it can be better utilized.
- Explore instituting progressive prices at pay lots, such as fifty cents per hour for the first hour or two, and then higher the longer someone parks there.
- Explore working with the private pay lot operators to see if they can charge the same prices for consistency.
- Less people have been using private pay lots (such as U.S. Bank) since they started charging (\$1 for two hours). Now people will park a block or two further away for movies (but not for shopping).
- There are 45 stalls under the Safeway at 15th Ave. NW and Market.
- Monitor the lot-sharing agreement between the movie theatre and U.S. Bank to see what changes will occur when development of the U.S. Bank site begins.

Other Issues:

- Attendees expressed concern that there is not enough enforcement in the 2-hour restriction area and on 56th NW where the hooded meters are. They wondered if the installation of meters/removal of meter hoods would help this
- Desire was expressed to have the angled parking continue south along Ballard Ave NW.
- Very short term customers (using ATM's, etc.) park in load zones, and then delivery trucks can't get into the load zone and double-park in the street and get ticketed. Attendees expressed interest in making the system work more effectively.
- Explore creation of a parking and access map.
- Business people like the meter repair phone number, keep it in their rolodex, and call whenever they spot a broken meter by their business.
- Meters on 56th Ave NW serve NW Market because people use the cut-through in the middle of the block at Ballard Square. Explore how to make more patrons aware of this.
- Explore whether the impact of a Pedestrian Overlay Zone on a high traffic neighborhood business corridor is worth the trade-offs.
- Frequent parking in front of "No Parking" signs on Shilshole Ave results in alleys being blocked.

PARKING AND MOBILITY STRATEGY TOOLBOX: 7:35 TO 7:45

- Meghan described typical on-street changes that can be made to increase parking supply for specific needs, off-street programs that can be developed such as lot-sharing agreements and parking validation programs, and the role that improved enforcement can play in helping the parking system to function.
- Mark Keller, SDOT, discussed Transportation Demand Management (TDM) tools that residents and employees of Downtown Ballard can use to reduce demand for parking by reducing the number of automobiles in the neighborhood. Examples include the Flexcar car-sharing program, transit passes and benefits for small employers, and improved bicycle facilities.

NEXT STEPS 7:45 TO 8:00

- Randy Wiger, SDOT, distributed worksheets for meeting attendees interested in participating in the Parking Workgroup. He explained the time commitment, which is one meeting per month for approximately four months followed by individual commitments to achieve implementation of the Workgroup's recommendations.
- Next steps include taking the newly formed Parking Workgroup on a walking tour of Downtown Ballard to identify problems and opportunities.
- Meghan, Randy, and Tracy Krawczyk, SDOT then took questions from the audience.

Meeting Adjourned