

Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: September 3, 2014/ 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Co-Chair: Jeff Aken
Co-Chair: Kristi Rennebohm Franz
Recorder: Clint Loper
Location: Seattle City Hall, Room L280

Minutes Distribution List:

See Attachment A

Members Present:

Jeff Aken, Adam Bartz, Don Brubeck, Leah Curtiss, Riley Kimball, Clint Loper, Lara Normand, Kristi Rennebohm Franz, Ester Sandoval, Michael Wong

Members Absent:

Merlin Rainwater

Guests:

Andy Baker, Dongho Chang (SDOT), Brendan Connolly, Monica DeWald (SDOT), Steve Durrant, Emily Ehlers (SDOT), Tom Fucoloro, Andrew Glass-Hastings (Mayor's Office), Auden Kaehler, Scott Kubly (SDOT), Kristen Simpson (SDOT), Sam Woods (SDOT), Eugene Wasserman, Sara Zora (SDOT)

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 by Kristi Rennebohm Franz

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Lara Normand read a letter from SBAB to the friends and family of Sher Kung, who was tragically killed in a collision on 2nd Ave. this past week. The Board and all attendees observed a brief moment of silence in her honor.

INTRODUCTIONS

All attendees introduced themselves and SBAB welcomed several new members

PUBLIC COMMENT

A new public comment form was distributed. It will be made available at all meetings to provide another method for providing comments to SBAB.

Andy Baker requested that presentations be posted on-line so that community members unavailable to attend an SBAB meeting will have access to the information. He also commented on the Ballard "missing link" portion of the Burke-Gilman Trail, noting that it has been over a year since there has been any communication to the public about the status of the Environmental Impact Statement. He requested that SDOT provide an update, including a description of why it has taken so long to negotiate a scope and budget for the work.

Tom Fucoloro commented on the Central Greenway open house (see "announcements," below)

congratulating Emily Ehlers and Dawn Schellenberg. Their successful facilitation of the public meeting resulted in increased public support for the project.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The previous night's open house on the Central Greenway was well attended. There is a form on-line for community members to continue providing input on the project
- SBAB is instituting a new process for meeting minutes which should allow them to be posted sooner and more consistently
- There is a memorial ride on September 5 for Sher Kung, beginning at 5 p.m. at Westlake Plaza.
- The 2nd Ave. protected bike lane demonstration project will be opening on September 8. Volunteer ambassadors are being recruited for the opening to help educate users and drivers
- Kristi and Jeff met with the project manager for the Hwy. 520 project and the project may be on the October SBAB agenda

PRESENTATIONS

Time: 6:15

Presenter: Scott Kubly, Acting Director, SDOT

Scott mentioned that the fatality last week was upsetting, and noted that he has been involved in similar situations before, including a fatality just before a bike facility opened. He noted the "Seattle process" of extensive public involvement and suggested that – while public involvement is important – sometimes it makes sense to move quickly to implement a project that promotes better safety for bikers or pedestrians. He highlighted the fast four-month turnaround on the 2nd Ave. project, noting that a similar project in Chicago required six months for design and construction.

Scott noted the diversity of emails and comments SDOT receives on these types of projects, including some that have not supported the project. He expressed the opinion that in a situation like 2nd Ave., it is impossible to design a project to please everyone, but given the safety concerns something needs to be done. Scott also noted that there are multiple types of bikers that need to be considered, and that bike riders can help create support for these facilities with their behaviors on the road as well.

Questions, Answers and Comments:

SBAB comment: The 2nd Ave. project was initiated by the mayor. We need a system where SBAB and SDOT are more involved in setting priorities.

Q: What are your thoughts on how to prioritize projects in light of political pressures?

A: We are talking about this a lot within SDOT now. Questions include, "What level of investment is appropriate for a particular project?" "Does every project have to be perfect?" In Chicago [by focusing on getting things done rather than building every project to the highest

possible standard] they built 60 miles of protected bike lanes in 3 years. In terms of priorities, he believes that taking advantage of opportunities to leverage funding and consolidate SDOT efforts is very important, as well as prioritizing corridors by levels of use and need. In Chicago they also felt equity was important, and learned that providing facilities as part of ROW upgrades -- where no demand was previously evident -- increased visibility and ridership.

Q: Somehow the SDOT internal process missed prioritizing 2nd Ave. It also allowed a resurfacing project on a BMP priority road segment like Roosevelt Way NE to proceed to 30% design without any improved bike facility in the design. How can SDOT prevent situations like this in the future?

A: The reality is some projects are politically driven. Regarding Roosevelt, SDOT will be discussing that internally. These decisions will always be made on a case-by-case basis, but we also need to have better internal coordination.

Time: 6:30

Presenter: Andrew Glass-Hastings, Office of the Mayor

Andrew noted that SBAB is in a unique position in the community in terms of its understanding of bike priorities, including how those priorities relate to other modes. He mentioned that Mayor Murray has two overall goals for bicycling in Seattle:

1. Creating a bicycle system for all users – all ages and abilities.
2. Creating an overall transportation system that is safe for all users and all modes. In terms of bicycle facilities, an example of this is how a protected bike lane can also improve pedestrian safety.

He noted it has been a busy eight months since the mayor came into office, including a focus on resolving the Bicycle Master Plan appeal, moving the Westlake protected bike lane design forward, and the 2nd Ave. project. The mayor has wanted to express his priority for moving projects forward, and not getting mired in process. The mayor was specifically interested in getting the 2nd Ave. project completed before the opening of the Pronto bikesharing program to ensure there is at least one safe north-south route through downtown. Andrew feels SDOT is primed and ready to complete projects such as 2nd Ave; they have just needed the leadership that the mayor and the new SDOT director should be able to provide. He also noted the potential for the 2nd Ave. project to reframe the public's understanding of bike facilities, and mentioned the mayor's expressed desire to have bikeshare stations in every neighborhood in Seattle.

Questions, Answers and Comments:

Q. Do you have any insight to share about the budget and how SDOT will get the resources to implement the BMP?

A. 2015 will be an "austere" budget year, not just at SDOT but across city government. "We will do more with less." As an example, the current plan is to implement six miles of protected bike

lanes, though the BMP calls for five miles per year. Also, Seattle is looking at potential approaches to the next transportation levy.

Q. How can the Mayor's Office encourage SDOT to prioritize based on the BMP criteria rather than politics?

A. 2nd Ave. wasn't a political decision; rather it is a longstanding priority that needed political leadership to implement.

SBAB comment: It's imperative that the BMP projects result in broader traffic-calming in addition to just bike improvements.

Response: Agreed. Seattle is developing a "Move Seattle" strategy intended to integrate the various modal plans. It is a major priority for the Mayor; more on this in the future.

SBAB comment: Request that the safety goal include making sure the heavy haul corridors incorporate safety and get input from both SBAB and from the Freight Master Plan Committee.

Time: 6:55

Topic: Bicycle Master Plan Implementation Plan

Presenters: Kristen Simpson, Sam Woods, Emily Ehlers, Sara Zora

Purpose: Provide an initial overview of draft implementation priorities with a focus on capital projects

BMP implementation priorities for the next 3-5 years include capital projects and a wide variety of programmatic efforts. Capital projects fall into the categories of Protected Bicycle Lanes, Neighborhood Greenways, In-Street Minor Separation, and Citywide Off-Street Facilities. Draft implementation lists were provided for each, and SDOT presenters highlighted the priorities for several of these. The draft lists included a ranking score, indicated the phase by year for each project (study, design, or implementation), and noted the program responsible for implementation (Center City Study, Multimodal Corridors, Safety Projects, Partner Projects, Bicycle Master Plan, or Safe Routes to School). This list will be updated annually, including a re-evaluation of priorities.

The overall implementation focus at this time is primarily on the citywide components of the bicycle network. Specific project priorities and implementation sequencing were based on a combination of the BMP implementation criteria which comprised the numeric score, along with a qualitative evaluation that considered leveraging and partnership opportunities, geographic balancing, community interest, and similar factors. SDOT is seeking SBAB's input on the draft lists.

Tonight's discussion will be the first of several on the implementation plan. At a September 17 special meeting, we will wrap up the discussion of CIP priorities and discuss programmatic efforts as well. Then SBAB will have a chance to review the full plan October 1, before it is finalized and transmitted to City Council by mid-October.

Questions, Answers and Comments:

Q. What does the score on the lists indicate?

A. The score was based on the quantitative implementation criteria derived from the five overarching goals of the Bicycle Master Plan: safety, ridership, equity, livability, and connectivity.

Q. How was equity accounted for?

A. That is one of the five criteria and therefore part of the score, using the analysis from SDOT's Geographic Information System (GIS). Other non-quantitative factors were also used, including political feasibility, constituency building, etc.

Q. The list suggests that the qualitative evaluation may have outweighed the scoring criteria, as many lower-scoring projects are scheduled to be implemented earlier.

A. "Tier 1" scoring under the BMP goes from 92 down to 68, so essentially all of these projects are considered high priority.

SBAB comment: Kudos to staff for the lists and the presentation. We have been asking for something like this for some time; it is great to see all the bike facility projects – regardless of program and funding source – listed in one place. This would be enhanced by mapping in addition to the lists, as well as by more transparent information on why some lower scoring projects are being implemented sooner.

SBAB comment: Project priority and sequencing may not always be the same; in other words sometimes it may not be feasible to do the very highest priority projects first and then work down the list.

Q. Is feedback on future projects more useful than feedback on 2014-15 ones?

A. Realistically yes, since the 2014-15 ones are already underway.

SBAB comment: One member expressed support for smaller projects too, lower cost than might show up on a list like this; e.g. green paint at intersections, bike boxes, etc. Another member voiced the opposite opinion, noting that Portland is finding some of these painted intersection approaches do not increase safety.

Response: We also do spot improvements, and perhaps these can be implemented in that way.

SDOT comment: Note that the number of neighborhood greenways projects is reduced in the "out years" due to less budget being available. This is due to a reduction in carryover of currently available funds for neighborhood greenways.

Q. Given the Bridging the Gap funding expiration, how are projects expected to be funded beyond the 2015 cycle?

A. For work planning purposes we are assuming the same, basic level of funding provided by BTG.

Q. How do you account for the possibility that “opportunity” may be higher in wealthier neighborhoods where there is considerable private investment, which may skew that part of the qualitative evaluation in an inequitable way?

A. Opportunity is not only about investments. There are some situations, e.g. in South Seattle, where there are important leveraging opportunities not related to investments.

SBAB Recommendations:

- Provide mapping by city sector to augment the lists.
- Separate out the scoring into the five criteria so we can see which projects score best for equity, safety, etc.
- Show dollar values (BMP cost estimates), by dollars spent per mile. If this can be done by area then we can see how equitable the spread of funding is.
- Provide more transparent explanations of why some projects that don’t score as high are proposed for earlier implementation. Populating the “notes” section of the table will help.

SBAB UPDATES AND NEXT STEPS

September 8: 2nd Ave. protected bike lane opening, 9:00 a.m. ceremony – SDOT will send invitations to all SBAB members. Cascade is looking for ambassadors to help educate all road users to the new traffic configuration for the first several days.

September 11: workshop on the Hwy. 520 project

September 17 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. here in Room L-280 in City Hall: SBAB special meeting to continue the BMP implementation discussion

September 22 Rainier Valley Neighborhood Greenway Open House. The meeting is from 6 – 7:30 PM (presentation at 6:30) at the Emerald City Bible Fellowship Auditorium, 7728 Rainier Ave S. Visit website at (<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/rainiervalleygreenways1.htm>) for more details.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

ATTACHMENT A

Meeting Minutes Distribution List:

Edward Murray, Mayor, City of Seattle

Andrew Glass-Hastings, Transportation Advisor, Office of the Mayor

City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, Transportation Committee Chair

Scott Kubly, Acting Director, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

Goran Sparrman, Deputy Director, SDOT

Dongho Chang, City Traffic Engineer, SDOT

Emily Ehlers, SBAB Liaison, SDOT

Kevin O'Neill, Planning and Urban Design Manager, SDOT

Sam Woods, Manager, Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs, SDOT

Sara Zora, Transportation Analyst, SDOT

Diane Sugimura, Director, Department of Planning and Development (DPD)

Bernie Agor Matsuno, Director, Department of Neighborhoods (DoN)

Allie Gerlach, SDOT Communications

Meeting Presenters

City of Seattle Council Transportation Committee Members

City of Seattle Neighborhood District Coordinators

SBAB Members

Individual Meeting Attendees