

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

8 February 2006, 6pm-8pm

City Hall L280

1. Call to order and introductions 6:05

SPAB members in attendance: Jodie Vice (Chair), Matthew Amster-Burton, , Molly McCarthy (Vice Chair), Jean Healy, Chris Tachibana (Secretary), Nicole DeFrank (Get Engaged) Rob Fellows

SDOT representatives: Megan Hoyt, Pete Lagerwey (SDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Program)

Presenter from Feet First: David Levinger

Absent: Peg Staeheli, Rob Ketcherside, Maria Koengeter

Public: Charles Smith (previous SPAB member); Benjamin Smith (Board Candidates), Helen Powell (UW School of Medicine)

2. Approval of January Minutes 6:07

3. David Levinger (Feet First) 6:08

Addressed three policy recommendations:

- a) school zone designation policy
- b) sidewalk tree pit design
- c) double-lane left turn

a): has comments from Jean and Peg on the tree grate policy.

b): Gave out draft version.

c): Working on policy recommendations for double left turn-lanes with green lights, where a green + dedicated lane gives motorists the impression of a "green arrow" (examples, Roy and Queen Anne, 34th and Fremont) and disinclination to stop for pedestrians. Suggested solutions are a dedicated pedestrian phase or a flashing yellow arrow instead of green. David invites people to a policy advisory committee at Feet First that would have an impact on Seattle and possibly nationally.

Comments:

Helen: Mercer and 9th also has a double left-turn.

Rob asked if we should endorse. Jodie said we could send drafts to the email list for possible endorsement in March. Jean asked about a deadline for feedback. David said about Feb 20.

4. Pete Lagerwey, SDOT, budget (6:20)

Announced \$300,000 for a Seattle Bicycle Master Plan. Asked about support for a Seattle Pedestrian Master Plan in 2007. Suggested SPAB and Feet First make a list of policy issues for a master plan.

Discussed previous budgets. Funding for pedestrian improvements is down by roughly half in last 5 years (not counting special projects), from \$1.5 million to just over 800,000. Note that numbers in the budget include salaries charged to projects.

Discussed new budget.

Highlights within the one-time projects:

- 15th and Holman. This converted to a full signal in response to an accident at 87th and 15th last spring; new channeling and a center island were added to encourage correct turns. Will be doing other improvements including new section of sidewalk, painting.

- \$500,000 for new sidewalks (policies discussed with SPAB previously). Will be hiring an engineer/designer in early March.

- SLU (SouthLake Union) where there will be curb bulbs, sidewalk replacement/fixing, bike lanes on 9th, streetcar ramps.

Smaller projects:

- Gatzert Elementary School improvements including replacing ramps, adding bulbs, curb realignment and countdown signals. General discussion including David, Matthew, Pete and others on problems with countdown timers and the possibility of a countdown to "walk" rather than to "stop". Pete said Gatzert will begin with a traditional countdown to stop, plus flashing hand. This isn't ideal, but we may be able to try some other options later.

- Rainier spot medians where cars have been passing in center turn lane. Crossing islands would let pedestrians cross in two segments and would also manage car speed.

- 98th street sidewalk at Lake City Way (marked on budget with "?") which is expensive and would have to go through capital projects.

Not included are big capital items, e.g. around Northgate and big trail projects.

Upcoming events:

- Ribbon cutting for Interurban Trail on March 25(?)

- International bike and pedestrian conference (ProWalk ProBike) is this year in Madison WI, and could be here in 2008. Conference organizers visit Seattle

March 16, 17, will meet with Cascade Bicycle Club, would like them to get together with ped and bike board.

Comments:

Jodie asked if this round is a 2-year budget cycle. Pete explained that 2-year budgets are planned, but only one year is adopted. (Example: 2007 is adopted, then the 2-year budget is revisited and revised in 2007 for 2008). This is the 2-year budget so it is the most important.

Molly asked if this is the time to advocate for a Pedestrian Master Plan. Pete said next month is critical for getting things into place. Charles asked wouldn't it work to do a ped plan after the bike plan. Pete said they will be looking at the bike plan with an eye toward ped issues also but the budget is up now, and the bike plan draft won't be done until December.

Megan asked if the new Council member will be part of the planning. (Yes)

Rob asked if the one-time expenses occur in other years. Pete said there are an exceptional number of one-time expenses in this budget, because of better economy and higher awareness of ped issues. Rob noted a Ped Master Plan is not in budget. Jodie said in November we sent a letter to Council and Mayor endorsing the Bike Master Plan and saying we'd like a Ped Master Plan.

Rob asked about getting revenues for more sidewalk expansion. Pete said the Mayor always lists pedestrian safety as a priority, so they have lists of issues, organized into categories, ready to be funded. He suggests expressing opinions on what has been said publicly and giving guidance on how revenue should be directed.

Jodie suggested forming a committee to write advisory on budget with priority on returning funding up to 2002 levels, and including a list of issues. She contacted Jan Drago's office about coming in March, could be a good time to discuss this.

Pete reminded us that budget and other revenue streams are separate and need to be treated as such.

Ben went to a transportation coalition forum last week and heard rumors of a levy on pedestrian, bike and potholes issues. Could be a new revenue stream.

Helen: requested more information on SLU. Pete said he could meet with the group Helen has put together and suggested listing specific problems and solutions/suggestions for discussion.

Rob noted that money should come in from impact fees for that area.

5. Right-of-Way Improvements Manual Discussion - Matthew (with Peg's input) (6:55)

Met with Barbara Gray on Monday. Matthew's expressed disappointment in the new ROWIM. Barbara's comments were that this is "baseline", and it will be revised more often than before, e.g. as soon as this year. Peg told them that WDOT has new pedestrian specifications that should be incorporated into ROWIM.

Barbara's suggestion: Put revisions in writing with reasons they are important; try for a higher profile with the Mayor; address sustainability. Matthew and Peg will go over ROWIM and write a new advisory.

Barbara had noted that the only comments on ROWIM came from pedestrian and freight advocates, so discussion was held on Megan's idea of a joint field trip between freight and pedestrian advocates to look at sites we that we love/hate. Jodie said perhaps freight board members can visit in April so in March we could discuss specific questions to bring up.

6. Round Robin (7:10)

Jean: Went to the 19 Jan 2006 summit on pedestrian safety, found it informative. Education, engineering and enforcement (3 E's) were discussed. Healy joined a small group on education programs.

She asked about an open hole in a sidewalk that she noticed, which seemed to be part of work on what she thinks was private property. She contacted SDOT but didn't get a response. Megan said any work that disrupts the public right-of-way must get a permit from SDOT Street Use, and they have roving inspectors to try to catch this kind of thing.

Nicole attended the Waterfront Development open house. The concept plan is done. The redevelopment plan is contingent on the tunnel/viaduct decision. The tunnel could cost \$3-3.2 billion, but all waterfront plans are unfunded. Rob said by his calculation, the viaduct (now 40 feet wide) would have to be 68 feet wide (which seems monstrous) to accommodate standards and demand.

Megan is working on the reduced school speed zone advisory. She's hoping to have a brainstorming session in the second week of March to talk about different options and strategies, and to have new board members here in March now that the Jan Drago is decided as the new head of the transportation committee.

Chris wrote letters to the City Council asking for priority on pedestrian issues while considering the Interim Appointment, and to the new member Sally J Clark. Chris and Jodie will coordinate on inviting Jan Drago and Sally Clark to a SPAB meeting. Chris, Rob and Jodie will work on budget and revenue package advisories. Discussion followed on how to get more notice for SPAB, like contacting the council, mayor and press and generally being visible.

Jodie also attended the Waterfront Development Open House. No large changes seem to have occurred in two years. We assume they are waiting for word on viaduct funding. Rob spoke on proposed state legislation on the viaduct and waterfront planning. All transportation agencies are trying to get their issues on the 2006 ballot while funding is possible. Some local transportation revenue opportunities looked good but he's not sure what's still viable.

Jodie said the Southeast Seattle transportation study has a new project manager Tracy Krawczyk, and might be ready to come to SPAB in the next few months. Molly will be head liaison.

Matthew toured Theo Chocolate at 3600 Phinney. He asked if the Open Space 2100 happened. Jodie said Peg attended. Discussion of a possible tunnel under MLK was confirmed as a car tunnel by Ben.

Molly has been trying to find out about Southeast Seattle transportation plan and Rainier Ave Core plan.

Ben saw Open Space 2100 posters and said they are quite visionary.

7. Upcoming agenda (7:50)

Next month and beyond:

Councilmembers Clark and Drago

Budget and revenue

New board members

Waterfront Development

Megan said we will hear about the Thomas street overpass in May or June.

8. Public comment (7:50)

Helen (representing the planning for SLU UW) at 815 Mercer) is interested in improving pedestrian access and getting improvement in that area immediately. Employees will be walking 2 blocks on Mercer to reach their parking.

Matthew and Molly suggested defining specific problems and using the clout of the UW to get results as well as bringing problems to Pete Lagerwey's and the City Council's attention. SPAB could support advisories written by her group.

Ben said he will be moving to Wallingford from Capitol Hill and isn't thrilled about access to the Ave from 45th in Wallingford.

9. Adjourn (8:00)