

## Westlake Cycle Track Design Advisory Committee Meeting #11 Summary

Tuesday, June 2, 2015 5:30-7:30 PM  
Swedish Cultural Center

### Design Advisory Committee member attendees

Member Name	Interest Represented	Attendance
Warren Aakervik	Freight interests	Present
Martha Aldridge	Lake Union Park users	Absent
Andrew Austin	Non-vehicular commuters	Absent
Devor Barton	Pedestrian interests	Present
Karen Braitmayer	Westlake Ave North business owners	Present
Dave Chappelle	Lake Union floating home and live-aboard residents	Present
Thomas Goldstein	Cascade Bicycle Club	Present
Amalia Leighton	Transportation Engineer	Absent
Sarah McGray	Bicycle interests	Absent
John Meyer	Air/water transportation/tourism	Absent
Martin Nelson	Westlake Stakeholders Group*	Present
Peter Schrappen	Lake Union marina operators and boat moorage tenants	Present
Cam Strong	Westlake Stakeholders Group*	Present

\*Note: The Westlake Stakeholders Group represents a variety of businesses and residents within the Westlake corridor.

### Staff attendees

#### Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

- Dawn Schellenberg
- CJ Holt
- Peter Trinh

#### Office of Economic Development

- James Kelly

#### Toole Design Group

- Kristen Lohse

#### EnviroIssues

- Penny Mabie
- David Gitlin
- Sara Colling

### Observers

- Warren Aakervik

- Angi Arends
- Phil Bannon
- Kim Barker
- Sue Dills
- Jerry Dinndorf
- Lisa Helker
- Scott Helker
- Andrew Otterness
- Marilyn Perry
- Mary Ellan Rains
- Tim Ratcliffe
- Gordy Ruh
- Dick Schwartz
- Cam Strong
- Mike Thomas
- Bill Wehrenberg

- Bill Wiginton
- Arden Wilken
- Jack Wilken
- Kat Willhight

**Note:** *This document is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It is not intended to be a transcription of the meeting, but an overview of points raised and responses from SDOT and Design Advisory Committee members.*

## **Welcome and introductions**

Penny Mabie, facilitator, welcomed the Design Advisory Committee (DAC) and audience members and led a round of introductions. She outlined the purpose of the meeting which was to present 100% final design, present how open issues at 90% were resolved, and share project next steps.

## **Adopt summary from meeting #10**

Penny called the members' attention to the summary from the previous DAC meeting. The committee agreed to post the summary to the project website as final.

## **DAC members share what they've been hearing**

Penny asked for the committee's feedback on the overall process and to share any new input they've been hearing from their constituents:

- Thomas Goldstein, Cascade Bicycle Club, shared his appreciation for the amount of investment the community has in this project as well as SDOT's hard work in maintaining 85-90% of the existing parking in the corridor. He hopes this project will be a model around the country.
- Karen Braitmayer, Westlake Ave North business owners, shared she continues to be interested in developing plans that provide accessibility for everyone. She is pleased with what she has seen from SDOT and still has some questions. She is hearing concerns about construction from her fellow businesses.
- Devor Barton, Pedestrian interests, shared he still hears concerns from the community about parking capacity. He thinks more could be done to share the work that's been done to preserve parking. He knows people with hearing and seeing issues that are still not sure how to use the cycle track on Second Avenue. The Westlake Cycle Track should be obvious and clear for all users.
- Dave Chappelle, Lake Union floating home and live-aboard residents, appreciated the vision that Thomas shared that this be a model facility. For his neighbors, parking has gotten worse because the parking management plan stopped shy of the north end residences and park and riders moved north. SDOT added 18 RPZ designated spaces, but that doesn't help the businesses in that area. His neighbors also met with SDOT staff about Railroad Park. He heard mixed comments. Some still feel there is a lack of lighting and some are concerned with the back-in parking.

- Cam Strong, Westlake Stakeholders Group, shared he has heard concerns from the community that are unanswered. The overall loss of parking is still unclear. He said the overall issue is safety for all and listed the open safety issues that he sees: bicyclists should be required to use the cycle track; there should be more signage giving pedestrians the right of way; and back-in parking is a concern. He said the design around Nautical Landing does not address issues and community members are disappointed that an exception for moorage tenants was not included in the parking management plan. He hopes SDOT can set up ongoing dialogue so the community voice can be heard as the project moves forward.
- Warren Aakervik, Freight interests, agreed with Thomas as well and sees cycle tracks as a solution to getting bicyclists off of freight streets. The issues are that this might cause some back up on Westlake Ave N and large trucks need access in front of Nautical Landing and Diamond Marina.
- Martin Nelson, Westlake Stakeholders Group, shared he is hearing frustration over lack of safety for pedestrians crossing the cycle track. He also agrees with Thomas about growth and is concerned the maritime industry will go away. He hears frustration from yacht brokers and businesses. Bicyclists aren't maritime customers.
- Peter Schrappen, Lake Union marina operators and boat moorage tenants, said he is struck by how little he has heard from boaters but thinks they will just move their boats if they need to. Peter read from an email that went to Seattle City Council noting there is nowhere for customers to park, the improvements favor bikes, employees don't ride bikes to work because they are coming from all over the region and there are still park and riders occupying parking spaces.

### **Presentation: How the will cycle track improve safety**

Dawn Schellenberg started the presentation with SDOT's mission and values. She reiterated the project's main goal which is safety for all users. SDOT knows the current situation isn't working and providing a space for people on bikes will help manage growth in the area, ultimately making the area safer.

- Martin asked why economic vitality was no longer included as a goal.
  - o Dawn clarified that economic vitality was always listed as an objective with the overall goal being safety.
  - o Martin noted that people crossing the cycle track is a safety issue that needs to be focused on.

Dawn reviewed four other cycle tracks SDOT has implemented within the city including Linden Ave N, Broadway Ave, Alki Ave and Second Ave.

- Peter noted Alki Ave isn't a good example because Westlake has businesses on the opposite side.

Dawn listed how public feedback has influenced the project including:

- Include clearly marked, formal pedestrian crossings

- Maximize parking with smaller stalls, angled parking and one-way circulation
- Add speed humps and stop signs to calm parking area and discourage bicycle use
- Improve ADA accessibility from parking area to businesses
- Improve mixing zone at north end
- Preserve Railroad Park
- Add signal at Driveway 2

## **Presentation: How open issues at 90% were resolved**

CJ walked the group through each open issue at 90% design and showed details on how they had been resolved. He began with ADA accessibility, noting that the design team met with Karen Braitmayer to discuss locations for ADA parking stalls.

- Cam noted that he hasn't seen any signage at crosswalks that says pedestrians have the right of way.
  - o CJ responded that as they discussed previously, there will be pedestrian crossing signs at the beginning of the entire corridor at each end. The standard is to not overwhelm users with signage. SDOT uses in-pavement markings successfully in other areas of the city.
    - Cam followed up asking for in-pavement markings that say pedestrian crossing.
      - CJ responded that the crosswalk itself is an indicator that there is a mixing zone.
    - Peter suggested signing two or four crosswalks.
      - CJ noted that is a good idea and said SDOT will monitor the facility throughout spring and summer after it's built.
    - Peter thought it would be smarter to err on the side of caution.
      - Dawn responded she and CJ can go back and ask the SDOT staff that Peter and others met with the week before if this is a possibility.
    - Karen added that if yield signs are placed at arbitrary crosswalks, it could give the impression that yielding isn't necessary at all crosswalks.
    - Thomas added that from a cyclist's point of view, there is a lot of distraction when entering a bike facility. He is curious how this is addressed in other cities, but his instinct is that it wouldn't a bad thing to have more signage.
      - CJ responded that Dawn will discuss education measures once the cycle track is open later in the presentation.

CJ continued the presentation discussing the speed humps in the parking area. Their dimensions will be three inches high and 12 feet wide and will stretch across the drive aisle. They will meet ADA and emergency vehicle needs.

CJ discussed lighting at Railroad Park noting he met with Railroad Park neighbors and are planning lighting with a shielding mechanism so that it's not overly invasive for the households. He also noted SDOT is maintaining back-in parking in that area to prevent large vehicles from impeding on the drive aisle and to maintain consistency with the parking configuration across the rest of the corridor. CJ also

explained that the sidewalk will be 6 feet wide through Railroad Park as a request from the community to remove less vegetation in that area.

- Martin clarified that the design will cut into the edges of Railroad Park.
  - o CJ confirmed that yes they will cut into that vegetation on the edges a bit and Dawn added that the angle will be more attractive for bicyclists to remain on the cycle track.
- Peter asked what guidelines designate an 8-foot sidewalk.
  - o CJ said there is no formal requirement for an 8-foot sidewalk.

CJ continued the presentation discussing the north end design to slow bicyclists as they move through the mixing zone on to the cycle track.

- Martin asked if SDOT would add rumble strips to the pavement.
  - o CJ responded SDOT will monitor the area closely and see if adjustments need to be made.
- Dave asked if there would be signage notifying pedestrians it's ok to walk on the sidewalk between the Fremont Bridge and the cycle track.
  - o CJ responded that is a good point. SDOT is assuming pedestrians will continue their path on the inside sidewalk and people on bikes will gravitate to the outside and will monitor.

CJ discussed the driveway safety guidelines that require removal of ten parking stalls near Nautical Landing. CJ explained that the design team was working to preserve as much parking as possible and hoping to be able to maintain this parking. However, 90% review is the most robust with over 30 reviewers. Ninety percent review was happening during the last DAC meeting. Reviewers determined that the NACTO (National Association of City Transportation Officials) recommended clearance of 30 feet from any driveway needs to be implemented for safety. The project must also adhere to AASHTO (American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials) standards, which uses a mathematical equation to determine necessary sight distance.

- Cam asked if there is opportunity for exceptions.
  - o CJ responded that the design team explored that option and were told there could not be exceptions.
- Peter said this parking loss is devastating to those businesses and he would like to continue to work with SDOT on this.
  - o CJ said he would be happy to keep the conversation going.
- Peter asked if this standard is applied throughout the city.
  - o CJ replied it is applied through all federally funded projects. CJ reiterated that the team had been trying to preserve parking and he understands the frustration.
- Warren asked what design speed is used to determine sight distance.
  - o CJ responded the team used 14 miles per hour as the design speed. They are designing the cycle track for 10 miles per hour but 14 miles per hour is necessary as a buffer.

CJ reviewed the final parking counts. Overall 90% of the parking is being preserved, with 89% preserved in the south end, 87% in the central section and 93% in the north end.

- Martin asked how many spaces there are currently and how many will there be with the project.

- CJ answered there are 1,254 parking spaces currently and 1,124 with the project.
- Thomas asked if all the parking spaces will be compliant with City law.
  - Dawn responded yes, the parking spaces will be compliant.
- Peter asked about the status of dumpster changes.
  - Dawn said the dumpsters were incorporated into the parking counts and Seattle Public Utilities will work with the corridor on potential changes.

CJ outlined the Highland Drive design noting it is the same design they presented at the last meeting.

- Cam noted this design traps cars in the AGC parking lot if pedestrians and bicyclists get the right of way.

## Questions and comments from the DAC

After a break and a chance to look through the roll plots, the DAC members had a chance to ask questions of the project team.

- Devor asked where budget comes from for adjustments to the design after the cycle track opens.
  - Dawn responded it depends on the change.
- Dave encouraged the team to work with Nautical Landing. This is a big change for them. He is hoping the team can think outside the box so Nautical Landing can keep that parking.
  - Cam added there could be technology such as signaling that could solve the problem.
  - Dawn agreed that it is a tough situation and CJ added they have been meeting with Nautical Landing and will continue to.
    - Peter said he would like to be involved.
- Cam asked if the project is on budget.
  - CJ said the project is on budget. They don't have construction bids on the project yet.
- Thomas asked if Starbucks could potentially exchange their drive-thru space for space somewhere else.
  - James Kelly said that Starbucks location is highly profitable.
  - Dave suggested Starbucks pay for a stop light.
    - CJ responded that the project team considered a stop light but the current design is the better option.

## Presentation: Education and monitoring

Dawn outlined the responses to the open policy issues related to the project that needed management input:

- Speed reduction in the parking area: SDOT will work with Peter to consult with State for more flexibility with speed limits.
- Restrict people bicycling from using the parking lot: New design should discourage people using the parking area for bicycling. SDOT will monitor and adjust if needed.
- Traffic signal installation at driveways: SDOT will monitor driveway traffic to see if traffic signals are warranted.

- “Don’t block the box”: SDOT will monitor conditions at Driveway 14 to see if needed.
- “Bikes watch for peds” signs: SDOT agreed to implement signs at either end of the corridor and monitor for effectiveness. Based on today’s meeting, Dawn and CJ will reopen this with management.

The DAC discussed putting up yield signs or pavement markings that say “yield.”

- Thomas noted that there is another city that has yield signs above the bike path.

Dawn outlined next steps for educating people on how to use the cycle track once it opens. Similar to when the protected bike lane opened on Second Avenue, the Westlake Cycle Track will have volunteer “ambassadors” standing at various locations along the cycle track, letting them know to yield to pedestrians and follow the path correctly.

SDOT will also monitor the cycle track after it opens by collecting data and meeting with stakeholders.

### **Observer comments to DAC**

Comment 1 – Commenter said he has heard disappointment from the community that the cycle track is in the location where it was originally proposed with the highest potential for pedestrian and bicyclist interactions. There is no speed limit, no barrier between bikes and pedestrians and no requirement for bicyclists to use the cycle track.

Comment 2 – Commenter was shocked and disappointed to hear that once signs are put in, there is nowhere to go further in terms of safety. He thinks the team could look at speed or what the interactions were caused by, not just signage to improve safety.

Comment 3 – Commenter thanked DAC members for their focus on Nautical Landing and the parking issues that came up last minute. He noted that the changes affect not just Nautical Landing but also Lake Union Crew, a business across the street and others. He said losing 11 parking spaces is devastating. If people can’t park, the maritime community on Westlake will disappear. He hopes large trucks and trailers can still access his business and Lake Union Crew.

Comment 4 – Commenter said he is angry because the community members wasted over \$40,000 on a lawyer which is the only reason the DAC exists. He is insulted that SDOT started by showing 50% parking loss and now are showing much more preservation to make themselves look good. Thousands of volunteer hours have gone into this. Community members wanted the west side of Westlake Ave N to become a cycle track. No bicyclists have died in the parking lot. Commenter said that an SDOT staff member said that the only reason the cycle track is being put in is because the city received a grant. The commenter does not believe there has been one fatality in the parking lot.

Comment 5 – Commenter pointed out the “duck dodge” where people take boats out on Lake Union for a friendly race. It is part of the maritime community. The cycle track will put a damper on that. The

community needs a government level, waterfront protection. They feel they are being picked on and have had to fight to get the City's attention.

- CJ clarified his previous comment saying that more signage on the cycle track could cause more distraction.
  - o Cam added that the recommendation is to put "pedestrian crossing" in the pavement rather than "slow," so that there is a legal responsibility to yield.

Penny thanked the DAC and the community and noted SDOT will continue communicating with stakeholders.