

Westlake Cycle Track Design Advisory Committee

Meeting #3B Summary

Monday, May 12, 2014 5:30-8:00 p.m.

MOHAI – Lakefront Pavilion

Design Advisory Committee Member Attendees

| Member Name | Interest Represented | Attendance |
|------------------|--|------------|
| Warren Aakervik | Freight interests | Absent |
| Martha Aldridge | Lake Union Park users | Present |
| 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 | Present |
| Sarah McGray | Bicycle interests | Present |
| John Meyer | Air/water transportation/tourism | Present |
| Martin Nelson | Westlake Stakeholders Group* | Present |
| Peter Schrappen | Lake Union marina operators and boat moorage tenants | Present |
| Cam Strong | Westlake Stakeholders Group* | Absent |

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

Staff attendees

Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

- Barbara Lee
- Mary Rutherford
- Dawn Schellenberg
- Sam Woods
- Michael James

Mayor's Office

- Andrew Glass Hastings

Office of Economic Development

- James Kelly

EnviroIssues

- Penny Mabie
- Kate Cole
- Sara Colling

Toole Design Group

- Kristen Lohse
- Kenneth Loen
- Pete Lagerwey

Observers

- Arden Wilken
- Jack Wilken
- Marilyn Perry
- Phil Bannon
- John Hull
- Jo Hull
- Arne J Levang
- Bill Wiginton
- Kirk Kassner
- Susan Robinet
- Jerry Dinndorf
- Sierra Hansen

- Roque Gomez
- Pamela Hale
- Brock Gilman
- Kat Willhight
- Dar Logan
- Mary Ellen Rains
- Kyle Chapman
- Lynn Asbeck
- Alex Wilken
- Casey O'Connor
- Dennis Logan
- Malcolm Taan

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 (DAC) members.

Welcome and introductions

Penny Mabie, facilitator, welcomed the Design Advisory Committee (DAC) and audience members and led a round of introductions. She reminded the group of the open house on May 21st and pointed out the ground rules included within the agenda.

Review of meeting summaries #2 and #3

Penny called the DAC members' attention to the meeting #2 summary included in their packets. She asked if the members agreed to adopt the summary, noting that Cam had sent revisions since the last DAC meeting.

- Martin Nelson, Westlake Stakeholders Group, noted that Cam had requested his comments be included on page five rather than page seven. Until Cam has seen the final version, Martin doesn't feel comfortable approving the summary.
 - o Penny responded that she had sent this version to Cam that day but hadn't heard back from him yet. She said it is up to the committee to decide if they want to adopt the summary or wait.
- Martin noted they should be able to wait until Cam comes back.
- Martha Aldridge, Lake Union Park users, asked if the summary reflects the meeting #2 notes.
 - o Penny responded yes.
- Devor Barton, Pedestrian interests, asked if they need unanimous consensus.
 - o Penny responded that unanimous consensus is not necessary but it is good practice.
 - Devor suggested including a note within the summary stating Cam's objection.
 - Penny responded yes, if she hears that Cam has an objection, they can include a note within the summary. She asked if the members are comfortable with that approach.
- Martin said yes and the other members agreed.

Penny then called the members' attention to the meeting #3 summary and asked if they considered it final and the DAC members agreed.

DAC members share feedback from the interests they represent

Penny asked committee members to share the input they've been receiving from their constituents.

- Dave Chappelle, Lake Union floating home and live-aboard residents, reported the Floating Home Association had their annual meeting two weeks ago. He had the opportunity to talk with people and posted Concepts A and B for people to see and mark-up with post-it notes. He also met with the president of the Live Aboard Association, has talked with people on the street, and responded to emails. He noticed that all the verbal comments he's received are strongly against losing parking, while the post-it note comments were more specifically about safety. People don't see how Concept A could be made safe with all the crossings and Concept B presents concerns with trucks interacting with the cycle track.
- Martin reported he had a number of meetings and has heard the same comments: parking and safety. The people he's spoken to don't see how Concept B can accommodate safety with the number of people who would have to cross the cycle track to get to businesses, boats and homes. There was one individual trying to figure out how many parking spaces would be lost with each proposal. Until they know what those numbers are, they don't have a way to determine which concept would be the best for maritime business.
- Amalia Leighton, Transportation Engineer, reported she went to the national American Planning Association conference in Atlanta and spoke with others grappling with similar issues. She noted that from an equity perspective, people need opportunities for safe walking and bicycling, especially with the recent bus cuts.
- Thomas Goldstein, Cascade Bicycle Club, reported he walked the corridor a couple different times once with a listing agent interested in economic development and again with one of the designers of the Broadway cycle track who thought Westlake is less complex than Broadway. Thomas also rode the Broadway cycle track and noted how the design encourages people to be mindful and ride slower. He distributed two letters to the committee, one from a business owner on Westlake and one from a commuter.
- Sarah McGray, Bicycle interests, reported hearing mainly from commuters concerns about interactions with cars coming off Westlake. People are also concerned about recent bus cuts.
- Devor reported that from a safety perspective, people are concerned that SDOT gets this right the first time and as soon as possible. People want to know where they should be walking in the corridor.
- Peter Schrappen, Lake Union marina operators and boat moorage tenants, reported that people are excited about the open house. There has been a lot of press on this as well as on the large yacht that came into Lake Union to refuel. Refueling on Westlake brings in quite a bit of money. Peter has also heard about tenants moving out of the corridor because they'll lose parking. They'll need more certainty.
- Karen Braitmayer, Westlake Avenue North business owners, reported she spoke with a variety

of business owners ranging from small to large businesses. They all agree that the current condition is not working. They all can report accidents or near misses they've witnessed. They also all report the same fear that the solution will benefit bicyclists at the expense of business, particularly in terms of loading, access to parking for tenants, customers and marinas. People have anxiety because there is a lot that is unknown. Not knowing how many spaces could be lost is making people imagine the worst.

- Martha reported she did a presentation with the South Lake Union working group which includes non-profits and businesses in the area. They asked her to report a list of items including the following: parking is a huge issue; people need more transportation options (some suggested people park on the north end of the lake and take a water taxi down); many people in this constituency can't ride bikes; the project doesn't seem to be considering the possibility of High Capacity Transit; there is interest in the west side of Westlake; questions as to whether the corridor needs as many entrances as it currently has; and there are concerns with Concept B because of having to cross the cycle track.
- John Meyer, Air/water transportation/tourism, reported he is hearing the same things about parking and safety. His bicyclist friends can't see a cycle track fitting within the corridor without removing a lot of parking. It seems impossible to put one in without hurting business.
- Martin also noted he has a letter from people in the community to share with the committee.

SDOT approach and objectives

Penny introduced Mary Rutherford, director of SDOT's Traffic Management division. Mary outlined the staff changes within the project team. She noted that previously Barbara Lee, SDOT Project Manager, sat at the table representing the Capital Projects team. However, the Capital Projects team focuses on delivering projects. Missing from the table were staff from the Traffic Management division. Traffic Management is responsible for how these facilities operate. For that reason, Sam Woods, who is a lead in the Traffic Management division, will sit at the table instead of Barbara. Dawn Schellenberg, who does outreach on projects related to new separated facilities, is now the project's Communications Lead. Finally James Kelly, with the Office of Economic Development, has been brought on to the team to support economic vitality within the corridor.

Mary explained that SDOT staff, and likely others, walked away from the last DAC meeting feeling discouraged. SDOT showed two concepts, but the concepts didn't help to really understand how to make this work for all users. SDOT is taking a step back and rather than focusing on sides of the parking lot, will approach this from the inside out. Because the corridor is different in different areas, there probably is a Concept C to consider (as was referred to at the previous meeting). SDOT will be open to identifying the right solution that provides the necessary predictability and safety for all users. Therefore, SDOT is moving away from specific options and will be looking at pieces of the corridor. Mary hopes the DAC members can do a dry run for what the open house could look like.

Mary then outlined the objectives of the project:

- **Safety** for all users
- **Connectivity**: Connect cycle track with surrounding bike/walking trails and facilities
- **Accessibility**: Provide a flat, low-stress bike path, making this scenic corridor more accessible to residents and visitors
- **Economic vitality**: Creating a space that attracts customers and supports adjacent land uses

Mary noted that the “economic vitality” objective was added since the last meeting. She stated SDOT has no preconceived notions about this project other than these objectives.

- Martin noted that he appreciates including economic vitality as an objective, and it should include maritime uses in addition to land uses.
- Dave asked if there are alignments that are off the table, such as the west side of Westlake.
 - o Mary responded that Sam will speak to the west side of Westlake.
- John said it seems like SDOT is trying to design a Burke Gilman Trail here, but he doesn’t see that happening in this corridor.
- Thomas said it is an all ages route and a destination for bicyclists. With Bike Share, they will probably see a million more people riding bikes around Seattle who will likely seek the flattest route. He is curious about economic development throughout the corridor.
- Devor noted that one of the reasons the DAC asked for an extra meeting was to be better prepared for the open house and was concerned how this new approach will affect the open house.
 - o Mary said she agrees and by the end of the meeting, the open house will become clearer.
- Peter noted they weren’t joking about an Option C at the last meeting and asked about how safety is driving this project. He asked for how this area compares to other areas in Seattle in terms of safety.
 - o Sam said they will post that data to the project website.
- Karen noted that the Broadway cycle track does have similarities and there are opportunities to learn from those similarities but working within a parking lot is very different than a city street because people are traveling in all different directions. They could be creative about parking such as placing a lid on part of the parking lot and bikes could go underneath.
 - o Mary agreed that Broadway is different but they can learn from features that are similar.
- Martin said Rock Salt closed altogether and Pasta Freska is closed for lunch because of lack of parking. He doesn’t see how the current businesses can continue without parking.
 - o Mary said she is not in a position to speak to that but they do have parking management strategies that could help address parking issues.
- Thomas said there are mixing zones by Seattle University where the paving is clear and attractive. There are design adaptations that improve economic development. For example, Fremont Brewery recently doubled their space and more than 50% of their clients arrive by foot

or on bike. People used to drive more than they do now. It is in businesses' economic interest to realize people are getting around more and more by foot or on bikes. Spokane is an example. Fewer young people are getting their licenses. Also one third of rides are taken by people who make \$30,000 or less.

- An audience member asked for citations for those statistics. Thomas said he has a talk online with the citations he could send.

Corridor segment discussion

Sam opened the corridor segment discussion by explaining why the west side of Westlake isn't a viable option. To put a cycle track on the west side of Westlake, the City would have to acquire additional right-of-way. The City owns between 10 and 12 feet which includes utilities, bus stops and signs. They couldn't acquire more right-of-way because of the buildings built up to the property line. Building into the green hillside also isn't a possibility because it's hazard slope and it is unstable.

- John asked if the street could be moved to the east.
 - Sam responded that could have more impacts to parking than building the cycle track within the parking lot. In 2000, Seattle Public Utilities completed a project to upgrade outfalls prevent flooding in the corridor. They used the landscaped area to install utilities in order to not impact parking. Therefore, building a cycle track there would require relocating the utilities into the parking area. The City would also potentially need to include a separate sidewalk which would impact parking as well.

Sam noted that the City wants to discuss the broader context of possibilities, but for this variety of reasons, the west side of Westlake is off the table.

Penny explained that the conversations with the DAC and with the community about Concepts A and B caused a shift in thinking. Showing the two alignment concepts was meant to serve as a conversation starter with the intent of finding adjustments that better meet the needs of the community. However, that approach raised some angst and got in the way of constructive conversation. Therefore the project team shifted the approach in a few ways:

- Concepts A and B are no longer the frameworks for discussion.
- The open house format will now focus on listening to the community rather than presenting alignment concepts.
- The order of the DAC meetings will change to hold a parking management meeting directly after the open house on June 9th.

Penny noted that at the meeting tonight, rather than look at spot designs, the DAC would give SDOT input for how to approach the open house.

- Dave asked if a road diet for Westlake is on the table.

- Sam responded that a road diet is off the table. Westlake Avenue N is a major truck route. A road diet would require in-lane transit stops, and the average daily traffic on Westlake is on the upper range of where the City would consider a road diet.
 - Dawn added that with the Mercer and Viaduct construction, Westlake Avenue N needs to be an option for drivers.
- Karen asked for a definition of a road diet.
 - Sam responded that currently Westlake Avenue N has two lanes in each direction. A road diet would re-channelize the road to one lane each way with a left hand turn lane in the middle.
- Peter asked if SDOT is coordinating with Sound Transit.
 - Michael James, SDOT high-capacity transit representative, explained that a Sound Transit study looked at several corridors connecting Ballard to downtown. Westlake Avenue N was one of the five routes studied. It will be two or three years before Sound Transit and the City will know if the project is funded and longer to know whether the route will be located along Westlake or one of the other corridors. Therefore they are years from understanding where that corridor could be, if at all.
 - An audience members asked to see the cross sections.
 - Michael responded he brought the cross sections to the last Westlake Cycle Track open house and could bring them to the next one as well. Michael added that what is documented in the studies is maintaining four lanes on Westlake and adding high-capacity transit which would have significant impact to parking.

Penny asked the committee to think about the logical ways to separate the Westlake corridor into pieces useful for discussion. Kristen Lohse, Toole Design Group, showed the aerial view of the corridor on the screen.

- Martin said if they had the accident statistics from SDOT, they could focus on the areas that have the most collisions.
 - Sam responded the project team is using GIS to reflect locations of reported accidents. They can show collisions on the maps at the open house.
 - Devor said the members have been hearing anecdotally about safety concerns in certain areas which gives them a start.
- Dave said he has seen two (non-reported) accidents at the very north end of the corridor by driveway 14. That would be an area to consider.
- Amalia is interested in where some of the more significant industrial actions, such as fueling, are taking place.
 - Peter responded driveway 14 and driveway 10.
- Martha pointed out that the aerial view of the corridor seems to show less density along the water on the south side than on the north side.

- Penny paraphrased a few members' responses by saying that there is activity on the north end that isn't visible on the plot.
- Sam said an example of the unique corridor use is the Lake Union Rowing Club's 80-foot shells. There are also different cross sections of the parking lot, some with a service lane, some without. She asked the committee what are other ways they could break up the corridor.
 - Penny asked Dawn to explain the open house format to add some clarity to the discussion.
 - Dawn outlined that the open house runs from 5:30-8 pm with a presentation with Q&A at 6:15 pm. Before and after the presentation, the project team will have exhibit boards that offer background on the project including data on the corridor. There will also be work stations set up with maps of the corridor broken into segments. They will ask people to provide input on the conflict points and unique features of each section. It will be helpful to hear the most logical ways to break up the corridor from the DAC members.
 - Martha clarified that the DAC members' role would be to listen to the public.
 - Dawn responded yes, the expectation is for the DAC members to listen but they are welcome to share their knowledge and experience as well.
 - Penny added that the DAC members can also answer questions about the DAC process.
- Karen said she works between McGraw and Crockett Street which has parallel parking and a double loaded angled lot. It also has two-way traffic and bikes and pedestrians in multiple directions. The entrance at McGraw Street is narrow and a portion of the parking lot is used for displaying boats for sale. The area is more about the intersection than the section itself.
- Martin said they had asked SDOT for a traffic study related to the intersections. He asked if SDOT had that data with information on how many vehicles use the different driveways, whether driveways could be reduced, and what the impact would be to other driveways.
 - Sam responded they have turning movement data within the Toole studies and answered that driveways can be consolidated.
- John said between 2450 and 2470 is a major block with landscaping, an old railroad, etc. as well as in front of Starbucks.
- Thomas said the traffic circulation study does beg the question about consolidating driveways. For example, driveway 4 shows little usage.
- Devor said the exhibits have been broken down by driveway and wondered if that is the natural breakdown.
 - Penny responded that breaking down by driveway didn't seem to work with the earlier discussion around McGraw and Crockett Streets.
- Sam said that at the open house, they will have the cross sections with a larger scale and dimensions included.

- Sarah asked, recognizing that it would vary driveway to driveway, what is the estimate on how much parking would be gained by consolidating driveways.
 - o Penny said it is likely too early to decipher.
 - Sam added there are also safety benefits from consolidating driveways.
 - Kristen said they could gain a few spaces but likely not a dramatic increase.
- Sarah said the driveway next to China Harbor has a lot of activity during commute hours with little kids coming from the pool and daycare, people going home from work and customers coming and going from China Harbor. There are also dumpsters blocking views.
- Karen noted there is a jumble at China Harbor, in front of her office at McGraw Street, and in front of the AGC building with traffic merging into a single lane making things confusing.
- Martha noted that Argosy Cruises and Kenmore Air also have a lot of activity.
- Dave suggested creating a GIS overlay color coded by building density (how many employees), marinas (how many tenants), and floating homes (how many residents).

Penny noted that Dave's suggestion is a transition to her next question of the DAC which was: what kind of information should be on these maps?

- Martin said he is concerned with the development going in on Galer Street on the west side of the corridor which has permits for 334 residential units and only 260 parking spaces. He asked what the city's plan is for how to manage the need for more parking spaces than is being provided.
 - o Sam said they will have a staff person from the City's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) at the parking management meeting to address those kinds of issues. She will relay that concern to DPD staff.
 - Martin added there are other developments as well south of National Sign.
- Dave suggested people at the open house could have an opportunity to comment where they have seen an accident.
- John suggested the maps include the turning movement data.
- Peter noted that questions will likely arise about people using the corridor as a park and ride.
 - o Thomas asked if there are studies to know what percentage of people are using the corridor as a park and ride.
 - Sam said they've heard about it anecdotally.
 - Peter said there is a Human Resources department promoting the area as a space to park and ride for free.
 - o Dawn asked that Peter scan that document and send to SDOT.
- Martin said there used to be a parking stakeholders group that worked well with SDOT and then SDOT changed the rules without consultation.
 - o Dawn said Mike Estey from SDOT's parking management team met recently with Cam and that group to discuss options. They will report back at the parking management meeting.
- John noted there are fuel deliveries to Kenmore Air and Argosy Cruises.

After a break, Penny checked-in with the DAC members to ask if this approach seems more useful.

- John said it is much more useful than the two options approach.
- Martha said it addresses that there are different needs for different areas in the corridor.
- Devor said he feels more prepared for the open house and this process is more constructive.
- Peter said it allows them to tap into more creativity.
- Martin said he is curious what will be presented at the open house.
 - o Dawn answered they will have exhibits with background information, project objectives, and study data. They will also have maps for people to comment on.
- Penny added the DAC can do a dry run of one segment to see how it would go at the open house.
 - o Martin suggested using the ACG building area as an example.
 - Penny agreed and asked what their needs are. Committee comments were:
 - AGC has private parking that they need to access with both ingress and egress.
 - There are fuel trucks coming out of Kenmore Air.
 - There are tourists in the area unfamiliar with the area.
 - There are Starbucks customers.
 - At driveway 3, there is a lineup of cars with pedestrians mixing. There is also a small parking lot across driveway 3 with many pedestrians crossing at the light and that number seems to have increased recently.
 - An office building opened up across the street at the light. There could be an opportunity to manage the entrance to the Starbucks driveway such as signage.
 - The Starbucks driveway is also elevated and the parking lot at AGC goes down.
 - As a pedestrian it's not clear where you're supposed to be. The sidewalk disappears.
 - Penny noted she hasn't heard yet about marine or residential uses.
 - Audience members said there are residents in that area.
 - The AGC building also has restaurants and the building receives over 20 truck deliveries per day. There is also a hotel there with tourists going to Starbucks.
 - The area doesn't have consistent bike parking.
 - There is a marina there as well.
 - It's important to know the deliveries and truck sizes along these sections.
- Penny asked if there are opportunities within this area.
 - o Better signage.
 - o While natural shrubbery is valued, there is far too much in this area. The line of sight is challenging. There could be opportunity to clear out the driveway to improve visibility.

- This section in particular needs a marked crossing. There is also a large lot to the south of the AGC building that doesn't seem to have as much use as the rest of the parking (as reflected in the aerial map). DAC members responded to that comment:
 - That is a paid lot.
 - It's full by noon and MOHAI uses that lot for visitors.
- If one-way drive aisles are still on the table, how would that change parking dimensions and does this section make sense from a one-way perspective?
 - Sam said they will show at the open house what would be required for one-way back-in angle parking.
- At driveway 3 the two berms are confusing and there is back up through that area.
- With new shoreline requirements, would the Starbucks drive-thru be considered sustained land use?
 - Penny said that would be a DPD question.
 - It also could be an economic development question to consider optimal siting for businesses.
- Penny asked members if there are other high value features.
 - This is one of the few stretches that accommodates the ebb and flow of large groups.
 - The safety issues point to a lack of predictability for bike and cars.
 - AGC building access as well as access to Kenmore Air and Argosy Cruises needs to be preserved.
 - Because these are water-related businesses, they can't leave and go somewhere else.
 - There is an opportunity to improve the entrance to South Lake Union Park.
 - While there is value to the landscaping, in this area it should not be prioritized over parking.
- Peter clarified that the conversation will be continued beyond this meeting.
 - Penny responded yes, this is a practice run. The project team will have these kinds of questions at the open house to get a more thorough understanding. The DAC will then have their parking management meeting to learn about opportunities to solve parking issues and after that the DAC will move into looking at the corridor segment by segment, looking for ways to balance needs.
- Peter said his trade association is funding an economic impact study that will hopefully be segmented section by section and provide additional information for the DAC to consider.

Penny thanked the committee for running through the exercise. It was a helpful dry run for the open house.

Dawn added that the project team would provide DAC members with a cheat sheet for the open house with the framing questions and the amended design objectives.

Observer Comments to DAC

- Comment 1 – A resident commented he sees no way to have a separated cycle track and keep a

reasonable amount of parking. The only way to make this work is to have bicyclists share with either pedestrians or cars. The biggest safety concern is speed, if everyone were going 10 mph, there isn't a safety concern.

- Comment 2 – Commenter received the open house postcard that says “start the conversation” but the conversation should have started ten months ago. The community should have been engaged earlier. The people John is communicating with who have concerns are not anti-bike. He doesn't think the west side option should be off the table. Maybe this project isn't practical.
- Comment 3 – A resident at 1200 Westlake Ave N commented she sees a lot of accidents. The aerial view doesn't show driveway steepness. The dense bushes will have to go. She doesn't feel safe walking. SDOT needs to start tracking bicyclist behavior. Twenty percent of folks out there are going fast and all over. This is a vast improvement from what the parking lot was like before. They should consider licensing bicyclists.
- Comment 4 – Commenter commutes by car through Westlake and patronizes businesses. She also has her captain's license. She thanked the committee for the work they've put into making this work for everyone. This is a unique corridor and she likes how SDOT is now approaching this piece by piece. Anything that improves predictability and safety will be better.

Next Steps

Dawn reviewed the slide on how to contact the project team by email or phone. The team can also set up community briefings with those interested.

Penny listed next steps noting the next DAC meeting on June 9th about parking management. On June 23rd, the DAC will meet to discuss what they heard at the open house. In July there are two placeholders for meetings if special topics arise. She noted MOHAI is booked on July 14, so that meeting would need to happen at another location. In August, the DAC will work through design concepts in more detail.

The community open house will be on May 21st at Fremont Studios from 5:30-8 p.m.