

## Westlake Cycle Track Design Advisory Committee Meeting #5 Summary

Monday, June 23, 2014 5:30-8:00 p.m.  
MOHAI – Lakefront Pavilion

### Design Advisory Committee member attendees

Member Name	Interest Represented	Attendance
Warren Aakervik	Freight interests	Present
Martha Aldridge	Lake Union Park users	Present
Andrew Austin	Non-vehicular commuters	Present
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	Present
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)

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

#### Office of Economic Development

- James Kelly

#### Department of Planning and Development

- Lyle Bicknell

#### Mayor's Office

- Andrew Glass Hastings

#### EnviroIssues

- Penny Mabie
- David Gitlin
- Sara Colling

#### Toole Design Group

- Kenneth Loen

#### Observers

- Phil Bannon
- Ann Bassetti
- LeAnn Byrum
- Spencer Byrum
- Suzanne Dills
- Jerry Dinndorf
- Brock Gilman
- Pamela Hale

- Jamie Lang
- Teresa Monahan
- Marilyn Perry
- Mark Schroeder
- Mauri Shuler
- Barrie Taraday
- Bill Taraday
- Bill Wehrenberg
- Bill Wiginton
- Arden Wilken
- Jack Wilken
- Kathy Willhight
- Paul Wirsing
- Tim Zamberlin

*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 reviewed the ground rules included on the agenda.

## **Review of meeting summary #4**

Penny called the members' attention to the meeting #4 summary. She noted the incorporated edits based on feedback from two DAC members. Peter noted he also has minor edits to add. Penny asked if the members consider this summary final after Peter's edits are incorporated. 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.

- Karen Braitmayer, Westlake Avenue North business owners, reported she had been out of the office so doesn't have new information. She does have a meeting planned for early next week with Nautical Landing and Morrison's Marine at the north end of the corridor to learn about their unique uses.
- Devor Barton, Pedestrian interests, reported that the main feedback he is hearing is that people are starting to feel impatient. They are looking forward to the cycle track being built.
- Peter Schrappen, Lake Union marina operators and boat moorage tenants, reported receiving positive response to his Letter to the Editor published in the Seattle Times. He noted he appreciates Mayor Murray's approach to move from modal-by-modal planning to more integrated planning. The Westlake Cycle Track project could be a pilot for the rest of the city.
- Dave Chappelle, Lake Union floating home and live-aboard residents, reported he is still hearing concerns about how the project will move forward. However, he is hearing some optimism when people talk about the opportunities for parking management.
- Warren Aakervik, Freight interests, reported he communicated with the people who deliver the fuel to Morrison's Marine and learned they back their fuel trucks out. That could create a problem with sight distance. Without seeing the design, it is difficult to see the impact on freight mobility.
- Cam Strong, Westlake Stakeholders Group, reported his constituents' interest in hearing the open house feedback. He heard concerns with the statement made at the last DAC meeting that parking will be lost. It would be helpful to know criteria that could be applied to designs; the Sound Transit Ballard to Downtown study is a good example. He is hoping to rebuild Westlake with a thoughtful process.

- Martin Nelson, Westlake Stakeholders Group, reported he has also heard concerns about the comment from the last DAC meeting about parking loss. People are concerned that SDOT has a design that hasn't been shared with the DAC. People also have questions about replacement parking for the parking that will be lost.
- Martha Aldridge, Lake Union Park users, reported she hears concerns about parking for large buses – both tour and school buses. Construction wrapping up around Seattle Center could help alleviate parking needs on Westlake. She appreciates the project team is being cognizant of other projects, such as Ballard to Downtown High Capacity Transit.
- Andrew Austin, Non-vehicular commuters, reported he rode his bike along four potential route options within the Westlake corridor. He was impressed by how many people were walking and cycling the corridor. He found that from a user perspective the routes are chaotic. There are many choices on where to go with people needing to weave between the parking lot and sidewalk.
- Sarah McGray, Bicycle interests, reported she hears uncertainty about where the best placement would be for the intended route. She is also hearing concerns with safety and discomfort biking on Dexter Avenue in the rain. Westlake is a more desirable route.
- Thomas Goldstein, Cascade Bicycle Club, reported he agrees about Dexter Avenue not being a viable alternate route.

## **Open house summary**

Dawn Schellenberg, SDOT communications lead, provided an overview of the project open house held on May 21. More than 480 people signed in and more than 230 comments were submitted. Most attendees came from the Westlake corridor but many also came from Fremont, Ballard, Eastlake/Capitol Hill and other parts of the city.

The comments reflected safety as the highest priority for the project followed by parking concerns and ideas, business impacts and bicycle concerns. These themes reinforce the project goal and objectives and reflect the DAC members' input as well. The project team compiled all the comments into a summary. The comment summary, the comments, and 11x17 maps will all be posted to the project website.

## **Other ideas for the Westlake bike facility**

Sam Woods, SDOT project manager, reviewed three suggested ideas: an elevated cycle track; encouraging use of Dexter Avenue North; and a community member's suggestion to align the facility through the parking aisle.

She showed an example of the Thomas Street bike and pedestrian overpass, an elevated track connecting Myrtle Edwards Park to Lower Queen Anne over Elliott Ave W and the BNSF tracks. Sam outlined what something similar would entail for Westlake: an elevated structure approximately 6,200 linear feet, 14.5 to 16.5 feet high with a minimum width of 12 feet. It would also require columns to

support it and ramps at both ends and along the facility. An elevated structure would have significant visual impacts, as well as parking impacts to the corridor. The cost is also far outside the project's budget. Because of these issues, SDOT is not considering an elevated cycle track.

- Martin commented that with no economic impact study, they can't know if the potential revenue loss would be even greater than the estimated project cost of \$75-80 million. This is a marine-related corridor and can't be moved.
  - o Sam responded that although no economic impact study was being done by the city, parking management strategies will help address parking needs.
- Cam commented that he is concerned that this option is being dismissed without much conversation. It should be set aside and reconsidered if the City isn't able to address the issue of loss of parking with other concepts.
- Warren commented that if parking is the issue, a parking garage could be built for that amount of money.
- Sarah noted that she thought the outcome of the last meeting was that there is a dialogue in addressing parking management concerns.
  - o Cam responded he sent a follow-up email to Mike Estey who said after a conversation with Mary that reactivating the Westlake Stakeholder Parking group was off the table for now.
    - Mary Rutherford, SDOT Director of Traffic Management, explained that the intent was to keep the parking management conversation as part of the DAC rather than separating it out.
    - Cam responded that the parking data presented at the last meeting only reflected one third of the corridor. If the rest of the free parking is included, the lot would be 95% full. In light of that, he asked to schedule a Westlake Stakeholder Parking group meeting with SDOT and got nowhere.
    - Mary said SDOT intends to continue the dialogue about parking, but within the DAC process rather than forming another group.
    - Cam asked when that will happen and Mary responded that parking will be discussed as part of the DAC process. The DAC will start looking at what the concepts mean for parking and what the parking management strategies are.
    - Cam said this is a current need rather than something that can wait until 2015.
    - Penny said that the current parking management needs aren't within the DAC scope. Those can be discussed with Mike.
    - Cam clarified that he was suggesting he himself go back to Mike to discuss current parking issues.
    - Mary added that Mike had sent an email earlier that day saying they had the preliminary results from the 2014 parking study. Based on that data, SDOT will make recommendations about parking modifications this year.
    - Cam said he hadn't seen that email yet.
- Peter noted the concern that bicyclists wouldn't be inclined to use the elevated track applies to

an at-grade track as well.

- Sam responded that at the next DAC meeting they'll get further into a design discussion and issues like that one.

Sam continued her presentation outlining the considerations for using Dexter Avenue North as an alternate route. Sam presented the elevation profiles of Dexter and Westlake. Dexter has a long, continuous 100-foot elevation gain that is challenging for a more casual bicyclist, while Westlake is flat. Currently about one third of bicyclists use Westlake and about two thirds use Dexter. Sam stated demand on Westlake keeps increasing as South Lake Union continues to grow and reiterated that the bike facility would be for all ages and abilities. Westlake is a natural, flat, direct connection from the Ship Canal Trail to South Lake Union Park.

Sam continued to discuss an idea suggested by a community member that would construct the bike facility in the center of the parking aisle. She noted the attractive elements of the design, including that it would add predictability for where bicyclists would be riding, the speed humps help to slow motorists, and the back in angled parking improves safety. However, the design isn't considered protected, because motorists can drive on it or cross it at any point with no physical delineation. She added that this design is 6 feet wide rather than the 10 foot minimum and drivers are likely to avoid the speed humps and drive where the cyclists would be riding. Essential to an all ages and abilities safe facility is that where motorists cross the facility it is in a predictable and limited manner.

- Sarah asked if this design is two-way or one-way for cars and bicyclists.
  - Sam said it is two ways for both and clarified that bikes would be traveling in the same direction as cars.
- Martin noted that when the street is painted solid green, his experience is that vehicles stay off of it. He wanted to hear input from Sarah and Thomas whether that is the case. Also he wondered if Mike Estey from SDOT would know how much parking would be lost with different angle designs. He noted that by his calculations with 45 degree angles, 29% of parking is lost with 5 feet per side.
  - Penny indicated that the conversation was becoming a design discussion which is premature.
    - Martin continued that with 60% angled parking, 15% of parking is lost with three feet per side.
    - Penny verified that these numbers are based on Martin's own calculations.
  - Thomas said, in response to Martin's question, that cars don't necessarily stay off the green paint and that this design could add a fair amount of confusion.
    - Sam added that green pavement is meant to highlight potential conflict areas – where motorist and bicyclist paths cross.
    - Sarah said she doesn't have enough experience to comment on green lanes. She doesn't think this design encourages a broad spectrum of users.
    - Penny added it is important to know exactly what tools like the green pavement are typically used for.

Sam concluded that SDOT is optimistic that working segment by segment through the corridor will help develop a design that is pretty spectacular. The design team expects to present a draft concept to the DAC at the July 28 meeting that they'll discuss with an iterative, nuanced approach.

Penny circled back to Cam's comment earlier in the meeting regarding screening criteria. She explained that with the shift from using concepts A and B to a more organic design, SDOT is not providing the community a number of alternatives to compare to each other and apply criteria, and that the process will be more iterative than that. After the roundtables help to get a clear understanding of the pinch points in the corridor, SDOT will bring a concept to the DAC for discussion and input.

- Sam added they would be looking at the design segment by segment rather than one design all the way through the corridor.
  - o Cam clarified that it sounds like what Sam is describing is criteria.
    - Penny said rather than using formal criteria, they are integrating needs.
    - Cam said if it is needs driven, he is comfortable with that.
    - Mary added they have defined several objectives and they'll want to make sure the design meets those objectives.
  - o Martha noted she feels they've been making progress. The discussion about concepts A and B brought about a better process.
    - Penny added that the process is sometimes slower than some would like it to be but SDOT is gathering a lot of data and listening.
- Peter asked about the woonerf concept.
  - o Sam said a woonerf is different than the design she just discussed. The design she discussed is considered a shared street.
    - Penny added that the project team changed the terminology to be more accurate.
- Thomas asked SDOT, referencing Cam's point about 95% parking utilization based on the presentation at the last DAC meeting, when the soonest that free parking can be removed.
  - o Mary responded that they are currently studying the 2014 parking data and based on that study, the plan is to make changes to parking management during the summer or fall of this year.
    - Dawn added that some changes are occurring as soon as July.

After a break, Sam noted that at the last DAC meeting she had acknowledged that whatever is done, there will be some parking loss. That was not intended to imply that SDOT has a design in mind, but rather to acknowledge that a cycle track will require some space, and some parking loss is inevitable. However, as was discussed at the last meeting, parking management may offset the impacts of these lost spaces.

## **Ballard to Downtown High Capacity Transit update**

Michael James, SDOT High Capacity Transit representative, began his presentation by explaining that the term "High Capacity Transit" refers to bus or rail. He described the study recently released by Sound

Transit, which examined five potential corridors at a high level that would connect Ballard to Downtown. He noted that in terms of public outreach the Queen Anne tunnel option scored the highest. The five corridors ranged in scores in terms of travel time, cost, ridership and other factors.

- Martin asked if Sound Transit and SDOT would take community input as they determine which route is appropriate.
  - o Michael responded that yes, they will absolutely take more community input and outline the next steps in the project.

Michael explained that Sound Transit would still need a funding authority for the project, and that brings uncertainty to the project's future. Assuming the Ballard to Downtown project does move forward, Sound Transit would have to determine which route to pursue and then get voter approval. If Ballard were selected, the corridor would be determined from there. Based on the North Lake Link example, Michael estimated that Ballard to Downtown service could begin in 2028 only if all goes smoothly.

- Warren asked if Sound Transit and King County Metro would start coordinating systems so they feed into each other.
  - o Michael said Dow Constantine is working to encourage a more integrated transit approach and the recent transit vote could encourage more collaboration.
- Sarah asked if the Westlake corridor were chosen, would the transit be located in the road or the parking lot.
  - o Michael said they examined the corridor under the assumption that it would operate within the road.
  - o Sarah asked if the road would be expanded by lane width.
    - Michael responded that it would become a six-lane road rather than four, with two of six the lanes being exclusive for transit. There is one option (for the north portion of Westlake) that may expand the road by one and a half lanes.

## **Westlake land use and planning**

Lyle Bicknell, Principal Urban Designer in the Department of Planning and Development, showed aerial maps of the corridor that illustrate zoning uses. He noted the shoreline overlay on the shore side of Westlake which necessitates an additional level of regulation. The Westlake corridor doesn't have much projected future development.

Lyle explained that south of Galer Street the City doesn't have parking requirements. He also noted that development is providing 25% more parking than what would be required, so just because the City doesn't require parking, doesn't mean it doesn't get built. Lyle summarized that they can safely estimate that within the next 20 years they will probably see about 625 new units in the corridor.

- Martin asked why there are no parking requirements below Galer Street.
  - o Lyle responded that is because that area is considered an urban center where alternate transportation is more accessible.

- Martin asked about the current development being built that doesn't offer three parking spaces to every four units.
  - o Lyle responded that it does vary but that in general developments will include parking to attract residents. He also noted that Seattle is becoming more comfortable for people who don't have cars.
- Sarah asked about plans to create parking requirements in South Lake Union.
  - o Lyle responded that South Lake Union is actually operating as they had hoped in which developments are self-regulating and fewer people have cars, so the city has no plans to require parking.
- Warren asked about the Restricted Parking Zone (RPZ) requirements south of Galer.
  - o Lyle responded that RPZ requirements are prioritized based on use.
- Dave asked about the scenario if the amount of parking stalls were reduced and the marina owner was supposed to require parking, what happens if their marine were to burn down, would they be required to meet parking needs.
  - o Lyle responded that a new marina coming into the area would be required to include a proportionate amount of parking, but the "existing non-conforming" marinas would be grandfathered in after a hypothetical fire.

### **Discuss DAC workplan and upcoming activities**

Dawn summarized the discussion at the last DAC meeting to hold roundtables at different locations along the corridor. Based on the DAC feedback, the project team is going to hold two roundtables – one at the AGC building and one near the houseboats – and a DAC tour along the corridor. The roundtables will involve about 20 people representing diverse perspectives. Dawn invited audience members to sign up if they are interested in attending the roundtables and representing a particular interest.

- Cam noted that the area by Diamond Marina is a big conflict area and asked if there would be a roundtable up there.
  - o Dawn said she is communicating with Peter and Dave Morrison about making that a stop on the tour.
- Karen said, regarding Lyle's presentation, residential developments are finding their parking is underutilized and they are sometimes leasing spaces out to non-residents.

Penny described the DAC tour planned for July 14. It will be limited to DAC members and project staff so that everyone can hear; however project staff will summarize the conversations and post a summary of the tour. It will start at 5 PM and last about two and a half hours. Members will meet on the south end of the corridor, walk north, and take an Argosy boat back.

- Sarah asked if members were going to ride bikes.
  - o Penny said she wasn't sure that had been integrated into the planning and it could be challenging logistically.

Penny then described some changes in the DAC workplan. She proposed moving the 8/11 meeting to

8/25. The following DAC meeting would land on the week of September 29 and the open house would be held in mid-October. The DAC agreed with the proposed plan and Penny said the team will email the revised schedule out to the members.

### **Observer comments to DAC**

- Comment 1 – A Westlake resident and member of the Lake Union District Council commented about the AGC marina area. There are about 40-50 parking spaces not being monitored by the City. Parking is full by 7:45am. There are 16 cranes in operation and workers from the construction sites park in the Westlake lot during the day. Bicyclists ride too close to pedestrians.
- Comment 2 – Commenter congratulated SDOT on their open house. She appreciated the maps and the chance to explain their own area. It engaged all kinds of interests. She does have concern with the online comments having the same weight as written comments because people who came to the open house got to engage. She also thanked Lyle for the reminder of what the shoreline overlay means to the people who don't have uplands. When the marinas were put in, they had to identify parking. The maritime industry needs to be preserved.
- Comment 3 – Commenter noted that he drove through the parking lot starting on the north end and saw zero spaces between West Marine and Nautical Landing. If people wanted to go to China Harbor or other businesses, unlike the south end, there aren't options.
- Comment 4 – Commenter agreed with the previous comments and encouraged the City to consider the elevated track option. She is disappointed it seemed dismissed out of hand. They are struggling with limited space. She envisions a bike lane, pedestrian lane and some landscaping. It would be a huge gain. Hong Kong has escalators on the hills which could be another solution to consider. Her main concern is that they'll end up with a solution that solves nothing.
- Comment 5 – Commenter felt that the proposed High Capacity Transit won't help the Westlake area. There is so much going on at Westlake, but others don't want to acknowledge that. He felt the City will lose a large part of its heritage and business community at the convenience of bicyclists.
- Comment 6 – A resident who has been living in her floating home for 34 years saw the road paving changes. They were told they would get speed bumps and signs but nothing happened. When she asked at the open house if they've considered a multi-modal path, she was told that it's there now and it doesn't work. That should be kept in mind as an option and reworked with signage to limit the impact on parking.
- Comment 7 – A resident who also owns a boat, bikes and walks along the corridor commented she is supportive of the cycle track especially that the City and the DAC are making sure it is done right and not a quick fix. She thanked the City for the signs put in along the corridor. She is afraid to cross the Fremont Bridge because it feels dangerous with fast bicyclists riding by. She encourages the City to pay attention to the Fremont Bridge using signage or special stops.
- Comment 8 – Commenter said that Lyle discussed residential development but he thinks it

would be useful for the DAC to discuss what is being rezoned and the commercial permits coming through the pipeline.

- Comment 9 – Commenter encouraged the DAC to challenge SDOT on what he considered to be a bait and switch. When this project started, it was urgent to get bikes out of the parking lot and then they came out with a 10 mph cycle track idea. Ten mph will work for families but the fast bicyclists will continue to use the parking lot where it's dangerous. Also, in discussing parking it's a matter of livelihoods. Businesses don't survive without parking. He has questions to the City that aren't answered. He has asked the City to give the DAC power in this decision in the same way the parking workgroup had power.
- Comment 10 – Commenter asked if because the meeting is ahead of schedule, could Lyle address a previous commenter's question.
- Comment 11 – Commenter said a multi-modal path is what is feeding into this path so this area shouldn't be a mile long speedway.
- Comment 12 – Commenter was a part of the parking workgroup in 2006 and agrees that they felt it was a collaborative process. The workgroup built a walk/bike path that is wider than the Burke Gilman Trail and gave up 400 parking spaces. The path needs signs and enforcement. She can understand why bikes wouldn't want to go up the hill – a short escalator isn't a bad idea. What stops bicyclists from staying on the path is the 90 degree turns. Long, slow turns would help.

Lyle walked through the zoning requirement and heights and noted how heights increase as you move south through the corridor. The south end becomes a mixed zone.

- An audience member asked for more information.
  - o Penny addressed the advisory committee asking if they need this information on zoning and they said no.
- Thomas addressed an audience member about the elevated cycle track option. He said one third of bicyclists wouldn't use it and they would be dealing with the same issues as they are now. Also it wouldn't give bikes the chance to access businesses along Westlake. The Centennial Trail in Spokane is a good example where it's obvious where the bikes and pedestrians should be and there are treatments anywhere where there is conflict. There are also design features to keep people going slow.

## **Next Steps**

Penny reminded the committee the DAC tour is on July 14.