

## **Summary Notes from Westlake Avenue North Interest Group Meeting 1 Residential/Liveboard Issues Monday, November 6, 2006**

### Summary and Introductions

SDOT staff hosted the first of three Interest Group meetings with Westlake community stakeholders to gather and discuss concerns and issues, and to identify volunteer representatives to take part in a Westlake Parking Workgroup. This meeting was focused on issues specific to residents and liveboards. Twenty-eight (28) members of the community signed in as attendees.

The meeting opened with introductions of all participants, and a brief discussion of the intended purpose and outcomes by Marty Curry, who is facilitating the three Interest Group meetings and the subsequent Workgroup meetings.

### Parking Management Goals (with Questions and Answers)

SDOT's Mike Estey gave an overview of the City's parking management goals generally and as they pertain to Westlake. He described that the Westlake Avenue North parking is in public right of way and how City staff do their best to manage public parking consistent with City policies and goals, and to best address the needs of the adjacent businesses, residents, properties, and other interests. He said there are two main goals of the City's parking management plan for Westlake: 1) achieve an 85% maximum peak occupancy of spaces (an industry standard indicating the parking is well utilized but that there are available spaces to be found without a significant amount of trolling); and 2) understand and address the wide variety of user needs in Westlake. Mike's full speaking points are attached at the end of this summary (Attachment 1) and linked on the SDOT web site. His response to what is "on the table" for discussion during this outreach process: essentially anything that achieves those two primary goals that is not currently illegal.

During Mike's presentation, he responded to questions and took comments. Among them (with a brief summary response given at the meeting included):

- What is the definition of "north end vs. south end"? (*It's not specifically defined, but we consider the south half of the corridor roughly south of China Harbor.*)
- What days of the week were included in the 2005 study? (*Tuesday and Wednesday in May*)
- Why is the south end so crowded? (*Many possible reasons; it's denser, closer to Queen Anne, South Lake Union, downtown, has a couple taller buildings, etc.*)
- The Marriott charges \$15/night for parking, so their guests park at Westlake.
- What is required to change the RPZ rules to allow non-residents? (*Relevant statutes are both City and State.*)
- Has SDOT been instructed by the Mayor or City Council to make revenue from Westlake? (*SDOT does not install paid parking to raise money. Paid parking is a tool to provide better access, availability, and turnover of parking. There are revenue assumptions in the proposed budget. If paid parking is not installed at Westlake, the budget and assumptions would be revised.*)
- Clarify whether parking controls in place now are monitored for implementation and efficiency. (*SPD Parking Enforcement reports that at some point time limits signs*

*have limited effectiveness. Westlake appears to have reached a point where paid parking would provide more consistent access and availability)*

- The Parking Enforcement Officers community members have talked to have strong opinions, and need to be involved in the plan. One PEO said no one had talked to him about the plan, and he has valuable information to share. *(SDOT would welcome comments from any parking enforcement personnel about Westlake conditions. SPD's Parking Enforcement Manager has been a key member of the City's Westlake team.)*
- What is the thinking behind having one particular area for residents to park vs. all over the corridor? There is a safety concern with having all the residential vehicles concentrated in one area. *(The details of vehicle dispersal will be among the many issues addressed by the Working Group, and that kind of input will be helpful as we shape final recommendations.)*
- What are the demographics regarding houseboat residents and live-aboards? *(Lynne Reister of WANA said she has information on the numbers of residences, residents and vehicles.)*
- What is the approval process for the plan—can parts be approved as we go along? We can spend a lot of time on it and someone can reject the whole thing. *(The City Traffic Engineer, Wayne Wentz, is the one in the Seattle Municipal Code with the authority to make decisions regarding how the curbspace and public right-of-way are managed for parking purposes. He will attend the first Workgroup meeting to share his perspective.)*
- Marinas charge different rates for live-aboard leases. SDOT can use that information to help define “resident”.
- If you live at the north end can you park at the south end with your RPZ permit? *(Yes, though details of whether or not to have specific pockets of parking available for residents will be discussed, the entire corridor will have a single RPZ designation.)*

### Small Group Discussions

The large group then broke up into three smaller working groups to discuss in greater detail the specific thoughts, comments, questions, and concerns attendees had regarding residential and liveaboard issues as they relate to parking the corridor. The City presented a summarized list of the residential and liveaboard issues and concerns it had heard over the past several months from meetings, emails, conversations, and other comments. Each of the three smaller working groups then elaborated on those issues, brought up additional ones, and then each table prioritized its top concerns. The details of those table discussions can be found as Attachment 2 at the end of this Meeting Summary, and are linked on the SDOT web site.

At the conclusion of the small group discussions, a number of additional questions and comments were raised and addressed. Among them (with a brief summary response given at the meeting included):

- If there aren't enough Parking Enforcement Officers to patrol now, there still won't be if there's paid parking. *(Paid parking is more efficient to patrol; there's no need to chalk tires, return every two hours, etc., so fewer PEO's are typically necessary.)*
- Don't separate out live-aboards from residents; they're “residents” just like houseboat residents.

- Live-aboards are not like houseboat residents; they rent rather than own, and tend to be more transient.
- Big buildings with paid parking (e.g. WRQ, Marriott) have empty lots. Is there a way to keep them from parking at Westlake for free?
- Consider placement of loading and handicapped parking zones for efficiency and access.
- How should the community address issues that are outside the purview of SDOT, such as public safety, transit and hotel parking? Will SDOT act as a facilitator, or should the community act on their own? *(SDOT can help facilitate City agency contacts. On some issues, the community may need to pursue separate communications with other agencies and the private sector. As those issues are identified, SDOT will ensure there is clarity for each on who has the lead.)*
- An attendee requested that someone come talk to the group about parking requirements for future development, and general information and timelines on upcoming development. *(SDOT could invite someone from the Department of Planning and Development, or WANA could separately meet with DPD staff. An attendee suggested visiting the South Lake Union Discovery Center, where there is a display map and model of current and proposed developments.)*
- An attendee requested a detailed study of who is actually using the parking and where they come from (e.g. park-and-riders, area employees, gym users).
- The problem statement should be revised to note that the parking problem is in the south end only.
- Are any meetings scheduled for geographical areas? *(Geographic-based Interest Group meetings are not currently scheduled. We are waiting for the outcomes of these first three Interest Group meetings to see whether issues related to the geography of the corridor have been well represented. If necessary, it may make sense to have specific geographical representatives on the Working Group.)*
- The truck-only zone does not work the way it should, and needs to be redesigned.
- Public transportation in the corridor is limited to Metro's Route 17 between Downtown and Ballard. Improving the pedestrian route from Westlake to Dexter Avenue would increase access to transit.
- To support marine uses, there should be no paid parking on weekends.

### Forming the Workgroup and Next Steps

At the conclusion of the meeting, the next steps for community outreach were described. There will be two more Interest Group Meetings (November 13 for marina owners, operators, and users, and November 21 for Property and Business Owners, Managers, Employees, and Customers). Once 15-20 Parking Workgroup members have been identified, the Workgroup will meet approximately five times over the next couple months, probably once every two weeks (see Attachment 3 for additional details about the Workgroup, and fill out and send to SDOT Attachment 4 to indicate interest in joining the Workgroup.) The Workgroup will roll up their sleeves to put together a workplan and arrive at recommendations for a revised Parking Management Plan, with the details to be presented to City Traffic Engineer Wayne Wentz.

**Attachment 1 – Parking Management Goals; Speaking Points of Mike Estey, SDOT**

**Attachment 2 – Summary of Small-Group Discussions**

**Attachment 3 – Summary of Parking Workgroup**

**Attachment 4 – Application to Volunteer for Parking Workgroup**

**Attachment 1 – Parking Management Goals**  
**Speaking Points of Mike Estey, SDOT**  
**November 6, 2006**

- Parking is an important asset. In case of Westlake, is in public right-of-way. At SDOT, our job to manage in manner consistent with how manage public ROW parking elsewhere. Provide access & ensure mobility.
- When parking study done in 2005, data showed southern half largely “full” during significant portions of day. Over past couple months, have heard that more or less acknowledged. But disagreement about whether or not a problem. We think it is –limits access to businesses, amenities. Why we’re proposing to better manage the parking.
- **Two main goals:** 1) manage parking to achieve a peak maximum occupancy of 85% . . . parking is well-utilized, but don’t have to “troll” too much to find a space – those who need it have access; 2) in whatever implement, do our best to address the wide variety of parking uses in Westlake.
- With those two goals in mind, have been asked what “on the table” for discussion. Answer: anything that helps achieve those two goals that is not currently illegal (e.g., allowing RPZ permits for employees as a “class” in addition to residents – not currently legal).
- Broader context for our work – guiding policy documents like the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Strategic Plan. They speak to how Seattle will accommodate growth over time, and to employ various transportation strategies in response.
- Accepting that each area of city has its unique characteristics, want to be consistent in how apply tools available to manage parking. Unrestricted, time limits, paid parking, enforcement.
- The data collected in 2005 shows that existing unrestricted parking and time-limit signs not working well. In circumstances like this, experience in other parts of city is that paid parking is effective in providing improved access to available parking.
- In Westlake, draft June plan proposed managing the public right-of-way by introducing paid parking and a residential parking zone. Recognizing that Westlake has a variety of parking needs and has until now been free for parking, also proposed some innovative things:
  - allow for all-day paid parking (which don’t do anywhere else)
  - introduce the possibility of purchasing multiple days of parking; may better meet business, employee and marina user needs
  - allow residents to park in many paid parking areas by displaying a valid RPZ permit
  - start at a lower hourly rate than the rest of the city
  - adjust rates to meet performance targets; if occupancy falls substantially below 85%, then the City would lower rates; if occupancy is still substantially above 85%, the City may raise rates
- Comes back to trying to meet a couple key objectives: 85% occupancy (i.e. – access), and doing our best to meet a wide variety of user needs. What is “on the table” for discussion? Any and all ideas, thoughts, and suggestions to address those goals. We’ll be taking all of them at these Interest Group meetings, and the Parking Workgroup will wrestle with them.

## **Attachment 2 – Summary of Small-Group Discussions Regarding Resident and Liveboard Issues**

At the November 6 meeting, the larger group split up into three smaller groups to further discuss concerns, questions, and ideas regarding parking in the Westlake corridor as it relates to residents and liveboards. The City provided a summarized list of the resident and liveboard issues it had heard over the past several months from meetings, emails, phone calls, and other comments. This document includes the City's initial summary of resident and liveboard issues, followed by the notes of each of the three smaller groups at the November 6 meeting. Each group was additionally asked to prioritize its top issues.

### **Westlake Avenue North Parking Issues and Concerns: Community Residents and Live-Aboards**

(As summarized by City staff from e-mails, letters, phone calls, meetings and conversations with community members over the past several months)

#### Space Availability

- 1) Growth and development in the immediate area make it difficult to find convenient parking during some periods of the day.
- 2) Commuter parking for bus transport to center city destinations (i.e., "hide and ride") increases demand for available parking spaces.

#### Economic Impacts

- 3) The cost of paid parking may create an unacceptable additional economic burden for:
  - community residents
  - live-aboards
  - guests
- 4) The cost of paid parking may force local businesses to relocate, thus changing the unique character of the Westlake neighborhood for those who choose to live there.
- 5) The cost of paid parking may increase prices for marine service businesses that are used by local residents and live-aboards.
- 6) The cost of paid parking, on top of the economic hardships caused by the succession of construction projects, is unfair to local residents.

#### Residential Parking Zone (RPZ) Permits

- 7) Need to define who qualifies for an RPZ permit:
  - shore-side residents east of Westlake Avenue North
  - shore-side residents west of Westlake Avenue North
  - "official" live-aboards
  - "other" live-aboards
  - marina slip owners/ renters
- 8) Need to balance space allocation for all RPZ permit holders and their guests with other area parking needs.

9) Need RPZ parking space locations to be convenient for loading/unloading between cars and residences.

10) Need to be adequate number, location of loading and unloading areas designated.

#### Enforcement and Security

11) Need to monitor “non-resident” parkers migrating to RPZ spaces to avoid paid parking.

12) Need to address parking durations in excess of 72 hours for live-aboards who leave for multiple-day/multiple-week sailing cruises.

13) There are public safety and security concerns associated with Westlake parking.

### **Notes from Three November 6, 2006 Small Group Discussions**

(each group's top priorities and concerns as indicated are shaded  
and at the top of each group's list of issues)

#### **Group 1**

- Concern about RPZ areas too distant from residence, loading, etc. - especially at night
- Safety a particular concern near China Harbor (call/talk with SPD to confirm)
- Allow resident parking anywhere in corridor with permit - don't “herd” into limited areas
- Fear of increasing encroachment on unique marine area - want to preserve marine access needs
- Is there a difference between residents and liveaboards for parking purposes?
- Real issue? Access of west-side condos - in/out of RPZ - has impacts on east side
- Address “guest” issue with RPZs
- Unique neighborhood - zero other off-street parking options for residents
- Implement in rolling manner, south to north, where problems greatest
- Plan/City need to appreciate desire to retain overall character of corridor/community
- West side residents without good options need access to RPZ (maybe limited number) - e.g. Nuts & Bolts
- City needs to address how/why it's allowing limited west-side parking with new construction, because of impacts on east side - need to preserve marine-related parking - one of last marine-primary use areas
- Parking for high-impact projects - should have to provide their own in sufficient numbers
- Need details on RPZ permits - how many allowed per household; how many guest permits
- Reiterate concern about parking in unsafe areas at night

#### **Group 2**

- No paid parking on evenings and weekends when demands are lower - alleviate burdens on marina users
- Employees in buildings with existing paid parking need to be using those spaces - need to find ways to encourage better behavior
- More effective problem statement would be “There is a problem in the south end because of X, Y, and Z”
- No definition of “official” live-aboard

- There is definition of live-aboard in DNR regulations
- There are live-aboard and non-live-aboard leases - suggest using that as determinant; don't open can of worms with DNR definition
- Some are tenants at will; define by where they get mail, or other (car registration, voter registration)
- Need to include people on west side of street
- How many guest permits are allowed?
- Where else in City can one now walk several blocks to find free parking?
- Don't believe that revenue is not a goal
- If RPZ permit, why could not park anywhere in corridor?
- Exclusive RPZ is an option?
- If lower-priced parking, more demand will occur (e.g. in residential areas) - disparity between high and low price
- Distinction between weekday and weekends; daytime and nighttime
- Why make changes along entire corridor if problems are not throughout corridor
- Three-day parking passes are a signal to burglars
- RPZ stickers are also a signal to thieves
- Treat residents and live-aboards the same

### **Group 3**

- RPZ permit - no time limits, no designated area
- RPZ should include both general and premium spaces - should be able to park anywhere
- Need to address lack of public transportation; needs of park-and-riders
- No Saturday paid parking, not appropriate for this area, businesses are closed
- Concern for safety - walking a distance to residence in the dark
- Designate spots on west side of lot (across from 2420, 2460, 2466) as residential only
- Concern for development/zoning changes changing character of shore side with big condos, driving out small businesses
- Need to travel from north end to south end without paying for parking
- Mid-day is worst congestion in parking lot; 1:00-3:00 can usually find a space; after 5:00 seldom a problem
- Currently can usually find parking space close to residence
- Saturdays during summer, south end is full with SLU users
- Paid parking in other neighborhoods does not seem to alleviate congestion - why here?

## **Attachment 3 – Summary of Westlake Avenue North Parking Workgroup**

As part of the Westlake Avenue North community involvement effort, a Parking Workgroup will be formed and meet with City staff to address issues identified by stakeholders and develop parking management recommendations. Marty Curry will facilitate the meetings, working with the workgroup and SDOT staff to ensure the process is open and effective.

### Membership

The overall group will have a total of 12 - 15 people, who will be identified from volunteers from the three prior stakeholder meetings. The workgroup will reflect the various types of stakeholder interest and use of Westlake parking, and will include representation from the different geographic areas throughout the corridor. All workgroup meetings will be open to other attendees, though active participation at workgroup meetings will be limited to workgroup members.

### Commitment

The group will meet approximately five times, once every two weeks (accommodations will be made for holiday schedules). An initial meeting will likely be held in December, with subsequent meetings taking place in January and February. Meetings will likely last about two hours each.

### First Meeting

At the first meeting, the workgroup will need to establish a set of goals, ground rules for how the group operates during meetings, parameters for discussions, and a communications plan. The group will want to outline a workplan for how it intends to move through subject matter in subsequent meetings to reach its ultimate recommendations. As the person designated in the Seattle Municipal Code with the responsibility for making decisions regarding parking, curbspace designation, and the public right-of-way, City Traffic Engineer Wayne Wentz will attend the first meeting to share his perspective.

### Communications Strategy – Keeping the rest of the community informed and involved

It will be important to keep the broader Westlake community fully informed and involved throughout the workgroup process. The workgroup will help serve as a two-way conduit of information to members of larger stakeholder and other interest groups. As part of a communications strategy, non-workgroup members will be kept current via regular updates of the SDOT website and email summaries of each workgroup meeting to the project contact list. The workgroup will also help with posting, spreading, and sharing information throughout the community involvement process. Non-workgroup members are invited to share and comment throughout the process, either through workgroup members or directly to SDOT staff. As mentioned above, all workgroup meetings will be open to other attendees, though active participation at workgroup meetings will be limited to workgroup members.

**Attachment 4 – Application to Volunteer for Parking Workgroup – Residential Interests**

Westlake Avenue North

November 2006

**PARKING WORKGROUP VOLUNTEERS – RESIDENTIAL INTERESTS**

Thank you for your interest in participating in a parking workgroup for the Westlake Avenue North community. The following information will help us form a workgroup that is balanced by both interest group (e.g., residents, businesses, employees, marina users, etc.) and geographic area.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Residence Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**RESIDENCE TYPE:**

- Houseboat
- Liveaboard
- Shoreside home
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**MEETING AVAILABILITY:** Put an "X" in the times during the week when you typically ARE AVAILABLE.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
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<b>Mornings:</b> 8:00 to 11:00 AM					
<b>Afternoons:</b> Noon to 5:00 PM					
<b>Evenings:</b> 6:00 to 9:00 PM					

**Return by November 27, 2006 to:**

Sue Partridge, Seattle Dept. of Transportation, P.O. Box 34996, Seattle, WA 98124-4996, (206) 233-3718, Fax: 206-684-5093, [sue.partridge@seattle.gov](mailto:sue.partridge@seattle.gov)