



Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board

*Stewards of the
Pedestrian Master Plan*

Jennifer Lehman, Co-Chair
Emily Davis, Co-Chair
Ori Brian
Akshali Gandhi
Bianca Johnson
Emily Mannetti
Esti Mintz
Han-Jung Ko (Koko)
Maria Sumner

The Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor and all the offices of the city on matters related to pedestrians and the impacts which actions by the city may have upon the pedestrian environment; and shall have the opportunity to contribute to all aspects of the city's planning insofar as they relate to the pedestrian safety and access.

*-City Council Resolution
28791*

June 9, 2021

SPAB June Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Board members: Jennifer Lehman, Emily Davis, Ori Brian, Bianca Johnson, Han-Jung Ko (Koko), Maria Sumner, and Akshali Gandhi. Plus unconfirmed new board members, Erin Fitzpatrick, Hang Nguyen, and Greyson Simon

Members of the public: Ray Warrick, Doug MacDonald, Michelle Baruchman, and approximately 3 people joined by phone

Public Comment:

- Doug MacDonald: I sent a map to Polly from SDOT of where in Seattle all of the pedestrian collisions occur, using 2019 data. This is related to Vision Zero. The map is really striking because it shows that pedestrians can get hit almost anywhere, but the vast majority of collisions are concentrated in the Central Business District and other areas. I would encourage that there is more discussion about the granularity rather than discussing generalities. I also noticed that there was a slide talking about the vulnerability of cyclists and pedestrians who make up the majority of people who are killed in collisions. The slide showed that 60 pedestrians were killed and 6 cyclists were killed in the same period, showing that pedestrian deaths outnumbered.
 - Polly: Thanks for your comment. I will share this with SDOT and we do have information in our GIS database that shows pedestrian fatalities and injuries. We are looking at Rainier and Lake City Way specifically in the near term in part based on these maps.
 - Doug: Rainier and Lake City Way are problem areas, but they are not where the main volume of collisions are happening as you will see on the map.

Board Member Introductions

- Board members shared their names, pronouns, neighborhoods, and new outdoor spots that they have discovered during the pandemic including: Little Brook Park and the adjacent Stay Healthy Street (Hang), Queen Anne P-Patch on Lynn (Emily Davis), Meadowbrook Pond (Maria)
- Three unconfirmed board members have joined: Erin Fitzpatrick, Hang Nguyen, and Greyson Simon. The new board members are scheduled for confirmation hearings on June 16th.

Mid-Year Check In:

- Framework for each subcommittee for mid-year check in: what do we want to keep doing, what do we want to start doing, and what do we want to stop doing?

- Guiding Principles Subcommittee (Bianca, Ori): The guiding principles committee aimed to see what tangible things SPAB wanted to pull out of conversations with SDOT, such as supporting investments that are safe and equitable for all pedestrians, ensure investments are made equitable throughout the city, and supporting the greater community.
 - Ori: We had a suggestion to collaborate with other boards, which I think we should keep doing as we did when the bike board came to us last meeting with a letter that they wrote.
 - Emily D: That's a great point and I had the intention to attend other board meetings. I think it's great to see what they are doing, but it is tough for one person to attend three meetings in one month. We could possibly rotate sending people to those meetings.
 - Maria: It would be great to connect on specific topics, such as Vision Zero. It is a lot of time to attend all of the meetings, but we could also coordinate over email and this is a good thing to keep on the list.
 - Emily D: I attended the transit board meeting and the bike board meeting. I did not figure out how to attend the freight board meeting.
 - Akshali: There is also a School Traffic Safety Committee.
 - Jennifer: Yes, we will talk about that later and our July meeting is with the School Traffic Safety Committee. There is also the Transportation Equity Workgroup. I don't know when they meet or if it's possible to collaborate with them. It would be good to keep that work at the forefront.
 - Ori: Something we could start doing is to proactively invite the other boards to our meeting if something relevant to them is coming up at our meeting.
 - Maria: It is good to see that the City is moving in the direction of racial equity specifically. I don't know how exactly to take action on this, but it is good to keep this in our principals.
 - Koko: When we get more information from Polly, it is good for the board to know where pedestrian injuries and fatalities occur and where the City should be investing.
 - Jennifer: The Move Seattle Levy Oversight Committee has a dashboard that tracks their projects to see what projects are getting completed, so maybe we could do something similar to that. Other than having a representative on the committee, I think we should do more about connecting with these projects and discussing how funds are allocated.
 - Ori: The last pillar talks about safe and accessible movement for pedestrians, specifically giving strategic advice for the Pedestrian Master Plan and reviewing SDOT projects early.
 - Emily D: I think this is the most clear part of our work. It seems that most teams on SDOT want to get our feedback and proactively seek feedback, so this is the easiest to achieve.
 - Jennifer: I like that presentations that we've received recently have questions at the end that help guide the City's feedback for us.
 - Akshali: I understand prioritizing projects early on, but I wonder if there is more space for updates. Maybe we could do a six month check in or a one year check in.
 - Ori: I agree. We could start trying to get follow up to have more of a thread throughout the year of different projects to track.
 - Akshali: Instead of presentations, maybe we could do an "ask me anything" type of conversation with people from SDOT. That way the board can learn more about how certain decisions are made and get updates on specific projects.
- Policy and Projects Subcommittee (David and Anna—no longer on the board)
 - Emily D: This subcommittee is not really active, but it's helpful to know what projects and policies we want to learn more about. If we have ideas or topics in mind then we can add these to the document.
 - Jennifer: I can read some of the topics on the list, which are: Transportation Equity Workgroup (March), Vision Zero (April), update on PMP Racial Equity Analysis (May), Hardened Centerline

(May), grants to study Aurora Avenue safety (on hold), School Traffic Safety Committee (August), Climate Pledge Arena (received memo earlier in the year), Policy Operations and Advisory Group, encourage use of sidewalks, updates on Stay Healthy Streets/Stay Healthy Blocks/Keep it Moving Streets, ADA Transition Plan (TBD) signal policy, and other topics.

- Ori: The board can consider prioritizing these topics based on our guiding principles and also what Akshali brought up, which is circling back on topics rather than having a new topic every month. Other thoughts?
- Emily D: That's a good point and we can add ideas to this list over time.
- Jennifer: Akshali has had some great ideas for presentations such as wayfinding
- Tactics and Actions (Maria): This subcommittee sat down to talk about how to achieve the goals and principles that we have. We sat down to discuss what we want to keep, stop, and do more of. We want to keep working with the other boards, keep using our voice to write letters to the City Council and the Mayor's Office. The board is very new, so it's helpful to sit down and talk about what we do and can do. We want to do more getting engaged earlier in the design process. We want to know more about what feedback is desired for each specific presentation. We want to stop having presentations that are too far along to influence and we want to stop addressing every single thing that comes up, but rather use the principals to focus on what the board values.
 - Bianca: We could also do more of connecting the ideas to our guiding principles to be more grounded.
 - Maria: David, our previous Chair, reminded us that we can treat the board like we have subpoena power and we can bring people in to talk to us when we want to know more and have conversations.
 - Ori: Is there anything we should move around in this document?
 - Greyson: It is important to make sure our positions and what we're concerned about there to the general public. In general we need to get our message out into the social media sphere, not necessarily Twitter. This is something we can do more of rather than just keep doing.
 - Ori: In the "do more" section, we have getting more information earlier from SDOT, working with other boards, tying decisions to our principals, and building our social media messaging presence.
 - Emily D: Asking for clear intentions from presenters is going well this year, so that is something we can keep doing. That is part of the reason why the Climate Pledge Arena presentation turned into a memo instead because it was a better use of everyone's time.
 - Maria: Vision Zero is a hot topic in Seattle. There was an op-ed in the Times in January and we should comment on the state or lack of progress there. We should keep discussing Vision Zero.
 - Jennifer: I agree that we should focus on Vision Zero and social media as well.
 - Koko: We talked about how we respond to public comments and people who write letters to us, but I don't see that in our guiding principles, so that is something we should address.
 - Maria: Are you looking for assurance that we are responding to public comments fairly?
 - Koko: This is my second term and when David and Anna were the Chair and Co-Chair we worried about the same questions. People who write to us are more privileged than those who do not know how to reach us. On the other hand, if people reach out to us and we do nothing then we are not aligned with our mission for serving residents. In the past two years we have not really figured out what the board does in terms of action. Maybe we should come up with some ideas and put it in our principles and tactics so the board can act consistently.
 - Maria: This seems to fit into tactics, but I don't know what the tactic is or that we are aligned.
 - Emily D: It is difficult to have a specific tactic because how we react to each public comment and situation is different. It's hard to distill this into one formulaic response.

- Koko: I remember a member of the public wrote to us twice and attended the meeting and the solution we came up with was to write a letter to the City.
- Emily D: I think that writing letters and elevating issues brought to us by the public is something we consistently do.
- Akshali: One of the notes that we were talking about earlier was to make the letters we write transparent. We should make sure we are publicizing the letters that we send.
- Ori: Koko, it sounds like you are also saying that we need to make sure people have ways to find us and reach out to us. We need to know how to more proactively reach out to people. Does anyone have suggestions or proposals on how to reach more people?
- Koko: I did post to a Facebook group in my neighborhood and got some comments. Maybe each of us can find our own neighborhood social media outlets and get feedback.
- Bianca: There is a program [Your Voice, Your Choice] which allows people to vote for projects that they are interested in and that seems like a great way for people to get involved with the government.
 - Polly and Brian: This is Your Voice Your Choice, but it is not coming back until 2022.

Board Business

- Meeting Minutes approval delayed until the July meeting.
- Vision Zero next steps discussion
 - Jennifer: Allison Schwartz presented on Vision Zero in the April Meeting. In the May meeting, we talked about forming a subcommittee to stay connected and work with Allison.
 - Polly: Allison is open to meeting with a subcommittee from the board to discuss Vision Zero and how the board can help achieve Vision Zero goals.
 - Erin, Akshali, and Hang join the subcommittee with Maria and Ori
 - Maria: I believe there was a Vision Zero presentation to the City Council during the Transportation Utilities Committee meeting. It would be good to find a link to that meeting recording and maybe we can follow up to that discussion.
- School Traffic Safety Committee meeting discussion
 - Maria: In July, we will have a joint meeting with the School Traffic Safety Committee which will include a presentation on School Streets.
 - Polly: I am working with the School Traffic Safety Committee liaison to figure out
 - Jennifer: It would be interesting to talk about camera enforcement in speed zones around schools
 - Maria: We learned in a recent meeting that this enforcement is only allowed in school zones, but it would be interesting to learn more about that.
 - Akshali: It would be great to learn about more non-infrastructure programs that encourage students to walk and bike to school, such as walking school buses. Also discussing how parents are getting ready for the next school year if they are now working from home—are they walking their students to school more?
 - Ori: I am not directly related to kids walking to school, so maybe we could publicize this meeting more for parents and people who are related to students walking to school.
 - Jennifer: That's a great idea, Ori. Akshali, your point about returning to school and it would be good to learn more about school hours next year. School buses were not as widely available, so there seem to be more new barriers to getting to school this year and I'm curious to learn more about if that will continue.
 - Koko: I just talked to my neighbor and she has a Kindergartener. We were talking about Seattle Public Schools and how they are hoping to fully reopen in the fall. However, since she has younger kids who are not able to be vaccinated, she is concerned about the upcoming school

- year. This is an interesting topic, but I'm not sure if it's relevant to the discussion. We could publicize the meeting on the Seattle Public School Facebook page to see if they can post on their group.
- Akshali: I also agree with Koko and Ori that we should publicize this meeting. The School Traffic Safety Committee meeting might have more contacts or ideas on how to reach people.
 - Communications Update
 - Ori: I gained access to the SPAB Twitter. I am planning to post links to the meeting and meeting reminders, any positions that we take on the board such as things we vote on, and interesting things that come up in our meetings such as recaps on presentations. We could post about reaching out to groups and publicize our meetings. What are other thoughts or suggestions about using our social media channels?
 - Emily D: Seattle Greenways is very aligned with what we do and they have an email list. If there is something relevant, then they could help post our meetings. I'm on the Seattle Greenways list so I can talk to them about sharing our meetings.
 - Maria: I'm excited to have our presence on Twitter. There are a lot of great pedestrian activists on Twitter and there are some people who tweet out some of our meetings so we could retweet those things. It is good to remind folks that they can attend and provide public comment.
 - Ori: Our Twitter is separate from SDOT so we can retweet other accounts. Please send interesting content or other accounts to the Twitter.
 - Field Trip/Retreat Discussion
 - Jennifer: Pre-2020, the board has had field trips to a new pedestrian space in Seattle, but it may be in conflict with the Open Public Meeting Act.
 - Polly: Under the existing Governor's Proclamation all meetings must have a virtual option, so it would be challenging to have a field trip under the existing circumstances. If the Governor's Proclamation still stands then we will have a regular virtual meeting. The board will make the decision for the August meeting at the July meeting based on the status of the proclamation.
 - Jennifer: I have set up a Google Jam Board available to board members and will share my screen for the public to observe. The board asks, "If we are able to do an in-person outdoor field trip to a pedestrian project in August, where would you like to go?" Link to board: <https://jamboard.google.com/d/1Dhvgotyudi9tUEBVPODfRaeoZ3W5Tae97WKNDvrwAd4/edit?usp=sharing>
 - Ideas for field trip include:
 - New Northgate pedestrian bridge
 - New waterfront on Portage Bay
 - Hardened center lines (if they are constructed)
 - Places with high concentration of pedestrian deaths-if can be done safely. We could find a nearby park and walk to it.
 - Pioneer Square construction and connection to the waterfront
 - Accessibility infrastructure improvements or city challenge areas
 - If we are not able to do an in-person field trip, what would you prefer for our August meeting?
 - Have a regular SPAB meeting
 - A retreat focused SPAB meeting
 - Take a recess in August and reconvene in September
 - Ori: We could tentatively choose a field trip location and when the proclamation is lifted then we could go on the field trip.
 - Jennifer: That is possible, but there is the potential that it could be dark or rainy, which may or may not be appealing.
 - Akshali: Could one of us stream the field trip so that it is available virtually?

- Jennifer: Eventually we will have to figure out how to have in person and/or virtual hybrid meetings, so that is something to think about.
- Maria: If we are not able to meet in person then I would also be up for a recess
- Emily, Akshali, and Koko agree
- Greyson: I disagree because we only get 12 meetings and we should use the time that we have.
- Erin: I would like to do training or something educational. I would like to learn more about homelessness in Seattle or other topics.
- Emily: I'm not sure who would give that training or how SDOT approaches that.
- Erin: Maybe someone from Seattle shelters could give a public presentation
- Greyson: Is there a requirement that they have to be affiliated with the City? I do have some connections with some homeless advocacy organizations.
- There is no requirement that the speaker has to be affiliated with the City
- Ori: I agree that I would like to meet and learning more about the homelessness crisis would be helpful
- Jennifer: We will try to get the field trip to work, but if we can't then we will find a presentation for a regular meeting. We have a regular agenda meeting where we can follow up on that to have something teed up.
- Emily D: If anyone is interested in joining the agenda setting meeting, you are welcome as long as we don't reach quorum.
- Greyson: I would be interested in seeing what that looks like.
- Polly: I will send you the meeting invite
- Jennifer: Reviewing the brainstorming for the field trip, it looks like we are divided between new infrastructure and subpar old infrastructure.
- Emily D: Pioneer Square has all of those things, so maybe we could meet there and incorporate visiting new and old infrastructure.
- Bianca: I like the idea of moving through different spaces and not being limited to one area. Pioneer Square is a good idea and it is close to the International District which we could also visit.
- Jennifer: I like that it is centrally located. If we are able to meet in person then hopefully everyone can attend. Does anyone have concerns meeting in person if we are able?
- Maria: I just want to make sure that everyone can get there and that everyone can get around regarding accessibility.
- Public Comment
 - Doug MacDonald: Thanks everyone for your hard work. Virtual meetings have some advantages and some disadvantages. My best new pandemic route is getting from the Best Buy in Northgate to home. The new Northgate bridge is really interesting and it will present new problems because it is a shared pedestrian and bicycle space and there is concern that the speed of cyclists will be a challenge to pedestrians.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55.