

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board

September 10, 2014 Minutes

Attendees

Members: Devor Barton, David Goldberg, Lydia Heard, Lorena Kaplan, Bevin Wong, Joanne Donahue, Jacob Struiksma, Ninona Boujrada

Public Attendees: Jack Wilken, Arden Wilken

Other Attendees and presenters:

Howard Wu, Sam Woods, Candida Lorenzana, Chris Ruffini, SDOT; Lyle Bicknell, DPD

Introductions

July Minutes:

Approved.

Public Comments:

Jack Wilken: Westlake cycle track: Devor is on the Design Committee, I sent him materials. Want to talk about pedestrian safety. Right now pedestrians are not safe in the parking lot due to 20 mph bicycles. The proposed track on the east side will have all the pedestrians crossing it from the parking lot. Design speed is 10 mph but the bicycles go 20mph. We need education or process for cyclists to let them know that pedestrians have the right of way. The parking lot will be smaller and will be dangerous. MOHAI on SLU: No provisions for keeping pedestrians safe from bicycles on 8-10 foot sidewalk. Need a process, education. Same issue as Fremont Bridge which I have talked about before. At the long parking lot at north end is a 12ft shared sidewalk. That's not bad. Bicycles are more respectful there. LH – signs, did they affect behavior? No, larger sign at bridge might help. Cyclists don't seem to know they need to yield. Need Coast guard rules on avoiding collisions.

Second commenter: We live at the marina on Westlake, come out onto the sidewalk there and treat it as a street because it is as busy and dangerous as a street. This needs to be addressed with any new design work.

2nd Ave Protected Bike Lane

Sam Woods, SDOT, Multimodal Projects

- Would like feedback from you today.
- Background: May 6th Mayor announced the protected bike lane from Pike Place to Pioneer Square. Announced in time for launch of Pronto cycle share. This will attract new or visiting cyclists so this type of facility is very important. High ranking project in the BMP, implementation and safety perspective. 61 bicycle/vehicle crashes over the last year, including recent fatality. Also 22 pedestrian crashes during that time period.

- Project Area: $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, 11 signalized intersections, one block towards the Market, turns west at Yesler to get to Occidental Park. There will be a Pronto station there. Washington St. connects to the waterfront trail.
- Traffic signals. Each movement is clearly defined and predictable. Motorists: Have a red/green left turn arrow. We already plan to change the signs from “left turn to green only” to “no left on red arrow” as drivers are more familiar with no turn on red signs. Pedestrians and cyclists get protected movements. So far few motorists have been hostile, they tell us they like the predictability, and not having to wait for cyclists and pedestrians to make a turn.
- This is a two-way bike lane. 3ft buffer between bike lane and parking lane for door swing. Bulk of motorist training is for the southbound left turn. Tried to make this as intuitive and obvious as possible. JS – not working for me, I rely on the sound of the traffic pattern. LK – bikes don’t yield? SW – education. Not been a problem so far. SW – also pedestrian behavior – have earphones in, can’t hear me, they jump startled. SW – more aggressive cyclists will move to the vehicular travel lane. Others have been too afraid to ride 2nd, now are trying it, more casual and slower riders. JS again, audible signals don’t work, want predictable traffic pattern.
- Crosswalks on 2nd eastside are now protected all the way along the bike lane. Signals progression has been retimed for 25 mph for more safety. Signal configuration is a little confusing. At Union and at Yesler we have signals over the drive lanes which are clearer for drivers. JD – precedents? SW – Chicago, but ours is temporary and don’t have the right poles to put wires all the way across the drive lanes.
- Copenhagen bike box for bikes turning onto the cycletrack from the cross streets.
- At 2nd and Pike, was planning an all way walk but didn’t work with traffic, some rough interaction there, would appreciate your feedback. On 2nd at the intersections we have stop bars for bicycles to keep them out of the crosswalk.
- There is a parking lane which is sometimes left turn, we had to move some parking. Working better each day. Our intern is talking to each driver at the stop light to let them know how to use the signal. We have had ambassadors in the bike lane to let cyclists know to stop. Have had little problem with parking in the bike lane. We have postcards handed out and signs that explain how to park, how to do truck delivery, how to use the signals.
- Observation and Evaluation will lead to permanent improvements, including the signals over each drive lane. Replace the drain grates which drop below grade.
- Signal timing, transit timing being tracked, working with Kevin Desmond at Metro. Metro will be happier if bicycles get off of 3rd and go to 2nd.

Action items: Walk and observe 2nd and give our feedback, suggestions for 2nd and Pike in particular.

SR 520 West Approach Bridge North Project

Candida Lorenzana, SDOT; Lyle Bicknell, DPD

- Seattle Community Design process, preferred alternative – lid on west side of Montlake, with HOV lane for transit. The state legislature wanted some specific things refined, the non-motorized connections, Portage Bay Bridge, etc. LB – Council like the corridor but want the ped bike connections more intuitive and comfortable. Intensive design session the last three months to hone in on this.
- Better changes for regional connections: Land bridge over the freeway to connect the neighborhoods. Took out maintenance facility, fire life and safety, removed the big building, now have a naturalized path. Was walking under a low clearance freeway, long and dark. Now an open path, over rather than under, with a very comfortable 5% or less grade. Beautiful wide landscaped path. Go from lid to land bridge to neighborhood or regional east/west trail. 14ft path with extensive landscape buffer (35ft total).
- Removal of ventilation stacks gives more open space for bicycle, ped, park use
- Buffers views of roadway
- Shorter ped crossing, wider buffer (Montlake Blvd) JS – maintenance of landscaping not to encroach on path? LB – state will maintain, cognizant of that
- Undercrossing to Bill Dawson trail, get up to Montlake blvd by stair and/or ramp. LB – trying to improve poor conditions on Bill Dawson as well.,
- Urban Trailhead at Montlake Lid – connect to Olmsted Greenway from Arboretum; hardscape for wayfinding and ped activity – variety of crossing opportunities, all high quality, seamless connections without crossing highways or encountering traffic, east/west and north/south, both directions.
- New connection to cross trail under Montlake, a connection that doesn't exist today.
- JS – separation between cyclists and peds? Concrete, slope, asphalt differentiation. LB – very early in design, can think about this.
- Also new connection under highway from Arboretum to Lake Washington, Foster Island boardwalk
- Open house in Montlake tomorrow, Transpo Committee on the 23rd. Then costing exercise with WSDOT. Then back to Council in December. No funding yet. LH – Who do we direct our support to? Send letter of support to the Mayor, Council.
- Phasing issues, don't break up the most important piece do it all at once (will work with WSDOT on this).

Action item: Letter of support to Mayor, Council

BTG Finances

Chris Ruffini, SDOT

- BTG will expire in 2015.
- Original levy was a three-part when passed – parking tax, employee head tax which was later repealed, property tax levy. Parking came in stronger than expected and made up for the employee head tax.

- Impact to revenue: Ongoing non-BTG is general fund, gas tax, vehicle license fees. Gas tax about 12mill a year. We pay more than we get back. We get about 67cents on the dollar from taxes, Gas tax not a good source anyway.
- Revenue is not growing, costs are. We have a lot of competition for the general fund, balance between services and infrastructure.
- Levy is 20% of ongoing O&M, half of signals, signs and markings program. Greatly extends SDOT reach, big contributor to neighborhood large and small project programs. Big funder to PMP and BMP projects.
- The property tax levy is expiring, will go away unless we replace it. We got 60-70mill towards bike and ped projects, 60mill signs and signals, bridge and stairway maintenance, large part of stairway rehabilitation. Also transit service hours. We are giving up more to Metro temporarily out of VLF, leaves less money to fund projects. Takes away one of the tools in our kit.
- Bonded Debt: What we did with the commercial parking tax. Bridge rehabilitations, seismic retrofit, Spokane, Mercer, other road work. The parking tax is was used for the bonds and is spoken for through 2024. A mortgage, in effect. If we renew the levy, we would still need another source of income to make up for the parking tax which is spoken for. Otherwise we can't do any more big projects. Need a second job in other words. VLF can get another 20\$ but would take a public vote, unpopular. JS – how much property tax total is taken by the levy? Not sure, fairly small.
- 2015 budget wind-down. City has not optimally maintained infrastructure, we need to do something. JS – need more money for sidewalks. Yes. Mayor has discussed this. 25% of block faces in city are not improved. More than 2billion infrastructure backlog (new sidewalks). Have to prioritize.
- Combination of new levy and new revenue source. On ballot in November 2015. Lots of discussion right now. Next year's budget will be "fun", two budgets for passage or no passage of levy. JD – is there something we can do? CR - If you see value, make that known, community meetings, reaching out to the mayor, vote. Council could extend commercial parking tax, we are exploring all alternatives. What are our options? Crowdfunding with a social justice component, with a matching fund? Like LID without all the paperwork. The people who brought this about last time are still here working internally in the departments.
- Grants relied on parking tax for matching funds.
- Modes – Mayor shares opinion on not having mode wars. Paving versus reconstruction with new sidewalks. Complete Streets.
- Council enforcement of property owner maintenance of sidewalks.
- Social justice is embedded in every program.
- Show up and do public commentary during budget talks.

Action items: Speak up at community meetings, reach out to Mayor and Council, give commentary during the public comment period at budget talks. [Note from the Chair: There have recently been a couple of ethics violations by city officers in relation to bond elections. We are always free to act as citizens if we are clear that we are not representing the Board. I think

as a Board we can advocate for increased/new funding sources without any ethics issue and recommend that we do so. –LH]

Updates:

- Devor on Westake cycletrack, proposals, controversy. JD – can the board weigh in? DB we're not getting anywhere, we need to just do it already.
- Retreat: October 11, 10-2, Joanne's office in Belltown (same as last year), potluck, other details to follow. Same week as next Board meeting.
- JS – Roosevelt – traffic lanes being resurfaced, sidewalks are terrible. Unsafe right now.
- LH to forward email from Matthew Amster-Burton

8:08 Adjourn

LH