

Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee
Meeting held Online
February 16, 2024

SSTSC Members (X = present)

- X Mary Ellen Russell, volunteer
- X Margaret McCauley, volunteer
- X Marilyn Firman , volunteer
- X Robbie Frankel, King County Metro
- X Noa Guter, volunteer, chair
- X Gary Davenport, SPD
- X Yvonne Carpenter, SPS
- X Diane Walsh, SDOT
- X Brooke Nelson, SPS
- X Ryan Baum, volunteer
- X Kelsey Rote, volunteer

Other attendees

Fred Young, SDOT
Sara Colling, SDOT
Steven Richard, SPS
Marni Campbell, SPS
Greg Spotts, SDOT
Francisca Stefan, SDOT
Dan Anderson, SDOT
Becky Hutchinson, Mahlum
Vince Gonzales, SPS
Brian Fabella, SPS
Matisa Hollingworth, SPS
Anjali Grant, Anjali Grant Design

Public Comment: None

SDOT Future Funding Plan: Greg Spotts, Dan Anderson, Francisca Stefan

SDOT director Greg Spotts spoke briefly and introduced Dan Anderson and Francisca Stefan who discussed the upcoming levy plan. They are now presenting broad ideas and the final plan will be submitted to the mayor. This is the last year of the current 9-year levy. 1/3 of the SDOT budget is funded by this levy.

A greatly condensed synopsis of the presentation follows: The current levy has been transformative said Dan, citing such things as the opening yesterday of the Hiawatha stairs and great improvements for pedestrian and bike access around Green Lake. The new levy priorities are Safety, Equity, Sustainability, Mobility, Livability, and particularly Maintenance and Modernization. There are some major delayed maintenance items like the Ballard and Fremont bridges and street potholes, but also a desire to expand neighborhoods, bike network, and safe walking routes.

Questions:

1. Mary Ellen asked about the promotion of non-car infrastructure after decades of neglect. Francesca said that each time a road improvement or repair is made there will be a focus on walking and cycling. An example is the repair of the degraded signal system which now will include audible pedestrian signals as the repairs go forward. Repairing cracked seals in roads protects bikes possibly more than cars. The plan is to get more for all modes of transportation with each dollar spent. There is currently a 20-year plan and only an 8-year levy. The backlog of maintenance means that some streets need to be hurried before they fail completely. Otherwise, the planning will include more carefully planned improvements benefiting all.
2. Mary Ellen asked if they needed official support from us. They will contact us at the appropriate time when they do.
3. Mary Ellen asked about public amenities often being in the plan and taken out if the funding is short. She urged going for the higher levy amount.

Last Month's Minutes and Action update items:

The land use code is not on the city council calendar yet. **Action: Margaret** will contact her representative next month. Marilyn contacted Cathy Moore with the asks from the annual report. Councilmember Moore seemed very supportive. She was interested particularly in the crossing guard situation, the bus paddle enforcement, and correcting the land use code so we do not need departures so often.

Action: Mary Ellen reported that the transportation budget funding was still at the state legislature, and she volunteered to write a letter supporting our concerns. **Action: Noa and Kelsey** will review.

Mary Ellen moved, and Margaret seconded to have the minutes approved pending completion of the December Action Item updates for the minutes. The approval was unanimous.

SPS Update: Brooke Nelson, Yvonne Carpenter, Steven Richard

Brooke reported that:

- With the help of The Bikery (a volunteer bicycle repair company) and local community efforts many bikes were built for students. The volunteers included school staff and students and cycling affinity groups.
- The Dunlap school walk groups (including a new one) had a trash pickup program, "Love your Route", in February. This proved both popular and fun for the students. Plus, they cleaned up a lot of trash.
- Broadview-Thompson resource center is having a meeting next week with Brooke to discuss walk group resources.
- There is now a Rainier Beach Action Group Committee.
- The current plan is that by September 2024, the bus paddle contract with the city and police should be in place. The police will review citations and assign penalties.

Crossing Guard update: Brooke reported that a G.A.S. web app is being developed for the crossing guard information. This is an interactive map to include positions filled and unfilled. No report from Yvonne about current crossing guard information.

SDOT Update: Diane Walsh, Sara Colling

- The safe route to school packages and reflectors are ready for school to pick up. There are enough for 3 to 5 packages per school.
- There were questions about the Aurora Ave. N. project. Eaglestaff and Cascadia schools are involved.
- Sara reported that they are working on a project at Kimball Elementary at 23rd Avenue. There will be marked crosswalks and curb ramps.
- On 3rd Avenue NW next to Greenwood Elementary School from NW 67th to the school there will be 7 intersections with marked crosswalks, curb bulbs and speed cushions.

Alki Elementary's New Design Proposal: Becky Hutchinson, Brian Fabella, and Vince Gonzales

Construction has been discontinued until the departure process is complete. 9 departures were approved and then appealed. One was remanded back for consideration. The reason was the lack of parking at the location. There will be a one-year delay in opening. A new design has been resubmitted which includes 15 parking places.

A partnership with Seattle Parks and Recreation improved beyond what initially was expected, giving more play space for children.

The estimated cost of the delay and changes in design services is at least \$3 million. The meter is running, depending on how much longer the departure process takes. Mary Ellen said this is a 'really good example of why we continue to push for code change'. Mary Ellen requested an email summary of the whole process to help with our advocacy. Besides the costs, the students will be at the interim site for at least an extra year. They have reengaged a Traffic Engineer so another report was done and validated number counts (one of the objections was the first count done in Covid).

To get 15 parking spaces they must:

- Move transformers.
- Give up a dedicated on-site Loading Zone
- Give up a dedicated preschool walkway. (Shifted north along the building with other students.)
- Operations for facility partners were sacrificed (the loading platform for custodial and partners was much safer than the riskier on-street unloading without a platform.) Unloading without a platform causes many more L&I injuries which the platform would prevent.
- The bike parking was reconfigured but not lost thanks to partnership with parks.

Other choices would have been no preschool or condemning neighboring houses, neither of which was a viable choice.

We requested they email us when the appeal hearing is scheduled so we get to create a response letter.

Action: The committee for the response letter is **Mary Ellen writer, and Margaret and Noa to support.**

John Muir Elementary's Design Proposal: Vince Gonzales, Matisia Hollingsworth, Anjali Grant

This is slated to begin in the Summer of 2024 and last for 1 year. The plans were presented. The site is very hilly. There will be 8 bike parking spaces in front primarily for larger parent or teacher bikes. Most of the bike parking is behind the school to prevent theft, and because most children enter from the back. They are upgrading loading and parking. There will be a ramp for dumping trash into bins. There will be curb ramp updates. They are fixing the ADA parking stall and will cut the corner of the sidewalk and add a ramp. There is an unpopular traffic circle.

They are 60-90% done on the SIP approval. SEPA will review when the SIP approval is completed. They need no departures except possibly bicycles. We don't think that will be necessary as putting them on the playground should not trigger a departure.

They are adding a 5000 square foot addition which will house an additional 40 children.

This is like the Leschi project where change orders caused great expense. The SEPA hearing there focused on artificial turf in the preschool play area. The materials were certified as PFAS free. They don't use Rubber Crumbs anymore.

There was a question about Tree removal. As time was running out, **Action: Mary Ellen**, a landscape architect member agreed to talk outside of the meeting with Matisia and Anjali.

FUTURE TOPICS

1. Roxhill Elementary School Issues?

Next Meeting: March 15, 2024, in person at City Hall