

**Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee
John Stanford Center, Room 2774
January 25, 2019 Minutes**

STSC Attendees

- ✓ Richard Staudt (SPS)
- ✓ Mary Ellen Russell, Chair (parent volunteer)
- ✓ Shanti Breznau, Secretary (citizen-at-large)
- ✓ Margaret McCauley (pedestrian safety advocate)
Kevin O'Neill (SPD)
James Wells (Metro)
- ✓ Mitchell Lloyd (SDOT)
- ✓ Marilyn Firman
- ✓ Lee Bruch
- ✓ Yvonne Carpenter (SPS transportation crossing guard manager)
- ✓ Stephen Jones (SPS transportation bus manager)

Other Presenters/Public

Geri Guerrero, principal of Loyal Heights Elementary

Public comment

None.

December 2018 Minutes: Approved

Robin Randels is getting finalization from SDOT on school walking audits.

Action: _Yvonne will send crossing guard flyer info to Stephen. Stephen will print and laminate copies for each school.

Council of Great City Schools (a consortium of school districts) that benchmark District operations, including transportation practices & costs, etc., has been hired by SPS and will make recommendations for how to improve system (Stephen). They will make recommendations on the 30th. Stephen is particularly interested in hearing the recommendations from former Denver bus manager.

Council of Great City Schools tends to focus on things all school districts do in common, don't tend to focus on innovation (Richard). They are unlikely to address active transportation or alternative practices.

Action: _Stephen will forward report from the audit to the committee.

New Member recruitment update

Jessica Knaster Wasse cannot join committee. One new application has been received from Cascade Bike Club staff, another person from SE Seattle has inquired and was encouraged to apply. Shanti will stay on the committee through March, then will be leaving.

Crossing guard recruitment

No new recruits for Dec. Training schedule conflicted. Will train 3 this month, possibly 4. Lost an afternoon at South Shore, they got a full time job but will continue AM. Moved guard there from Cloverbell.

SDOT survey results, Lincoln High recommendations

Safe Routes to School Race and Equity Analysis – first high level report is complete and Mitchell emailed to the committee. 2771 physical mailers were returned. Consultant did analysis compiling results. More detailed info coming next week. 1100 responses for elementary students, 600 for middle school students, 700 for high school.

1200 students report walking or biking to school once a week including 520 students of color. 800 kids reported walking or biking 3 days or more a week. 640 said they did not walk due to violence, bullying, etc. More information about barriers to walking will be included in full report.

Survey only identifies by zip code. No information about which school attended due to privacy concerns. If a survey were to have more detailed info about which schools the responders attend it would need to go through the school district to be protected from open disclosure laws. Gender information was included (after some back and forth). City of Seattle IT privacy team dictated how much detail could be asked. The survey was administered district-wide, although not to all student families because contact info was not used due to privacy concerns. In-person engagement/interviews were also conducted.

Action: _Mitchell will forward detailed report to committee when it is available.

Phase 2 of Neighborhood Street Fund is kicking off next week. Projects are split up by council district. Residents can vote on preferred projects in their own district. Maps and voting are available online and at community meetings.

Richard asked if info can be sent out through schools to make sure families know to vote.

Action: _Mitchell will send information to Richard to distribute to families.

Lincoln High school Improvements:

2 projects will be completed before school opens, others will be implemented after school opens.

Interlake between 45th and Woodland – will be turned into 1 way neighborhood greenway with protected bike lane.

Interlake and 45th will be ped activated button to facilitate crossing.

SDOT considered committee's recommendations, opted not to reverse one way directions of streets.

Action: _Mitchell will confirm that out of date signage will be updated to reflect 20 mph speed.

SDOT does annual school sign audit in summer to check for outdated, broken, blocked signs.

Seattle Squeeze is halfway over. SDOT director Sam Zimbabwe, from DC. They are old friends of Shanti's from grad school. Sam has school age children.

Action: _Lee will also send info about voting on Neighborhood Park and Street Fund to Richard.

_Lee to look into timing of upcoming DON green/street funding. Parks or streets under \$50K.

Action: _Mitchell to discuss detailed report at next STSC

Upcoming changes to traffic studies, SDOT requirements for ROW improvements

Lee found Council's resolution to change traffic studies (already been passed). This is following a recommendation from 2018 comprehensive plan to focus on multi-modal transportation. The issue for us is how this will be implemented in the Director's Rule. Draft Director's Rule will be available for comment soon. Current proposal says that projects more than 4000 SF development/renovation would include street improvements for multi-modal transportation including sidewalks, curb ramps, reduced parking in the project, subsidized bus passes, proposing alternative tools.

Past traffic studies have been heavily focused on cars.

Lee would like to talk to members of SDOT and SDCI who are writing the rules.

Richard reached out to Heffron, who says they don't think this will substantially change rules for schools. He has call into **John Shaw**, the transportation reviewer for SDCI. School still has to provide parking for assembly events. This piece isn't changing. This item isn't in sync with how

schools are built, they rarely provide parking. This requires a variance as a matter of course, which doesn't make sense. It doesn't reflect what is actually occurring at most schools, requires schools to trade for variance in order to get approval for typical conditions.

Shanti commented that it is strange that schools are lumped in with other development types, given that traffic conditions are very different, peak hours are different.

Action: _Lee will reach out to John Shaw. He will ask who is putting together draft DR. Committee will write a letter to the drafters of the Director's Rule.

Action: _Lee will watch for comment period to open and notify committee. Richard will distribute info to schools to ensure comments include schools' perspectives.

Loyal Heights Traffic Safety – Geri Guerrero

Loyal Heights moved to renovated John Marshall school location in September. The school houses 452 students, with a capacity of 660, and 4 special needs programs. Since moving back to the building there have been traffic concerns. She distributed diagram to parents and sent an email with several specific requests for signage and flashing lights.

Majority of families walk or bike to school. There is 1 bus from apartment buildings to transport kids across 85th and 80th. There have been too many close calls where kids were almost hit by a car crossing the street near the school.

School is located near the 24th Ave NW and NW 80th St intersection at Larsen's bakery that STSC looked at in 2018.

Lee pointed out that waiting to address neighborhood conditions until after the school is occupied puts kids at risk. These assessments would be better before the school opens.

When the school was closed driver behavior shifted, neighborhood residents are not used to slowing down for the school anymore. Geri reached out to SPD to request enforcement.

Richard pointed out that SPS generally tries to funnel peds onto a single crosswalk because this is safer, may not wish to add an additional crosswalk. Geri says that people are driving and parking in a location that makes this crosswalk heavily used.

There was no walk through by schools or SDOT to look at traffic issues before the school re-opened.

Action: _Mitchell will reach out to SDOT curb space management group to ask about getting signs prohibiting parking during school hours. Mitchell will also refer these items to Ashley Rhead to take a more comprehensive look at improvements needed.

Mitchell encourages the school to take an incremental approach, implement parking signs and possibly crosswalk striping and then see how conditions respond.

Richard pointed out that property owners are encouraged to paint curbs within 5' of drive. They are discouraged to do other painting, but not sanctioned. This could be done by a parent group (using traffic paint), and would be ok as long as neighbors do not complain. Richard did not direct Geri to suggest this.

Richard brought up the small grants program as a way to get sandwich board signage encouraging parents to follow traffic plan, use safer crosswalk.

Action: _Mitchell will forward info about grants applications to Geri.

Action: _Mary Ellen will connect Kevin and Geri via email for enforcement now and when new traffic signs are installed.

Yvonne says that there is an ex. Guard at 80th. There should be an additional guard farther south, but this is separate from issues Geri is describing.

Geri's requests (**black** were submitted before the meeting via email, **blue** are notes taken during the meeting, **green** are notes for SDOT to follow up on):

- **NW 80th Street:** Cars drive past the school zone speed limit every morning and after school. We have multiple families and children crossing NW 80th St on 26th Ave NW and on 25th Ave NW. We have had multiple adults yelling at drivers to 'slow down' but to no avail. Due to a disregard for safety, here were incidences:
 - Staff have had to flag down or wave at drivers to stop or slow down because children are crossing NW 80th St. Multiple close call incidences of children about to cross the street and cars not yielding. We've already had a child close to being hit by a car as the child stepped out on the road to cross the street.
 - There is no cross walk on NW 80th St and 25th Ave NW **Mitchell, please refer this to SDOT**
 - Flashing lights on NW 80th St are being disregarded by drivers
- **REQUESTS:**
 - Paint a cross walk on NW 80th St and 25th Ave NW
 - Can a camera be set up to take pictures of cars driving past the speed limit?
 - Can a school zone flashing lights be set up with ample distance from the school to give drivers time to slow down? **Their current locations are not effective.**

- Can a crossing light system be set up so that students can press the button to cross the street and lights will flash?
 - Additional crossing guard employee for NW 80th and 25th or 26th Ave. Mitchell, please check ranking for this intersection.
 - Sign indicating driving speed in a school zone
 - SPD to enforce signs/driving speed
- **25th Ave NW:** Buses and after school vans park on this street Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri. between 7:25am-8:00am & 2:00pm-2:35pm AND Weds 7:30am-8am & 12:45pm-1:20pm. This street is very narrow and becomes one lane when the buses and vans are parked in front of the school. Cars will either park on this street (building side) and not provide enough parking for the bus and vans during the pick-up/drop-off zone times. Cars will also drive through that street during drop-off/pick-up times. We have Special Needs students whom have run out into the street during those zone times due to sensory dysregulation. I've had to run out to stop a car driving on the street when one of our special needs student took off. We have cars drive through 25th Ave NW to pick up their children. Their student will run between parked cars to their car.
 - My biggest concern is that we have a large number of students and families who ride their bikes or walk to/from school and cross 25th Ave NW and there is near accidents occurring.
 - **REQUESTS:**
 - Paint the curb (school side) yellow down to the double fence so that there is parking space for buses and vans.
 - Signs put up messaging no parking during drop-off/pick-up times.
 - Signs put up for cars not to drive through the street during drop-off/pick-up times.
 - Sign indicating driving speed in a school zone
 - SPD to enforce signs
- **26th Ave NW:** I have asked parents to drop off their children (northbound) on 26th Ave NW. The concern is that this street is also narrow and becomes a one lane street during drop-off/pick-up times. We tried to block cars from heading southbound on 26th Ave NW in order for cars heading northbound to drop-off their children not get blocked in. We've had issues all year with cars not being able to go any where because they are blocked facing each other.
 - Cars also park and block the school's LOADING DOCK ZONE area. We've had SPS Delivery trucks or Waste Management complain about this issue.
 - Cars park in front of the school doors (west side) when that should be a drop-off zone only. Students are having to get out of their cars and cross a parked car in front of the school doors.
 - **REQUESTS:**
 - Paint the curb (school side) yellow in front of the Loading Dock zone area AND School Doors (west side) so that it is never blocked by parked cars.
 - Signs put up for cars not to park or idle during drop-off/pick-up times in front of the school doors (west side).
 - Signs put up for cars not to park or idle in front of the Loading dock area at all times. These used to be here, but have been removed. – Mitchell, please check
 - Signs for cars driving northbound only on 26th Ave NW --- M-F from 7::30am – 8:00am; I don't know if there is a way to block cars from driving southbound in the morning only on 26th Ave NW.
 - Sign indicating driving speed in a school zone

- SPD to enforce signs.
- **NW 77th Street:** Cars are driving too fast and recklessly. There are no school zone caution lights or enough cross walks for families to safely cross the street to the school. Cars are parking (school side), dropping-off, or picking up students on NW 77th St (school side).
 - **REQUESTS:**
 - Sign indicating driving speed in a school zone
 - Paint cross walks on NW 77th St and 25th Ave NW and vice versa
 - Paint cross walks on NW 77th St and 26th Ave NW and vice versa
 - Signs indicating NO PARKING or IDLING between 7:25am-8:00am & 2pm-2:35pm (Mon, Tues. Thus. Fri) AND between 12:45pm-1:25pm (Weds.)
 - SPD to enforce signs/driving speed
- **24th Ave NW:** Cars are not slowing down. Crossing Guard
 - **REQUESTS:**
 - Multiple School Zone/Crossing Lights Signals on 24th Ave NW (between NW 83^d and NW 75th Streets – north/south direction).
 - Sign indicating driving speed in a school zone
 - SPD to enforce driving speed

SPS Transportation reorganization update

Brought on Fred Podesta as new chief operating officer, which includes transportation and other divisions. He is Stephen's direct boss. Peggy McEvoy's position is moved out of transportation, Stephen will be taking on that role. Kathy Katterhagen is no longer in transportation. Bruce is still in the role temporarily as Fred is learning the job. Stephen has a more direct conduit to decision makers, has met with Superintendent Juneau four times.

Fred Podesta was head of mayor's homelessness task force. Has had number of jobs in City governance. Was formerly director of City Light.

The committee needs to find an opportunity to talk to Fred Podesta. His schedule will be busy in the short term as he is onboarding.

The superintendent is concerned with how transportation functions (Stephen). Stephens is working on making community communication more effective, making sure that communications don't go out without input from the transportation department. He is concerned that the report may promise too much. Make sure we don't present the Active Transportation Coordinator position as resolving all of the busing and communication issues. Superintendent Juneau will want to see results immediately. Do not overpromise, particularly with how quickly results can be delivered.

Have the message dialed in to explain what the transportation coordinator would be responsible for in detail.

Action: _Stephen will remind Paula to forward the decision spreadsheet to Mary Ellen.

Action: _Mary Ellen will make a graphic illustrating how more crossing guards could allow walk boundaries to be expanded and send to Stephen for review.

Annual Report

Margaret met with Stephen last week to clarify language in report, will add language requesting additional staff to manage crossing guards. Mitchell scheduled a slot on April 16th meeting to present annual report. Council subcommittee requested that we do briefing with staff prior to council meeting. Mayor's office would like opportunity to review report as well.

Action: _Mary Ellen and Margaret will coordinate final copy of report and generate slide deck for Council presentation.

Report should go to council, superintendent, school board, SDOT director (Shanti will send to Sam Zimbabwe), advocacy groups for walking and biking.

Future Topics:

- SDOT detailed survey results
- Crossing guard recruitment process – How to keep things from stalling when Yvonne is unavailable, get recruitment posters put up whenever there is a vacancy, increase pay to match bus monitors
- School staff training as crossing guards for backup
- Follow up with Lee regarding development of Director's Report
- Annual Report distribution
- Open committee position
- Toolkit for schools to make traffic plans
- Speed Camera update with year over year comparison
- Several schools have unqualified people directing traffic and crossing students. How to communicate with schools to prevent this?
- SDOT's complete assessment anticipated for early summer 2019. Dongho will return to give full assessment
- Pilot project for school road closure
- Follow up on Loyal Heights.
- Look through walk boundary decision spreadsheet for intersections that SDOT should review for improvements.
- Bishop Blanchett reached out to Lee about traffic concerns. Lee will ask if they want to come to a committee meeting.

Mitchell will be out next month, will line up another SDOT representative.

Next meeting: February 15th.