

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board meeting

January 8, 2014

City Hall, Boards and Commissions Room (L280)

6:04 pm – Introductions.

- **Present:**

(Board Members) Devor Barton, Anna Spooner, David Goldberg, Lydia Heard, Lorena Kaplan, Mark Landreneau, Jennifer Olegario, Jacob Struiksma, Dottie Faris, David Goldberg, Lily Berticevich;
(General Public) Chris Saliba, David Moser, Annie Youngerman, Heidi Bellinga, Michelle Ferguson, Kristen Ferguson, Howard Wu, Jim Macintosh, Brian Fallah,

6:07 pm – December Minute Approval: approved

6:08 pm – Public comment

- Guest: Thanks the Board for looking at 5-20 situation; it's an important for City connections and public transit, and connecting the arboretum and light rail station.

6:10 pm – Trees and Sidewalk Conflicts (Jennifer Wieland, SDOT. Amalia Matan, consultant, SvR Design)
– 30min

- Has spoken to the board before. City's project manager: Healthy Trees and Safe Sidewalks Mgmt
 - New title- preferred over "operational" and "conflicts" language
 - Today: schedule, feedback on plan elements
- In September:
 - 4 goals: accessibility and health, environment, equity, efficiency
 - New objective: communicate tree/sidewalk maintenance responsibilities (based on feedback from our Board)
 - New scope of work: "final operational plan."
 - Scope of Work: want feedback on existing and best practices research and public outreach and community involvement, and final operational plan
- Amalia: want to make sure to have enough staff to meet fast-track deadlines and be able to do enough case studies
 - Staff/firm specialties: soil, community engagement, design standards, arborists, tree maintenance, landscape architecture, public right of way, Pedestrian Master Plan experience
 - Sizeable team because of speed for the project
- Working schedule:
 - Project kicked off in December
 - By end of Jan: Scan of national/international practices/emerging practices.
 - Starting now: Toolkit with best practices (rubber sidewalks, easements, etc.), evaluation materials

- 3 corridor case studies: 1 in Madrona Corridor, 2 undecided. Will apply Toolkit to see what will happen- targeted and specific.
 - Targeting 3 community meetings that the Board would be welcome to join
- Beginning public outreach/engagement
- Operational plan: will look to City/Boards for advice throughout
- Best Practices Research:
 - National and International City Research on Tree/Sidewalk Programs and Policies
 - Trees (physical aspects)
 - Street edge and hardscape
 - Roots
 - Subbase Soil
 - Nutrients
 - Water/Air
 - Failures
 - Utilities- acknowledge that we're in an urban environment
 - Transportation
 - Education/Outreach
 - Design Standard Review
 - Easements
 - Outside the scope of the project: dealing with walkable zones on private zones. Devor: Board needs/wants to maintain a walkable path for sidewalks. Are trees prioritized? There are more tree topics listed. Jennifer: issues with trees are especially complex; tree survivability has many more things to look at. She looks at this project as a way to help pedestrians in general.
 - Lydia: private/public issues are really confusing. Will you help clarify who is responsible (for safety, pruning, etc.)? Jennifer: to the extent that we can. That's why we added the final operational plan into our plan- focused on educational side.
 - Jeffrey: suggests San Francisco: street trees responsibility to private owners. Another issue he sees: people choosing the wrong tree. Amalia- part of this is education/guidance. Making sure that right tree is chosen, received, installed appropriately. Jeffrey: private home owners may not take those steps to receive education. Maybe there could be education connected w/ nurseries?
 - Dottie: how are you selecting case studies? Jennifer: the one that was already chosen is b/c funding for this project was partially secured b/c of their sidewalk repair funding. For other two, considering: geographic balance, social equity, existing challenges, high/low densities.
 - Anna: why a quick schedule? Jennifer: the Madrona project has been put on hold until this project was done. Madrona conditions are currently really bad: trees are damaging public/private property, safety issues. Amalia: Urban Forestry Mgmt Plan requires many more trees to be planted.
 - David: is there a process element to this? Jennifer: want to apply a broad set of evaluation criteria; there will certainly be judgment involved. Amalia: lack of consistency currently in the industry, so want to bring consistency to the discussion.

6:45 pm – Capital Projects (SDOT) – 40min

Greenwood Ave Transit Corridor Improvements (Ken Lee, project mgr & Paul Elliott, public information officer) – 20 min

- 30% design
- Greenwood Ave. N. between N 105th and 92nd St
- Project began as route consolidation
- Improvements: sidewalks 6 ft wide, bus amenities and bulbouts. Budget only on E side of street for sidewalk. Engineering team on E side. 5 improved bus stops (E and W side).
- Current conditions: narrow sidewalks, no concrete gutter, bad surface, magnet for standing water
- Proposing bus islands: similar to Dexter Ave achievements. Sidewalk, bike land, bus island, traffic lane. In Greenwood, looking to improve bike/ped interaction. Suggestion: bikers bike up onto level ground. Lorena: what are the suggestions for helping with sight impaired? Also- any bus-cyclist collisions? Ken: some tactile strips, still working on it; I'll look into it.
- 90% design: 2nd Q '14, Advertisement: early 4th Q '14 (hoping will have funds to include W. side), Construction: 1st Q
- Lydia: What is the crossing going to be like? Getting across a busy street Ken: already crossing.
- Joanne: Raised bicycle grade is supposed to slow them down? Ken: Yes. This would be the first type. Devor: also make it easier for wheelchairs
- Dottie: why not a W side sidewalk now? Ken: there now, below standard. Dottie: strange to not address sidewalks on both sides as part of the scope. Ken: part of transit policy project. Dottie: colored speed bumps? Ken: not yet- at 30% of design. Jim: being visually impaired, this would be important.
- David: what is in the Ped master plan in this corridor? Ken: good question. David: what are primary benefits of bus island? Ken: transit efficiency; bus doesn't have to weave in and out of transit.

7:07 23rd Ave Corridor Improvements (Kit Loo, PM) – 20 min

- Update: presentation a few years back.
- Project location: 1-90 to Rainier. 8th highest ridership for transit, 6000 riders/day (schools, retail, residences)
- 23rd current (poor) conditions: potholes, narrow lanes, no turn lanes, poor lighting (adding, moving, trees blocking lights), improving sidewalks, vehicle/pedestrian space buffer zone.
- Improvements: public art funding from the city.
- FAQ: why reconfiguring the lanes? Fix substandard lanes/intersections, add Denny left turn lanes to help traffic, changing to 3 lanes total from 4 will help stop speeding.
- Phase 1: John to Jackson. Hope to begin construction by the end of the year. Phase 2: Jackson to Rainier (less extensive than Phase 1). In design. Phase 3: E Roanoke to E John (keep 4 lanes).
- Neighborhood Greenway: extend this concept, improving side streets for peds/cyclists. They're still in the development stage.
- Community outreach continues.
- Jacob: sidewalk widths? Kit: 7-8 ft, but saving trees is an issue. Many of the trees are very immature, so they are looking at where to make changes/improvements. Raising the grade doesn't resolve root problems b/c the root issue remains, and also starts to interfere with private property. Want to improve transit by putting bus stops away from poles/trees.

- Mark: Light House for the Blind on 23rd, 48 bus stop. Kit: all new ped signals will have APS installed. Devor: neighborhood people have complained about having to cross the street after crossing a button. Kit: We are trying to improve transit along the corridor; we'll have to talk to our Transit guy about making certain times of the day with less heavy transit a timed ped crossing plan.
- Alejandro: everything completed by 2016? Why isn't Montlake area work (phase 3) prioritized higher? We're doing construction that will probably be improved by *your* work. Kit: phases are timed based on funding. Phase 3 project was conceived within the last year; all the funding isn't in place for it specifically yet. Maybe we can get the funding for it earlier. Reality is that it's about funding. David: is the source the federal funding? Kit: trolley wires, trains improvements, a regional mobility State grant. The 2 grants they have are for transit.

7:20 pm – 520 Update (Calvin Chow & Lyle Bicknell, SDOT, Kristin Dean, WSDOT, Daniel Dobuga, Ryan McNill) – 40min

- W. approach Bridge North: funding in place for N bridge only- going W bound. 2 independent bridges (separate W and E traffic).
- Don't have funding yet for full Montlake Interchange. So, will construct with keeping in mind that improvements will come in the future.
- Floating bridge is about a mile long, so designed a series of belvederes/pullouts for resting/views.
- All ramps from Lake WA to arboretum will be removed.
- 16-ft pedestrian corridor at intersections that will connect greenways; more bikes/ped anticipated.
- Have considered N/S and E/W transportation in the area.
- Making bus stops ADA accessible. Construction: 2014-2016. ADA accessible path in W bound direction. County Metro will maintain their service points/advance notification for temp relocation.
- Key improvements: make as safe as possible. Eliminate sweeping free right onto intersection, signalized. This will shorten the crossing width, more sight distance.
- Coming off the bus from the E side, going to bus from Cap Hill: 3-legged crosswalk @ Lake WA., or pedestrian undercrossing to come up in transit zone shelter. Jacob: the pork chop islands are too complicated/slow. Lyle: we've heard that now shelters w/ railings. Jacob: why not just a regular intersection? Lyle: many different connections/movements have to be accommodated. Calvin: Since WASHDOT doesn't have money for all Montlake improvements, we have to work with existing structures. Lyle: subtle reverse curves slow cars. Jacob: subtlety doesn't help. Suggest rumble strips or some kind of slowing. Alejandro: agrees w/ Jacob that slowing needs to take place.
- Audience question: why not a ped bridge? Lyle: the area will be reconstructed in its entirety in the next phase of construction so we want to be fiscally responsible for now. The final plan isn't created or funded yet. Worked with communities to make things safer. Calvin: waiting for WASHDOT for design money to move forward.
- David: what is the purpose and need right now, especially if we're going to redo half of it later? Lyle: take care of issues right now that are susceptible to wind/seismic/general failure. The 5-20 program is to address the safety/vulnerabilities along the corridor, while adding capacity to transit/connections to other transit areas. Program w/ 13 years of history: Seattle prioritizes non-motorized access, etc. Capacity expansion in the form of HOV lane, not general purpose. Travel demand mgmt. strategies: tolls (fund construction and manage demand- 20% drop), speed signs, movt signs. Jacob: make on/off ramps as safe as possible=squared intersections. Lyle: still have \$1.4

billion of improvements unfunded. Dottie: increase on I-90 since tolling? Lyle: yes. Calvin: I-90 is being discussed. Lyle: want bike lockers available.

- North of the ramp: bus only lane. Sidewalk widening, bus/bike lane
- Montlake community concerns:
- Lyle: good example on great improvements- signalized. Great design decisions- always stop crosswalk- greater greenway bike facility. Helpful with ultimate buildout phase. Alejandro: as a montlake resident, agrees.
- With future funding, also want to advance design to accommodate all needs/interests. David: clearly dealing w/ legacy from 50 years ago. And we're probably going to live w/ what we have now for awhile... and- what are potential sources for federal/other funding? Answer: FHWA is partner, they advise us. 520 has applied unsuccessfully for tiger grants. Lucky to be involved w/ federal Tifia program. Wetland and parkland mitigation part of funding, traffic calming is earmarked through arboretum. Good news: 520 continues to rank w/in legislature.
- Lyle: For meaningful help for that intersection for pedestrians, need next round of funding/projects. Calvin: we could also need WASHDOT's help. Response: prioritizing ped access/safety is priority. They hear that loud/clear. People of all modes want to use this interchange. It is a state facility.
- Jeffrey: what is the gap in this phase (as the interim phase) and next phase? R: depends on legislature. No funding, design funding then wait for other funding, or all funding. No matter what, the next project wouldn't be able to begin until this project is done b/c we have to remove this bridge- so 2016 at the earliest. David: expected city share for next phase? Calvin: state facility, not city funding.