

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board

June 17, 2015 Minutes

Attendees:

Members: David Amiton, Joanne Donohue, Lorena Kaplan, April Kelley, Jeffrey Linn, Paul Muldoon, Gordon Padelford, Bevin Wong

Public Attendees: Jacob Struiksma, Peter Than, Thomas Noble, Kelsey Miller, Craig Shumate, Cameron Zapata

Other Attendees and presenters: Lorelei Williams (SDOT), Eric Tweit (SDOT), Ian Macek (SDOT), Kevin O'Neill (SDOT), Paul Elliot (SDOT), Barbara Gray (SDOT), Art Brochet (SDOT), Lauren Squires (SVR), Amalia Leighton (SVR), Howard Wu (SDOT)

Public Comment:

- I live in Wallingford and I walked down tonight to the meeting and it brought me down the Fremont Bridge. Crossing the bridge against bicycle traffic is very dangerous. I'd like to see something done about the speed on the bridge.

May minutes:

Approved.

Roosevelt Way NE AAC

Lorelei Williams, Eric Tweit, SDOT

- The design has been changed since we last presented to the board, so we're back to talk to you about those changes.
- To clarify, the three foot bulbs we had originally thought that was necessary to meet ADA requirements but then realized it's not necessary. In an effort to be efficient with our money we made those changes. Some places still need bulbs to meet ADA requirements.
- Changes: reduced number of curb bulbs because they realized they could meet ADA requirements without them. In some of those places they're adding in pedestrian islands (4' wide by 10' long).
- Joanne: Is this a slightly different design from what you have been doing? Is this an improvement?
- A: Yes, this is an addition. This allows pedestrians to get closer to crossing traffic and shorten crossing length. This adds one more thing to slow right hand turn traffic down.
- Gordon: So some of them have the extra protection on the other side of the crosswalk and some don't? Why?
- A: It's the turn radius. We're assuming turning traffic is going into far lane. In one instance there's a driveway in the way.
- NE 65th intersection: no changes. Just south of NE 65th there's a new bus island going in. Bike path will go in between island and sidewalk. Pavement will be raised to level with the bus island at the two crossings.
- Guest: Why doesn't that go all the way to 65th on the SE corner? The bulb should go all the way to the intersection.
- A: I'm sure part of it is the turning radius, but we can get a more detailed answer for you. Look to see if there's a possibility to extend it.
- NE 64th intersection: curb bulbs are staying, just refreshing crosswalks. Adding detectable warning strips if they're not there.
- Guest: The big problem is the poles. Crosswalk button is in the middle but should be on the right of the ramp, on the east side of the street.
- Joanne: How does that help? A: If you want to cross Roosevelt, you have to hit the button. When you get to the ramp, it should be on your right hand side instead of having to look for it or it being in the way. It makes it consistent with others.
- NE 63rd intersection: new bulbs going into 63rd but not Roosevelt. Adding pedestrian islands on the north and south end on west side.
- NE 62nd intersection: all new ramps; pedestrian islands on north and south side (west).
- NE 61st intersection: T's to the east into Roosevelt. Pedestrian islands being added on west side. ADA ramps have been shifted north on NE corner. Corner is being painted, not changed; makes crossing more perpendicular and creates shorter crossings.
- Ravenna Blvd: no changes to corners. On the north, putting in a bus island.
- Guest: Why aren't there any bulbs at Ravenna? Ramps are wrong, long crossings, it's a mess.
- A: So the bus bulb gives you additional width. With that on the NW corner, there's no good design to move everybody (including bikes) around the curb bulb. Which parts are you concerned about? The whole intersection. Curbs set up diagonally; timing on the lights; south and north sides of Ravenna should have bulbs because it's so wide. A: So a three foot bulb, what does that get you? Help me understand which is more important? J: All streets have parking, it should be sidewalk. A: There won't be parking there anymore. J: If you don't put a curb there, people will park there.
- Joanne: Would you say this is the priority? Jacob: Yes.

- A: Jacob we talked about meeting with you separately. I think that would be beneficial. There are some changes with parking that will impact how it looks now. Jacob: Not having the bulbs is making it less safe.
- NE 59th intersection: T intersections coming in from the west on 58th and 57th. On the eastside they're going to paint out a bulb in the street to prevent parking. ADA ramp on the eastside; island on the north side on the west.
- NE 58th intersection: Extend sidewalk into the parking lane on the east with ADA ramps on both N and S crossings. On West side, pedestrian islands; also extending curb bulbs into NE 58th street.
- NE 57th intersection: Looks similar to 59th; paint bulb on eastside and ADA ramp.
- NE 56th intersection: ADA ramps on far north and far south side for more direct parking. Pedestrian island on the north side.
- NE 55th intersection: Pedestrian island on north side; south side is a bus island.
- NE 53rd intersection: This is a safe routes to school intersection. Bulbing out on eastside of street and remarking crosswalk. Pedestrian island on north side.
- Gordon: On the west side it looks like those ramps are pointing into the middle of the intersection instead of 90 angle to each other. A: Orientation of these is often the conflict of utility and what not. I can't tell you exactly why they are like this. We can follow-up on that and verify why it's angled.
- NE 52nd intersection: Curb bulbs on east side of street and pedestrian island on west side.
- NE 50th intersection: No major curb changes. Bus island going in to the south.
- NE 45th intersection: No bulbs being added. A lot of paint is being revised on north side. To south side there's a new bus island immediately south of the island. It's wide because of curve; helps shorten crossing distances.
- Jacob: Is the driveway for the gas station going away? A: yes.
- David: When pavement markings; two months ago it only took two months until markings were plowed over by semis. A: It is going into the same. We've looked into it.
- Gordon: I stood there for hours one day. There's a lot of turning cement and double load trucks that are running over that. A: They do have another lane; they may need to use 50th to access. Good point about vehicles you saw there.
- Jacob: It's another reason why I don't like that paint. I'd rather see physical concrete.
- Jeffrey: Why are you using paint there? Not actual structure? A: Where we're using paint it's because of lower cost; we think it is useful, not as good, but effective. Also for 58-59 is that they're so close. Great crossing at 58th will help. We thought it was a good next step without going the full bulb. Jeffrey: When people are traveling south, will you have a structure at the north? A: For 59th and 57th the eastside is paint and an island on the west. Nothing raised on the eastside. Jeffrey: But you do have one bulb coming out on the eastside? A: Yes on 58th. Jeffrey: The rest will be paint? A: SDOT will send the presentation out.
- 42nd intersection: East leg: bulbing into NE 42nd on eastside into 42nd. North of intersection there's a new bus island. Islands through the intersection that reflect the bus islands that break where crosswalks go. West leg: bulbing out on eastside of Roosevelt.
- Jacob: All the bus stops except for that one are south of the intersection. I don't understand why this isn't standardized. There's no continuity. That's the big problem. A: I don't know that I'll be able to explain why it's located on the north here. I think there's likely not enough room, but I'll have to get back to you. We tried to put the bus stops on the south side as much as possible, but we'll have to clarify.
- Lorena: I'd like to second and third about the ramps being perpendicular instead of pointed into the middle of the intersection.
- Construction scheduled to begin end of 2015.
- Jacob: why is there less money? A: We're still working to finalize cost for this project. We were in the process of trying to fund the additional costs. I wouldn't say that there's less money. I would say that we're trying to make sure the money that we're spending is as efficient as possible.
- Jacob: I personally think paint is a waste of money. I'd rather you spend the money and build it right. A: One thing we could look at is a curb instead of paint at 57 and 59th.

Action Items:

- SDOT to report back why the island doesn't go all the way to the SE corner at 65th.
- SDOT to meet with Jacob independently to talk about the Ravenna intersection.

PMP Update: Public Outreach Strategy, Best Practices

Ian Macek, Kevin O'Neill, Barbara Gray, SDOT; Amalia Leighton, SVR consultant

- Update on ongoing assessment work: PMP 09 has a number of specific performance measures. We're going to try to tie back to the evaluation criteria that was established. Includes safety metrics; equity; vibrancy; health.

- We'll be sharing you the results when we complete them. Barbara will walk through the methodology.
- I'm going to participate in some of the workshops because I think there's some intent that's important to recognize. The Pedestrian board at the time did not want to spend all their time on PMP. Instead there was a group of 25 that worked on the PMP. We had significant representation from people with disabilities.
- We really wanted to plan for where pedestrian activity was, but include looking at demand and where it's going to continue to grow. As you know, there are a lot of people who make specific decisions that have impact on pedestrians. We needed a system that would crank out a product that was consistent. We also wanted a system that could scale, be nimble and work for years to come. Mapped out eight quarter and half mile walk sheds to generate heat map of demand. Shows highest pedestrian demand.
- Joanne: How did you pick the locations? A: We would with the work group to sort them. Examples of highest potential demand: Universities and colleges; regional attraction (park, museum); apartments/condos; bus transfer (5+ routes or light rail); center city retail. Appendix goes into a lot more detail about point value and how we thought about it. We used a similar threshold on transit master plan and bike master plan.
- With system based plans (bikes, transit, modes that operate efficiently on a network) it's important to identify a grid because connectivity is important. We came to the idea that we didn't want to exclude anyone in the city. We did not establish a minimum grid. We didn't identify connectivity. Looked at equity data and evaluated on income, auto owner, disability, diabetes, physical activity and obesity.
- Joanne: Any reason why older adults weren't singled out? A: There's a good amount of overlap with seniors, but it was going opposite of the equity measures because seniors were living in low-density, affluent areas. It felt like it skewed the data.
- Lorena: Has there been any thought of adding social justice to equity piece? It seems like you are including it, but not calling it out. A: There's an entire matrix of companion activities. I'd love for you to look at that and see where the gaps are. There are probably different partners we should include. We were also trying to address historically underserved. Lorena: I would just encourage you to toot your own horn and adjust your language.
- April: I was wondering if there's any overlay with the physical condition of sidewalks. A: Yep, getting ahead.
- David: I have a question about auto ownership in equity. In some ways you could imagine that if you're successful with modal plans; it would decrease autos. A: It was older populations or children that weren't able to drive. More appropriately called low-ownership so we should describe it differently.
- Used building blocks, made determination on percentage wise of how they should shake out: equity: 35%, corridor 25%; vibrancy 40%. Then generated the high priority areas and added in parks. Did an inventory of every sidewalk and crossing in the city. Evaluated crosswalks and along the roadway. Dug deeper into downtown because that's where the highest number of crashes occurred.
- April: What gets priority? Maintaining what we have or developing new? A: Priority for this plan was to do a little bit of both, but to use this to build out the network. We did significant maintenance projects through BTG because we had the funds. Prior to '07 there was no money to build sidewalks outside of capital projects. In '07 – focused on Broadview; '08 – south Seattle to build out the light rail; '09 – lake city I think. The data of what we did with BTG levy dollars ties back to our performance measures.

Amalia with SVR Design

- We wanted to revisit best practices. Looked at cities that developed a PMP after we did. Looked at NY, SF, Boston, Philly, Chicago, Sydney, Vancouver BC. Not all had separate PMP, some combine with bike, etc. Also looked at papers from Advocacy Groups to keep up to date with health and equity measures.
- Two best practices looked at were prioritization and the tool box. Feedback from staff is the prioritization is a little complicated.
- Findings: Criteria for ranking related to goals and policies—atmosphere looks very different now than it did before. Vision Zero, Move Seattle, Comp Plan, etc.
- Including health and equity is cited as a best practice. Our approach is still very relevant. Using new census data that was released in 2010 can now be included.
- Locations and conditions used – to include maintenance.
- Best practices Toolbox findings: Public facing/ image rich; PDF form of all toolboxes in addition to online option
- Looked at innovative options: NACTO urban street guide, related explicitly back to goals; thinking about interim options lower—cost options to activate streets.
- Jacob: Were there different tools for how to maintain, make it safe, etc.? A: I would say that we have some of those policies in place. In Seattle it's often more about enforcement. It is pretty clearly defined in the toolbox as to what the walkable zone is.
- Jacob: We're not enforcing. A: Right. It's particularly difficult to enforce things like low-hanging tree branches. It's really about education of property owners.
- Jacob: Are there better tools for reporting, etc.? A: Yes definitely.

- Gordon: You mentioned moral hierarchies, what did you find? A: Chicago has the boldest hierarchy and politically they said pedestrians have priority politically. Some cities are taking it more from a safety approach. In places where's it's more dangerous, pedestrians have priority. NY, SF, Chicago all have vision zero type language.
- Gordon: Any cities that you looked at have a north of 85th like we do? Using something other than traditional sidewalks. A: Integration of green storm water infrastructure; and public space management. In Seattle it's particularly important because north of 85th we have creek basins that have environmental priority where we don't have sidewalks.
- ADA guidance. There are more documents about curb ramps that should be highlighted and included as part of this toolbox. It's something that has changed since '09. Ian handed SVR prioritization process, will bring the toolbox work that they did later one closer to when we work on that.
- Paul: Where is the public outreach plan in this? A: This was framed as a pretty minor update, so we told council that we'd be doing our broader public outreach through SPAB board. Chair has invited additional people to some of our workshops. We'll be going to neighborhood councils and going to other commissions (like the planning commission). You'll be leading and doing guidance on most of the public outreach.
- BMP original – facilities focused; not nearly as robust a tool. When we did the update, it was a much more robust update. Budgets for both PMP was probably double what we spent on BMP. They're almost reversed. The BMP update was essentially a new plan. I'd say that if we wanted to do something major; we'd go back to council and want to ask for additional resources.
- Paul: I like the idea that you looked at other cities, but was struck by the idea that if you look at walkable cities, often European cities stand out. I'm surprised that none were surprised. A: So surprisingly they may not have a document. Partly those cities have been grounded in walking since inception. Cities we looked at were transition cities so they had to develop written plans. For the first plan, we looked at European cities, but for prioritization and toolbox, we had to look at cities where there was a lot of room for improvement.
- Jacob: Did you see any tools for how to deal with construction? A: We certainly are looking at that now, and we'd bring that feedback to you. We're going to do a wholesale revision of that process and we should come back and share our revisions with you. The requirements now around access with construction are way different from what they were in '09. I'd like a standard approach to what's used out there is where we're moving. I'd like to come back on that.
- David: Mapping out operational changes for maintenance will be part of this plan update? A: I'd love to do an assessment of 2015 timeframe. There's a tool we can use to see if we're on the right track. I think we have most of the issues with construction access identified, but practically what can we do to create change.
- Jacob: A lot of it is based on complaint. A: You want to be more pro-active. But even having a tool like the find it fix it app helps. Jacob: It doesn't have sidewalks. A: Yes, and we're making adjustments, but just having the app in place is the big lift.
- Jacob: Also the time that someone has to do something. I think people should have to move their car more often than 72 hours. Timeline should go quicker. A: You and I are in agreement. Not everyone else is.
- Right of way improvement guide will include some information on maintenance. Last time we went over performance measures and started to look at policy framework. Recommended changes to policy framework: Vision needed to be more action oriented, so adjusted. PMP Goals: Health goal changed "get more

Northgate Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge Project Update

Art Brochet, SDOT

- Project has moved along pretty much as expected. There have been a lot of questions about funding, how far we've gotten with design, etc. This project is driven by creation of sound transit station; in design review we're looking at a ~2000 foot bridge.
- Art will come back with full sense and sequence of corresponding pedestrian and bike projects in surrounding areas. Partly waiting to see what happens with Move Seattle.
- Existing walking conditions are quite terrible. On west side of 1st Ave NE on 92nd north up until bridge we're building a protected bike lane. Joint bike and pedestrian on eastside after 105th. We have a long distance to make up at 5% grade because I-5 is so elevated. Looking at adding a stairway at the west side to avoid that if capable.
- David: No elevator? A: No elevator. SDOT won't deal with complexities to manage an elevator. There is an elevator in the sound transit station.
- April: How long is the loopy ramp? A: 800 feet.
- It will be built out of steel as a truss tube. North Seattle College is part of conversations about western end point of the tunnel to see if they want to reorient their ramps or anything else. Looking into removing an entire parking strip at the eastern end point, but still in discussions.
- Funding: \$25 M for the bridge itself. Sound Transit and City each have \$5M in each, leaving us at \$15M short fall. Tiger grant tried to fill that, applied again this year asking for additional \$10M e-bike share program. That might be scaled down if other funding comes through. Some options in Move Seattle and inclusion in the WA State capitol budget (\$10M in there). All should be resolved this fall.

- Lorena: What are the crime statistics in this neighborhood? A: They have the advantage of Seattle precinct located next to college, so generally good next to campus. Near the mall, there have been episodes of theft/assault/high prowling area. Personal injuries have come out of those.
- Lorena: What types of safety will you include? A: Lighting, part of the reason why we brought the ramp closer to the college to have it more visible. Also trying to make it a place where people prefer to walk through and not live.
- Lorena: Has it been determined that emergency poles are or are not effective? A: Campus has an array of call boxes that have been effective. We're looking into that.
- We had been talking about a bridge that is 15-20 feet wide. We've landed on 20' and no distinct zones that will be delineated by elevation for bikes vs pedestrians.
- April: Do you know what's going in the old precinct property? A: No.
- Jeffrey: Has there been any discussion of zoning on the west side? A: I know Northgate urban development plan came out. I don't think zoning in that area is considered a limitation. Development has been slower in Northgate than thought.
- Jeffrey: I know they have big plans for Northgate itself, but on the other side of the freeway I wonder if they've developed any plans? A: I haven't delved into plans there, but I know it's available.
- April: I know there's an Apartment at 109th on the west side.
- Any questions, feel free to contact Art. Planning to hold an open house in September. I'd love to come back with you to talk about what we're thinking on entrances and landings on each side, and how they see controlling flows of folks across the bridge, and the safety elements (probably in 3-4 months).
- Jacob: Are bikes going to be flying through there? A: That's a great question for Alta. I think it will be like the regional trail facility.
- David: Related to the design that you take for the tubing. I toured the bridge at Husky stadium and the railing that was chosen is so thick that you can't see through it. There's a large curve in it, so you're operating on a blind curve. It'd be good to see the material, set up a mockup on it, particularly on the eastside. A: We're also paying attention to the mixed zone to sound transit because there will be a lot of traffic there both ways. Desire is to have design ready next year so we can have it built out and ready for use, before the sound transit is operating.

Board Updates

- Letter drafted by Gordon on the Move Seattle levy. Gordon: Outlining our role as being stewards of the PMP. Goes through the levy funding and points that council could adopt if they want to like: multi-modal corridor investments and arterial roadway maintenance projects that they're going beyond minimum ADA requirements and prioritizing walkability. Paul: I'm hearing a lot of reaction about the levy being much larger than the BTG; Licata's plan to take 1/3 of the value out and look at other alternatives for funding. Gordon: Polling was really strong, even with the increase. My thinking is to stay out of funding decisions. Joanne: Need to get some clarity on Lydia's comments. Paul: When's council making a decision? When does the letter need to go in? Gordon: any substantive changes need to happen this week. Board wants to look at the letter before it is sent to council. Gordon will resend.
- Lorena: Today is my last meeting. Will stay in touch through the end of June.

8.12 Adjourn