

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board November 12, 2014 Minutes

Attendees

Members: Jacob Struiksmma, Devor Barton, Lydia Heard, Jeffrey Linn, Lorena Kaplan

Public Attendees: Tom Noble, Heather Bazille, Cathy Jacamilla, Amanda Barnett, Eliza Pan, Alice Poggi, Brendan Pepler

Other Attendees and presenters: Howard Wu, Talis Abolins, Michael James, Michelle Marx, Kristen Simpson, Ian Macer, Kevin O'Neill

Introductions

October Minutes:

Approved.

Public Comments: Tom Noble, re the Westlake cycletrack. Pedestrian usage is 600% greater than people on bicycles. There are questions on how to protect pedestrians from bicyclists – most common concern is excessive speed. The designers have said that bicycles would not go where pedestrians do, but they are relying on goodwill. Suggesting further controls for the cycle track. JS – Looked at different grades on BG, something to look at here.

Mount Baker Commons and Olmsted Parkway

Talis Abolins, Friends of Mount Baker Town Center

- Asking for review and support from Board, Collaboration and input are also welcome.
- This proposal serves all of the six objectives of the PMP. I looked at the layers of priority mapping, this area is high in those needs. It makes an important connection between Cheasty and Mt Baker Blvds, also addresses social equity needs, and this is one of the most diverse areas in the country, representing a broad range of demographics. We have a dense Town Center going in here. The area is challenged in terms of walkability, but this is a pedestrian oriented town center. Pedestrian safety – this corridor has been noted as highly unsafe. Pedestrian bridge is mostly ignored by youth from the high school. Complete Streets – 110 year vision for this completing this important connection. Would be a great success if we could make that happen. This area is one of the most underserved for open space in the southeast sector. The proposed land bridge would connect boulevards and open space. Get more people walking – lots of opportunities here, town center to activate the street frontage, but a high volume traffic corridor, not pedestrian friendly. Overpass will help. This is a vision to make that work.
- We have support from groups that include Seattle Parks Foundation, Beacon BIKES, SEED, Seattle Green Spaces Coalition, Friends of Seattle Olmsted Parks.
- Three basic components: Reconnect Olmsted Parkway; Make town center synergy and identity at the Commons, Make a successful Plaza Marketplace.

- Location: at intersection of MLK and Rainier, where Land Bridge would cross. Connects Mt Baker Blvd to Cheasty Blvd and the Olmsted park. Connects to Franklin High School on east, transit station and to proposed Mt Baker Commons on the west. Cheasty used to be Jefferson Blvd. connects to Jefferson park. Make it friendly to pedestrians, cyclists, elderly, disabled. Mt. Baker Commons would help with community identity.
- Part of citywide Olmsted vision. Lake Washington Blvd, etc. CM Harrell describes Cheasty Blvd as a gem with mattresses in it.
- Community has done a lot of planning for their town center, this connection of blvds has been a constant theme. Connections overlaid with dense town center.
- Pedestrian gap, auto dominated area, safety issues. 1976 overpass is largely unused, ignored by youth especially.
- Rezoned this year for the Town Center, high density called for.
- Land bridge ideas: How to make safe passage for both bicyclists and pedestrians. Will be costly but adds to social equity. Lots of room here to make the bridge work in all ways.
- Support? Key moment in city focus for this area. Study for Rainier area corridor, pedestrian safety solutions. Catalyst project area. We would like a letter of resolution from the Board to support the vision to reconnect the boulevards, with an associated open space in the core of the town center. SDOT study will take a year or more, after that would be an implementation phase. LK – costs? Still fleshing out. Possible 5million for land bridge. Lots of ideas being floated, sinking Rainier for easier transition, everything on the table now. Giant roundabout didn't work, bowtie concept was controversial, at-grade crossing unattractive idea, be creative. Audience: Why is at-grade not feasible? Speeds a problem all along Rainier and MLK. TA: Lot of work to be done at-grade as well, improving streetscape. Can't get away from the high traffic counts. Freight route, many lanes of traffic combined with kids who need to get to class and don't want to wait for signals. Key component for identity, social equity, make a key open space corridor with a land bridge. CM Clark: Funding issue, she said if there is a vision the funding should be there.

Action items: Draft a support letter of resolution

PMP (Pedestrian Master Plan) Work Plan Update

Kristen Simpson, Jennifer Weiland, SDOT

- 20013-2014 work. We need the Board to tell us: Is this working, is there another format that might work better for conveying accomplishments? Also to think about as you look at the new plan update.
- Accomplishments organized around the objectives of the PMP.
- SDOT Mission, vision, core principles – always show this, but they are important to consider.
- Review of goals and objectives of the PMP

- Objective 1: Completing the pedestrian system, largely funded by BTG, but school speed zone cameras ramping up to cover some costs. (JS – 7 blocks of new sidewalks not enough).
- Objective 2: Improve walkability. Pedestrian system on all streets, all streets walkable at a basic level. Draft of street use operations plan due in about a month for public comment. Mostly tree/sidewalk conflict. Spot repair for tree uplift, also corridor management and renovation. Construction Hubs in several neighborhoods, adding new ones to the mix in ID and Roosevelt, where new construction is ramping up. Scott Kubly has asked to look again at requirements for pedestrian access around construction zones. Beef up getting contractors to follow access standards. ROWIM standards also ramping up early in 2015.
- Objective 3: Pedestrian safety. Programs and activities, Be Super Safe; Stay Active, Walk Safe for older (over 45) pedestrians, who are overly represented in collision statistics. Wrapping up school road safety action plan, programmatic activities and infrastructure improvements around schools, uses school zone camera funds.
- Objective 4: Complete streets. Plan design and build complete streets. An unfunded mandate, creates challenges about how to implement. ROWIM update will give teeth to the ordinance. Street Concept Plans: Once a street concept plan is approved, it is adopted into the ROWIM for use by developers. Advisory only, they are not required to use it, although we may beef that up. University District, Arena Area, First hill, Pontius Ave, and 35th Ave NE concept plans this year, more coming in 2015. Multi-modal corridor program, newly funded, to do conceptual design for 8-10 corridors around the city, selecting corridors which are priorities in more than one modal plan. Do conceptual design and sort out allocation of the ROW. Funded through a very preliminary conceptual level, get out ahead of funding, grants. Sara Zora is working on that, could get her out early next year to talk to you about it (Action, put on agenda list). JS – enforcement, Aurora example, doesn't work for every mode. JW: Complete Streets is a policy directive, how we manage it after it is built comes under public use, street permits. Public Space Management issue.
- Objective 5: Vibrant spaces. Public Space Management program. Started early 2013. Brought permit reviewers into the development of the policies, part of public space management to do a better job of managing the ROW, mobility in the ROW. Up to 45 program areas in the ROW. Expanded parklets, now up to 15, this year we have four built, one in construction, another about to start. Evaluating moving the program from a pilot to permitted use later this year. Pilot plan for play streets program began this year. Have play equipment, expand the block party idea, a recurring permit for more frequent use, very popular. Working on Park(ing) Day. Had 50 pop-up parks this year, the most ever. Lots of ways to use the ROW. Alley design and activation. More than just places for service, or bad places. Design in ID, PS, University District. Develop ADA walking surfaces for alleys, program activation.
- Objective 6: More people walking. Hosted four Summer Streets events. Went to Portland to check out Sunday Parkways, interest in creating a version of that here maybe next year. Updated walking maps this year. Safe Routes to School – walking encouragement, safety education, mini-grants to schools for safety activities at the school. Will evaluate

Comment [LH1]:

the Holiday Pedestrian Safety program, redo the knowledge survey. JS – Santa House at Nordstrom crowds the sidewalks, too much traffic there. Look at that.

- LH - BTG? Zeros in 2016 if not replaced. Tom Noble: Curb ramp puddles. LK – recently had a retreat, we want to partner, be engaged in a more proactive way. Would be good to be invited to more of the planning meetings. The Board has experience, expertise, would like to get upfront. More timely updates, invitations, we want to be more proactive in engagement.

Action item: Get Sara Zora on the agenda early next year to talk about Multimodal Corridor Program and conceptual corridor planning.

PMP Work Plan Update

Michelle Marx, SDOT

- My other colleagues are here as well. Our assumption is that this will be a relatively minor update, not a major overhaul. The plan has a sound methodology. Makes sense in how we direct money for programs and projects. Assess what we have done to date, how well we moved toward the goals. Look at performance measures, trends. We didn't set any targets, just goals. Want to set targets this time. Make sure we are still in alignment with national best practices. Are we getting the right data, using it in the best way? Review and update the toolbox. One key tool not yet included is the Neighborhood Greenway, serves both bike and ped needs. Implementation plan: Do we need a more detailed 5-yr implementation plan like for the BMP? Synthesize the work into a printed document. Something more tactile. Hard to navigate the website where everything lives online now. JS – all the problems, could go on and on. Roads resurfaced, but no new sidewalks (equity issue? Modal equity?) Enforcement. Overloaded Find It Fix It app. We need more to give pedestrians a fair chance.
- LH: Interface – we often hear that the online interface is difficult, will be good to have something that works better, is more user friendly. Targets: Look at equity. Dollars spent or number of units built may not be the best measure. Something CM O'Brien pushes, using a metric other than dollars or miles. Kevin O'Neill: BMP example. Lorena: Qualitative measures, safety. JS- Transit investments. Kevin: We have the Transit Master Plan, use that to improve the ped-transit connection in the PMP update. Public comment: Walking and transit are very important, also for those of us without smartphones.
- We are hoping to use the Board as our primary resource in this process. We plan to come to each of your meetings every month for the rest of this process, give a quick update, sometimes schedule some time on the agenda if needed. (Action: agree as a board to have them at every meeting). Wrap this up by end of 2015. LK- In our guidelines, to do the work of the PMP. Public comment: How will PMP relate to new Council Districts? How will someone look at the PMP to see how it relates to our District? Kevin: The plans have been citywide, the District system will impact how we do planning, we don't really know yet. This is a much broader issue than just PMP. Kristen: Lots of demand for reporting based on Council Districts, we have to remind district members that focus and priorities have a broad citywide perspective.

Action Item: Get the PMP update process onto Board monthly agendas until completed.

Elections: David Goldberg is elected as Chair and Bevin Wong as Secretary.

Updates:

- Devor will send the selected capital projects list to Art Brochet after Jacob reviews it.
- Devor will follow up on the presentations this month. Has some things noted for work plan update, etc.
- Devor volunteered to draft a resolution letter,
- We agree to have Michelle or PMP update team at every Board meeting.
- Applicants for the open Council board position were interviewed this week; a decision is likely in December. The annual open call for applications for current and upcoming openings will begin then.
- Howard will check on Bevin's confirmation.

7:55 Adjourn

LH