

Seattle Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board Joint Meeting Minutes

Date: January 5, 2022
 Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 Location: Virtual via Microsoft Teams
 SBAB Co-chairs: Patrick Taylor and Sarah Udelhofen
 SPAB Co-chairs: Jennifer Lehman and Emily Davis
 Recorders: Simon Blenski, SDOT

Bicycle Advisory Board Members Present:

Members	Present	Absent
	✓	X
Yasir Alfarag	✓	
Kashina Groves	✓	
Jose Nino	✓	
Andrea Lai, Secretary	✓	
Diane Walsh	✓	
Andrew Dannenberg	✓	
Meredith Hall	✓	
Sarah Udelhofen, Co-Chair	✓	
Patrick Taylor, Co-Chair	✓	
Maimoona Rahim	✓	
Yaacov Tarko, Get Engaged Member	✓	
Seat 6 Vacant		

Pedestrian Advisory Board Members Present:

Members	Present	Absent
	✓	X
Jennifer Lehman, Co-Chair	✓	
Emily Davis, Co-Chair	✓	
Erin Fitzpatrick	✓	
Bianca Johnson	✓	
Emily Mannetti	✓	
Esti Mintz	✓	
Maria Sumner	✓	
David Flasterstein, Get Engaged Member	✓	

Meeting Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by SBAB co-chair Sarah Udelhofen.

Get Engaged Member Introductions:

- The boards have new Get Engaged Members:
 - Yaacov Tarko: Hi, I live in Belltown and I'm the new Get Engaged Member on SBAB.
 - David Flasterstein: I live in Capitol Hill and I'm the new Get Engaged Member on SPAB.

Public Comment:

- Glenn Doren: I live in Belltown. Scooters are just flooding the sidewalks, riding at high speeds, and not yielding to peds. I reached out to Kelly Rula's team at SDOT many times over the past nine months. They have an agenda to push e-bikes and scooters, but they are doing it without any enforcement. SDOT keeps kicking the can down the road. At a recent City Council meeting they presented survey information from scooter users, but there was no mention about pedestrian feedback or the risk to pedestrians. SDOT says they are working on education campaigns, but they should either do enforcement or immediately stop service until there is a technology solution. On top of this existing issue, they are adding more e-bikes to our streets. I urge the boards to use what influence they have to get SDOT to change its approach.
- Doug MacDonald: I wanted to add to Glenn's comment. SDOT analyzed 17 police collision reports involving scooters: 8 of them involved scooters riding on sidewalks. That is over 40% of all scooter collisions. Scooters are not legally allowed on sidewalks. Even with this data, SDOT still allowed 1500 more e-bikes to be added. With the Move Levy expiring, we need to stop thinking about bike/ped infrastructure jointly. Shared paths are for bikes and are not comfortable for pedestrians.
- Alex Thompson (comment in chat): Cars should be banned in Pike Place Market.

Vision Zero Update:

- Maria: At SPAB we started reading off recent fatality information that we receive from Allison Schwartz on SDOT's Vision Zero team. In 2021, there were 31 lives lost, which was a 15 year high. The number of people who lost their lives included 19 pedestrians.
- Maimoona: Did SDOT have a reason for the 15-year high?
- Maria: According to an article in the Seattle Times, experts were puzzled. It may be due to the pandemic, with were fewer cars on the road traveling at higher speeds.
- Sarah: Good to hear you are working with Allison. Maybe SBAB can also work with her.

Presentations:

Stay Healthy Streets

Presenters: Summer Jawson and Sara Colling, SDOT

Presentation: See attached

Time: 6:25 p.m.

Presentation:

- Summer:
 - Since spring of 2020, we have taken the Stay Healthy Streets program from an emergency response tool during the Covid-19 pandemic to a long-term program.
 - For the permanent designs, our original directive was to make 20 miles permanent throughout city.

- Our process for doing that was to start with a needs assessment, do a feasibility check, pilot designs, evaluate them, and then implement permanent designs.
- The needs assessment analyzed access to open space, underserved communities, equity, geographic distribution, high density housing, and other factors.
- For Feasibility, we looked at locations that were non-arterial streets, where no new signalized were needed, and existing land use needs.
- For evaluation, we collected a lot of before and after data about how the streets were being used and are having a lot of conversations with neighborhoods to see if the space reflects the neighborhood.
- We've heard two major themes about permanent designs:
 - Fully closed route for walking, rolling and biking for all ages and abilities
 - Fully closed blocks for easier community recreation, events, and extensions of public space in high density neighborhoods.
- Sara:
 - I'm going to walk through a case study of one of the pilot locations in Little Brook neighborhood in Lake City.
 - Lake City Collective originally reached out to SDOT to request additional space adjacent to Little Brook Park.
 - We closed one whole block and paid Lake City Collective to activate the space. They held events there every other week through 2021. Outside of events they had a little garden and basketball hoop where kids played.
 - Down the street on we painted a street mural with a design by a native artist using funding from a National Association of City Transportation Officials.
 - To evaluate the space, we worked with the Department of Neighborhoods to conduct a survey in language and had a lot of community conversations. Survey respondents were primarily Latinx, which reflects the community in this neighborhood.
 - There was strong support for making the design permanent.
- Summer:
 - We have three main pillars to our permanent design: providing public space, shifting priority to people walking and biking, and changing vehicle use (discourage pass through traffic, encourage slow speeds for those vehicles who do need to access).
 - Our process to get from pilot to permanent includes: initially closing the street, modernizing neighborhood greenway such as signs and markings, installing gateway elements, then adding community enhancements.
 - For non-arterial gateways will narrow the street substantially to 11 feet. In the bulb areas, we will work with community to fill in the new space with planters, bike racks, benches, painted streets, or other ideas.
 - There was a question submitted about how Stay Healthy Streets relate to neighborhood greenways. They both have a shared goal of improving space for walking and biking, but they are not always fully linked. We heard from community in 2020-2021 that not all greenways should be made into permanent Stay Healthy. We are trying to be responsive to that feedback.
 - Stay Healthy Streets were initially funded in 2020 by the CARES Act, City Emergency Response Funds, and other maintenance and operations funds.
 - We recently received \$1.8M in Covid-19 Local Fiscal Recovery funds.
 - I also wanted to give an update on the Alki Point Keep Moving Street since it is a bit of an anomaly.

- We initially implemented the Alki location with Seattle Parks to provide additionally space to social distance.
- However, this space is unique compared to other Stay Healthy Streets or Keep Moving Streets. It is a non-arterial street and also in the BMP as a future bike facility.
- We did a survey to get feedback on a permanent design and received over 2,000 responses.
- We are still reviewing the results, but the big themes are that people want more space for walking and biking, while maintaining access to Alki Point Park.

Discussion:

- Sarah: I reviewed the presentation you gave in January 2021. The original schedule was to implement all 20 miles of permanent designs by spring of 2021. I totally understand that we are still in a pandemic, but was curious about the reason for the delay. What have been the biggest barriers to implementation and how can we help advocate to speed things up?
 - Summer: Funding was initially an issue, but now we have \$1.8M. Also, outreach takes a lot of time and the community has limited bandwidth. We want to respect that and take our time to do outreach right.
- Jennifer: How has as your approach and the program changed since 2020? What has surprised you most?
 - Summer: It's been eye opening to see the two ways people want to use them. In Little Brook and Columbia City there is a lot more support for one-block closures versus route closures elsewhere in the city.
 - Sara: Due to quick deployment of the initial designs, our A-frame signs fell over a lot and we received a lot of complaints. Once we started shifting to more permanent designs, complaints dropped significantly and I think people are starting to view Stay Healthy Streets in a more positive light. We also learned that it is easier to have a conversation about a permanent design if there is a tangible pilot for people to see and experience.
- Yasir: How can residents advocate for additional streets? I live in Capitol Hill and feel like Pike/Pine could be a good location.
 - Summer: There is a lot of momentum behind this program and recommend sharing your feedback with elected officials.
- Jose: I remember SBAB received a presentation about Vancouver Stay Healthy Street program. Are other cities making them permanent? Can we collaborate with them?
 - Summer: We were one of many recipients of the NACTO grant. We got to work with peers from other cities to get advice and share stories, including New York, Oakland, Denver, and DC.
- Meredith: I'm impressed with this outreach and like that we are paying community organizations to help with outreach. One comment I have is that I am still struggling with the Stay Healthy Street term and how that relates to a neighborhood greenway. I think the terminology clouds the conversation and makes it hard for community to advocate for improvements because they don't know exactly what to ask for. I hope that SDOT can be clearer going forward.

- Diane: I loved the Little Brook example. In Portland, I noticed they provide a path for bikes to ride through block closures. Can we do that here?
 - Summer: We are looking at doing that and evaluating a lot of new materials that I'm excited about.

Board Goals for 2022

Presenter: All board members

Presentation: None

Time: 7:15 p.m.

- Sarah: For SBAB, two priorities for 2022 are the Seattle Comprehensive Plan and Seattle Transportation Plan. These are huge opportunities and we want to give feedback on outreach plans and participate in drafting the plans.
- Meredith: I want to acknowledge that we just lost a great SDOT director who was responsive and supported our goals. We should advocate to participate in the search process for the new director. For other 2022 topics, we are interested in talking about more about micromobility.
- Patrick: I agree, micromobility is a mode without a home. Should it be in SBAB or SPAB or both? For the Seattle Transportation Plan, we often talk about the secret "car plan." There is a lot of focus on the modal plan elements, such as walking, biking, and transit, but there is never a direct discussion about cars and parking. In order to prioritize other modes, the plan has to deprioritize driving and parking.
- Jennifer: Recognizing the new political reality and a new SDOT director, we need to make sure bike and walking are still a priority. We want to keep moving forward and not lose any gains made over the past couple years.
- Jose: How can we influence the decision about the new SDOT director?
 - Patrick: Our best tool is probably a strongly worded letter to the Mayor's Office. We should ask to be on a selection committee or make sure our voices are in the room.
 - Jose: I can draft a joint letter from the boards.
- Yaacov: Can someone please share more background on the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan. What input will we give and who is listening?
 - Patrick: The Comprehensive Plan is a State mandated document for managing growth in the city. It is focused on housing and land use with some transportation components. The Transportation Plan will combine the current individual modal plans into one plan. The Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) will lead the Comprehensive Plan and SDOT will lead the Transportation Plan. Both plans will need to be approved by City Council.
- Sarah: One other thing SBAB is thinking about is that we are usually are reacting to something SDOT presents to us. We want to be more proactive. One strategy is developing relationships with the Mayor's Office and City Council and regularly attending Transportation and Utility Committee Meetings.
 - Emily: Having short term limits makes it challenging to have continuity and develop those relationships.
- David Flasterstein: I know its topical, but I want us to focus on snow removal. After the recent storms, many sidewalks in Capital Hill were not cleared. This limits routes to transit and grocery stores for seniors.
 - Esti: The plows push the snow and block curb ramps. I cannot walk through the piles which makes it challenging to leave my house.

- Erin: On the topic of snow clearing, I'm also interested in leaf clearing. SDOT says it is property owner responsibility, but I don't think there is any enforcement. I work at Lighthouse for the Blind any many of our clients have issues navigating sidewalks with pile of leaves.
- Yaacov: SDOT is taking over parking enforcement, can they take over leaf enforcement?
- Patrick: We are looking to have a parking enforcement presentation in the coming months.
- Kashina: Regarding micromobility, I know that is not good to having scooters and pedestrian sharing space on the sidewalk, but where else should they go? We need to build more PBL's.
- Maimoona: I'm not sure if this was discussed already, but there is a new bike path by the U District Station. The bike path is between the sidewalk and benches, so pedestrians are constantly crossing the bike path. It is very dangerous.
- Yaacov: I wanted to respond to the public comment about pedestrianizing Pike Place Market. Would anyone be interested in drafting a letter supporting a car free market?
 - David: I can help.
- Diane: I'm interested in Safe Routes to School. If there are any SPAB members interested in that, I'd love to talk.

Public Comments:

- Glenn Doren: I wanted to follow up on scooters riding on sidewalks. Riding a scooter is a choice. If you do not feel comfortable riding in the street on scooter where it is legal, you should not be riding a scooter.
- Doug MacDonald: I like that the sentiment from tonight is shifting away from shared use paths. Research shows that scooters are neither safe for pedestrians or scooter riders. Sidewalks are not designed for high-speed scooters. Drivers coming out of driveways or turning at intersections are not expecting a 15-mph vehicle to be on the sidewalk.
- Clara Cantor: Hi, I'm with Seattle Neighborhood Greenways. I wanted to remind folks that there is a big difference if someone is riding on crowded sidewalk downtown versus on a sidewalk in SODO or other street where there is no safe option in the street. I also wanted to introduce myself to new members. Seattle Neighborhood Greenways has had a history of working with SBAB and SPAB and collaborating on key issues. With short term limits, we also try to be a good resource for past decisions and provide advice for current issues.
- Anthony Avery: Hi, I live in West Seattle in the North Delridge neighborhood. I wanted to share an observation from the past year. There are speed limit reductions for e-bikes on the West Seattle Bridge. This limits the potential for people to easily bike to and from West Seattle and is a missed opportunity to increase mobility options while the High Bridge is closed.

Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 by SPAB Co-Chair Emily Davis