

## Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date: December 6, 2023  
Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Location: City Hall Room 370 and Virtual via Microsoft Teams  
Recorders: Sarah Udelhofen, SDOT

### Bicycle Advisory Board Members Present:

Seat	Members	Present	Absent
		✓	X
1	Yasir Alfarag	✓	
2	Max Green		X
3	Nia Ransom	✓	
4	Amy Conroy		X
5	Ty Bottorff		X
6	Doug Midgen	✓	
7	Donna McBain Evans, Co-Chair	✓	
8	Christine Stawitz	✓	
9	Vacant		
10	Peter Bryan, Co-Chair	✓	
11	Joseph Roberts, Secretary	✓	
12	Eli Davis, Get Engaged Member	✓	

**Meeting Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by SBAB Co-chair Pete Bryan.

### Public Comment:

- Email from Steve Howell on 11/23/23: Long time bike commuter here. The recent re-painting and striping north of 130th on Linden Ave N doesn't mask the underlying problems. The biggest being the bike lane on the EAST side of Linden. EVERY side street (135th, 137th, 140th etc) that abuts Linden has NO visibility past the bike lane to see traffic on Linden. The result is traffic ALWAYS shooting out into the bike lane and causing daily near-death experiences. The amount of blockades from moving trucks in the bike lane at every apartment building is enough of a joke where I and other cyclists often just stay on Linden to the irritation of many drivers. At least they can see us there. IMO the bike lane should have been on the west side of Linden all along. Thanks for listening, Steve Howell.
- Rachel Schaeffer (Cascade Bicycle Club): I wanted to call out the amazing success of finishing the Duwamish trail along West Marginal Way. There has been a big increase in the numbers of people biking and walking along that corridor – I wanted to mention this project as an example of how filling bike networks gaps works and how it is increasing safety for all people. SDOT has done a lot of great data gathering, one of which is that travel speeds have not slowed down. The project is boosting travel and safety outcomes for people who are traveling outside of cars.

- Sanders Lauture: I run the website 'Seattle Cars In Bike Lanes'. There have been 1,325 instances of people blocking bike lanes since last year. Question to SDOT: What safety measures are you collecting to compare the new installation types?

### **Presentations:**

#### **West Marginal Way SW After Study**

Jim Curtin, SDOT

See presentation attached

#### Discussion:

- Doug: What data does SDOT use to discriminate between motorized, nonmotorized, scooter?
  - Jim: We were not able to determine which were e-bikes and acoustic bikes. That is something we're going to need to figure out how to count throughout our transportation system and their ability to go faster than a standard bike.
- Doug: Can you elaborate briefly on your mention of traffic speeds being excessive?
  - Jim: The posted speed limit is 30mph, but we're still seeing mean speeds at 37 or 38 mph – which is still significantly over the posted speed limit. We have a high volume of very large vehicles out here; a large vehicle speeding makes it a very uncomfortable situation for people traveling via modes other than cars.
- Joseph: Thank you so much, this is a fantastic project. You hit a home run here, we're really happy about this. Question about another famous area in Seattle where it's insisted that it's impossible to mix freight and active transportation: Shilshole in Ballard. Does this project demonstrate that in fact there need not be an absolute conflict and it's actually possible to safely mix bikes and freight? If so, what lessons do you take away from this that could help Shilshole be successful?
  - Jim: The goals of this project are really the key to any street we're looking at. We want to organize our roadways in a way that there's predictability. So that even if someone is driving a truck and never touches a bike, there is still organization and there is a higher chance users avoid conflicts. This is a great project to help show folks that we can deliver projects that maintain operations for freight and industrial users while keeping it safe for people who are walking, biking, and rolling. We can hold this up as an example of what we're able to do when we work together on a project.

#### **Alaskan Way 90% Design**

Ching Chan & CJ Holt, SDOT

See presentation attached

#### Discussion:

- Doug: Will there be enough width in the two-way bike lane for a person biking to pass another cyclist going the same direction? Also, how far apart are the bollards spaced? We want to avoid cars being able to drive through.
  - Yes – our standard bike lanes are 10 feet wide; these bike lanes will be 12 feet wide, which is more space than the standard.

- Our team went out and did rides with local cyclists (different types of bikes, even a pedicab) and the participants felt there was plentiful room.
- The bollards are appropriately spaced to keep cars from driving through.
- Joseph: Will there be reflective treatments since it's dark and rainy around these parts?
  - Yes, reflective treatments will be incorporated.
- Joseph: What will ensure that the Port doesn't forget or delay reinstating the bollards at the end of cruise operation periods?
  - We're working very closely with the Port on the traffic control plan. This is going to be required through their permit to operate. It will be spelled out very specifically – how the bike lane is signed and arranged. I don't have all the answers right now, but the Port wants to be a good partner – they want this to work. They want safe, efficient transportation through this area. I think we will come to a good agreement; we will make sure it's in the traffic control plan.
- Joseph: Who is in charge of maintenance of this project?
  - It will be a partnership between SDOT and the Port. Generally, in the public right of way, it is on SDOT to maintain the asset.

### **Better Bike Lane Barriers**

Jonathan Frazier, SDOT

See presentation attached

Discussion:

- Donna: How do you adhere the concrete barriers to the roadway? Also, I've only seen pictures of the armadillos, what's your experience with them providing protection?
  - Jonathan: The armadillo barriers can be 6, 8, or 12" tall. There are a few different models. They are solidly stuck on the ground – a very large truck can still drive over them, but if you hit an 8-12" piece of plastic adhered to the ground when driving, you're going to feel it. The armadillos are not as good as concrete, but they are better than flex posts. They're also a bit narrower, so they can be useful in places where concrete options are too wide.
  - The smaller precast concrete barriers are glued and pinned into the pavement
  - The larger concrete barriers are interlocked together (each one weighs about a ton). When they're together, that creates a really big mass. A super strong impact could move them. Our incident response team would respond to any situation where they move. Toronto and other cities with experience using these said they just use a truck to push them back if needed, which is what we will do if that happens.
- Christine: Thank you for this presentation, and also thank you for sharing it ahead of time. Are there plans for doing this in the rest of the city (outside of D2)? Or are we waiting to see what happens with these pilot products first? It seems like there's a lot of data that already shows these are better. Should we wait? Or, funding-wise, is it more likely that a project starts with flex posts and then eventually gets upgraded?
  - Jonathan: It would be great if we could get project level budgets to a point where we could be doing concrete as the default option. There are certain times when flex posts

will be used, when it is an experimental design – in which case we can come in later and harden it with more permanent infrastructure.

- One example of an issue is bridges (the Jose Rizal bridge, for example) - it is a challenge to add a lot more weight or cut holes in a bridge to mount things. This project is still technically a pilot, but we are pretty confident based on how this has worked in other cities that these new options will work. Georgetown to Downtown is planning to use large concrete barriers in several spots (though there's also a bridge there).
- Doug: Are you aware that there are armadillo-like barriers on Newport Way in Issaquah? They've been there about a year.
  - Jonathan: Do you have any thoughts on them so far?
  - Doug: They seem to be staying well. They're white, in front of Newport Way. It would be easy to talk to the City of Issaquah and go out and look at those.
- Pete: You talked about total lifecycle costs. Given the difficulty you had installing some of these (specialist equipment) do you see the maintenance team having to purchase extra equipment to maintain them going forward?
  - Jonathan: No, they haven't needed to purchase anything. The crane trucks are the best piece of equipment for installation currently. A large trailer and large forklift could reduce the number of people out there doing the installation, though.

#### **Board Business:**

- Approval of November minutes
  - Donna motions to approve
  - Yasir seconds
  - All agree
- Co-chair update
  - Donna is transitioning from Co-Chair of the board to the LOC committee chair.
  - The board approved Donna to be the LOC Committee representative.
  - The board is looking for a new Co-Chair to join Pete. Please talk with Pete if you are curious about being the Co-Chair. It does not take up much more time, we simply meet with Simon for a 30-minute agenda planning meeting outside of the normal monthly meetings.
  - Pete has been co-chair for a year. It is beneficial to have a rotation with the co-chairs, so that we're not replacing two co-chairs at the same time (so there's one who has a year of experience and 1 who is new). Pete & Donna were both new at the same time, which meant there was a learning curve – if we get back on this rotation, it will be beneficial to the board.
- LOC update – Donna
  - You get a bigger perspective at the LOC meeting, as all 4 modal boards are represented, along with a standing committee. I hope to bring some of those perspectives to you all as I sit in on these meetings.
  - Right now, LOC is drafting a letter to the mayor (by law, must do between January and March to report on the successes and weaknesses of the Levy deliverables from the previous year). By the end of next year, they'll be more involved in telling the mayor and council what kind of projects are important to include in the next levy.
  - Two main takeaways:

- (1) The SDOT staff members who work on SDOT's Equity Framework are developing a new tool – a map with different layers. One is locations of all completed and future projects, overlaid with a racial and social equity index that considers household income, race, etc. to see where we are and aren't doing projects, and how we make our transportation network more equitable for everyone in this city. This will be a great tool for them going forward.
- (2) There is a 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter report on the projects that have been completed with levy funding. The department spent about \$54 million on projects. Half of that was the levy, the other half was other matched sources. 2023 has been the highest expenditures in the entire life of the levy. One of the reasons for that: there was a slow start to getting projects online after the levy was passed in 2015. You heard a few board meetings ago that the bike projects are one of the areas that are behind in terms of getting projects completed with levy dollars. There's concern about that from the oversight committee. They are hoping to catch up on this. One way to do that: building up staff capacity to complete projects in 2024. There are some large projects starting soon like Alaskan Way and RapidRide J Line (Eastlake).
- Workplan priorities
  - Councilmember Strauss' office reached out looking to talk with board chairs about the resolution that was put forward a few months ago related to freight movement in the city and industrial zoning. Councilmember Strauss has been making modifications and wanted to solicit our feedback on it. Pete met with CM Strauss; the resolution is going to go back to the council for approval with significant changes. Including language about safety and vision zero, reducing the scope of the roads they are talking about, and requiring any changes to be run by SBAB/SPAB/FAB.
- Results of the survey that SBAB members completed about our priorities
  - Top 6 items, from high to low: STP, Vision Zero, Better Bike Lanes Project, Speed management & automated enforcement, Aurora Ave N, Rainier Ave N.
- Announcements
  - Simon: We're working on a joint meeting with the Pedestrian Advisory Board, looking at February – this will likely be on our normal meeting date. The main presentation will be an update on the Vision Zero program. Please let Simon/Pete know if you have questions or specific items you'd like to see addressed.
  - Simon: the City Hall room is not available at this time in 2024, so come January there will be a new room for those attending in person.

**Public Comment:**

- Clara Cantor:
  - The S Columbian way barriers feel AWESOME. There used to be cars parked there all the time.
  - The new edits to the freight resolution prioritize freight routes and through-traffic over safety. The new edits do make it significantly better, and it doesn't give the freight advisory board more distinctive power over other boards, but the resolution as a whole adds significant red tape to safety projects. It will cause projects to send SDOT staff in circles trying to appease everyone. Just today, you heard SDOT present on a tremendous amount of data that just confirmed SDOT's assumptions on what they thought would happen there. And this requirement happened because people did not trust SDOT engineers who were making that project happen. It wastes SDOT staff time,

adds red tape, and keeps you from setting your own agenda. The qualification is the narrowing of lanes. I wanted to remind the board of that.

- Jeremy Cole:
  - I live in Highland Park - I am voluntarily a non-driver. I bike and take transit. There's a huge latent demand for safe bike infrastructure. The WMW PBL and Duwamish Trail are ones I use multiple times a week, sometimes daily. The most dangerous conflict that I've encountered is with people driving cars misbehaving, bullying, parking illegally, and doing whatever they want. There's a lot of misplaced emphasis on truck drivers who are actually professional drivers who do not want to hit anyone or lose their job. With the average person driving a car, there's minimal consequence across the city. We need to get a handle on the extremely poor handling of driving across Seattle. We need to make it next to impossible for someone to drive unsafely or impact someone's life by driving unsafely. Hard infrastructure is great.
  - One of the things I do is adopt-a-street – I maintain the WMW PBL and Duwamish trail – they largely don't get any maintenance. How do we intend to maintain this and other newly built infrastructure? It's key to making sure it's initially a viable choice for biking, but more so that it remains a viable choice. Volunteers maintaining it is not viable across the city.
- Sanders Lauture, District 7:
  - In the future, is SDOT only considering upgrading flex post bike lanes, or bike lanes with other barriers?
  - For locations I currently see bike lane blockage, what mechanisms is SDOT considering to mitigate these?
- Gabriel Arthofer:
  - Looking at the widening of the bike lanes on the project presented earlier, how are they going to keep cars from parking there, especially given that cars will be using that lane sometimes? Is there a possibility of putting one of those bollards at the end of the bike lane in the middle (not sure if that's a safety issue).
  - I know that highway medians are very specifically tested and engineered for the safety of the cars – the concrete and other devices – if it's low, are cars going to become airborne if they hit them?

**Meeting Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned by SBAB Co-chair Pete.