

Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee
Meeting held In-Person and Online
September 15, 2023

SSTSC Members (X = present)

- X Lee Bruch (volunteer)
- X Mary Ellen Russell, (volunteer)
- X Margaret McCauley (volunteer)
- X Marilyn Firman (volunteer)
- X Robin Schwartz (volunteer)
- Robbie Frankel (Metro King County)
- X Noa Guter (Chair, volunteer)
- X Gary Davenport (SPD)
- X Yvonne Carpenter, (SPS)
- X Diane Walsh (SDOT)
- X Sara Colling (SDOT)
- X Brooke Nelson (SPS)
- X Ryan Baum (volunteer, pending appointment)

Other attendees

Marni Campbell (SPS Executive Director of Operations)
Ryan Packer: The Urbanist reporter
Clara Cantor: Seattle Neighborhood Greenways
Fred Young: SDOT
Andrew Merkley: SDOT
Serena Lehman: SDOT

The link on the SSTSC Website for this meeting is still not working. **Action: Diane** will follow up with the appropriate people.

Public Comment: none

Welcoming New Members:

1. Ryan Baum: Will be confirmed next week by the City Council as our new Bicycle Safety Volunteer Representative. He lives in West Seattle and has been a bicycle commuter for 17 years all over including the downtown. He has a first grader at Fairmont Park Elementary School.
2. Brooke Nelson: our new SPS Safe Routes to School Coordinator. For more information go to: <https://www.seattleschools.org/news/program-coordinator-for-safe-routes-to-schools/>

Intersection Scoring Committee: Mary Ellen Russell

Action: Sara/Diane will report next month. The subcommittee works with the SDOT intern. We need to find out why it is taking so long to score each intersection and how to improve.

School Zone Enforcement Data Review: Mary Ellen Russell

Mary Ellen analyzed 2 years of data provided by Officer Gary Davenport, SPS liaison. The committee initially tracked the data monthly but decided to review it annually for a more holistic analysis. School zone speed cameras were turned off for two years during COVID-19. After that disruption, the 2021-2022 speeding rates dramatically increased from before COVID-19 in most places. Mary Ellen discussed the variable outcomes the data showed.

School Zone Automated Enforcement Expansion – SLI Response: Andy Merkley, SDOT Engineer

The presentation included a review of the planned expansion of the school zone speed cameras.

Currently, there are 19 active locations and 35 cameras. Steps to put in new speed zone cameras are:

1. Determine that 85% of traffic is over 30 miles per hour.
2. Put in Flashing Beacons and if they are not enough to slow traffic,
3. install Automatic Enforcement Cameras.

Cameras have shown that speeds in school zones drop 71 % during arrival/ dismissal times and 50% all day. Last week the City Council approved doubling the number of speed zone cameras by the 2024-2025 school year. They did not, however, allocate project funding. It takes 14 months approximately from design to completion for speed zone camera installation. Total upfront costs will be \$400,000.00 for SDOT and \$100,000.00 for SPS. Operation per camera costs \$66,300/year.

Tickets from automated enforcement are reviewed by SPD sworn officers, mostly officers on light duty. Another issue is staffing for enforcement. 4-5 new officers would be needed to enforce new cameras. There are multi-departmental efforts to get the state legislature to legalize having clerical staff or lesser-trained officers review the camera data and issue tickets. Bill Laborde is the one to contact at SDOT who is working on legislative change. This is a priority for us also. **A subcommittee needs to form** to follow up including contacting Mr. Laborde.

Levy to Move Seattle: Serena Lehman, SDOT

Diane Walsh, Ashley Rhead, and Sara Collings were commended for their part in the success of Levy Construction. The levy is in the 8th year of construction from 2016 until 2024. Relating to schools, 171 projects are completed. 131 crosswalks and 205 blocks of new sidewalks have been built. 39 staircases have been repaired. 9-12 projects are completed each year. Every school will be touched by the end of the levy.

Levy funding is used to leverage federal and local spending. From the \$507 million in levy funding \$1.26 billion has been leveraged.

Questions:

1. New funding package? It is in the works, currently at the SDOT and Mayor's office.

2. The Seattle Transportation Plan is being circulated. The committee will review the plan and comment officially after the October meeting.
3. Will there be more School Streets? More permanent school streets are in the offing. This has been a very popular and successful new program.
4. Mary Ellen advised that students need in on transportation discussion from the start, especially older students using the Metro.

SDOT UPDATE: Diane Walsh SDOT

1. **Action:** Reminder the new Seattle Transportation Plan is out and we as a committee need to comment by Mid-October. A subcommittee was later authorized to draft this comment as it is needed before our next meeting. The subcommittee includes **Mary Ellen, Brooke, Noa, and Marilyn.**
2. New School Streets locations: there are 13 school streets altogether including Stay Healthy Streets.
 - a. West Seattle Elementary Campus
 - b. Holy Family Bilingual Catholic School
3. New Stay Healthy Streets locations:
 - a. West Woodland Elementary
 - b. Genessee Elementary
 - c. Emerson Elementary
4. At Adams Elementary there are 4 way stops around the school.
5. October 4TH is Walk And Bike To School Day. Now is the time for school committees to request packets that Diane has prepared. Marni suggested Public Affairs – Beverly Lightbridge might be a publicity agent. **Action: Brooke and Sara** connect with Marni to publicize.
6. The principal of James Baldwin Elementary (formerly Northgate) reached out to discuss traffic conditions in front of the school. SDOT is unable to create a 4-way stop since this is an interaction of an arterial and residential street, not an intersection of two residential streets or two arterials.

Crossing Guard Update: Yvonne Carpenter

There was a lengthy list of changes, mostly the loss of crossing guards. **Action: Yvonne** will get the list to **Mary Ellen** who will update our map. There are 68 open positions. Yvonne is doing a lot to advertise for new guards. Due to time constraints, we were not able to give this issue the discussion merited.

Last Month's Minutes and Action update items:

1. **Action: Scoring Rubric Committee:** Carried over from May. This is ongoing. See Intersection Scoring above.
2. The City Council presentation was well-received and was timely. We seemed to be putting our weight behind what the Council Transportation Committee already wanted to do.
3. **Action: Marni** will check that the Annual report will be presented before the school board, either the whole board or a committee.
4. **Question: All** How do we get the annual report issues before the legislators?

5. Franklin High School Problem: Margaret sent a letter asking for better crossing conditions. There is a coalition working on this problem.

Mary Ellen moved, and Margaret seconded to have the minutes approved. They were approved without objection.

At the next committee meeting, Margaret will present a draft presentation policy

Future Topics:

- Annual Report Response
- Recruiting crossing guards.
- Land Use Planning Report?
- August: Stop Paddle Report

Next Meeting: October 20th Online