

# Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee

## Meeting held online

### March 18, 2022, Minutes

#### SSTSC Attendees

- X Richard Staudt (SPS)
- X Lee Bruch
- X Mary Ellen Russell, Chair (parent volunteer)
- X Margaret McCauley (pedestrian safety advocate)
- X Marilyn Firman (citizen-at-large)
- X Yvonne Carpenter (SPS transportation crossing guard manager)
- X Hunter Maltais (SPS Transportation Manager  
Robin Schwartz
- X Robbie Frankel (Metro Representative)
- X Ashley Rhead (SDOT host)

#### Other attendees

Ryan Packer: Urbanist Reporter  
Brian Dougherty: SDOT manager  
Vivian Song Moritz: School Board Member  
Cheri Hendrick (Mercer Middle School Design Team)  
Vince Gonzalez (Mercer Middle School Design Team)  
Caroline LeMay (Mercer Middle School Design Team)  
Tod McBryan (Mercer Middle School Design Team)  
Justine Kim (Mercer Middle School Design Team)  
Paul Wight (Montlake Elementary Design Team)  
Kas Kinkaid (Montlake Elementary Design Team)  
Shannon Payton (Montlake Elementary Design Team)  
Ariel Mieling (Montlake Elementary Design Team)  
Jessica Ravitsky (Nurse, Denny International Middle School)  
Jeff Clark (Principal, Denny International Middle School)

#### Last Month's Minutes:

#### Review of Minutes and Action Item Updates:

1. Crossing Guard Map is almost ready. **ACTION: Jennie or Brian** will send out final map when it's finished.
2. 4-way stops approved at Lawton & Madison. A revised all way stop policy is being developed specifically for schools. **ACTION: Brian or Ashley** will get more info on the upcoming changes to the all-way stop policy for schools.

3. The 24<sup>th</sup> and Irving: because it's a school zone SDOT can install speed humps on Irving. 24th is a neighborhood greenway, so SDOT can install there as well. SDOT is considering installing speed humps in 2023.
4. 14<sup>th</sup> and Henderson: **ACTION: Brian** said he could get the data verifying need to Robin. **Robin** could then recontact David Shaw. Deferred to April meeting.
5. Intersection Scoring Rubric will be carried forward. Mary Ellen forwarded it to us just before this meeting, but we are so fully scheduled that it will be discussed at a later meeting.
6. We have a new King County Metro member, Robbie Frankel who works in transit planning.
7. Richard researched the scoring rubric and sent a copy in chat.
8. **Action: Yvonne** will post a crossing guard recruitment flyer at Loyal Heights.

**Minutes Approved:** Margaret moved, and Richard seconded. All were in favor.

**Letters:**

The committee agreed that:

1. **Margaret** will write to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor requesting a police member for our committee. She will consult with **Lee** and **Mary Ellen**.
2. **Margaret** write a letter supporting WSDOT to USDOT to get money for a study of I-90 and Rainier Ave. South. This is near three schools and one, Hamlin Robinson, has busses whose turn is so tight that they go over a sidewalk. **Mary Ellen** and **Marilyn** will consult.

**Crossing Guard Update:**

Yvonne reported a new crossing guard at Roosevelt and 117<sup>th</sup> (Hazel Wolf) and a sub for Hazel Wolf, Jane Adams and a third school. She lost a guard a Broadview-Thompson, but a sub is filling in. She has an interview coming next week and an applicant for Leschi.

A crossing guard recruitment subcommittee was established to work on recruitment issues between meetings: Yvonne, Robbie, Margaret and Lee.

**Active Transportation Coordinator:**

Hunter reported he has hired Sarah Collins to a 223 day position starting Thursday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. He wants people from SDOT and SPS to meet with her to set goals and metrics for her job. Mary Ellen would like to join that meeting and Hunter agreed that committee members should be there.

**Asa Mercer Middle School Site Plan Review:**

The plan is to fully replace the school and 25 portables. Construction is to begin in the summer of 2023 and finish in 2025. The students will attend Van Assault School during construction. Currently, there is a public playfield north, and a park. There is a footpath through Jefferson Park on the Northwest. On the East side there is the very narrow street, 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. S. where buses park. On the south is Columbian Way with four bus stops and informal drop-offs by families. There is a high voltage power line on 16<sup>th</sup> which

might not be relocatable and also some exceptional trees. A recent street project has moved the crosswalk on Columbia much closer to the school. The VA hospital is on the east side of the school.

The current plan was presented. SDOT is requiring 7' of property to widen 16th Ave S. Street widening and power poles made keeping bus dropoff on 16th difficult. This is a forced dedication, not a purchase by SDOT. John Merrick and Jackson Keenan Koch are SDOT reviewers working on this. Design team has recommended that school direct families to use 16th as 1-way even if SDOT doesn't agree to make it a 1-way street and the STSC agrees that would be best.

If 16<sup>th</sup> was one way North, or possibly a school street with limited access during school hours, the pile up of parent cars would be discouraged and it doesn't seem like it would be necessary to widen the street. There have been careful plans to get the students safely to the four bus stops. Additionally, there is a proposed bike lane along both sides of Columbian way.

Questions asked were as follows:

1. Richard was concerned about the slip lane exiting from the VA Hospital. Would drivers, who would be looking for cars coming from the east, notice children crossing on the westside crosswalk. He would like the slip lane closed. The problem is the VA must agree to allow a 'normal' four-way turn. **Action: Robbie** offered to get a test to see if there was enough turn radius for buses and offered to look into moving the bus stop if necessary.
2. If someone (we) could get the VA to agree to closing the slip lane could a regular intersection be constructed.
3. On the South corner of 16<sup>th</sup> Brian suggested squaring off the corner and making a one-way pedestrian improvement. Lee suggested the option of a raised bike crossing there.

Mary Ellen thanked the presenters for an outstanding job of working with the guidelines and looked forward to continued updates as this project progresses.

### **Montlake Elementary School Plan Review:**

This team is in the predesign phase and had a schematic to show us. The construction will begin the summer of 2023 and conclude by Fall 2025. The children will attend John Marshall during the construction phase.

Currently this school has residential streets on all four sides. Now the bus drop off is on McGraw, There isn't a significant problem with parent drop-off. They park in the neighborhood and walk the children to school. 22<sup>nd</sup> is a School Street.

The initial plan is to preserve the Historic Building, build a Gym on the West side and a large classroom Building on the east side. There will be deep cutting to get all buildings' rooflines on level of the Historic Building's roofline. Pedestrian access will be on grade at Calhoun and 22<sup>nd</sup>, McGraw and 22<sup>nd</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> and McGraw. There will be bike parking at Calhoun and 22<sup>nd</sup> and McGraw and 20<sup>th</sup>. The main entry will be at Calhoun and 22<sup>nd</sup>. The buses will remain on McGraw. The service landing will be at grade in the NW corner. The loading dock will be underneath the classroom wing with a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> story. The bike parking will meet code. There is no car parking at this time. The staff parking is a problem because all parking is 2-hour in the neighborhood.

Ashley Rhead raised two questions. She is concerned about removing all onsite parking. Students and teachers with disabilities may need a special place for parking. Margaret suggested not all handicapped use cars and/or come to school in cars. It was discussed that it is better to be prepared for those who must. The school street could be permanent and could have an area with no curbs where handicapped could park and exit their vehicles.

Ashley also asked if there could be a traffic garden. This is permanent painted layout on the playground of a street with obstacles that a typical biker might encounter. These traffic gardens are used for training bike riders and are required once a year for a PE bicycle safety class. They would be nice to have for children to practice year-round. Cascade Bicycle is designing several 'school' gardens of varying amounts of space

Richard was concerned about the Loading Dock. He was concerned that on a narrow street it would be hard for a large vehicle to turn and enter the loading area as drawn. This is still in development the team said. There are two other possible entries near that corner. The positive thing about this corner is that it is far away from any other activity.

Another possibility would be staff getting neighborhood parking passes. Ruth Harper at SDOT is apparently the one to ask.

Kas Kinkead asked if there was a problem allowing 2 different locations for bike parking. Lee said that one space for short-term parking and one for all day was beneficial. Lee said the legislature has just allocated multi-millions to encourage bike education and biking.

Mary Ellen thanked the Montlake design team for coming so early in their planning and for the quality of their presentation. We look forward to seeing their progress.

#### **Denny International Middle School>**

Jessica Ravitsky, Nurse, and Jeff Clark principal brought us a serious concern about a hazardous crossing by their school. Hundreds of kids cross Thistle without lights, crosswalk or crossing guard. This is particularly dangerous now that there is so much more traffic due to the bridge closure.

Wants crosswalk on Thistle in line with bus access. Ashley & Brian will take a look at putting a crosswalk there & what other improvements are needed or could be possible. Crosswalk for Chief Sealth does not provide access for Denny students because campus is locked. It would also make sense to put a crosswalk to the west in front of the community center. There are great crosswalks at the corner that was formerly Denny's front, but building has been rebuilt and main entrance has moved.

Brian says there is some emergency funding for West Seattle bridge issues. Robbie will take a look at bus stop locations that could potentially be moved to make room for a crosswalk.

**ACTION:** Brian and Ashley will look at the crosswalk to determine what to do. Robbie will look and see if a possible bus stop relocation would help.

**The Walk Boundary subcommittee** is meeting, Intersection Rubric review includes

1. All collisions
2. Slip lanes
3. Traffic calming

4. Crossing distance
5. Slopes
6. Speed updates
7. Any additional suggestions are welcomed.

**Richard is on vacation** next month. Shelby Kirby will be his stand-in

**Future Topics**

- 4-way stops
- Review/reassess SDOT intersection scoring criteria
- Committee By-laws needed
- Seattle's climate change planning for transportation
- Annual calendar look ahead
- Bus Stop Paddle Funds through Pandemic (March?)

**Next Meeting date April 22<sup>nd</sup>.**