

Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee Meeting held online

April 10, 2020 Minutes

STSC Attendees

- ✓ Richard Staudt (SPS)
- ✓ Mary Ellen Russell, Chair (parent volunteer)
- ✓ Margaret McCauley (pedestrian safety advocate)
Kevin O'Neill (SPD)
James Wells (Metro)
- ✓ Jennie Meulenberg (SDOT, corridors and Ped transportation planner)
Marilyn Firman (citizen-at-large)
- ✓ Lee Bruch (citizen-at-large)
Yvonne Carpenter (SPS transportation crossing guard manager)
- ✓ Charlie Simpson (bicycle advocate)
Danny Bell

Other Presenters/Public

- ✓ Mitchell Lloyd, King County Metro Schools lead
Dani Hurula, KC Metro
- ✓ Clara Cantor, Seattle Neighborhood Greenways
- ✓ Tod McBryan, Heffron
- ✓ Michelle Brown, Heffron
- ✓ David Dahl, Mahlum
- ✓ Corrie Rosen (Mahlum),
- ✓ Vince Gonzales, SPS
- ✓ Amy Kleiner (Principal Viewlands)

Public Comment

No public comment.

Last Month's Minutes

ACTION Jennie will help ME get connected with Ashley Rhead to find out what is happening on 90th near Sacajawea.

Jennie summarized SDOT recommendations for Marine View Dr SW and 45th Ave SW in email and sent to Mary Ellen to forward on to concerned parents.

Jennie followed up with Ashley about SDOT *response* to changes in circulation at Northgate elementary to ensure that crosswalks, curb ramps, etc., responding to new circulation patterns

are in place prior to the new building being occupied. A pedestrian project on N 117th is in the works, along with Greenway on Corliss. SRTS program is potentially interested in doing projects there. Currently funding is uncertain. School Zone cameras fund SRTS and they aren't on right now. Crews aren't working right now, so that will create a backlog of projects.

ACTION_Lee will draft a letter supporting funding SRTS when things start up again to be sent to Mayor's office.

Crosswalk warrant rule has not been revised yet.

ACTION_Jennie will find out status of change to crosswalk warrant rule.

Brian Dougherty has communicated via email that SDOT is considering turning on flashing beacons and/or cameras, would like a recommendation from the committee to the mayor. Richard pointed out that the district has moved from distributing food at pickup sites to using buses for food delivery.

ACTION_Richard will find out if pickup sites are still in use for kids who don't get busing.

Margaret went to a pickup site and the traffic was steady when she was there the 1st week in April. Lee pointed out that flashing beacons will not be at the time when people are used to seeing them. If cameras are turned on it would require media outreach.

STSC supports turning on flashing beacons, not cameras. Clara Cantor suggests that we should include a statement in our recommendation that we aren't turning on cameras to avoid financial hardship, that in an ideal world fines would be tiered.

Margaret asked how fines are set, if they could be changed to increase with multiples. Mary Ellen said her understanding is that fines are set by state law.

ACTION_Margaret will research how school speed zone camera fines are set and what it would take to change the fine structure.

Ashley found out that budget for the mode choice incentive would be about \$500, but survey won't happen this spring. SDOT might look at doing something next fall.

ACTION_Jennie will ask Ashley and Brian about possibility of moving the mode choice survey to the fall (later in summer). STSC has previously thought it might be easier to get more complete data in the fall, but SDOT has wanted to keep it in the spring for continuity of data. With no data last year and school out for this rest of this year it might be a time to go ahead and change when the survey is conducted.

Jeff Bronstein has left SPS. STSC would love to stay in the loop about hiring to replace Jeff Bronstein. We would want to make sure this doesn't slow down hiring the Safe Routes to School Coordinator.

ACTION_ Richard will bring up hiring the Safe Routes to School Coordinator with JoLynn Berge, CFO, to keep the process moving.

Jennie reached out to Adonis Ducksworth about 15th & Columbian, didn't hear back. If she does hear anything she will keep the committee in the loop.

Last month's meeting minutes were approved.

SDOT Update:

Elementary Circulation at Northgate and Webster

At Northgate sidewalk projects are planned on 117th close to the future school play area. The Safe Routes to School program is installing a learning landscape on 1st Ave N, although right now there isn't capacity to get it installed and it may be delayed. The learning landscape consists of a series of activities laid out on the sidewalk and was designed in partnership with UW. Richard wondered whether there is anything in the design that would discourage people from crossing mid-block on 1st as they do now. The new location for the main entrance will likely make that crossing point less appealing. There isn't anything in the design specifically intended to discourage mid-block crossings.

At Webster SDOT has been installing school zone signs around Webster. SPS is planning to install curb ramps at 68th and 30th. SRTS (Ashley Rhead) had asked SPS to also install speed humps on surrounding non-arterials and flashing beacons on the surrounding arterials as optional comments during the SIP process. SPS is not acting on these comments for cost reasons.

Ashley will be on leave starting in late-April through early fall. Jennie and Brian will be covering portions of SRTS, along with a couple of other people on Brian's team.

Margaret asked if looking for consistency for street improvements should be part of STSC's discussions with SDOT and SDCl. STSC sees that there isn't a lot of consistency in terms of what is required, who is responsible, and who will pay for it. There are different outcomes at different projects depending on who the PM is and specific project budget, cost over runs, etc. The STSC would like to look at creating more consistency between outcomes.

Jennie says the majority of ped improvements come from SRTS, Ped masterplan, Bike masterplan. Each of these is funded from a variety of sources, with different requirements for different funding sources.

ACTION_ Mary Ellen will review Ped & Bike masterplans to see how much they are specifically planning for schools.

Viewlands Circulation Plan – David Dahl & Corrie Rosen (Mahlum), Tod McBryan (Heffron), Michelle Brown (Heffron), Vince Gonzales (SPS), Amy Klainer (Principal Viewlands)

Just starting design development. Intent is for construction starting fall 2021, occupancy fall 2023. Have begun coordinating with SDOT already.

Project goals are shaped through school design advisory team and SPS strategic plan which has a strong focus on racial equity, and SPS green resolution. School site consists of 2 parcels (1 big & 1 small) separated by ROW. Project is in Piper's Creek watershed that feeds through Carkeek Park into Puget Sound. Site slopes down away from 3rd Ave toward park which is substantially lower grade. There are currently 3 terraces on site. Small parcel to the west is in a riparian corridor, habitat buffer, and steep slope area. There are SPU installed stormwater facilities (biofiltration swales) along N and S property lines that cut off potential street access points. There are 13 exceptional trees on site that will be retained.

The existing building is along 3rd Ave with portable buildings on the middle terrace. Parent loading happens on the arterial (3rd Ave). Current bus loading on 107th is a problem, there isn't enough space. Parent drop-off on 3rd Ave can be chaotic. Deliveries are from 3rd Ave now. NW 107th St has too much grade to be an accessible route. There is a narrow drop-off lane in front of the school on 3rd. SDOT has said they prefer not to have curb-cuts on 3rd Ave.

Preferred alt creates parent drop-off and parking lot off of 107th and moves bus loading to 3rd where grade is less steep. Service access would be off NW 105th St. Main entry is at south portion of parent loop, where it's accessible to parents and bus access.

The parent loop takes a large portion of the site, and is located on the top terrace. The play field size is reduced. The hardscape play area is comparable to what is currently there. In the current condition there is a large field and almost no space allocated to automobiles. The preferred site plan allocates about 1/3 of the space to cars.

Tod McBryan pointed out that this site has much less available street frontage than most school sites. There are few streets with sidewalks near the school and 3rd Ave is a busy arterial.

Current enrollment is 385 students, the new facility will have capacity for 650. This is a big increase in attendance coupled with a significant loss of open space.

The proposed building is 3 stories rather than 1 story to protect open space.

The design team would like to see vehicle signal at 107th NW & 3rd Ave. Support from STSC could help with that.

SDOT did a project several years ago with street improvements and tree plantings to discourage mid-block crossings. The preferred alternative shows the main entrance at the mid-block on 3rd.

To accommodate school buses on 3rd Ave the curb will be moved over 2' to widen curb lane.

John Marek, Sara Zora, Noz Summimi (sp?) at SDOT gave guidance that strongly directed team not to include any curb cuts on 3rd Ave.

Currently design team is targeting submitting 30% SIP package soon, Monday or Tuesday.

There is no existing staff parking. This has sometimes been a source of tension in the community with concerns about teacher's cars blocking mailboxes.

Heffron's analysis shows that the parent drop-off as shown on the plan would lead to very high delays and not function without a signal at 107th. The committee is concerned that even with a signal there will likely be traffic delays that drive parents to continue dropping off on 3rd or continue crossing mid-block.

Richard pointed out that doubling the number of students doesn't have to double the number of cars. Tod McBryan pointed out that the area around this school is very unfriendly to pedestrians and lacks a continuous sidewalk grid.

Richard brought up the fact that more SPS student injuries with vehicles happen inside parking lots than anywhere else. SPS would like to reduce potential for this kind of on-site student and vehicle collision to protect students and also to reduce SPS insurance costs and liability.

The design team is planning for 4 full-size buses and 3 – 4 special ed buses. This takes more than ½ of the street frontage on 3rd, but does not take all of the space currently allocated to it on the plan.

Design team will take our comments and then re-consider. Tod thinks it would be helpful for STSC to reach out to SDOT. Sara Zora and Noz have moved on, Jackson Keenan-Koch is taking over, Diana Holloway would be worth reaching out to.

ACTION_ Mary Ellen will type up committee's comments about the Viewlands plan and reach out to Jackson Keenan-Koch and Diana Holloway.

Next Meeting:

May 8th. Meetings through school closure will be via skype.

Future Topics:

- Follow up on coordination meeting w/ SDOT, SDCI, Schools Capital Projects to avoid future box truck turnarounds on school property (TBD – once in-person meetings are held again)
- Circulation Plan Reviews
- Annual Report
- Northgate contractor circulation (August or September)
- Flip Your Trip presentations at additional schools (August)

Additional Meetings/Items

- Schedule annual report to City Council for May (Need to reschedule?)
- Schedule Walk Boundary Subcommittee – need to reschedule once in-person meetings are held again