

Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee Meeting held online

June 12, 2020 Minutes

STSC Attendees

- ✓ Richard Staudt (SPS)
- ✓ Mary Ellen Russell, Chair (parent volunteer)
- ✓ Margaret McCauley (pedestrian safety advocate)
Kevin O'Neill (SPD)
- ✓ 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
Dani Hurula, KC Metro

Other Presenters/Public

Public Comment

No public comment.

Last Month's Minutes

Jennie confirmed that the City's hiring freeze through September applies to the SRTS coordinator position.

Lee drafted a letter supporting funding SRTS when things start up again. It's ready to be sent to the Mayor's office.

Margaret sent a letter to the state safe routes to school advisory board about the school zone camera fine structure, but didn't get a response. Jennie also sent it to Mayor's office and Dongho Chang and got confirmation that they received it and are reviewing it.

Margaret reached out to her contacts on the pedestrian advisory board to ask them to include issues around changing traffic patterns for renovated/newly built schools in the pedestrian master plan. Mary Ellen reached out to the bike advisory board.

Jennie helped Richard and Polly Membrino get in touch to find contacts at SPS for DON outreach. Richard hasn't heard more from Polly to give details on what she is looking for.

Mary Ellen will reach out to Holly Goddard at SDCI about the mid-block crossing issue at Viewlands Elementary. Holly said SDCI doesn't comment beyond what meets code, which doesn't really apply to the mid-block crossing issue. She did say the departures process is

changing this year to be director driven with online community comments and suggested this is a good time for STSC and other concerned groups to weigh in.

The final Annual Report is available and has started to be distributed. Jennie put the report on the STSC website. She is working on blog post, wondering if we want input on the language.

ACTION_Jennie will send a draft of the annual report blog post to Mary Ellen.

Council subcommittees aren't meeting until July. Our liaison to council is suggesting that a packet could be submitted to council for approval without needing to attend a meeting. STSC terms start in April and expire in March 3 years later, even if people don't come on until later in the year.

ACTION_Jennie will check when Marilyn's term expires.

Last month's minutes approved.

SDOT update

SDOT signals team would like to get the school schedule for next fall so that they can make sure the flashing beacons are on at the correct times. The school board is supposed to decide by the 19th what school will look like in the fall. They are currently considering 3 options that include at least some remote learning.

ACTION_When the decision is made about school schedules for fall Richard will coordinate flashing beacon times with Jennie.

The City has asked employees to telework through September. The City is moving away from Skype to WebX. Jennie will set up a test session for WebX for future meetings. Richard said SPS has asked employees to stop using Skype, would like them to use Teams or Zoom. Jennie will check on whether Teams or Zoom would be allowed by the City.

The national SRTS partnership is dropping 'enforcement' from their principles and adding engagement instead.

The committee agrees that as long as City employees are working from home our meetings should be remote.

West Seattle Bridge Closure

Richard has been finding that people aren't following SDOT's preferred detour routes through his neighborhood because everything is pretty congested. He feels like traffic patterns aren't set yet as people are trying to figure out the best way to get around, so it will take more observation before we can make adjustment to walk maps.

Jennie said that Brian Dougherty would prefer to do some pedestrian improvements if possible rather than emergency busing.

Richard saw an announcement of ped improvements at 18th and Sanislo.

Right now SDOT is advertising an RFQ for West Seattle bridge design options. There is public desire to explore all options, including a possible tunnel.

Draft Design Guidance Document

Richard sent some comments. Marilyn would remove the sentence about the teacher being driven into, or just take out the word 'deliberately'.

Margaret suggested adding graphics. Mary Ellen suggested looking for 'good' and 'bad' examples at existing schools and taking photos like the one Lee took at Robert Eaglestaff.

ACTION_ Mary Ellen will send the draft to Richard Best, Vince Gonzales, and Jennie. Jennie will forward it to Brian and others at SDOT.

This iteration is a draft, we are looking for comment and input, not thinking of this as a final document.

Crossing Guard Update

Last month Yvonne put all of the open crossing guard spots out to admins at schools and included principles this time. This got a better response than sending info to just school admin. Yvonne got 3 applicants for Highland Park which only has 2 spots, will try to get one of them to move to Concord.

A crossing guard at Broadview Thompson wants to move to Thornton Creek, Yvonne got a new application for Broadview Thompson.

In total there were 4 applications that are waiting on fingerprinting and training, but that won't happen until August.

Current hourly rate for crossing guards is \$16.39.

Transportation planning for 2020-2021 school year

All of the options SPS is considering include what they are calling 'AB' schedules for at least secondary students. It's not clear whether this would be alternate days or morning-afternoon trading off.

OSPI released guidance this week that they expect students to be in the classroom this fall with 6 feet of space. SPS doesn't have space in classrooms to make this work with a traditional schedule.

One option that SPS is considering would have all elementary students in school in regular hours. They would move classes to gyms etc. to allow more social distancing.

Most crossing guards are associated with elementary schools, and SPS is considering options that have less disruption for elementary schools than older grades. It's likely that crossing guard schedules won't be heavily impacted.

Some families who would usually use the bus may drive their kids to avoid density on the bus. Yvonne said that SPS will have to have spacing on the bus too, which might mean running extra buses. This is particularly tough for special needs kids who need extra protection and really rely on busing.

SPS will interview for the new transportation director. Richard's understanding is that the role is staying at the director level. How much influence that role has depends on how much emphasis the superintendent is placing on transportation.

Summer school is available for all students this summer. Richard's understanding is that they are going to do the same level of meal service that they have been doing. Normally during the summer Parks takes over the distribution of lunches. Richard thinks that this year SPS will continue distributing them.

ACTION_ Richard will check on summer meal distribution and let Jennie know what is planned.

STSC will follow up on this discussion next month after we know more about what school will look like.

SPS is mobilizing contactors to start construction on June 22nd and capital projects has been incredibly busy handling that. Richard expects that we will hear back from them after construction projects begin.

Next year there may be more impetus for walking/biking to lower the risk of transmission.

Marilyn asked how the Black Lives Matter movement affects transportation issues. Richard said that SPS has already been focusing on this with their emphasis on improving outcomes for students farthest from educational justice.

If the police department is defunded it might impact SPD's traffic emphasis patrols at schools.

SPS is placing a 1 year hold on their MOU for school emphasis and resource officers in middle schools. These were officers in khakis & polo shirts who were not tasked with enforcement, but

are still no longer invited. The superintendent was not pleased that SPD used school property to stage protest response, and issued a statement saying SPS does not give permission for SPD to use SPS facilities. Jennie saw the national guard camped at Bailey Gatzert. Margaret also saw them at World School and Lowell.

Marilyn said that as a school counselor she has intervened in gang recruitment issues, and definitely thinks that can be handled without police officers. Richard's kids went through Denny when there was a police officer there. His kids saw the officer as a friendly face around the school, similar to the City Year volunteers, but that might not have been the feeling held by all kids.

STSC may need to explore more options for short term responses than just the police hotspots list.

Next Meeting:

July 10th. Meetings through school closure will be via skype.

Future Topics:

- Circulation Plan Reviews
- Northgate contractor circulation (August or September)
- Flip Your Trip presentations at additional schools (August)
- Mode choice survey schedule (August)
- West Seattle Bridge closure & walk routes (July)
- Transportation planning for 2020-2021 school year

Additional Meetings/Items

- Schedule Walk Boundary Subcommittee – need to reschedule once in-person meetings are held again. This meeting would be hard to do remotely because there is so much toggling back and forth between Versatrans and street view.
- 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)