

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board 2006 Retreat Minutes

13 May 2006, 10 am - 2 pm

SVR 815 Western Ave Suite 400

AGENDA

- Pedestrian Design Issues – presentation by Peg (20 minutes) - 10:10-10:30AM
- EIS 101 – presentation by Rob (30 minutes) – 10:30-11:00AM
- Pedestrian Master Plan scope (60 minutes) 11-12PM
- Lunch – Potluck, no formal discussion (30 minutes) – 12-12:30PM
- Pedestrian Master Plan, continued (30 minutes) – 12:30-1:00PM
- What we want to accomplish this year – Goals of Board Members(30 minutes) – 1-1:30PM
- Additional items if time allows – Viaduct position, School Crossing Guards, Green Ribbon Commission Report, etc. – 1:30-2:00PM

Please note, we may want to table the Design presentation or EIS discussion if we want to talk about our position on the Viaduct/Waterfront.

1. Call to order and introductions (10:15)

SPAB members in attendance: Jodie Vice (Chair), Molly McCarthy (Vice Chair), Jean Healy, Chris Tachibana (Board Secretary), Rob Fellows, Sarah Ross-Viles, Howard Wu, Nicole DeFrank (Get Engaged), Tammy Frick, Peg Staeheli, Ben Smith, Celeste Gilman

SDOT staff liaison: Megan Hoyt

2. EIS 101: Rob Fellows

Rob brought handouts on what is an environmental impact statement, when is it required, etc. Brought the Viaduct EIS as an example, because it's in clear Q&A format. Brought one of the 28 appendices to show the extent of the technical documents.

- What is an EIS and its parts:

Not a *decision-making* or a *design* document. A *disclosure* document to provide information on the impact of the decisions made.

Celeste: also incorporates cultural impact.

- Parts: Purpose and Need defines the point of the project

Megan, Jodie and Peg: example is the Mercer corridor project P&N, which is important because it defines if the point of the project is to increase capacity or increase access.

- Parts: Scoping is the alternatives and options to the project and their impacts. Scoping comments are suggestions for what to include in the project and come from public and agency comments (example: requests to consider sidewalks, skybridges, etc). This phase can include designs and sketches.

Ben, Rob, Megan: scoping comments may filtered out, but are included as other suggestions that were considered; project supervisors make decisions, within the impact statement, including various mitigations

- Besides natural environmental impact, EIS includes impact on historic buildings, noise, waterways and navigation, environmental justice (distribution of impact on disadvantaged communities), cumulative impact, projected conditions, assessment of alternatives, all compared to the "do nothing" option.

Megan, Ben, Rob: often need to read between the lines and draw conclusions from several separate impacts because each is described individually so overall impact (e.g. to access to transit, impact on pedestrianism) is not spelled out. Reader needs to think about the overall impacts.

- EIS is a quantitative document. If there are issues that can't be measured or are speculative, they are not included. If they can be quantified and mitigated or negotiated, they are included.

- Guide to reading an EIS:

- Look at elements you are concerned with.

- See if the analysis makes sense and if it doesn't, what is wrong.

- If the analysis makes sense but is lacking or wrong, this is where to make comments.

- Find decision-makers and hold them accountable. Comments made to a draft EIS have to be in the final version, so ask if a topic is not addressed or not clear.

- Timing is important: scoping comments have the most effect, EIS has lesser effect, design phase is hardest to change.

- Look for information in other sections, e.g. in the vehicle section to see pedestrian impact information that is not in the pedestrian section and in construction section to see impact during project.

- Consider secondary impacts (e.g. how streets outside of the the downtown area would be impacted by the Viaduct)

Nicole, Megan, Peg, Rob: EIS addresses air and water quality and noise, as the health impact.

• Discussion on the next topic...

Peg's presentation to Feet First on pedestrian-friendly design tabled. Please send photos on designs that function well or poorly to Peg (before the July 10 presentation)

Also note 24 May 12-4 Levinger and Am Planning Assoc meeting.

3. Alaskan Way Viaduct comments (11:30)

Ben: Personally doesn't like viaducts but SPAB should consider all options.

Rob: No information on impact of the tear-down option yet. It may be on the ballot but this is not in the current draft EIS or Purpose and Need, so we'll be voting based on no info.

Celeste: Votes could be split if two options are attractive to a single group of voters.

Jodie, Megan, Tammy, Peg: Viaduct is also tied in with the Waterfront Concept plan and Colman Dock. Can't address one without the other. Perhaps the master plans should linked.

Jean and Rob: If we don't get the federal money and the state will not fund if the project doesn't fit the P&N, then if the city decides to tear down, the city will pay for it.

Peg, Ben, Rob: Who has rights and responsibilities of routes if air space is state, land is city, neighborhood has other priorities etc? Facilities may be considered of "state wide significance".

Jodie: If SPAB represents the whole city, what is our responsibility if we recommend an expensive option?

Molly, Ben, Rob: At one point the tunnel was packaged with general bike and ped improvements, but has been separated. Also on ballot now, possibly, is a package on general transportation, sidewalk, etc improvements.

Jodie: How can SPAB be the most effective on Waterfront Concept Plan, vote in Nov on transportation funding, vote on Viaduct, and other issues coming out?

Rob: Our objective should be the waterfront as a pedestrian environment (aerial Viaduct Viaduct is counter to that).

Tammy: Alaskan Way splits downtown and waterfront, what option connects them?

Ben, Tammy, Megan, Rob: Alaskan Way is a tourist destination and tourists don't notice the Viaduct that much but still, it isn't a great pedestrian area and there are no parks.

Celeste and Jodie: What about an overall advisory on what how these projects should address pedestrian issues?

Rob, Ben, Tammy, Molly, Megan, Celeste: In the new aerial option (which isn't really a "rebuild"), the Viaduct is widened. How does the public get the Purpose and Need information? What about walking tours to show people what its like now, visualizations of current and new (some in the draft EIS)? Do Seattleites go downtown and to the waterfront?

4. Lunch (12:05)

5. Pedestrian Master Plan: Peg (1:05)

- Compared to Bicycle Master Plan: Analysis is different because bicycles travel linearly but pedestrians meander. Firms interviewed to do the Bike Plan were not necessarily appropriate for the Ped Plan. Timing on the Ped plan should be faster. It was 6-7 months to get to the scope phase of the Bike Plan, so it would be an advantage to get the scope for the Ped Plan out earlier, with or without certain funding.

- Brainstorm on what to include: projects, cost estimates, prioritization, implementation, connectivity and overlap with other Master Plans (Open Space, Bike...) and issues (drainage, development, mass transit...), details about policies, destinations, service objectives, deficiencies (e.g. sidewalks), policy language

Peg, Ben, Jodie, Megan: a West Seattle couple walked all the West Seattle sidewalks over 4 years. Could be possible guests at SPAB meeting.

- Questions to address: priorities (like sidewalks by 2030), annexations when we haven't completed work on the last annexations.

Megan: This document could correct issues that weren't addressed in Right of Way Improvement Manual (curb radii, signals, sidewalk closures in construction)

Howard and Jodie: look at the City of Cambridge Ped Plan and links to other Ped plans

- Reorganization of ideas for the Ped Master Plan
- Issues for Ped design and construction: construction closures, signal timing, sidewalk width, curb radii, curb ramps, signal types, sandwich boards, sidewalk texture, utility location, furnishings and plantings
- Scope for work
volunteer work, intern work, student work, professional scope, staff tasks; agency

Ben, Jodie, Megan, Rob: Who should be included? Feet First is Ped advocacy (but doesn't have the funds of Cascade Bicycles); SDOT; how to balance and accommodate various groups' needs

6. SPAB Goals and subcommittees

- Master Plans (Ped and Bicycle from Ped perspective)

* Peg
Nicole
* Tammy
Celeste
Howard
Jean
Rob
Ben

- Waterfront, Colman Dock and Viaduct

Tammy
* Celeste
Jodie
Chris
Howard
Rob

- Budget and Bond measures (impact fees)

* Rob
Jodie
Ben
Sarah

- Projects (Thomas street overpass, Mercer)

* Chris

- Safety Policy (school crossing guard and sidewalk closures)

*Nicole

Sarah

Ben

Peg

Jean

*chair

Rob: Right now, work is mostly observational/organizational, except for the overall advisory.

Megan and Nicole: Think in advance about when to address issues.
About the website: Rob Ketcherside and Matthew Amster-Burton were taking care of it, but now send info to Megan. Should we put priorities on the website, possibility for public comments? Also, will get personal contact info sent to everyone.

7. Adjourn for group picture (2:10)