

**City of Portland
Pedestrian Advisory Committee**

**Summary Meeting Notes
April 17, 2007**

Committee Members

David Aulwes*
Jim Conklin
Ali Corbin*
Kim Cottrell*
Karen Girard
Erin Kelley*
Doug Klotz*
Jess Laventall*
Rod Merrick*
Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara*
Bob Robison*
Matt Whitney*
Rod Yoder*

***Indicates committee members in attendance.**

Staff

April Bertelsen, PDOT
Caitlin McCollum, PDOT

Guests

Scott Batson,
Kirsty Hall
Marian Rhys

Approval of Notes

March notes were approved and adopted.

Announcements

- Ali reported that the crosswalks have been installed along NW 23rd Avenue. From what she can tell, there is compliance.
- Rod M. has been asked to be on the pedestrian and bicycle advisory committee for the Columbia River Crossing project. He had been skeptical early on, but it seems as if there is a real commitment in making pedestrian and bicycle connections an integral part of the criteria. Matt is also serving on the committee as an environmental representative.
- Doug made an inquiry to PDOT about the development at SE 38th and Belmont and the lack of sidewalk improvements. PDOT staff are meeting with the contractors this week.
- The next Pedestrian Networking Lunch is Thursday, May 10th.
- City Council approved the west side Burnside/Couch couplet plan and funding for pre-design.
- The Burnside Bridgehead and 3rd Avenue vacation is still on hold; there are no plans yet. Stuart is

aware of the PAC's concerns.

- April provided information about sidewalk inspections done by the Bureau of Maintenance. BOM staff inspect the city systematically, working their way around the city in a clockwise direction. It used to take ten years to make it through the whole city, now it takes 25. Their staff numbers have been reduced, and they are also concerned about getting this done. Also, whenever they respond to requests, it takes away from their systematic checking.

The committee talked about this issue, and street trees in general. We (as a community) should be thinking about trees and their needs better. Pavers and rubber sidewalks were discussed. April noted that there may be a rubber sidewalk pilot program in southeast.

There was also discussion about creating some kind of volunteer sidewalk inspector program. Citizens could be trained by BOM and inspect sidewalks in their neighborhoods.

Marked Crosswalks on Main Streets

Last fall, Rob Burchfield came to the committee to discuss new proposed criteria for marking crosswalks. Scott Batson, a traffic engineer with PDOT, was present to give an update on this process. Crosswalks have now been striped along NW 23rd and 21st Avenues, on NE Alberta Street, and SW Capitol Highway. SE Belmont Street striping is pending.

David wanted to know about compliance and other reactions to the new striping. Scott responded that he didn't know if any protocol had been set up to track behavior. It will be at least one year before we receive data on collisions. Also, there was no "before" video data collected.

Scott did do a "before" video on NE Fremont, and will be able to do analysis on the traffic calming devices put in there. The work done on NE Fremont was part of a larger project, and included parking removal and reduction of speed. Curb extensions may come in the future.

Questions:

Q: What are the measurements for safety?

A: In watching before and after video footage, we watch for how long people wait at a crosswalks, their hesitation, and number of people crossing. The sample size affects the study. We have to assume that what we are watching on any given day is "normal".

Q: Have you seen any difference with children versus adults?

A: All the information is anecdotal. Generally, it is accepted that children are less safe because they aren't able to gauge speeds and distance accurately.

Corner Truck Apron Design

Scott was also present at this evening's meeting to discuss designs for truck aprons. A truck apron is a mountable curb. PDOT wants to be able to accommodate trucks (i.e. a larger turning radius), without enabling cars to speed around corners. The design solution is to create two radii (one for cars and one for trucks).

In this design, there is a separate, low (2-3 inch) curb that trucks would be able to drive over, but would be unpleasant for cars due to texturing.

The first place these may be used is on SE Clay, at 11th and 12th avenues. SE Clay west of 11th is considered a truck district, and the Clay Green Street project calls for curb extensions, so it seems a good location for a test.

Other jurisdictions have used this method using only different colored pavement (not different heights).

One of the big things that staff is concerned about with this design is where pedestrians will stand on the curb, i.e. they shouldn't be standing where a truck might drive.

Comments:

- Concerned about the height, especially when two-inch overlays are put in.
- Perhaps domes or bumps instead of the raked surface (where trucks drive over).
- Make a difference of materials at the curb ramp level, so pedestrians know they are entering the street.
- This is a very good idea in concept, you are heading in the right direction. It would nice to see some of these choices modeled.
- Consider a slope that would also discourage fast turns.
- It is okay for pedestrians to stand at the edge; it is still part of the curb.
- I like the concept, anything to shrink crossing distance is a good thing.
- Create the less detailed, less fancy, most cost-effective design. It will be better and mean more.

Scott thanked the committee for their time and input. He will keep them updated as this process progresses.

Safety Subcommittee Update

- Kirsty Hall is a new employee with PDOT, in Traffic Investigations and was at the PAC meeting. Kirsty will be working on a safety project for 82nd avenue, the seniors on bikes program and helping with the public outreach campaign.
- Bob handed out an article that was written on the I Share the Road website about the power of a wave and a smile while crossing the street. Erin mentioned that she will test out this practice when crossing MLK and Grand.
- Bob and others met with Beth Erlendson, PDOT's new communications manager, and Mark Lear about a campaign titled "I Brake for People". About a year ago, the PAC sent a very firm letter, asking for a specific outreach campaign to highlight the rights of pedestrians in crosswalks. Mark has been able to secure funding and now will be able to put forth this campaign that targets motorists with education before enforcement. Bob crafted another letter for Mark, thanking him for his work and dedication to this. He asked that all PAC members sign it; Caitlin will deliver it to Mark tomorrow.

PDOT Budget

After last month's meeting, Rod Y. felt that it would be helpful for the committee to look at PDOT's budget and tie it in to how agenda items are determined. He suggested that the committee look at PDOT's Requested Budget for Fiscal Year 2007-08 to see where our priorities might be. Knowing the budget could help us form agendas and to hear about items when it is timely.

Rod passed out two handouts – one that shows the requested budget for capital improvements and one that shows programs in maintenance and operations (some of these programs affect pedestrians). Rod suggested that committee members review the documents and come back with ideas about which items would be worthy for the PAC to hear about.

Jess wanted to know how this fit into the list of projects that Comm. Adams presented several months ago. April explained that the package Sam brought before the committee was his requests for the one-time general fund money. This is the regular PDOT budget.

The group began to go over the Capital Improvements list, noting that Sandy Blvd and the downtown Mall project have PAC representation and thus the PAC will be informed as is necessary. There was an item on the list titled "Subdivision Streets" and Rod M. inquired if that had anything to do with shadow street connectivity. This item describes the work that is done by staff that implement development

policy. April suggested that it might be prudent for some one from PDOT's Development Review section to come and speak to the committee.

There was discussion about whether or not the committee should hear about all large investment projects. Some felt this determination should be up to staff, others felt the committee could take a larger, more proactive role.

The conversation turned to the committee's vision and wish list for projects. It was noted that the Pedestrian Master Plan has a list of projects, but that it has not been updated in a long time

April was pleased to hear the committee talking about updating the master plan. She will bring that up to her superiors.

Questions:

Q: How long will an update take?

A: A long time. The bike master plan is going through a two-year process.

Q: How many staff are working on the Bicycle Master Plan update?

A: The bike coordinator is the lead, plus pieces of other staff's time.

The committee felt that pedestrians should be next to receive an updated master plan. Rod M. remembers John Gillam saying that the current plan is not very aggressive and that more benchmarks and standards for measurement are needed.