

SE/NE 50s Bikeway Project

CAC Group Ride

October 16, 2010

Start: Rose City Elementary School, at 2334 NE 57th Avenue

End: Franklin High School/Clinton Park

10:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Meeting Summary

CAC Members Attending:

Chase Ballew, Central Northeast Neighbors District Neighborhood Coalition

Jeff Cropp, Richmond Neighborhood Association

Sandra Hay Magdaleno, South Tabor Neighborhood Association

Kenny Heggem, Woodstock Neighborhood Association

Hannah Kapell, Creston Kenilworth Neighborhood Association

Nellie Korn, Creston Kenilworth Neighborhood Association

John Mulvey, 'at large' citizen representative

Joe Recker, North Tabor Neighborhood Association

Seth Richardson, Foster Business Association

Bruce Treat, Mt Tabor Neighborhood Association

Chris Yake, 'at large' citizen representative

City of Portland staff

Rich Newlands, PBOT Project Management

Sarah Figliozzi, PBOT Transportation Planning

Jennie Tower, PBOT Traffic Operations

Project materials and additional background information can be found on the project's website here: <http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/50sbikeway>

The following is a summary of recommendations made by ride participants or project staff during the ride.

ALIGNMENT OPTION A

I. START: Rose City Elementary School

The group convened at Rose City Elementary School at 10:00 AM. There were approximately 20 people on the ride, including 11 of the 17 CAC members, three CoP staff members, and approximately 6 members of the public.

Project staff pointed out various bike lane widths along the route and generally in Portland so that the group could better evaluate the design options. Project staff recently worked with PBOT colleagues to receive approval to use 10 FT travel lanes on SE 52nd Avenue. The ability to use 10 FT travel lanes will increase available curb-to-curb width which will allow the project to increase bike lanes from 5 FT to 6 FT.

Staff pointed out that that bike lanes along NE 57th were 4.5 FT wide. A small section of bike lanes on SE 52nd near Gladstone and Center are 5 FT wide. As a comparison bike lanes along SE Hawthorne between SE Grand and SE 12th Ave are 6.5 FT wide.

II. NE 53rd Ave & NE Halsey to NE Hoyt

A comment was made that cyclists are often pinched at traffic circles, including those in this section. This is often because cyclists do not position themselves in the middle of the lane as they progress around the circle. A recommendation was made to consider pavement markings which encourage cyclists to position themselves in the middle of the lane at traffic circles.

III. NE 53rd Ave & NE Glisan to Everett

Staff noted that a semi diverter could be installed at the southern side of the intersection of NE Glisan & 53rd to reduce traffic volumes southbound. It was noted that this could be difficult due to the parking lot and its entrance on NE 53rd just south of Glisan. Another diversion option is to install a diagonal diverter at NE Everett that would be eliminate through auto traffic on NE 53rd as well as NE Everett with a pass through for bicycles. A comment by one or two participants was that the diagonal diverter at Everett was preferred over the two, especially given the parking lot access issue.

IV. NE 53rd Ave & E Burnside

The group talked about the complexities of crossing E Burnside. The curb to curb width with four travel lanes does not permit curb extension or median improvements. Project staff had identified this intersection as a candidate for a signal, preferring the HAWK/Hybrid signal option despite the fact that approval could be difficult due to federal guidelines. Staff learned last week (10/13/10) that installation of a HAWK/Hybrid is still an option with tentative internal PBOT approval to continue to consider this signal as an option at this location.

Staff are also investigating the option of a 'snake diverter' at this location that would permit autos to turn left or right at the intersection but restrict cars from crossing E Burnside at 53rd Ave. Similar applications of a snake diverter are at SE Ankeny & 20th Ave and SE Harrison & 20th Ave.

The alternative to installing a signal at this intersection is to jog the route north at SE Washington, so that it travels along SE 55th Ave to take advantage of the existing signal at E Burnside.

V. SE Stark St & SE 55th Ave/53rd Ave

A median crossing is proposed at SE Stark and SE 53rd Ave. Participants noted that 53rd was easier to cross than Stark and 55th. Crossing 55th would be necessary if the project needed to job the route to take advantage of the existing signal at E Burnside and 55th.

VI. SE 53rd Ave & SE Stark to SE Belmont

Given the low speed and traffic volumes in this section, there were no major comments.

VII. SE 52nd Ave & Madison St

A number of neighbors had gathered at the intersection of SE Madison and 52nd to advocate the installation of stop signs and speed bumps at this location. The intersection of SE Madison and 52nd is currently uncontrolled as it does not meet the warrants for stop signs. The project team will be evaluating the installation of stop signs and/or speed bumps as part of the bikeway design.

VIII. SE 52nd Ave & Division

The project team reminded the group that staff are investigating options for reducing traffic volumes between SE Division and SE Lincoln while at the same time trying to negotiate options for Trimet's bus line 71, including couplet option. A comment was made that the right hand lane at the south leg of the intersection (north-bound traffic) has turned into a defacto right turn lane which poses safety issues for cyclists. Staff responded that they are analyzing feasibility of a bike box there.

IX. SE 52nd Ave & Foster

A comment was made that the intersection of SE Foster and 52nd can be very dangerous for bikes as well as peds due to unpredictable motor vehicle movements (allegedly including driving over sidewalk curb extensions and cutting through adjacent parking lots to avoid the signal). Feasibility of bike boxes on SE 52nd are currently being analyzed. A suggestion was made to include bike boxes on SE Foster as well. The group discussed the need for other creative solutions to make motorists more aware of cyclists at this location (ideas included: public education banners, art elements similar to Clinton St Signage project, and/or additional warning signage). Some voiced concern that additional signage could add to 'sign clutter' in the area. Staff will investigate other ideas as well.

Project staff also heard from the Foster Powell Business Association meeting (10/12/10) that a new food cart pod is being developed for the north-east corner of the Foster-52nd Ave intersection. This will be another bicycle and pedestrian draw to the intersection.

X. SE 52nd Ave & Steel

A comment was made that the project should consider including diversion at SE 52nd and Steel to reduce through traffic on this street. Steel is a bikeway west of SE 52nd Ave.

The group also discussed opportunities for improving the pedestrian crossings at SE 52nd. SE 52nd Ave has been identified in at least one Safe Routes to School report as a major barrier for kids walking and bicycling. One comment of note is that if buffered bicycle lanes are selected as the preferred design treatment and both sides of auto parking are removed then there will also not be room to install curb extensions.

XI. SE 52nd Ave & Woodstock Blvd

The group congregated at the southern end of the alignment to discuss proposed bicycle lane treatments for SE 52nd Ave between Division and Woodstock. Current design options include 6 FT bike lanes, which require removing one side of on-street auto parking and buffered bike lanes (8FT) which require removing both sides of auto parking.

A comment was made that removing auto parking for buffered bicycle lanes may have some negative safety/comfort consequences such as possibly maintaining or increasing higher speeds due to the road feeling wider, as well as removing the buffer that parked cars create for pedestrians. One suggestion was that surface mounted reflectors or wands could be used to make the road appear narrower. Surface mounted wands were quickly dismissed due to the aesthetics and maintenance issues. Staff will inquire about the use of surface mounted reflectors or similar treatments. Staff noted that anecdotally these reflectors might be a maintenance issue.

A comment was made that one of the benefits of the buffered bicycle lane was that it also allowed more room for cyclists to avoid the dangers of being 'doored' by adjacent on-street auto parking. A suggestion was made to consider using the standard bike lane widths but reallocate the widths of the bike lanes so that the bike lane adjacent to the on-street auto parking was 7 FT wide and the bike lane adjacent to the curb was 5 FT. Staff said that they would add this design to the proposed treatments being considered for 52nd Ave.

ALIGNMENT OPTION B (residential route)

XII. SE 54th Ave & Foster

The group discussed improvements planned for this intersection as part of the Gladstone/Center Bikeway project. Details regarding those improvements can be found here: <http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/index.cfm?c=50518&a=256137> Additional design improvements include bicycle detection at 56th (possibly push button) and possibly adding a signal head so that cyclists at 56th can better see when they have the green light.

XIII. SE 54th Ave & Powell

The group stopped at the Powell crossing to talk about design options. A representative from the Foster Powell NA said that the NA would be very supportive of any improvements at this crossing that could be incorporated into the project. Staff are investigating options to include a full signal at this location but will need to work with ODOT regarding approval/feasibility.

XIV. Franklin HS - Clinton Park

The project team updated the group on latest conversations with Portland Public Schools (PPS) and Parks Bureau regarding feasibility of a ped/bike trail through the park. PPS does not support the shared use of the current driveway/parking lot. This means that a potential trail would need to be moved into the park, likely between the trees and the tennis courts. It appears that there is room for a 12 FT wide trail without impacting tree roots, however the significant slope in the park just to the north may pose significant feasibility/constructability issues.

The alternative is to jog the route back to SE 52nd Avenue on SE Woodward Street or jog east on SE 58th. SE Woodward Street is an existing and heavily used bikeway. Many CAC members supported jogging the route back along SE Woodward.

XV. Public Outreach

The group discussed options for outreach to affected properties regarding potential for parking loss. The group also made suggestions for potential venues for the open houses.

XVI. Next Steps

All CAC members should have Monday, November 15th on their calendars as the date for the next CAC meeting. The project team will return with an evaluation of the various design improvements. The evaluation will be based on the design objectives and input received from the CAC members and members of the public.

The ride ended at 12:30 PM in Clinton Park.