

# Bicycle Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

## April 12, 2011

### **BAC Members Present:**

Matthew Arnold, Committee Chairperson; Robert Pickett, Committee Vice-Chairperson; Andrew Haliburton; Keith Liden; Shamus Lynsky; Tom Ralley; Roger Averbeck; Chris Beanes; Suzanne Veaudry Casaus; Tigue Howe; Heather McCarey; Mark Ginsberg; Kathryn Sofich; Ian Stude; Shayna Rehberg; Alison Graves; Rob Sadowsky

### **BAC Members Absent:**

Carla Danley; Yonit Sharaby; Anne Duston

### **City staff:**

Roger Geller, PBOT; Cary Watters, Commissioner Fritz's office; Dan Layden, PBOT; Eric Schubert, PPB; Jeff Smith, PBOT; Kalja Dillmann, Office of the Mayor; Sarah Figliozzi, PBOT; Nick Falbo, PBOT

### **Guests:**

Bob Marshall; Doug Klotz; Marsha Hanchrow; Chris Achterman; Carl Larson; Kiel Johnson;

### **Announcements:**

BAC members announced news and upcoming events related to bicycle projects in the Portland area:

#### [Bicycle Rodeo & Safety Fair](#)

Saturday, May 21, 2011 - 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Maplewood School, 7452 SW 52nd Ave

Contact Roger Averbeck (roger.averbeck@gmail.com) with questions

#### [North Williams Avenue Open House](#)

Saturday, April 16, from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m

Immaculate Heart Church (2910 N Williams Avenue).

City Council is holding a hearing on the 1 year Bike Plan for 2030 progress report April 13th. Rob Sadowsky encourages everyone to attend and offer visible support for the plan. The next update is scheduled for 4 years from now. Mathew Arnold mentioned that the BAC has authored letters of thanks to Commissioner Saltzman and Commissioner Fish for their support and coordination with bicycle related projects.

The Community Cycling Center is holding a "[Shop Warming Party](#)"

Friday, April 29th from 7:30 to 9:00pm

1700 NE Alberta

The Portland Plan is now offering draft strategies for review. Please [review the material](#) and take the surveys to make sure your voice is heard in this process.

Portland Milwaukie LRT project is approaching 60 percent design. They are looking for a small subcommittee of the BAC to help work through some of the small details. Members should consider participating on this.

N/NE Quadrant Project is holding a Freeway/Local Interface Charrette all week. The closing session presenting the results of the charrette Wednesday evening.

April 13th, 2011 5:00 PM

ODOT Bldg., 123 NW Flanders, Conference Rooms A and B

The [Alice Awards](#) are coming up. Please attend if you can. Mark Ginsberg is trying to fill a table, please contact him for information.

May is Portland public schools [Walk+Bike to School Challenge Month](#). Registration is open for schools, participate if you can. On the last day in May, there'll be a large bike train going down Concord and Concord neighborhood greenways.

Mathew wanted to say thanks to all members of the committee that could attend the retreat. Chris Beanes will author a letter in thanks to the hosts of the event.

### **Meet the Director**

Tom Miller, recently appointed Director of the Bureau of Transportation, will fully take the reins on May 1st. Tom provided an introduction of himself and his background, as well as telling the story of how he became appointed as Director. Following his introduction, the BAC offered the following questions:

**Q:** You started out saying you didn't have a grand plan yet. We've seen examples like NYC where a transportation commissioner can make some bold moves. Is the NY example an inspiration for you?

**A:** If you're in my shoes, talking bicycling in Portland Oregon, you have to be paying close attention to what's happening in New York. It does raise the question of whether we're moving at the right pace. It is clear that creating an environment where people want to ride bikes is the right thing to do.

Once upon a time it felt like Portland was the source of all the innovation, but New York has blown us out of the water. At the same time, Janette Sadik-Kahn has taken some blowback for that. I don't think that the pace of change happening in New York is sustainable in Portland because of the commission form of government. That's our political reality. I hope the work done in NY gives us more opportunity, but we have to be really clear about who we are.

**Q:** We're in the process of updating the Transportation System Plan, and were going to be talking about policy over the next couple years. What are your thoughts on setting policy direction that sets more right of way to bicyclists and other modes?

**A:** We don't have a clear policy. How policy gets developed in PBOT is not clear to me today. The lack of clarity has been a source of frustration for advocates because you don't know where to go. Structurally in the bureau, it's something that I hope to address. On my watch, the transportation bureau will be very transparent about how they do what they do and why they are doing it.

**Q:** One issue we see is the interplay between bikes and other modes such as streetcar and light rail. At the retreat we compared this committee to the freight committee, and saw clear power discrepancies. Streetcars continue to be built on the right side of the street, despite past assurances that it wouldn't happen.

**A:** In the south waterfront project, I caught the issues of right side streetcar. We put our foot down to retain the position for bikes, and told them to fix it. I appreciate the advocacy community at keeping the pressure on dealing with bikes and tracks. We've talked about flanges, potentially at high demand and risk situations. The point is to keep working at this to make it better.

**Q:** To meet our transportation and sustainability goals we're going to need more than just PBOT. We're going to need to work with other city and state agencies. How do you see PBOT eyeing to partner more with both city agencies, but also other agencies like ODOT?

**A:** ODOT is complicated. Jason Tell, the Region 1 Manager of ODOT, understands the urban realm. ODOT has historically seen their position as moving motor vehicles. This is not going to change any time soon. It's come along way, but it still has a long way to go.

With regard to other bureaus, it is also hard. We don't have the strong mayor form of government, and the relationships are more nuanced. I'm not a transportation geek, sustainability is why I'm doing what I'm doing. I have very good relationships with people at the bureau of planning and sustainability. Let's talk about outcomes and figure out how transportation fits into that outcome. The merger of bureau of planning and sustainability is very important, as is having a good working relationship with those people in particular.

**Q:** You talked about how you had enlightened Mayor Adams about the benefits of bicycling for political purposes, but perhaps an association with bicycling has turned into a liability recently. How do you turn that around?

**A:** The bureau of transportation has done excellent work over the last few years, and has gotten tarred and feathered for it. But were going to own up to it, we didn't handle the communication as well as we could have.

What were going to do is improve our communication, both internally and externally. Policy for example; we need to understand how it works internally, so that we can be clear externally with the public. The reception of bicycling has suffered over the last few years because there wasn't enough of an effort focused on communications to form a cohesive message.

**Q:** How can we best support your efforts to implement the bike plan for 2030?

**A:** I don't want to be too prescriptive in an answer today, because I want to work with you in the future to answer that. I want the committee to help us do our work more effectively and faster. I wish I could say X, Y, and Z. We need to figure out how to plug you all in at the right moment and in the right way.

### **Bikeway Development Projects**

Dan Layden, Capital Program Manager for PBOT presented on a cluster of capital projects intended to improve conditions on several bikeways identified in the Portland Bicycle Plan for 2030 as "Major City Bikeways," as well as other innovative treatments, including a two-way Holladay Street.

The focus of these projects are to take us to the next level, in particular in the more urban areas. We already have bike lanes, but we don't have much else. How can we find some way to make it better?

The following projects were presented:

#### **North Willamette Boulevard**

Here the bike lanes are pretty narrow. The idea here is to remove parking to provide more space. We're looking at a variety of options, including buffered bike lanes. The stage we're at now is thinking about how to get the space and having the conversation about this with the community.

#### **North Williams**

This is a popular route and there are lots of conflicts because of the hill, conflicts with buses, conflicts with cars. We're looking first to understand can we get more space.

From a technical perspective, we think we can do it. Technically, it's doable, but politically it's a challenge. Some of the preliminary evaluations show that removal of a travel lane or parking lane will provide the space they need.

Dan showed some pictures of potential improvements, like buffered bike lane, and potentially grade separation of the facilities.

**Q:** In this particular segment, the weaving of bikes and buses is a major problem, but in this segment, this isn't addressed.

**A:** This issue is not completely figured out, but we're talking about it, and we have some ideas. There are challenges with a left side bike lane, and concerns were raised. But it's not a done deal. Another potential solution is to bring the transit station out, so that the bicyclists ride on the outside, and the conflict is more with pedestrians than with buses.

Rob Sadowsky raised the potential of a shared bike/bus lane. The BTA is having conversations with trimet about this concept.

**Q:** An attendee raised an issue on segment 4 mentioning that traffic volumes are inappropriate for the neighborhood collector designation that Williams has. Perhaps this traffic is more appropriate on Interstate or MLK?

**A:** We haven't looked at that problem. This is a murky area in policy, and the project is not a broad discussion of overall traffic flow in the district.

**Q:** Also on segment 4, because of the high travel and parking demands, bicyclists are going to those businesses as well. Don't give up on providing for the bicyclist demand as well.

**A:** We're not going to say we're done on that segment, we're just saying that that is a tough area to figure out.

### Lloyd district.

3 primary projects in the area:

N Vancouver/NE Wheeler – the idea for this segment is a bus/bike only lane

NE Holladay Street – Trimet restricts access to this currently. It could potentially be opened to bikes only, and made two-way.

A member raised a comment to not forget the connections farther west, crossing interstate.

### NE 12th Avenue Overcrossing of I-84

This is one where we're looking at some signal timing changes. The signal engineers have found a way to make this intersection work much more efficiently, allowing us to adapt one of the turn lanes for more bicyclist space. We can make the intersection work better for cars, and provide bike facilities.

**Q:** What about widening the sidewalk on 12th?

**A:** We could widen it 2 feet, but it would be very expensive, so it's not likely to happen. 10 feet (as it is currently) is the same as the Hawthorne bridge.

We're also working on some technical feasibility projects- Downtown cycle track, south downtown crossings of I405, and Glisan Street NE 22nd to 32nd. More information on these later, once the other projects are wrapped up.

**Q:** For these projects, public outreach needs to be really on point.

**A:** We recognize that and have been working hard with many events and open houses.

**Q:** How could policy support have helped these projects and processes? Would your work have been any easier with a stronger policy backing?

**A:** Yes and no. The reality is that this becomes political. It matters to what the community can accept. Policy helps, but in the end it's a political decision.

Roger mentioned that these projects were all based on a policy background as major city bikeways in the Bike Plan for 2030.

### **Event Bicycle Parking**

Sarah Figliozzi from PBOT will discuss the city's efforts to provide event bicycle parking.

### **Timber Game parking Accomodation**

We started working with the timbers folks last season, to build up the demand and awareness. For one of the home games they tested out the Morrison street closure. They had a good discussion with the timbers to establish the win, win situation. During that season they were providing 100 to 200 bikes per game.

The first home game is starting with about 450 spaces, 250 of which are reserved for season ticket holders. PBOT's plan is to make sure no one gets turned away, so they are offering an additional 100 bike spaces. We recognize that 450 spaces is puny when it comes to mode split, and we want to be aspirational, but were responding to what we've seen in the past games.

Currently the Timbers management is working with a bike parking provider. We've talked with them about supplying their own bike parking, but they have been very happy with having a separate provider deal with the issues.

### **General Event Parking Policy**

We looked at San Francisco to see what other cities are doing for event parking, they have a rule that all events involving a street closure require that bicycle parking is offered for 1 percent of attendees .

Were looking at doing this gradually. Getting a sense about who's providing bike parking now, and to provide information to people who are interested. We've created a website designed to make the process as easy to use and clear as possible. A standard permit is allowed to use the parking lane. We suggest that people do 5 percent of expected attendees. We are trying this approach first , before requiring it like San Francisco.

Tom Miller mentioned that for the timbers game we're also raising the on street parking rate in the vicinity of the stadium. He's excited about starting to use the tool of variable pricing for managing parking demand.

PBOT is pushing the idea of event parking onto the event organizers themselves. This will not be a city provided or run service. The rack provider 'bike racker' has seen significant growth since 2008.

**Q:** Is there additional permitting costs if the parking is within the street closure?

**A:** Only if they go beyond the closed space.

**Q:** We went to an event at the. Rose garden, and asked the staff where the bike parking was, but nobody knew.

**A:** Signage is required as part of cite code to direct users to long term parking.

**Q:** Some of these events that have lots of traffic, do you talk at all about traffic management and how to get 500 cyclists out after the game?

**A:** with the timbers we've got some excellent staff that have been working out all the details and outreach.

In terms of next steps, we want to talk with the parks bureaus about large events on the waterfront. Bike parking is a wonderful advertisement and reminder about bike transportation.

Members brought up the idea of sponsor or users fund. Valet parking seems to make the difference for people. Sponsors may be interested in paying for these services. People will also pay for it, as a service. People pay to park their car, they may pay to park their bikes. You can get payment on both sides.

**Q:** Parking is still a problem. We need to push collectively, to make parking much more readily available. I think we can do a lot better.

Tom Miller answered that he increased bike parking requirements significantly in the code.

**Q:** For long term, the uncovered staple racks are not adequate

**A:** Trying to get existing property owners to enhance and offer better bike parking is hard, and we have no teeth. Getting private people to push for the benefits is what we really need.

### **Committee Business**

Next month will be much internal BAC stuff for the last hour.

If you have any topic ideas for the agenda forward them to Roger Geller.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:05**