

Sam
Adams
Mayor

Tom
Miller
Director

**North Williams Traffic Operations and Safety Project
Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting**
December 6, 2011, 12:00 – 2:00 pm
Oregon Red Cross, 3131 N Vancouver Ave, Training Room 11

Summary of action items from meeting:

- Any SAC members who would like to suggest North Williams Avenue business owners to be recruited to the committee should send suggestions to Ellen or Michelle
- Ellen will send the transcribed notes taken the Community Forum tables to Laurie Simpson for inclusion in the tabulation of responses to the Forum questionnaire
- Ellen will post the new SAC charter and decision making process to the website
- The Guiding Principles subcommittee will bring a final recommended draft of the Guiding Principles back to the SAC at the January meeting

Meeting attendance

Committee members in attendance:

Debora Leopold Hutchins, chair
Gahlana Easterly
Jazzmin Reece
Ben Foote
Jana McLellan
Michelle DePass
Karis Stoudamire
Nathan Roll
Allan Rudwick
Laurie Simpson
Mychal Tetteh
Shara Alexander
Caitlin Wood
Irek Wielgosz
Melissa Lafayette
Diana Moosman
Paul Anthony
Pastor Jerrell Waddell
Pastor J.W. Matt Hennessee
Steve Bozzone
Noni Causey

Paul Anthony

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Committee members absent

Dwight Terry
Jrdn Freeauf (excused)
Kenneth Doswell
Pamela Weatherspoon Reed
Susan Peithman (excused)

Members of the public in attendance:

Scott Lieuallen
Russ Willis
Ed Abrahamson
Joe Clinkenbeard
Thad Miller
Jonathan Maus
Don Nesbitt

Project staff in attendance:

Ellen Vanderslice, PBOT
Michelle Poyourow, Public Involvement
consultant
Joan Brown-Kline, Public Involvement
consultant

Meeting Notes

1. **Welcome, introductions** (Committee Chair Debora Leopold Hutchins) (5 minutes)

Deborah called the meeting to order a few minutes after noon, and welcomed everyone.

2. **First public comment period**

No members of the public in attendance wanted to comment.

3. **Check-in (Debora)**

a. Review agenda

Debora solicited comments and questions about the proposed agenda from the Committee.

Allan asked if goal was to stick to the timeline described in the meeting agenda. Debora responded that the times given in the agenda are a guideline, but what is most important to her is that the meeting end at 2 pm.

b. Committee membership update

Debora introduced a new Committee member, Caitlin Wood, representing Disability Rights Oregon. Caitlin agreed to join the SAC at the end of September but has been unable to attend prior to today's meeting.

Debora also announced that Tom Anctil and Jorge Guerra have stepped down from the Committee. Debora asked if new members should be recruited to take their places. Jerrell suggested that they recruit another business owner for the Committee, perhaps from OAME.

Allan Rudwick asked how many of the current Committee members are representing Williams businesses. [Five – Diana Moosman, MOSI Architecture; Dwight Terry, Terry Family Funeral Home; Jrdn Freeauf, Eddie Murphy Cabinets; Kenneth Doswell, Betty Jean Couture; and Nathan Roll, Metropolis Cycle Repair.]

Diana Moosman said that a budding business association is starting to meet and they could use that forum to recruit another business owner. Debora asked the Committee members to think of good potential additions and to send those suggestions to Michelle or Ellen.

c. Debrief North Williams Community Forum

Debora asked people to report on what they heard at the November 28th Community Forum. She began, saying she thought it was a good forum, and well attended, with about 200 people there. It was very diverse, with members of the African American community who'd lived there for a long time, people from the churches, new residents, people of different ages, all around a great turnout. Also, the City officials there made it clear this is being taken seriously.

Jazzmin said she thought it was well organized, and it was great to see members of the SAC in the small group conversations. In her group, she spoke with one long-time property owner and two recent transplants. The two transplants recently came from bigger cities in part because they liked the bike infrastructure. They chose biking as their main mode of transportation for cost reasons. Someone from the Northeast Coalition of Neighbors was in her group and was very uninformed of what the SAC was up to, giving the small group bad information, which concerned Jazzmin. A common thread that she heard throughout the evening was that bike commuters don't feel comfortable on Williams, and prefer the side streets, except for the one male bike commuter; they are looking for their main mode of transportation to be safer.

Matt Hennessee said that it was great having the mayor there the whole time. The slideshow underscoring the history of the neighborhood, houses, streets and families was a good feature. The small-group facilitators did a great job. He also observed the good conversations that happened after it was over – for him, he had a great conversation with Stephen Gomez, whom he knows from Nike and who is now on the Board of the Bicycle Transportation Alliance. He heard many of the same common concerns expressed in the reports from small groups. He also really appreciated Gahlana Easterly's story about this process and her role in it.

Allan heard some big ideas that he found interesting, such as making Williams a two-way street, or building a tunnel for bikes underneath Williams Avenue.

Laurie Simpson had three people at her table who had lived in the neighborhood for 60 years, She said she asked them what they saw today on North Williams that wasn't safe compared to back in the day; their answer was vacant lots and chain link fences.

Mychal Tetteh said he thought that having planning experts and people experts in the room together, discussing the same problem, was great.

Shara Alexander found the evening amazing, the coming together of hearts and minds of everyone there. She said that it was very important that the community build a little trust, and then they can start to talk about ideas for fixing Williams.

Melissa Lafayette said she liked the big ideas that came out of the small group discussions.

Steve Bozzone thought it was great having the Mayor and the heads of the Portland Development Commission, the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and the Bureau of Transportation in the room. It seemed to him like this is just the beginning of something longer-term. The transportation decisions in this project are only part of what is happening; those other agencies also have some work to do on how they plan and involve communities.

Michelle DePass reported that they got about 93 responses to the survey, which is a great response rate. She can summarize the answers to three questions for the Committee today:

“What is your relationship to N Williams?” (Choose all that apply) 60% said “neighbor,” 62% said “commuter.” (Michelle noted that these add up to more than 100% because people could choose all that applied.)

“How satisfied are you with traffic safety on N Williams?” 20% were neutral, 60% were unsatisfied and 15% were satisfied

“What ideas do you have for improving safety on N Williams?” The most common ideas listed were better crossings; slowing traffic; a buffered bike lane; and turning Rodney into a greenway.

Melissa, Allan, Ben Foote, Laurie and Michelle DePass said they would get together to analyze the rest of the responses.

Allan passed around a copy of a very preliminary analysis of the responses.

Michelle said that they would present a more detailed analysis and report at the next meeting. Laurie added that they will incorporate the notes from the small group discussions into that report. Ellen will send these to Laurie.

d. Announcements

Debora told the Committee that Joan Brown-Kline is holding two focus groups about this project, one with churches and one with non profits. They will be on December 9th and 14th.

4. Old business (Deborah)

a. Decide whether to adopt a new SAC Charter and Decision-Making Process

Ellen and Joan presented two new documents for the Committee to consider adopting.

1) Committee Charter

This Committee adopted a charter back in January. This new draft charter makes changes to it based on the way the Committee is operating now, including the decision-making process developed at the last meeting (see below).

One question that came up at the last meeting is how the Committee should allow and manage the use of alternates. In this new draft charter, Ellen proposed that members who cannot attend in person may attend by remote means or may send a knowledgeable alternate. From the City's point of view, since the City wants all voices to be heard in this process, she said that she did believe that groups representing a constituency should be able to send an alternate.

In the future, Ellen said, there might be people attending meetings by remote means depending on the barriers to their physical attendance.

This draft charter also describes the length of commitment. Funding for this project will go away in June, at the end of the budget year, so this Committee will need to make a recommendation in March.

2) Decision-Making Process

The group reviewed the written Decision-Making Process, which was based on their discussion with Joan at the November meeting.

Discussion:

Pastor Hennessee asked if the purpose today was to adopt all three of these documents – the Charter, the Decision-Making Process and the Guiding Principles. Debora said Yes.

Debora asked if there were any comments on the new Charter. Hearing none, Pastor Hennessee moved to approve it.

Allan suggested that they adopt the Decision-Making Process first, then the charter, since the Charter includes elements of the decision making process.

Jazzmin asked if the March deadline leaves enough time to put out bids for construction. Ellen replied that this will not be a big construction project (at least not with this budget) so it would be enough time.

There was a friendly amendment to Pastor Hennessee's motion; it became a motion that the new Charter and the Decision-Making Process be adopted. The motion was seconded. The Committee voted and support for the motion was unanimous.

Ellen said that she would send out the Charter and the Decision-Making Process as finalized documents, and would post them on the project website.

b. Decide whether to adopt Guiding Principles

Debora referred the Committee to the Guiding Principles, which were created by a subcommittee, and asked everyone to take a few minutes to read them again.

Gahlena Easterly expressed some concern with the wording of the 3rd paragraph, under History. Shara and Pastor Hennessee agreed that it should more accurately reflect what we now know, i.e. that some of the actions taken around North Williams were indeed malicious. Pastor Hennessee suggested that the article "Bleeding Albina" be cited; Ellen suggested that the line read "We understand that some of these actions were malicious" with a footnote citing the article. People nodded their heads in acceptance.

Laurie pointed out that Boise-Eliot should not be hyphenated as it is two separate neighborhoods. Also under History, the first two lines refer to this neighborhood as "historically black," when it has at other times in history not been black. Some Committee members, including Debora, spoke in favor of retaining that phrasing, others suggested different phrasing; the Subcommittee offered to take it back and edit it again. Ben moved that it be referred back to the Subcommittee, Jazzmin seconded, and the group voted with more than 2/3 in support.

Ben suggested that they add "workers" to the first paragraph.

Debora pointed out that the sentence saying "once this draft is adopted..." doesn't need to stay in there, since this document only begins to exist once it is adopted.

Jana added that the first sentence of that paragraph keeps her from moving forward and adopting this document until she addresses these problems...yet accepting this document *is* the next step, so it's circular.

Pastor Hennessee suggested that “unintentionally” be deleted from the 2nd paragraph.

Mrs. Easterly suggested that “ask” be replaced with “strongly recommend.”

Jana asked that, in the part about debriefing and studying this process, they specify that it happen through a “formal facilitated evaluation.”

Steve suggested that as a guideline for future projects the City start from a place of community need and input and base projects on that early input and community guidance (rather than coming up with a technical solution and adapting it to community needs and input).

5. Discuss and decide what the SAC wishes to include in the project scope (Ellen)

Ellen said she was interested to know what areas Committee members already agree should be in the scope, and what needs to go into the “corral” for further discussion. One representation of the project scope is the Purpose and objectives statement on the front of the goldenrod project flyer (which she passed around).

Allan asked how they should decide on a scope in light of their budget constraints. Ellen said she could imagine this Committee making a recommendation that exceeds the current budget, and maybe isn’t supported by the technical analysis, but is part of a bigger vision and a longer-term effort.

Allan asked whether they could add North Vancouver Ave. to the scope.

Debora said she was concerned that if Vancouver were added, they’d have to go out to the community again with a bigger question.

Jazzmin did not want to add Vancouver to the scope, because they don’t have the budget. Pastor Hennessee agreed, except for the intersection of Cook and Vancouver.

Shara said that this seemed like a big discussion, and asked if the Committee could go back to the City and say we want to study Vancouver too. Diana added that they could ask the city to do more technical analysis on Vancouver. Mrs. Easterly asked if they could look into making a recommendation regarding Rodney and Vancouver.

Ellen responded to Shara, Diana and Mrs. Easterly’s questions that the City could take a recommendation from this Committee that Vancouver be studied, or that Rodney be moved to the top of the list of Neighborhood Greenways to be developed. But she added that they haven’t gone to the Rodney neighbors, so this Committee isn’t the right place to make decisions about what should happen on Rodney. Also, the consultant contract

doesn't include additional technical analysis for streets outside the original project extent (North Williams from Weidler to Killingsworth).

Shara suggested that, given that these traffic and safety problems are going to continue and get worse in the coming years, there should be some way transitioning from this project to the next one, and keeping all these people in the loop.

Laurie noted that there is nothing in the Purpose statement preventing the Committee from making recommendations about Vancouver or Rodney.

Allan said when he had asked project staff about some ideas in the past, he was told they were "outside the project scope." He appreciates the need for focus, but he does not want to be handcuffed to Williams being a one-way street with other constraints on big ideas. He moved to expand the project purpose to: "Making traveling on the North Williams and North Vancouver corridor....safer and more comfortable..."

Noni asked where the "corridor" ends. Shara suggested the wording be changed to "North Williams Ave. and surrounding streets."

Jazzmin pointed out that they were wordsmithing the purpose in order to fit their potential solutions, and there was no need to do that.

Allan said he would be willing to accept Shara's "North Williams and surrounding streets" suggestion as a friendly amendment to his motion. No one seconded the revised motion.

Pastor Hennessee said he wanted to have an objective in front of them that they can achieve. Shara agreed.

Ellen asked if a subcommittee should be set up to make a proposal about the scope. Debora said she was hesitant to set up a subcommittee because time is short.

Ben moved to adopt the Purpose and Objectives (from the yellow flyer) as written. Irek seconded.

Ellen asked whether the Committee wanted to add something to objective #5 that would address neighboring streets; and also asked whether there is interest in adding an objective about honoring history.

Ben withdrew his motion.

Laurie pointed out that they will have a report from the forum and the survey by the next meeting, so perhaps they should wait until then.

Shara moved that #5 become “to explore innovative solutions and strategies on the North Williams/Vancouver corridor.”

Jana proposed a friendly amendment: that the Purpose and Objectives on the yellow flyer, with Shara’s addition to #5, plus a #7 point about honoring the history of the neighborhood, all be adopted together. The motion was seconded, and the Committee voted unanimously in support.

[After the meeting, Caitlin suggested to Michelle and Debora that objective #4 refer not just to walking but to any pedestrian activity; for example, “to maintain or improve conditions for pedestrians moving on or across North Williams.”]

6. Next meetings (Debora):

SAC Meeting: Tuesday, January 10th, 2012, 12:00 to 2:00 pm, at the Red Cross (please note, this is NOT the first Tuesday of the month; because of the New Year’s holiday **we will meet on the second Tuesday**). Future meetings are scheduled for February 7 and March 6.

7. Second public comment period (10 minutes)

Don Nesbitt had a comment. He is a neighbor, living near North Williams and Stanton. He finds that one-way streets are designed to get people through the neighborhood, and that movement is prioritized over the people who live in the neighborhood. The hospital is an obvious source of through traffic.

There are 13 intersections between Broadway and Fremont and there is only one active crossing management point – at Stanton and Vancouver. For years neighbors have been asking for a signal at Stanton and Williams. Signals are also needed at Cook – people make mad dashes to get across and turn onto Williams, and right there you have the bike lane, pedestrians crossing. He is more afraid for pedestrians than bikers, he said, and a lot of the people in this area have what he called “motility issues.” Give them a break. Traffic is going to get worse. He doesn’t know how return this to a neighborhood street, but thinks there are some immediate actionable solutions. The street needs to re-identify itself.