

Bicycle Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Lovejoy Room, City Hall
April 11, 2017 6pm to 8pm

BAC Members Present:

Rithy Khut (Chair), Elliot Akwai-Scott (Vice-Chair), Ian Stude, Christopher Achterman, Roger Averbeck, Dan Bower, Jim Chasse, Maria Erb, Reza Farhoodi, Keith Liden, Betsy Platt, Shayna Rehberg, Evan Ross, Kari Schlosshauer

BAC Members Not Present:

Jocelyn Gaudi, Kirk Paulsen

PBOT Staff Present:

Roger Geller, Daniel Soebbing, Emily Tritsch, Caitlin Reff, Christine Leon, Steve Hoyt-McBeth, Matt Ferris-Smith, Elizabeth Mahon

Guests:

Mary Vogel, Wendy Serrano (Trimet), Alex Oreschak (Metro), John Stewart (JS) May (Portland Art Museum), Maria Rambo, Doug Klotz, Mark Linehan, Alexis Biddle, Chris Eykamp, Emily Guise, Phil Richman, Luke Norman, Jonathan Maus

Introductions and Opening Remarks

6:00

Reza:

Broadway Corridor Planning committee is starting up soon. It would be good if the BAC could get a dedicated streets advocate on the committee.

Would like to get designs of the NW 14th repaving project. Would be a good location for a protected bike lane, lots of right hook problems.

Shayna:

Keith and Shayna will be communicating about upcoming bike parking code issues. Want to know priorities about # of required spaces before communicating with staff on these issues.

Get Portland Moving

6:10

Emily Tritsch is the asset manager at PBOT. Kicking off a new project called Get Portland Moving. Similar to a previous effort that started in 2008 that was called Keep Portland Moving. Goal is to coordinate earlier in the planning process for potentially disruptive capital projects. Starting in Central City and Cully Neighborhood, planning to expand to entire city next year. Working with Trimet, ODOT and other city bureaus to reduce congestion, improve safety and take advantage of road closures to complete work by multiple agencies at once.

Successes so far:

Trimet Max Closure: Yamhill to Morrison

BES and PBOT and Parks and Multnomah County are all taking advantage of the closure to do work in the area.

Closures will be painful. But while you are stuck in traffic, remember that we are trying to get as much work as possible done at once to minimize disruptions.

Emily is here to get feedback on this project. She wants to know if there have not been enough accommodations made for bicyclists around street closures. Emily circulated contact information that people can use to send questions and concerns.

Movepdx.net is a website that has an online map that people can use to find up to date information about street closures.

Roger: Appreciate Emily coming tonight. Is glad to hear that there will be coordination across different bureaus. Roger has noticed that there is little information on the Get Portland Moving website about potential impacts on bicyclists. It seems that the map is more geared toward motorists and transit.

Emily: Currently only trying to list information that shows if a lane is going to be closed, or if a street is going to be closed. Could add information to the map depicting impacts to bicyclists.

Keith: Will you be expanding to smaller, more mundane projects? All City Projects?

Emily: Yes. We are already meeting frequently with other bureaus to talk through all projects that are impacting streets. While the project is currently focused on major projects, we want to expand the project to more street projects in the future. There are approx. 14,000 permit applications each year.

Keith: BES is doing projects to improve ditches. But PBOT appears to be missing opportunities to partner with other bureaus to do joint projects.

Emily: Joint Projects Committee is focused on coordinating projects with other bureaus.

Betsy: Had a safety concern while driving when a beam was being suspended above the road.

Emily: When contractors receive permits they are supposed to work safely as they do work in the right of way.

Christine Leon: Trying to get some teeth behind enforcement of permits in conjunction with the Get Portland Moving project.

Emily: Would like feedback before November on the Get Portland Moving project.

Portland Arts Museum Ordinance Amendment

6:20

JS May: I'm a biker, Board President of Cycle Oregon. Portland Art Museum consists of 2 separate wings. 50% of visitors don't find the "other" wing. The connecting tunnel is underground.

New pavilion is named after Mark Rothko, who was a Latvian immigrant to Portland, who studied at the Portland Art Museum. The intention is to create a grand public space that will be open during public hours. Intention is to make art economically accessible. PAM runs the museum like a business. He biked through the Madison st vacation, so he will be affected by the construction project.

Caitlin: Here from PBOT to provide additional background for the project.

The art museum has been working with the City for several years to amend the original street vacation ordinance to allow them to proceed with construction of the Rothko pavilion. The commissioner wanted to honor the request by bringing the proposal to council on April 20th. In 1968 the museum added a new wing. That was when the street vacation occurred. The vacation was amended in 1984 to restrict ped access during night hours.

Conditions: 8-foot-wide ped easement. Must be lighted. Can't be blocked. Must exist as an open mall. The proposed amendment would allow the museum to continue to develop the design of the Rothko Pavilion. Allow them to enclose the pavilion. Allow the restriction of pedestrian access.

Keith: The street has already been vacated. Currently there has to be 8 feet of access 24/7?

Caitlin: 1984 ordinance allows PAM to close ped access at night.

Christine: Ped pathway takes a jog next to the YMCA. There is a ped easement there, as well. Not sure if the easement allows this part of the pathway to be closed. PBOT values circulation and access, so there are conflicts. PBOT is struggling with how to make the pavilion accessible.

JS: Planning a charrette to discuss how the design could be accessible to peds.

Rithy: There are a number of museums that have sky bridges to link buildings.

JS: The desire is to make the ground floor of Rothko pavilion a grand public space. This is not viewed as being compatible with 24/7 public access at this point. Skybridges run counter to design guidance for the downtown. [editor's note: the city's major encroachment policy (TRN 8.01) applies only to the public right of way, not on private property].

Rithy: There are plans to make loading space on Jefferson. How will that work?

JS: There will be an off-street loading space on museum property. A new gallery will be built in conjunction with the new project. Believes that the changes to the loading zone can be done without disrupting the bus stop in that area. Art comes into the museum in many ways. Not all art comes through the same loading zone.

Rithy: There would need to be a new curb cut?

JS: Yes.

Christopher Ackerman: Ped access would be the same as it currently is, but bike access would be gone?

JS: Yes.

Ian Stone: But it would be changed because pedestrians would have to enter and exit through doors?

JS: Yes

Roger: Don't understand how it would work to have the space closed off from 7pm to 11am.

JS: The museum only closes off access on occasion in relation to events. There is currently a cage structure that is designed to prevent issues. The new pavilion design is intended to be more welcoming than the current structure.

Roger: Will the change to the vacation transfer property ownership to the museum?

JS: The museum already owns the property under the current vacation.

Dan Bower: What does this mean to the future of the plaza to the west and other areas where streets might be vacated?

Christine Leon: PBOT has maintained that connectivity standards are the highest goal. But the Livable Streets initiative is trying to set a new direction, in addition to the connectivity standards. PBOT needs to look at things comprehensively. Sometimes closing off parts of right of way can help to make great places, as long there is still connectivity. Homelessness is also an issue. Many businesses have expressed a desire to close off access to easements in response to homeless encampments.

Doug Klotz: I don't believe that a passageway that has doors will feel like public access. There are other examples of buildings that have public access easements in Portland which do not feel like public spaces. There should be a requirement that pedestrian through-access easements should be open and have a minimum dimension that makes them feel like pedestrian circulation spaces.

Mary Vogel: Amsterdam Rijksmuseum tried to close pedestrian and bicycle access through a pedestrian passageway during a recent renovation. They were denied the ability to close the passageway, and the project ended up creating a space that citizens desired to visit.

JS: That project was publicly funded with approx. \$500 million. PAM doesn't have access to that kind of money.

Caitlin: PBOT does not encourage sky bridges in downtown Portland.

Dan: Do the current hours of easement closure coincide with museum hours, and will there be plans to change the hours of closure in the future?

Caitlin: The amendment to the street vacation could include amendments to the hours that the museum is allowed to close access to the pedestrian pathway.

Keith: What are hours of streetcar operation

Dan: 5:45 am to 11 pm

Ian Stude: Would the change to the easement provide the museum with the right to close the walkway at any time for an event?

Caitlin: There is not language specifically for that in the easement.

Christine: Under livable streets we allow partial closure of right of way. We are considering more privatization of uses in the right of way. PBOT would probably say no to closure of the walkway today. But going forward, PBOT would be more likely to allow temporary closures in the future.

Guest: Nobody objects to expansion of the art museum. But it seems that the key to find the right solution is through design of the space. Why not design the space first before putting the proposal before the council?

JS: Cost is an issue. The museum has to raise all of the money to do the addition.

Caitlin: There is a condition that would provide a timeframe for the change to the vacation. The approval would not continue indefinitely if construction doesn't occur soon.

Rithy: A letter has been drafted which says that continued pedestrian/bicycle access is a priority.

Shayna: The ordinance has already been drafted. What can we do at this point to impact the process?

Rithy: Council could amend the ordinance or choose not to adopt it. Commissioner Saltzman has asked for feedback from the committee on this issue.

Keith: Fundamentally agree with what was written in the letter. Concerned about the precedent of blocking access. Concerned about blocking access to the streetcar. Concerned about the public not knowing if the door is locked or not.

Kari Schlosshauer: Would support continuing to move forward with the letter. Very concerned about the Livable Street Initiative. Doesn't want to see closure of right of way for private events.

Dan: The committee should absolutely send a letter. This should be a design challenge to the museum. But he will not be voting.

Elliot: There are important points that could be added to the letter to address design issues. Would rather see a complete stop to approval of the proposal by council, rather than an amendment at the time of adoption. Need to continue tweaking the letter this week.

Shayna: Is ordinance linked in agenda?

Roger Geller: No. Will send out the ordinance tomorrow.

Rithy: The letter should either ask that council not adopt the ordinance, or should include strike-throughs on specific language that should be changed in the amendment.

Mary Vogel: Uses the art museum plaza on a daily basis to commute by bicycle.

Ratif: The letter opposes the closure of the accessway.

Biketown Report

6:45

Steve Hoyt McBeth: Preparing for the busy season for Biketown. Portland has the highest bike mode share of any major US city. Feels that Biketown can expand the bike mode share. People with memberships use the bikes a lot more than members in other cities. There are different types of memberships, individual, group, etc...

Adaptive bike rental open house is scheduled for 25th of April. Program is expected to get underway in June.

- 72% of trips on biketown bikes are made by locals.

- Annual pass average trip length is 1.57 miles, which is much higher than national average for bikeshare systems. Average trip length for all uses is much higher than expected based on national data.
- Usage by day and time over first 90 days was much lower in early morning commute time than expected by Steve.
- 26% of trips by locals are replacing auto trips.
- 5% of local users say they have reduced the number of personal vehicles they own because of biketown.
- 56% of tourists riding biketown said that bicycling opportunities was a factor in deciding to visit Portland.
- Tried to develop a dense network of stations.
- Could expand the station network without building additional station infrastructure by stationing bikes at other kinds of bike racks.
- Wants to expand the morning commute use of bikes.
- GPS on bikes isn't as good as expected.

Rithy: Are there stations that are underutilized that could be shifted to Alberta, where there is a lot of demand?

Steve: Going to move 10% of stations this spring. Neighbor impacts and use levels will be determining factors in deciding which stations to move.

Dan: Can you use GPS to figure out what routes people use to get to Alberta?

Steve: Hope to line up ride report datasets to see where people are riding and know how they are getting there and differentiate between the routes they are using and other bicyclists.

Ian: Has been charged when he locked up in a place that he should have been able to park. While the app is useful, need to make sure that the built environment and signage reflects how the system actually works.

Steve: Anything that we move, we intend keep a virtual station in place where the actual station used to exist.

Moving stations will change our station density. Utilization numbers indicate that there is extra capacity in the fleet. There are a lot of members that live outside the station area.

Elliot: Thanks for coming and tracking data. Excited to see the report after a year.

Guest: Skeptic, but current member. What is the attraction of having stations vs. "Car 2 go" no station model?

Steve: Feel that reliability is more important at the expense of flexibility. There are private bike shares that are coming in with lower cost bikes. Competition might push the industry to further disperse bikes. Have thought about positioning bikes on corridors vs. stations. Feels that station based system is useful.

Guest: Social acceptance is lacking. Without infrastructure it is impossible for people to bike. Avid cyclists have resisted biketown, including bike shop owners. Could partner more with bike shops to bring them into the fold.

Steve: A lot of bike shop mechanics have volunteered to fix bikes following the vandalism incident.

Division Street

7:10

Elizabeth Mahon: Outer SE Division St safety action plan and multi-modal project. Lot of work that needs to be done under vision zero program on Division St:

High Crash Corridor

13 people killed and 117 injured on outer Division in the latest 10-year period

- Capital projects are in the works, including crosswalks, beacons, lowering speeds, etc...
- 2 pedestrians were killed in December on the same evening. Deaths occurred near crossing beacons that were already in place.
- Need to enhance work on enforcement, engineering, and education.
- Trying to develop a template of tools that can be used at other locations.
- Converting bike lanes to buffered bike lanes.
- Speed cameras have reduced speeding now that ticketing is being enforced.
- Plan to convert middle turn lane to a median island.
- Applying standard of no greater than 530-ft between enhanced pedestrian crossing.
- Buffered bike lane and median islands will extend from 82nd to city limits: about 4.7 miles.
- Buffered bike lanes will initially just be striped. Tubular markers or tough curb could be added, as well. Eventually there will be more substantial separators added to the protected bike lanes, the designs of which have not been decided upon yet.
- Parking, vehicle turning, and driveways are tradeoffs.
- Goal is to begin and complete construction in 2018. Trimet's enhanced transit project on Division is scheduled to begin in 2019.
- Education and Outreach: community members are being trained to go out into communities to teach peers about changes that the city is making.

Kari: Heartening to see strong proactive work prioritizing people on outer Division. Wants to see that carried forward as you do more community outreach. People might resist the removal of parking in similar situations. Do you have a priority to keep bike lanes curbside in areas where parking is retained?

Elizabeth: Haven't gotten that far yet. Every tool is still on the table.

If there is an instance where we have to deal with that there are different design options.

Could consolidating driveways reduce conflicts between cars and bikes/peds?

Elizabeth: Project will inventory all driveways in the corridor and try to identify locations where driveways can be consolidated. Where curb ramps are improved in EPAP there has already been some work to close unused curb cuts. Because Division is a high crash corridor we have the authority to reduce access already.

Bus bike interaction?

Elizabeth: Buses will stop in outer traffic lane, so they won't have conflicts with bikes. Trying to protect bikes and prevent mail trucks from encroaching on bike lanes without breaking the budget.

Roger Averbek: Will project elements have to be redone as transit project is built? Other areas where transit projects have been proposed have seen delays in the implementation of safety projects while awaiting transit construction.

Jim Chasse: Glad to see PBOT is going to finally step up to do something. 130s bikeway has yet to be completed. Other improvements to division haven't been completed. Some projects get put on hold awaiting other project elements.

There are maintenance conditions on Division right now that are a problem. Some of the sight lines to the beacons on the east bound travel lanes are obstructed by stop here signs. Bike lanes are almost non-existent from 82nd to 92nd.

Crosses 4 ODOT facilities on the way to work each day. There is a project that will be implemented at the 205 interchanges.

Elizabeth: PBOT will be working with ODOT on those projects, getting bike lanes through, and dual turn lanes will be added. Exploring reducing Division to a single lane beyond those turn lanes with modeling.

Jim: East Portland opposed gas tax due to belief that city is not serving East Portland.

Elliot: Wanted to clarify funding source and what led to aggressive timeline.

Elizabeth: In December council allocated 300,000 toward outreach. In January Council allocated 500,000 for capital improvements. Working to get project on the SDC list. Goal budget is 2.5 million. EPAT has also provided money for Division improvements aside from the SDC funds that are being sought.

Rithy: It is important to have actual physical separation in the bike lanes on Division, and not just flexible posts, like those that are being proposed on Powell by ODOT.

Meeting adjourned

8:08