

# Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee

## Meeting held online

### June 18, 2021 Minutes

#### STSC Attendees

- Richard Staudt (SPS)
- X Lee Bruch
- X Mary Ellen Russell, Chair (parent volunteer)
- X Margaret McCauley (pedestrian safety advocate)
- X Jennie Meulenberg (SDOT, corridors and Ped transportation planner)
- X Marilyn Firman (citizen-at-large)
- X Yvonne Carpenter (SPS transportation crossing guard manager)
- X Charlie Simpson (bicycle advocate)
- X Hunter Maltais (SPS Transportation Manager)
- X Peaches Thomas (safe streets advocate)
- Richard Best
- Jeanne Suleiman, KC Metro customer relationship manager in mobility division

#### Other Presenters/Public

Deborah Hutchinson (concerned citizen about 75th St and 40th Ave NE)

#### Public Comment

No comment.

#### Last Month's Minutes

Approved.

**ACTION:** Peaches will write a letter to the City requesting a similar analysis here in Seattle and that the City carry it out by funding groups who are already working in this space.

**ACTION:** Richard will follow-up with mode-choice survey planning for the next year at next month's meeting.

#### Annual Report

Will not be presented until August to the SPS School Board, but Jennie can get an SDOT blog post up sooner. It was brought to Jennie's attention that Council Member Alex Pedersen could be invited to a STSC meeting for us to share the annual report.

**ACTION:** Mary Ellen and Margaret will get a final ADA accessible version published and Jennie will work to write an SDOT blog post. Jennie will work to invite CM Alex Pedersen to a STSC meeting to discuss the Annual Report.

#### SDOT Update (Jennie Meulenberg)

1. Ped advisory board meeting topics

Join meeting from 6:30 to 7:30pm on July 14<sup>th</sup>. Marilyn, Mary Ellen have committed so far to join. Email Jennie by the end of June if you are or are not able to join.

Topics for the meeting: SDOT will present on School Streets. SPAB has additional questions on automated enforcement in school zones, which may be discussed.

Mary Ellen would like to know more about how the ped master plan is made and specifically how safe routes to school are factored in. Jennie suggests we should ask them to come share at our meetings. Marilyn would like to know whether the ped board and/or SDOT Ped Master Plan team look at street crime and how it relates to pedestrian experience.

## 2. School zone sign audits

Ashley is excited to partner with STSC on school walk audits. There is an SDOT Safe Routes to School toolkit that we can reference for the walk audit. Walk audits can be done all year round. Improvements on the ground are not likely until next summer (2022). With the Levy to Move Seattle, every school was intended to get an improvement. The Levy ends in 2024 and everything we identify now would be installed in 2022/2023. Mary Ellen would like to know which schools have already had improvements completed, which schools have planned improvements, and which ones still need improvements identified. Sand Point Way Elementary might be a good school to do an audit. Ashley has 9 top priority schools and projects lined up for those.

## 3. 75th St and 40th Ave NE update

Jennie found there was a work order from 2006 to replace the beacons and spans. There are no specific traffic studies related to those improvements that she could find. There were 2 collisions (2018 and 2019), but not bike or pedestrian-involved collisions. No recent traffic studies have been completed. No other complaints have been brought forth. Ashley mentioned that Deborah could get yard signs and/or work to get a mini-grant. Ashley also sent other grant options if the community identifies this location as a priority.

**ACTION:** Jennie will ask a representative from the SDOT Pedestrian Master Plan Program to come to a STSC meeting to discuss the Pedestrian Master Plan planning process. Jennie will talk to Polly about homelessness and student safety in terms of walking to school. Jennie will check about sign audits that many need to be done at new or renovated schools. Jennie will share the list of top 9 priority schools from Ashley.

## **Crossing Guard Update** (Yvonne Carpenter)

Added two new guards, one at Dearborn Park and one at Southshore Dunlap

Lost a guard at Southshore Dunlap and Rising Star.

There will be some relocations of guards for 21-22 school year.

There will be a push for recruiting this summer. There will be a training closer to when school starts. The ideal timing for recruitment might be early August.

**ACTION:** Jennie and Yvonne will coordinate an SDOT blog post in early August.

## **Aurora Reimagined Coalition Goals** (Lee Bruch)

There is a website ([www.got99problems.org](http://www.got99problems.org)). The state/city are doing a \$2m study early next year to guide Aurora's future. The coalition is trying to create a movement to deemphasize traffic throughput and emphasize safety. The coalition is conducting walk audits, they are recorded, can be viewed on zoom, and you can view them on YouTube (search Aurora Reimagined Coalition or visit the website). There will be 6 visioning workshops for Aurora (you can view the upcoming events on the website). The first workshop is on July 7th and will be online.

### **STSC Planning for Fall 2021** (Mary Ellen Russel)

#### *When to resume in-person meetings?*

SPS policies will determine when the STSC is allowed to resume meetings at the John Stanford center. We will not be able to meet in-person, most likely, until the Fall. Most people are interested in a hybrid approach where we can meet in person and have an option to make it virtual as well. The SPS wifi network works well for SPS employees but is glitchy for guests. We would need to get a dedicated SPS computer for meetings (Hunter says that is fine). Most of the conference rooms have been equipped with a screen.

As one option, STSC could meet in the Municipal Tower (every 10<sup>th</sup> floor is public). The City is supporting Webex and planning to continue that. All of the boards are having the question about how to carry out hybrid meetings. Most of the SDOT boards & committees meet in City hall in a specific room. There are talks about upgrading that room to support hybrid meetings. If the hybrid approach does not work then the next option would be to alternate meetings between in-person and remote.

Jennie will let the committee know when there is official guidance allowing in-person meetings. Hunter says SPS will not be open for meetings on-site until the school year.

#### *Safe Routes to School Coordinator Position*

SPS is working with HR department to get SRST position ad posted. It was supposed to be posted 3 weeks ago but still isn't up. It's not clear what is holding this up. Jennie said Ashley told her that City has signed MOA but SPS has not yet. Hunter says locating the right party to sign is challenging. Hunter is going to pursue it in the next 2 weeks before summer school starts.

#### *Revising Transportation Service Standards*

Hunter believes there will be substantial pushback from certain neighborhoods if middle school service standards are changed. There is historical bias in terms of where students have bussing. The City of Seattle provides Orca cards to all students. It is not clear whether that will continue in the Fall or if the income eligibility requirements will return. These are for students within the walk zone. Students outside of the walk zone have yellow bus service. Margaret suggested and Hunter agreed that we should create a Middle School walk zone subcommittee to reexamine the walk zones.

Transportation is making push to make app for parents to know where buses are, also to put tablets on every bus to give turn-by-turn instructions to drivers to create consistency of service. Hunter is hoping to implement that for next school year. Transportation ended the year in the red but with stabilization money they are less over budget than usual.

More than 60% of SPS fleet is type A (short) buses for special ed. The funding formula is geared around full-size buses.

Margaret suggests inviting state reps for Seattle to discuss this issue. She thinks that all of the workings of the funding model for the transportation service standards should be made public.

SPS is moving to change fleet of diesel buses to electric. This is going to take a massive investment and also is challenging with busing vendor. First Student is the only game in town for busing, competition is needed to have better results for students.

Margaret mentioned that Hunter's predecessor had floated the idea of moving busing in-house. The way depreciation funds work from the state make it impossible for SPS to replace buses all at once, they need to do it incrementally over time.

SPS received stabilization money for transportation but it's still not clear how much they spent this year on vendors for sped & McKinney Vento and costs won't be understood until September, so it isn't clear yet whether Transportation is less or more in the red than typical.

Hunter is interested in moving away from small yellow buses to a white fleet (vans). Sped students cost about 13k to transport, gen ed 2200, typical reimbursement is 2k per student. Moving to vans could save money on special ed transportation and also allow better service for McKinney Vento & foster care students. Using the tablets in each of these would help families understand where their students' ride is. Setting up a cooperative with surrounding districts to do a white fleet could clarify who is responsible for costs and lower all districts' costs. White fleet would be reimbursed by state if driver is OSPI certified bus driver (typical 2k per student plus every destination counts for formula). Hunter is planning to have a presentation on all of this info by the end of July that he will share.

Grant money could be accepted for capital costs if it could be obtained.

**ACTION:** Hunter and Jennie will keep the STSC updated on when in-person meetings are allowed. Hunter will work to make the transportation service standards more public and continue to update the STSC as it progresses (there will eventually be a powerpoint available). Margaret will reach out to state representatives and Mary Ellen will reach out to find more about grants.

#### Future Topics

- SDOT transportation equity work group (September)
- Sand Point Elementary walkthrough (early fall)
- Crossing guard publicity (July), need push in early August.
- Kimball/Washington, Ashley Davies, (July)
- Walk Boundary Subcommittee
- Seattle's climate change planning for transportation (when in-person meetings resume)
- Annual calendar lookahead
- Bus Stop Paddle Funds 2019-2020

**Next Meeting date: July 16th**