

Bicycle Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

October 14, 2008

BAC Members Present: Linda Aeder, Matthew Arnold, Sharon Fekety, Tom Gainer, Mark Ginsberg, Andrew Haliburton, Keith Liden, Shamus Lynsky, Jack Newlevant, Robert Pickett, Tom Ralley, Shayna Rehberg, Kathryn Sofich

BAC Members Absent: Alicia Crain, Todd DeNeffe, Brooks Koenig,

Staff (PDOT): Roger Geller, Caitlin McCollum, Jeff Smith

Guests: Chris Achterman, Tom Armstrong, Rob Burchfield, Carl Larson, Matthew Machado, Colin Maher, Jonathan Maus, Heather McCarey, Michelle Poyourow, Alice Ann Wetzel

Announcements

- The Police Bureau's bike light program has given away over 100 lights.
- Robert has created a proposal for the gap between the Eastbank Esplanade/Springwater on the Willamette and the Springwater trail (near SE 4th). He will send it to committee members for review.

Seven Corners Urban Design Strategy

Tom Armstrong, southeast district liaison for the Bureau of Planning, came to the meeting to talk about urban design at the Seven Corners intersection (where SE Division, SE Ladd, SE 20th and SE 21st converge). The Division Vision process identified improvements along SE Division, but left Seven Corners unresolved. Now, the Bureau of Planning is having a short, intense community discussion about the location and its potential. The planning is in conjunction with the Tabor to the River project, and construction could begin as early as 2011.

The goal of the new urban design is to enhance the area make it a distinctive place, while still maintaining mobility. Tom stated that planners want to maintain the bike connection and be sensitive to congestion management on Division.

There was a walking tour of the area earlier this summer, attended by about 20 people to start to develop concepts and talk about ideas. Planning contracted with Emmonds Architects to create concept designs, which were unveiled at a community open house last week. Feedback from the open house, as well as that received tonight, will be used to take the concepts to the next level.

There are three alternatives; all include gateway treatments at 19th and 22nd Avenues.

- Alternative 1 "Ladd Square" would close SE Ladd to motor vehicle traffic and create a public square. Bikes would exit from Ladd during the green phase of the SE 20th signal.
- Alternative 2 "T Intersection" creates a place that helps catalyze new mixed-use active buildings at SE 21st and Division. This is dependent on private redevelopment.
- Alternative 3 "21st Avenue Corridor" shifts the activity focus to 21st Avenue, which would need to be re-zoned for commercial mixed use. The street would be pedestrian oriented, and may require the re-routing of a bus.

At the open house, there was a lot of interest in the first alternative; it is bold, creates a public space and is not dependant on private development. It was suggested that the treatment to 21st Avenue could be combined with the closure of Ladd. However, there were concerns about the potential for increased traffic on other streets in Ladd's Addition. Also, a square may not fit with the historic geometry of Ladd's.

Q: It will be a challenge to create a people place with the current traffic. Is it possible to reduce the number of lanes on Division?

A: That is being discussed. PDOT planners are modeling scenarios. Re-allocating the Ladd green time (if it is closed) might help.

Tom asked the BAC for ideas on how Alternative 1 could be improved. Their responses:

- My first reaction to the plaza is that it would make me pick a different spoke of Ladd; I'd avoid that area/situation.
- What about a bike scramble signal?
- I question the viability of creating a plaza bounded by busy streets. There are other failed plazas in Portland.

General Comments:

- This intersection is book-ended by Ladd Circle and SE Clinton and 26th, which both have huge bike volumes. There is not a lot of thought on how address bike traffic. You would need a huge, deep bike box if alternative one was chosen.
- The benefit of number one is that motor vehicle and bus traffic would go away.
- Northbound cyclists mostly use SE Ladd, that movement needs to be as fluid as possible.
- When are we going to say "we are going to improve this area for bike traffic"?
- This would be a great area to experiment with bike-oriented development.

Tom thanked the committee for their feed back. Planning will publish a conceptual design report by spring.

Broadway-Williams Intersection

City Traffic Engineer Rob Burchfield came to the meeting to present some potential improvements to the intersection of N Williams and Broadway, and to seek participants to serve on a committee to look at them more in depth. The intersection is a notoriously dangerous area, with a bike lane in between a right turn only lane, and a right turn or straight lane. The area was originally planned to have a bike box, but it presented design problems.

Potential Improvements:

- "Williams Signal" – Adds a separate bike phase light, the bike lane moves to curb tight. Through car movement goes with either bike phase or right turning phase. There is a possibility for an advance stop bar for the cars turning right, to help prevent right on red (which would be disastrous).
- "Victoria Signal" – A signal phase at NE Victoria would transition cyclists to the left of the two right turning lanes.

2nd Ave signal – same as Victoria, but moved east to second (there may be a streetcar platform here)

Streetcar is coming on Broadway; the final design process has just begun. The Broadway Weidler plan puts parking on the south side of Broadway, which creates a narrow lane width. Once the streetcar tracks are in, the lane widths are set.

All three alternatives have a bike-only light and a situation where bikes would have red light when motor vehicles have a green light.

There was some additional discussion about whether it was better to have the critical point farther east, or if it was just extra uncomfortable for cyclists to ride so long sandwiched between cars.

Reducing lanes and/or turning movements is really not feasible, due to the high traffic volume and how it ties into other lefts of the intersection.

There is funding for these improvements through bike-truck safety money.

Hayden Island

The Bureau of Planning is working on the Hayden Island Plan, which will affect future development and ties into the CRC project. East of I-5 is residential. West of I-5 will be Transit Oriented Development to replace the Janzen Beach super center. The island is occupied mostly by older residents, and very few children. It is a community that will be growing. The concept plan was presented to the Planning Commission in spring, staff are working on more details and changes to the zoning code and will return to the Planning Commission in November. One of the desires is to keep pedestrians and cyclists away from the freeway ramp terminus.

Right now there is only one main road through the island. This plan lays out additional infrastructure and recommends lane configurations. On the arterial street, the proposal is for an 18' shared bike/ped path on one side of the street

Comments:

- The center street must have bike lanes
- Since there is a blank slate, this would be a good opportunity to try a physically separated bike/ped trail
- Look to the Old Mill district in Bend for inspiration about a colored, raised bike lanes
- If 3,000 cars are traveling on this road daily, it will be uncomfortable without a bike lane
- 11' lane widths are in place to accommodate commercial vehicles; it might be better to isolate them, and have everyone operate with 10' lanes
- 7' of parallel parking is unrealistic
- You can't have parking next to swales
- If the population is older, you'll likely have a higher percent of people on recumbents or trikes, which means more room (i.e. bike lane width) is needed.

The committee had many critiques of the proposed lane configurations, primarily lack of bike lanes on the internal major streets. There were also suggestions that since these are new roads being built that they be innovative with physically separated and/or colored treatments.

Bus Relocation

Ian Stude sought BAC support for a proposal to relocate a bus line from SW Broadway to the bus mall. Prior to the new mall construction, several buses traveled up SW Broadway. After mall construction is completed, the TriMet proposal shows only one bus, number 68. Because this is a high bike/bus conflict zone, PSU is looking to have the number 68 removed from Broadway as well.

The 68 is a short loop bus from Collins Circle (SW 18th & Jefferson) to OHSU. It makes two stops on Broadway. Moving it would add a total of three blocks to the route.

The committee did not feel strongly that the bus *needed* to be removed from Broadway, but it would be nice. They agreed that less buses along Broadway in general is good. They support the current TriMet plan which reduces many buses. Ian will draft a letter stating this and also encouraging TriMet to look at ways to eliminate buses from Broadway.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.