

Lower Southeast Rising Area Plan Project Advisory Committee Meeting #3: November 15, 2021; 6pm – 8pm

Meeting Notes

Meeting began at 6:05 p.m.

Attendance

Committee members: Anna Weichsel, Aron Klein, Ben Waterhouse, Carolanne Fry, Eleanor Manning, Jed Hafner, Kathy Brock, Melanii Lambert, Michael Kennedy, Nancy Chapin, Nick Sauvie, Nicki Wichester, Pam Hodge, Ryan Ernst, Tim Williams, Valeria McWilliams, and Vivian Schoung

City staff: Mauricio Leclerc, Bryan Poole, Marty Stockton, Valeria Tapia, and Zef Wagner

ODOT staff: Hector Rodriguez-Ruiz

Public: Michelle Eyres, Scott Goodman, and Mary-Ryan O’Meara

Welcome:

- An Informal Committee Winter Gathering and Woodstock Walk will be held in December – exact date TBD.
- The next Project Advisory Committee meeting is January 27, 2022.

Introductions:

- Name and relationship to the project area.
- One thing you learned in the last week or so?

Public Comment:

- No representatives for public comment.

Project Overview and Timeline/Process Schedule

The timeline has been updated to reflect the Needs Analysis, an additional phase of work that will focus on where there are deficiencies and needs. The Pin It, Portland website is one way that the public has the ability to inform the project on geographical needs and opportunities.

Presentation: Pin It, Portland Walk-Thru, Public Feedback Highlights, and Discussion

- Shared comments for the mapping tool regarding the categories of Environment, Housing, Public Facilities, Public Safety, Transportation Zoning or Land use.
- Thanked the Land Use Committee of the Brentwood-Darlington Neighborhood Association for highlighting comments of interest of the categories in their November 2021 newsletter.

Sample comments:

- **Public Facilities:** A trash can that is emptied regularly at Hazeltine Park would be great. Animal waste is often collected and left at the park in various bags.
- **Land Use | Zoning:** On SE 82nd Avenue. We need more retail business here for our neighborhood. We need code enforcement on existing businesses to maintain sidewalks, remove graffiti, not have junk cars taking up valuable space and being environmental hazards and creating an unkempt look in our blue-collar area, perpetuates stereotypes of our area when in reality it's neglect on the part of city of Portland.
- **Public Facilities:** In Brentwood Park. There appear to be zero public EV charging stations in the Lower Southeast Rising zone. We could definitely use one or two charging stations at each of the big parks.
- **Environment:** On SE Cooper Street. If there is zero intention to pave Cooper or fix the potholes, then this land should be ceded to neighbors to create a pedestrian pathway, gardens, tree planting and shut it down to non-local traffic. It's impassable in most places as is. It has become something of a nature hike as it stands.
- **Transportation:** This intersection is so insane - Harney has a stop sign but "cross traffic does not stop" means cars flying down 52nd don't have to stop *if* they're turning right, but they do have to stop if they're turning left...except traffic on Harney has no way of knowing the cars on 52nd have to stop if turning left - all the sign says is "cross traffic does not stop". It gets really confusing when you're waiting at the stop sign on Harney for traffic coming down 52nd, and half the cars stop and wait for you, but the other half keep going and turn right. Also, it's really hard to see these cars until it's almost too late sometimes. Can we just make the stop sign at the bottom of 52nd required for right turns as well as left turns?
- **Public Safety:** On Woodstock at 57th. Speeding is rampant, sightlines are dim thanks to parked gigantic vehicles.

Another interesting comment project staff found regarding "Environment".

- **Environment:** Our section of the Springwater Trail needs shade trees and we recommend the native Oregon White Oak. To plant a grove or stand of Oregon White Oaks would bring beauty, harmony, shade, drought tolerant efficient trees to this area to create much needed protection for the Johnson Creek Watershed, beauty for the people, habitat for birds and animals, and bring back this gentle giant to our area.

Public advisory comments and questions included the following:

Question from Eleanor Manning regarding whether there is there a plan to make the Pin It, Portland website more mobile friendly? Eleanor also added that it would be great to have a QR code that makes it very easy to access so it could be advertised and posted, especially in the areas that don't have a lot of feedback.

Winter Open House and Engagement

There needs to still be an online component of the open house due to COVID-19 health and safety precautions. The online opportunity will be available for a month or longer. Project staff would also have safe "drop-in" hours located in the project area. Parallel engagement with the LatinX and other communities are being planned.

Public advisory comments and questions included the following:

Comment from Nancy Chapin identified the Brentwood-Darlington Community Center as a good location for an open house and/or drop-in hours.

Focus Areas

A preview of the land use focus areas was shared, which included the following:

1. SE 52nd Ave (Woodstock to Flavel Drive)
2. SE 72nd Ave (Woodstock to Crystal Springs)
3. Flavel Street MAX Station (Flavel & 92nd)

Land Use options to explore:

- **Base Case** – no change
- **Enhanced Commercial Nodes/MAX Station Area** – zoning map/code changes coordinated with transportation improvements
- **Neighborhood Corridor Designation** – Comp Plan designation on the Urban Design Framework (Centers & Corridors), plus zoning map/code changes coordinated with transportation improvements
- **Neighborhood Center Designation** – Comp Plan designation on the Urban Design Framework (Centers & Corridors), plus zoning map/code changes coordinated with transportation improvements

Public advisory comments and questions included the following:

Question from Ryan Ernst on the land use options and a desire to “do no harm,” are the land use option also rated on “do no harm” order as well? Base Case being no harm? Marty responded that the project staff and the Committee will be looking at benefits and burdens of all the land use options, but it’s important to acknowledge that the reason for the community advocating for this project, is that the current status or base case is believed to perpetuate a continuation of lack of public investment.

Small Group Breakouts: Identifying Issues for Transportation

Bryan Poole walked through group through the transportation categories for the small group breakouts: pedestrian crossings and sidewalks, street surface, pavement condition index, and existing and funded bike network.

Public advisory comments and questions in the small group breakouts included the following:

Collector Streets Group: Discuss sidewalk/crossing gaps and other challenges on busier streets (Bryan Poole, facilitator)

Bryan – spacing standard is having pedestrian crossings no further apart than 800 feet outside of pedestrian districts. Where are the sidewalk gaps not shown here? Places where ped crossings are needed?

- Left turn needed at 52nd and Woodstock (hard to turn when headed west). 52nd and Harney is also a dangerous intersection.
- Crossings needed along 52nd Ave at Ogden, Rural, Knapp, Carlton, and Tolman streets.
- What counts as a crossing? Bryan - On major street (such as 82nd), these would involve stopping traffic (such as a flashing beacon). For less busy streets, a marked crossing is an option.
- 82nd at Duke – left turn is dangerous, poor visibility due to parking near corner. PBOT looking at preventing parking within 20 feet of intersections.
- Need public education to highlight that every intersection is a ped crossing. Many are not aware of this. They think that only locations with marked crossings count.
- Hard to change everyone's behavior. When looking at just marking a crosswalk, versus putting in a traffic light, what are the cost differences? Bryan – engineers do a warrant analysis, look at pedestrians being hit. Significantly more expensive to do a signalized crossing. Just a couple thousand dollars to do a painted crosswalk. Traffic signal is about a million dollars.
- What resources are there to learn about what the options are for pedestrian crossings? Bryan – there about 5 options that PBOT uses. Can ask PBOT's pedestrian coordinator about sharing a guide.
- Are roundabouts an option? 52nd and Harney Drive is a nightmare currently – is a roundabout an option here, or at other arterial intersections? Also, at 45th Avenue hill at Harney Drive – near Precision Cast Parks and commercial area. Bryan – roundabouts use a lot of space, often require having to take property to create enough spaces.
- Examples of roundabouts on highway 14 in Washougal. Nice, but do take a lot of space.
- Roundabouts may not work so well in a commercial area. Bryan – roundabouts seem to work at the borders / entrances to a commercial area. Harder to do as a retrofit, versus doing as part of new development (Bend example).
- Like pedestrian islands – make it a lot safer to walk.
- Drivers pay more attention when there is a pedestrian island. Narrows the street.
- Hawthorne has added six pedestrian islands – makes a tremendous difference, making it safer for pedestrian crossings.
- Pedestrian crossing improvements needed at Errol Heights Park entrances at 52nd and 45th (just south of Crystal Springs Boulevard) – should be up for prime consideration.
- Cut through traffic is an issue with commuters coming from or accessing Johnson Creek Boulevard.
- Lighting is an issue. In most streets here, there is only one light on one side of the street. This is a huge issue for pedestrian safety on the east side. Need to light the street and the sidewalks.
- What is stopping sidewalks/crossings from being built (Reedway and 72nd a newer example)? Needs to be addressed on Woodstock.

- Bryan – what about Steele? Issues with cut-through traffic? Response – not especially busy, east of 52nd. Do drive Steele between 39th and 52nd – fairly wide. Bryan – the width is allowing people to speed. Similar issue with Harold.

Local Streets Group: Discuss local streets that need to be improved, which ones are difficult for walking, and/or which need traffic calming (Mauricio Leclerc, facilitator)

- Unpaved streets can have a fair amount of speeding. Henderson was given as an example.
- During Covid-19, there has been a public perception change in the unpaved streets, as they are now viewed as streets that allow public interactions. There is interest in alternative approaches to improvements/greening that continue these public interactions.
- Can different ways of improving street be explored? Different materials, ways to incorporate design of trees/landscaping, etc.?
- Question, are there air quality complaints around kicking gravel/dust? Mauricio and Marty responded that they did not know.
- There is an environmental service that unpaved streets can provide as far as storm water. And, that the environmental benefits can be hyper local to adjacent residents. Paved streets tend to benefit the traveler and/or car traffic.
- Streets can be improved to support placemaking rather than just moving cars.
- SE Steele St. (Chavez to 52nd) is being used to speed down this road because of the lacking stop signs and it is a rather wide road.
- Biking in the area between SE Steele and SE Duke streets – this is a block of streets that are difficult for navigating through on a bike. This area is perceived to be overdeveloped for circulation purposes.
- Cars look for streets with less stop signs to travel along.
- Fast driving cars tear up the unimproved roads.
- All the local streets around SE 82nd Ave need improvements.
- SE Tolman seems to stand out as a street to consider for improvement because it allows a bicyclist to connect SE Bybee/MAX Station.
- Consider acquiring an easement connecting Hazeltine Park (at the top of the Darlington Plateau) to Malden Drive directly below via a stairway (with safety lighting) for pedestrian use. A common design feature in the Portland West Hills to facilitate neighborhood walkability across challenging topography. This walking route would improve pedestrian safety (alternative to walking along 52nd Ave.) and provide better connectivity between Hazeltine, Errol Heights Park, and the Springwater Corridor.
- Crossings for Errol Heights Park (52nd and 45th). Are there other crossings?
- Consider redesigning Flavel Drive and Harney Drive as a one-way "couplet" from 52nd Ave to Clatsop St. Discourage speeding on Harney Drive by allowing uphill traffic only (west to east). Traffic on Flavel would flow east to west. Redesigning both streets as one-way only would open up more space for sidewalks, protected bike lanes, street trees and other amenities.

Bike Group: Discuss gaps in the bike network and what existing facilities need to be improved (Zef Wagner, facilitator)

PBOT: Identify: gaps in the bike network, as well as existing facilities that need to be improved.

- PAC: *Flavel Park & 67th Green Way: What's the plan for that crossing four lanes of traffic?*
- PBOT: there will be a signalized crossing on 82nd to make it better.
- SE corner: connecting between shopping center by the Home Depot and Fred Meyers, Luther Road to the Springwater Trail but still stuck on 82nd with difficult bicycling. Could be connected to Flavel Street but a still tricky gap.
- *Could Flavel park pathway could be a potential pathway? Could Luther be a good bike route?*
- PAC: Too narrow of a street, due to Johnson Creek and many apartments have been built.
- *Is Luther Road Clackamas County? Outside of the City of Portland's jurisdiction.*

Harney Drive, Neighborhood Greenway

- Springwater Trail to bell station, E-bikes would be more enjoyable up that road. 60th bike road that currently ends.
- PBOT: *But does Harney Drive look like an East-west direct bus route?*
- Potential crossing at 82nd not provided but Springwater Trail and Harney Drive are.
- Connectivity will be increased through the current partnership.
- Clatsop and Luther Road are challenging due to the narrowness of the street.
- PAC: Concern for people who live on Harney Drive, unwanted new traffic. Concern for the wideness of Harney to support biking infrastructure.

57th Ave:

- PAC Comments: It would work well as a neighborhood greenway. Though the existing path is gravel and has potholes (Flavel Street and Flavel Drive). Only about three blocks are paved.

60th Ave:

- PAC Comments: Would like to see increased connectivity from the park to the school. Establishing bike lanes near the school to slow down traffic provide safe routes to school
- PBOT: Lots of parking lots could be too much traffic.

Woodstock: Ramona and Tolman

- PAC: *Are there any street paving initiatives?*
- PBOT: If we were going to prioritize some way to close gaps, how would we do this?
- César Chávez Boulevard to 52nd? César Chávez Boulevard to 41st?
- PAC: *Could infrastructure be updated rather than paving?*
- PBOT: Challenge is funding, businesses are using parking is being used, and businesses want outdoor seating.
- PAC: *Could Ramona Street support a parallel bike lane? Does every business have to have off-street parking?*
- PBOT: Freight loading is essential.
- PAC: Ramona Street should be the choice due to the available shopping choices in the periphery. *Could PBOT paint 8-foot stripe so you could ride along with Carlton Street or Tolman Street which is the only direct way through?*

PBOT: What do we do with limited space in small streets?

- PAC: *Any opportunities for one-way designated traffic for cars, one-way for cyclists, like Hawthorn Street?*
- Knapp Street going away from 52nd is a narrow street. Designating traffic on two streets to flow in one direction could provide more visibility for cyclists. Knapp Street greenway being extended. Knapp Street crossing 45th is a concern for crossing. Ogden Street stops at 56th which is less convenient Needs a complete crosswalk and infrastructure to support changes. There are only three speedbumps on 45th, but nothing going South. *What would protective factors look like along Knapp Street going uphill?* Could we get flashing, beacons, signals?
- PBOT: Flashing, beacons, and signals, would require approvals and the pathway could be a potential pathway

PAC JAM Board Comments:

- Greenway, share the road, slow down signage on the Greenways south of Woodstock are nearly non-existent. Including more signage would be a cheap way to promote use of the existing Greenways
- Adding a buffer along driving lanes that have bike lanes with speedbumps.
- Green infrastructure all around the project area. Bike lanes on 82nd that can be 120% safe for bikers!
- SE Tolman as potential bike-friendly greenway. Already used as alternative to Duke/Woodstock but difficult to ride west of 52nd due to unpaved streets. Intersects with two 2 bus stops and connects to SE Bybee MAX station.
- Suggest diverting proposed Tolman bikeway west of Cesar Chavez to Woodstock Blvd/Crystal Springs for connectivity to Bybee Station. Tolman has a very steep hill from Cesar Chavez to 36th Avenue and is a narrow residential street. The gentler slopes and broader streets of Woodstock Blvd & Crystal Springs Blvd. provide a better biking experience.
- See prior comments under Local Streets Group suggesting redesign of Flavel Drive and Harney Drive as a "couplet" with one-way traffic flowing east to west on Flavel Drive and west to east on Harney Drive (uphill only to discourage current use as speedway.) Allows more room for protected bike lanes, sidewalks, street trees and other amenities.
- 45th from Foster Road (two blocks from Flavel Drive has become dangerous)
- There needs to be a safe greenway infrastructure throughout the whole project area that connects with other greenways as well.

The meeting ended at 8:05 p.m.