

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

January 28, 2016
5:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-112

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Lampe, Commissioners Bishop, Chirls, Larrivee, Simas, Woosley, Zahn

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Paula Stevens, Kevin McDonald, Franz Loewenherz, Chris Masek, Darek Jarzynski, Kyle Potuzak, Department of Transportation

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember Kevin Wallace

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m. by Chair Lampe who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present.

Councilmember Wallace shared with the Commission his excitement at having been appointed to serve as liaison to the Transportation Commission. He said transportation has always been a passion of his and that he has been involved in a number of transportation efforts over the years, including a stint on the Transportation Commission many years ago. He noted that as a Councilmember over the last six years, he has done a lot of work in negotiating a good route through the city for light rail. The agreement with Sound Transit is solid; it protects the city and it gives Sound Transit an alignment that will be efficient for the taxpayers.

Councilmember Wallace informed the Commission that he has also spent time over the past few years lobbying the state for the transportation package along with other Eastside and Seattle leaders. The work resulted in getting the package improved, including \$1.5 billion for I-405 and completing the SR-520 bridge. He said he also served on the executive advisory group for the hot lanes on I-405. Bellevue built up a lot of creditability with the Washington State Department of Transportation in that regard, though there is still some work that needs to be done on their part with regard to impacts.

Bellevue needs all modes of transportation. Where Yakima needs roads and Seattle needs transit, Bellevue needs highways, roads, transit and bicycle facilities to get people into and out of the growth areas from the neighborhoods and the region. The Commission has done a great job of helping to implement a robust and complicated transportation plan. In the coming years, there will be much work to be done; 2016 will be a very exciting year given the current interest in seeing what can be done to spur additional investment in transportation projects.

Commissioner Bishop stated that he came to the Commission meeting directly from the final meeting of the King County Metro task force on service guidelines. At the meeting it was announced by Josh Brown with the Puget Sound Regional Council that the Federal Department of Transportation has just sent out information regarding the new federal allocation that will come from the highway bill passed by Congress in the fall. There is a new iteration of thinking about how the state's allocation will be distributed. That is an issue the city should find a way to weigh in on.

Commissioner Woosley said he was encouraged to hear that resources could be available from a variety of sources, federally, regionally and perhaps even locally. One challenge associated with implementing the Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan is that there is a lack of resources. Councilmember Wallace suggested the Council may want to have a conversation about a property tax levy to fund more transportation improvements. The last two budget cycles have involved borrowing money to fund transportation improvements, which was a smart move because it was done using existing tax resources to take advantage of very low interest rates. That route has been run and the opportunity to take on more debt is limited unless there is a dedicated stream of money coming in to pay for it.

Commissioner Zahn said she just returned from the Transportation Research Board meeting in Washington, D.C. There were a number of states represented who are implementing public/private partnerships involving design/build/operate/maintain and other approaches aimed at getting to transportation solutions sooner. She also suggested the Commission should on occasion conduct its meetings out in the community as a way of meeting people where they are. Councilmember Wallace said the Council has plans to hold two of its meetings in 2016 away from City Hall. With regard to public/private partnership, he said it was his understanding it has to come from the state. Absent changes in state law, there is only a limited number of things that can be done. The city needs to move forward over the next two years with more transportation projects by looking internally at Bellevue taxpayer contributions primarily along with some additional borrowed money and grant dollars.

3. WORKSHOP: PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE IMPLEMENTATION INITIATIVE

Senior Transportation Planner Franz Loewenherz said the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative is an attempt to finish what was started with the 2009 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, a document that included a set of performance targets that are not currently being met. The target to complete one north-south and one east-west priority bike corridor by 2014 was not met. By 2019, the commitment in place is to have two north-south and two east-west priority bike corridors completed.

Mr. Loewenherz reminded the Commissioners that in the fall of 2015 the Bellevue City Council established a list of program principles. They were clear about not wanting to dilute what was established by the 2009 plan but rather were more focused on making good on those promises. Moreover, the Council directed the Commission to focus on the priority bike corridor network and make sure there is a connected grid of safe facilities throughout the city and the region.

Mr. Loewenherz invited the Commissioners to focus on three elements of the overall strategy, namely early win opportunities, physical separation for bicyclists, and filling the gaps. The Commission is on point for ultimately presenting the budget proposal that will be formulated,

along with their broader role relative to the entire CIP.

Previously introduced to the Commission was the concept that is driving the thought process about how to make the priority bike corridor network come online, namely the notion of connected, protected, and rapid. Connected refers to filling the gaps; protected refers to promoting physically separated facilities; and rapid refers to identifying early win opportunities.

The research that has been done nationally as well as locally indicates that about a third of the people are not interested at all in becoming cyclists for various reasons. The lion's share, however, are interested but concerned about safety and other issues. Only seven percent fall into the enthused and confident category; one percent deem themselves to be strong and fearless riders. Bellevue - as it is - is perfectly acceptable to the one percent, but if a network is to be built to mollify the concerns of those who are interested but concerned, it will be necessary to determine the types of facilities needed. Data taken from the WSDOT Design Manual, which was adopted in November 2015, reflects the fact that as vehicle volumes and speeds increase on a corridor, a greater degree of physical separation is needed to create an environment that is appealing to most cyclists.

Mr. Loewenherz said money plays into the rapid wins element to a large degree. The three-and-a-half mile Mountains to Sound Greenway trail that is currently under design will cost in excess of \$30 million when all is said and done. Funding is limited to implement these types of mega-projects.. To create the two north-south and two east-west connections by 2019 requires creative solutions. There are a variety of treatments that can be provided in a very cost-effective manner and still provide a degree of protection and separation that would be appealing to cyclists of all ages and abilities.

In general, off-street paths and separated bike lanes cater to the interested but concerned cyclists. Conventional bike lanes, marked bike routes, unmarked shared roadways and other roads cater to those riders who have more confidence. There are a number of completed projects already in place, but between them are large gaps. The list of projects slated to come online by 2019 will help to close the gaps, but gaps will still exist.

Mr. Loewenherz said staff took time in determining how to develop a network grid that will first and foremost fill gaps in the priority bike corridor network, along with other improvements to improve access to schools, parks and other activity centers that would not otherwise be served by the priority bike corridor network. At its meeting on February 25, the Commission will help inform just how far to go with the package of improvements. A map of the city showing the existing, pipeline, and rapid implementation program projects was shared with the Commissioners; it showed a far more connected network that remains true to the 2009 plan put together with a mix of conventional bike lanes, separated bike lanes, and off-street paths in addition to shared lane markings. He added that cost figures will be available at the February 25 meeting.

Mr. Loewenherz noted there are parallel corridors where projects that can help to close the gaps in the priority corridors cannot be addressed with rapid improvements. When those parallel routes are made part of the connected network, it becomes clear that three north-south corridors can potentially be completed by 2019, subject to a lot of budget considerations. Even so, there would continue to be pinch points on 140th Avenue NE, on West Lake Sammamish Parkway, and under I-90 on Factoria Boulevard.

There are five east-west corridors defined in the 2009 plan. Combining the facilities that are in place with the projects in the pipeline and rapid implementation projects, the corridors can be largely completed. There are also opportunities to fill the gaps rapidly with interim projects. The Mountains to Sound Greenway trail will take a long time to come online, but Eastgate Way can provide an interim connection. It is not out of the question to say that true east-west connectivity can be provided on each of the five segments within the next two years utilizing interim solutions.

Transportation Engineer Darek Jarzynski stressed that the interim facilities will remain in place even once the links on the primary routes are completed, so to call them temporary facilities is somewhat misleading.

Commissioner Simas noted that the city has limited resources and from a practical standpoint must prioritize what is done and how it is done. One of the choice options is whether not the interim solutions should be considered more as permanent solutions, leaving funds available to be invested where they will address more critical needs.

Commissioner Woosley suggested the interim projects should be called near-term projects that ultimately will supplement the ideal system. The near-term projects are less expensive yet provide a lot of bang for the buck, so one question to be asked is will the near-term projects pose a risk to the financial support for the ideal system. If in fact the Council decides to raise transportation dollars through a tax increase, a portion of the new revenues could be used to accelerate the ideal system and obviate the need for the near-term projects. Mr. Loewenherz said the cost figures to be presented on February 25 will certainly help to inform the conversation.

Commissioner Zahn pointed out that the parallel projects that could be addressed in the near term in fact serve to make up five corridors east-west and five corridors north-south, which goes beyond the 2019 goal. She added that the parallel route shown for Eastgate Way should be supported. As Bellevue College continues to grow, a corridor should be created for the students to be able to travel to and from the campus, even if it is only an interim solution in place while waiting for the Mountains to Sound Greenway to happen.

Commissioner Woosley agreed a term other than “interim” should be chosen to reflect that the solutions will in fact be supportive of the ideal system. The real focus is on a gridded network system that gives people a way to get around the city. Getting something on the ground will help to build ridership, and as ridership increases it will be easier to track where investments are warranted.

Commissioner Woosley asked if staff would be bringing forward a recommendation for which of the east-west and north-south alignments should be given primary focus given the limited funding available. Mr. Loewenherz said that decision will be up to the Commission based on various factors, including available dollars.

Commissioner Simas commented that when the 2009 plan was being developed, there were some paths that naturally stood out as routes that would be highly used. There were few differences of opinion as to what would be the most important routes. The primary determining factor needs to be whether or not a given route gets people to where they want to go.

Commissioner Chirls pointed out that the majority of people are in the interested but concerned camp. That means that until solutions are found that actually make biking safer, it will be difficult to forecast how many people will actually use the facilities. He agreed that the solutions that will ultimately augment the primary routes will yield useful data.

Mr. Loewenherz said an open house is planned prior to the Commission workshop on February 25. The package of improvements and options for consideration will be shared with the public and comments will be received. The desire is to bring the discussion to a successful conclusion at that workshop, leaving the March 24 workshop open to talk about the broader Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative proposal in which evaluation and getting good data and performance metrics figures prominently.

Commissioner Larrivee said the goals in the 2009 plan were chosen on the understanding that Bellevue was behind the time in terms of having a robust infrastructure for bicycles. It was determined the city needed to get into the game and do so quickly. He said he was all for identifying opportunities for quick wins and putting together systems for people to try, but the city is still behind the curve and the primary focus should be on addressing the goals.

Turning to the issue of travel lane width, Mr. Loewenherz said it was not the intention of staff in presenting the issue previously to suggest a cookie cutter approach to the street system. That could not be further from the truth. The focus is actually on making allowance for design flexibility where context appropriate, and using sound engineering judgment to develop a system that can be implemented to be connected, protected and rapid.

Transportation Engineer Chris Masek said every effort is being put into making the most of the infrastructure that is in place. A part of bringing about rapid project implementation has involved looking at where there may be flexibility in the standards. A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets is a book produced by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) serves as the federal guideline for geometric design in the United States. All of the standards used in the state and in the city are based on that document. In the urban arterial section of the book allows for flexibility when it comes to lane widths, and the given range is anywhere between 10 feet and 12 feet. The flexibility is based on site specific conditions. A number of factors are taken into account when selecting lane widths including traffic volumes, posted speed limits, average vehicle speeds, and bus and truck traffic.

Transportation Engineer Kyle Potuzak explained that the Highway Capacity Manual produced by the Transportation Research Board anticipates reductions in capacity in association with lane width. Free-flow speeds in the 40 to 60 mile per hour range serve as the starting point. Even with a 10-foot lane width, the manual projects speeds well above most of the city's posted speed limits. The primary constraint in capacity in urban settings is traffic signals and other intersection control. Lane widths are more of a safety issue than a capacity issue in urban settings.

Mr. Masek said WSDOT's Design Manual is a document used at the state level. It is based on the AASHTO book. WSDOT updated the manual in November 2015, including the practical design section which focuses on developing project alternatives from the smallest dimensions that meet the need and desired performance. That does not mean that 10-foot lanes will be installed everywhere, but it does cause transportation designers to consider what lane widths within the federal guidelines are appropriate for specific roadways and intersections. In every

instance, safety is the top priority.

Mr. Jarzynski commented that shortly after WWII the United States government decided to develop the freeway system as the main transportation system for the country. It was also designed to move military forces freely and quickly around the nation. From that the 12-foot lane was born and for many years afterwards transportation engineers held the view that should the lane width be reduced there would be an increase in the number of crashes. Studies were done that showed in rural areas a decrease to something less than 12 feet increased accidents; the issue was not addressed for urban and suburban areas. The National Cooperative Highway Research Program created Project 17-26 aimed at answering the question of whether or not narrower lanes result in an increased accident rate in urban and sub urban areas. The project involved the states of Minnesota, Michigan and North Carolina and focused on both urban and suburban arterials. In all, more than 400 miles of roadways ranging from nine feet to 13 feet wide were studied. During the five-year study, 20,000 crashes were evaluated. Also, in the study area, there were 1342 intersection approaches at which more than 10,000 of the crashes occurred during five-year period. The study was published in 2007, and found there was no consistent, statistically significant relationship between lane width and safety for urban and suburban roadway sections and intersection approaches. Creation of the first Highway Safety Manual in 2010 documented that.

Continuing, Mr. Jarzynski said the study found no direct relationship between reduced lane widths and increased accidents in urban and suburban environments, though there were a few caveats. In limited instances, shrinking four-lane undivided urban arterials and introducing non-signalized intersections, with stop controls only for the minor streets, the number of crashes is likely to increase. Additionally, on arterials such as 148th Avenue NE, if there were no signalized intersections, if the lanes were narrowed, and if stop controls were put in place only for the minor side streets, the anticipation is that the number of accidents would increase.

The Highway Safety Manual is a very thorough tome published by AASHTO. It is used extensively by traffic engineers. In evaluating the safety of projects, site characteristics and traffic volume variables are analyzed. In the manual, two- and four-lane roadways include a safety factor relative to lane width, except for in urban and suburban areas.

Mr. Jarzynski confirmed for Commissioner Woosley that for the most part, reducing lane widths to less than 12 feet does not significantly reduce safety, unless there are unsignalized cross streets. The worst scenario identified by the study was unsignalized intersections of two four-lane roadways, something unlikely to be seen in Bellevue.

Commissioner Zahn said traffic speeds clearly affect safety in a negative way. When there is congestion on Bellevue Way and 148th Avenue, no one moves very fast, but when there is no congestion the traffic speeds are much higher, increasing the potential for accidents. She asked if in those cases narrowing the lane widths would serve to increase the risk of accidents. Mr. Masek said much has to do with context. For instance, it would not be a good idea to put narrow lanes on 148th Avenue given the traffic volumes and actual traffic speeds.

Commissioner Bishop said he met with staff recently for an hour or so to discuss the issue. He pointed out that the city has a design manual it goes by. The typical public street drawing identifies the standard lane width as 11 feet, and that has been the case for some time. The issue is how much 11 to go, where narrower lanes should be allowed, and under what conditions. He said in his opinion the determining factor should be actual vehicle speeds. The

city's standards have evolved over decades. Having the Commission give the nod to revising the city's standards is probably not the route to take; such a move should only be made using a much larger process.

Commissioner Bishop asked what the standard is for bicycle lane widths in Bellevue. Mr. Loewenherz said bike lanes can be four feet wide where there is no curb, and five feet where there is a curb. Commissioner Bishop suggested that an 11-foot vehicle lane and a four-foot bike lane probably would be just fine where traffic speeds are 35 miles per hour. Stepping the vehicle lane down to 10.5 feet might also be alright at that speed, and maybe it would be okay to go to a 10-foot lane where vehicle speeds are 25 miles per hour. In all cases, the primary factor is vehicle speed, though other issues involved include number of pedestrians, number of bicyclists, traffic volume, the number of driveways, sight distance considerations and illumination.

Mr. Potuzak explained that the lane widths discussed do not represent a change to the design manual. While the typical lane width in Bellevue is 11 feet, the manual specifically states that the AASHTO standards are the standards, which means there is a range of lane widths where 10 feet that can be utilized.

Commissioner Larrivee said he had confidence in the city's traffic engineers and could accept narrow lane widths provided the engineers have no objections. Mr. Masek mentioned that the engineering staff have not yet had the time to delve into all the details, but that is something that will be done.

Commissioner Chirls agreed with Commissioner Bishop regarding the tie between safety and vehicle speeds. He noted, however, that he was satisfied that the engineers hold the same view, and that the proposal fits within the design guidelines.

Commissioner Zahn commented that San Francisco's Vision Zero program focuses largely on robust data collection and analysis. Before any decisions are made, the environmental and injury data are carefully reviewed. The same approach should be used in Bellevue. It is far too early to be able to draft policy language.

Commissioner Woosley said it is clear the desire of the city is to create more bike lanes, and that in doing so safety should be the prime factor. He supported the notion of trusting the professionals to use all available data in coming up with safe solutions. There apparently is no significant degradation involved in going from 12-foot lanes to 11-foot lanes at free-flow speeds. However, going down to 10-foot lanes it appears vehicle speeds drop by 12 miles per hour, which in turn reduces the overall vehicle throughput. Bellevue is already facing a huge demand for the available capacity. In addition to safety and accommodating bicycles, overall vehicle throughput needs to be taken into consideration. Mr. Potuzak reiterated it all depends on existing vehicle speeds. The Highway Capacity Manual allows for going down to a 40 mile per hour free-flow speed to begin with, so even with a reduction of vehicle speeds triggered by narrowing lanes, the overall speeds are still within the majority of Bellevue's posted speed limits.

Commissioner Simas agreed with the comments made by Commissioners Chirls and Zahn relative to safety and analytics being paramount issues. He urged the Commission to get beyond the fear of what might be and to focus on an analysis of what actually is. Sometimes it is necessary to experiment to find out what will happen. He said during the last year he has

visited Boston, San Diego, San Francisco, New York and cities in New Hampshire and has seen for himself that nearly all cities are on a pedestrian/bicycle kick, and in every city lanes are being narrowed, sharrows are being utilized, and bike lanes are just being painted on existing roadways. It should not be difficult to look into what other cities are doing and what data is flowing from their experiments. Bellevue should boldly step out and try a few things and then analyze how well they worked or did not work.

Commissioner Bishop said it all will come down to how the narrowed lane widths get applied to the projects at hand. He expressed discomfort with the Commission being asked to adopt any specific approach prior to seeing any specific projects. Mr. Loewenherz reiterated that staff were not proposing a cookie cutter approach. It is all about context-sensitive decisions, taking the time, doing the research and figuring it out. There is a need to dig deeper than what has traditionally been the case with the Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan, which is simply lines on a map, and assuming it will all come to pass. The focus is on indicating what some of the tradeoffs are.

Mr. Loewenherz said to the extent possible and consistent with best practices, the bias is toward separated buffered bike lanes. He shared with the Commissioners images taken from the WSDOT Design Manual showing various on-street bicycle facilities, as well as photos of bicycle facilities along neighborhood greenways that involved signage, curb extensions, pavement markings and other approaches appropriate to lower-speed, lower-volume residential-character areas.

In the interest of time, Mr. Loewenherz limited the discussion to one north-south route, NS-2, and one east-west route, EW-2. He noted that NS-2 is the Lake Washington Loop and within it there are several candidate segments involving shared lane markings and separated bike lane treatments. The issues and opportunities include access to parks, transit and schools, and the need to narrow the lanes in some areas in order to facilitate a separated bicycle facility. He said the Commissioners will receive more detailed information ahead of the February 25 workshop. The information will also be going out to the public.

Chair Lampe suggested the Commission should be afforded the opportunity to see the information that will be going out to the public ahead of time.

Commissioner Chirls commented that if the presentation is aimed at familiarizing the Commission with the format and kind of information that will be presented to the public, it would be good for the Commission to see it.

Mr. Loewenherz reminded the Commissioners that the Council direction calls for engaging stakeholders at the earliest stages of scope development to ensure their input will be included in project design. The proposal for the next workshop is to have an open house at which the public can be introduced to the project and offer feedback on the general direction. Ultimately, that will not be enough, so staff is also proposing that the drawings be put out for public review via an interactive map in which a person can click on a line segment and be presented with a brief description and a link to the details. Viewers will be able to indicate their support or lack of support, rate ideas as high, medium or low priority, and provide comments. The process will take the 2009 Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan to a more granular level of detail for 40 miles of city streets, and to some degree it will be necessary to straddle planning and preliminary design. At a minimum, it should be possible to flag where parking will potentially be lost, and where 10-foot lanes would be required.

Commissioner Bishop voiced support for the approach. He said he would like to see the segments include an estimate of bicycle usage ranked high, medium and low. Mr. Loewenherz said it will not be possible to be that specific because the statistics are not in hand. However, for each corridor it will be possible to show the population and employment figures within a half mile.

Commissioner Woosley pointed out that at least three projects are creating some short-term demand on 114th Avenue NE that might make the proposed approach less than ideal. The fact is 114th Avenue NE will serve as a detour route while the 112th Avenue SE sewer project is under way. It will also serve as a detour route while the East Link project is under construction. Additionally, 114th Avenue NE will be impacted by the project to widen I-405 that will involve tearing down the Main Street overpass. All of that will need to be factored in. Mr. Loewenherz said the current focus is on making sure the right treatment is earmarked for the right corridor. The issue of phasing and sequencing will be the next step in the process.

Commissioner Zahn suggested it would make sense in looking at the corridors to factor in some injury data along with environmental information. Mr. Loewenherz applauded the desire of the Commission to set a high bar, but he stressed that limited staff resources means not everything can get included.

Commissioner Woosley asked if there is an ideal volume of bikes on a defined route needed to raise it in the community's consciousness. Mr. Loewenherz said there are level of service indicators for pedestrians and cyclists, and there are metrics called stress indicators with data points that feed into what constitutes a more stressful corridor versus a less stressful corridor. With sufficient time, it would be possible to create a map with all the data points informing it, color-coded to indicate the stress indicators in the network. Additionally, it would be possible to show how implementation of the network as planned will make stressful corridors less stressful. However, time and staff limits mean some things cannot be accomplished. In order to stay on schedule, it will be necessary to be done with the bike network, including an implementation strategy, at the next Commission meeting. A budget proposal must be ready to submit by April.

Mr. Loewenherz shared with the Commissioners three options. He pointed out that in the 2009 Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan where there might have been wide outside lanes along an entire segment, the thinking was that all that could be done by way of improvement were bike lane improvements for the one section only. The Commission could choose to limit implementation to just those links in the 2009 plan (Option 1), though there would be repercussions in terms of what is trying to be accomplished by the CPR approach. Option 2 would include all of the missing gap improvements in the first option plus upgrades to existing facilities along the priority bicycle corridor network, working from less protected to more protected. Under Option 3, the improvements from the first two options would be included along with the rapid implementation opportunities for feeder bicycle network improvements, such as schools, parks and major activity centers.

Mr. Loewenherz said the fact is the options will take a great deal of staff time to create all of the segments, cost them out, message them to the public, and group them into logical packages. To do so within a month will be challenging.

Commissioner Woosley asked if choosing the first or second option would be only the first

phase of a longer-term effort. Mr. Loewenherz advocated for continuing with the proposed approach and shying away from the pull to add to this or that project at this time. The focus is on moving away from a disconnected network to a real grid that connects edge to edge and that will put the city on the map for following through with delivering the 2009 vision.

Mr. Loewenherz said the schedule calls for an open house and another workshop on February 25. The remaining corridors will be discussed then along with the cost estimates and summary statistics. The Commission will at that meeting be asked to reach agreement on an implementation strategy. The focus of a third workshop on March 24 will be on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative budget proposal incorporating engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation. The budget proposal will need to be ready to be forwarded to the budget office by April 29.

Commissioner Zahn applauded staff for taking the time to look at the whole connection piece, Option 3. The focus on Vision Zero makes it necessary to look at things deliberately from a safety standpoint. Choosing just Option 1 or Option 2 could potentially create an unconnected system, which would not further the concept of Vision Zero, and the Commissioners should commit to doing whatever it takes to bring that about, including scheduling additional meetings if necessary.

With regard to outreach, Mr. Loewenherz asked the Commissioners to comment on the idea of putting door hangers on all affected properties that may lose on-street parking. Commissioner Woosley said it would be a good idea; people too often get mail in one form or another and overlook it so it would be appropriate to seek another approach. Mr. Loewenherz said using door hangers is above and beyond what normally happens for projects that do not yet have funding and are not presently slated to get built.

Commissioner Chirls said before he could say one way or another he would want to know what would be involved by way of costs and staff time. Mr. Loewenherz allowed that there would be some costs involved. There are services that can be paid to actually put the door hangers on doors, and they provide a physical record of their efforts.

Commissioner Woosley commented that once projects are funded, the impression is created that things have been decided and they cannot be changed. Making a concerted effort to bring the public in well before the project gets funded would be a good move.

Commissioner Bishop said his concern would be in regard to getting the word out to other users of the system that something is being planned. The neighborhood newsletter concept is one tool that could be utilized. Mr. Loewenherz said there will be a neighborhood leadership gathering on February 23 and the intent is to have a postcard ready to distribute at that meeting with links to the website and the wikimap interface, though the latter will not be active by then.

Commissioner Larrivee said the conflict in his mind was around what constitutes an affected property. He said he would much prefer to seek a broader distribution of the message, even though the impacts could be more dramatic for some than for others. Individual mailings are effective and are easier.

Commissioner Chirls said there are many communication issues that would need to be addressed if the preferred approach is to put something on someone's door. Such a notice would serve as a huge red flag for the recipients. While there clearly is benefit to informing

people early on, exactly how to do so is the question.

Commissioner Zahn pointed out that the affected properties are in fact those that will be negatively affected. At the end of the day, using door hangers would yield a disproportionate notice. She agreed the approach could be seen as a red flag. The overall project includes both pluses and minuses, but targeting only those who will be negatively impacted will not generate positive comments. Notice should be provided citywide using the normal channels.

Commissioner Bishop said the focus should in fact be on those who will be most impacted, and that means those who will lose on-street parking. He stressed, however, that not every project on the list will trigger the loss of on-street parking. He voiced support for the door hangers and said he would not worry about generating too many negative comments; the Cascade Bicycle Club will be sending out to its membership notice of the project, and that will generate lots of positive comments.

Commissioner Zahn said the members of the Cascade Bicycle Club likely fall more into the category of those willing to ride in more dangerous areas. Those in need of the information include those in the interested but concerned category.

Commissioner Woosley suggested that there may be ways to continue to accommodate on-street parking along with defined bicycle corridors. If that is the case, it would be a win-win for all concerned.

Mr. Masek said it is vitally important to know beforehand how particular neighborhoods will react to the loss of on-street parking. Once the scope for a project is set and a budget is approved, it is far more difficult to step back and have the parking conversation. Mr. Jarzynski concurred.

Commissioner Zahn said the viewpoint caused her to change her mind to favor the door hangers.

Commissioner Simas said he is not generally a fan of door hangers. He said he firmly believes that conversation is a two-way street; the city has a responsibility to talk with the public, but the public has a responsibility to seek out information. The city has a number of ways to reach out to its citizens, but it surprisingly does not appear to have a single person in charge of communicating or marketing to the people of Bellevue on behalf of the various boards and commissions. It is time for the city to solve the problem by implementing a consistent communication process. Door hangers are an expensive way of getting information out; mailers are more effective, but the tools that are already in place should be fully utilized.

Commissioner Chirls agreed with Commissioner Simas. He added, however, that should a mailing be sent out citywide, it will make no sense at all for many who receive it, particularly those who will not be directly impacted. However, a neighborhood-targeted mailer would reach far more people, including many who would in fact be interested in the issue even if they would not be directly impacted by something like the loss of on-street parking. Additionally, mailers allow for the inclusion of balanced statements about what is being considered. There was general agreement to take that approach.

Commissioner Zahn suggested it would be helpful to have someone come and talk to the Commission about the city's community outreach efforts. Commissioner Simas proposed

talking to the Commission's Council liaison about having the city set up a process to evaluate how the city communicates to the public and how all the boards and commissions could more effectively communicate.

Mr. Loewenherz briefly outlined the east-west corridor projects. Beginning with EW-5, he noted that by creating 10-foot travel lanes and removing the on-street parking, a continuous separated bike lane along the corridor can be created, with the exception of one small segment that includes conventional bike lanes because the lane width cannot be tapered.

With regard to SE 60th Street/Coal Creek Parkway/SE 4th Drive, Mr. Loewenherz said the same treatment with 10-foot lanes and the removal of on-street parking also results in a continuous separated bike lane. The same treatment applied to Forest Drive also can yield a separated bike lane, except that for one small segment sharrows may be needed to accommodate some left-turn movements.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Ann Lewis, 86 157th Avenue SE, applauded the Commission for the work it is doing. She said she is often out of town and were someone from the city to put a door hanger on her door, it would only serve to advertise the fact that she is out of town. She proposed sending out a mailer inviting the public to come to an open house about biking that might also affect on-street parking. Information should also be sent out via *It's Your City* and the *Bellevue Reporter*. She said she attended the recent Big Idea Festival put on by the Cascade Bicycle Club where they talked about Vision Zero among other things. Where there are collisions between cars and bicyclists, if the car is traveling at 20 miles per hour there is a ten percent chance the rider will be fatally injured; at 30 miles per hour the risk increases to 50 percent; and at 40 miles per hour the risk increases to 90 percent. In the segments where the city elects to use sharrows on neighborhood roads the posted speed limit should be 20 miles per hour, and 25 miles per hour on arterials. By doing that, the number of fatalities will be markedly lower.

Ms. Michelle Plesko, 13003 NE 70th Drive, Kirkland, said she rides her bike everywhere she can, but not in Bellevue. She said she has small children and often rides neighborhood streets and off-street trails, but will only use bike lanes if it is on a road that is not too busy. It will take thousands of people willing to ride bikes on safe facilities to truly transform the city. Bellevue has bad traffic and will not be able to build its way out of the traffic mess. By providing bicycle networks, the people will be given travel options and far more freedom.

Mr. Yuhong Li, 2615 108th Avenue NE, said he has lived in Bellevue for many years and is happy to see changes in the form of bike lanes. He said he used to bike to work but often encountered missing sections. Bellevue needs more protected bike lanes, even though there are tradeoffs between providing bike lanes and allowing for on-street parking.

Ms. Lizzette Hedberg, 2440 140th Avenue NE, stressed the need for good communications between the city and the public so residents can learn more about projects. She proposed adding to the city's website a "what's happening" or "what's new" box with links to communication. Additionally, information should be included with the utility bills. Notices could be put up at the library, the city could pay for an advertising spot in movie theaters, and flyers could be handed out to those seeking permits at City Hall.

Mr. David Wiggins, 1133 32nd Avenue, Seattle, said he has worked in Bellevue for ten years

and has commuted by bike for nearly all that time. He said he rides 108th Avenue where there are essentially sharrows. Cars generally pass respectfully, but not always, especially on 118th Avenue. Separated lanes are safer, and narrower lanes do tend to slow traffic speeds.

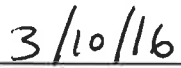
Ms. McKayla Dunfey spoke representing the Cascade Bicycle Club. She thanked the Commissioners and staff for working on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Initiative. The Club is very excited about working with the Commission and staff on promoting the outreach component and finding ways to reach out to new people. While some of the Club's members are in the fearless riders category, there are far more who want to be able to bike to work and school and with their kids on the weekends. It is encouraging to see the progress being made.

5. ADJOURN


Chair Lampe adjourned the meeting at 8:49 p.m.



Secretary to the Transportation Commission



Date



Chairperson of the Transportation Commission



Date

