



Stadium District Study
Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting 3
April 16, 2013
4:00PM – 6:00PM Seattle Municipal Tower Room 4080

Attending Advisory Group Members or Representatives:

Ryan Smith
Bart Waldman
Jeffrey Long
Henry Liebman
Tija Petrovich
Tom McQuaid
Alan Cornell
Linea Laird
Laura Bachman
Don Blakeney
Jack McCullough
Leslie Smith
Josh Brower
Osama Quotah

General Updates and Follow Up

Gary Johnson provided general updates to the Advisory Group, and provided a brief recap of Meeting #2 from March 26. Gary updated the group on progress to hire a consultant team indicating interviews had been held and the city was very close to announcing the selection. Gary summarized the sustainability charrette that was convened by the City of Seattle’s Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE) among the three stadium entities and topical experts on April 5 to explore possible district sustainability strategies. Major opportunities identified during the charrette included: sewer heat recovery and rainwater harvesting. Gary also shared with the group that King County has a future capital project to construct a wet weather treatment plant in the vicinity of the stadium district.

Gary reminded the group of the end goals for the project: to inform possible Comprehensive Plan amendments; potential zoning changes; and streetscape concept plans. Gary previewed the agenda for the meeting, which focuses on mobility and streetscape.

Mobility - Context Presentations

Three mobility related presentations were provided for the advisory group. The advisory group engaged in discussion and conversation during and after each of the mobility presentations. Discussion and

comments are summarized below. (Stakeholder Advisory Group member comments are paraphrased in the bullet points.)

Stadium Area Mobility Discussion

Bob Chandler of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Director's office presented a summary of traffic and freight mobility issues in the stadium district.

- About 35% of the Mariner's gameday traffic comes to and from events from the south.
- In recent years, Metro removed transit service from 1st Ave. S. This is a challenge for some event attendees, especially seniors. Other transit access such as light rail and King Street station are a considerable walk. Is there any plan to bring transit service back to 1st Ave. S?
 - *This is a live discussion and an open question. Metro will have interim routing and during construction phases of SR99 improvements. Final decisions about future routing of transit service from the south after construction have not been made.*
- Some people question the estimation of 20,000+ parking spaces available in the May 2012 Seattle Arena Multimodal Transportation Access and Parking Study. We observe that whenever there is an event with over 35,000 people it becomes very difficult to find parking nearby. This is especially difficult if there are dual events. A concern is that some identified garages are not open or available to the public, and some that are have a significant portion devoted to agency parked vehicles or reserved monthly parking spaces.
 - *The Arena EIS will do a more detailed accounting of available parking.*
- Agree that Airport Way S. is a very underutilized thoroughfare.
- Could you elaborate on transit on the waterfront?
 - *The future format of transit on the waterfront is under discussion but there will be transit on the waterfront that is likely to be unique to the waterfront. About 7% of n/s transit trips through downtown are expected to be on the waterfront.*
- Where is the parking going to be to get to the waterfront? There has been a severe loss of parking in South Downtown neighborhoods including Pioneer Square. We will permanently lose more on street parking on Jackson with streetcar construction. There needs to be consideration for more parking in the area.

Citywide Modal Plans & the Stadium Area

Kevin O'Neil, SDOT manager of Urban Design Policy and Planning, provided an overview of the city's various transportation modal plans and how they relate to the stadium district. Kevin described the hierarchy of the city's transportation plans, and how they inform other decisions and ultimately lead to implementation projects. Specific plans addressed included:

2005: Transportation Strategic Plan

2005: Freight Mobility Strategic Plan

2007: Bicycle Master Plan (BMP)

2009: Pedestrian Master Plan

2012: Transit Master Plan

2013: Update of BMP

2013-14: Freight Industrial Access Study and Freight Master Plan

Other topics addressed included the ongoing Center City Connector transit study, which evaluates potential connections between the First Hill and South Lake Union streetcar lines. The Center City connector study has no overlap with the stadium district study area. Kevin also explained the relationship between the Freight Industrial Access Study and the Freight Master Plan – both in the beginning stages during 2013.

- Regarding the Bicycle Master Plan, what is shown for bicycle facilities on First Ave. S.? Please don't take away road capacity to make new dedicated bicycle facilities in this location.
 - *Currently dedicated bicycle facilities (bike lanes) are not being shown on the portion of First Ave. S. near the stadiums. But intrepid cyclists may continue to use 1st Ave. S. in a sharrow condition. Improvements of SR99 include a city-side and a waterfront trail that provide improved north south bicycle connectivity in the vicinity.*
- There is a need for local transit to service the stadiums on First Ave. S. The Lander station is underused.
- Please encourage the inclusion of streetcar on 1st Ave. in future rounds of planning. This would be a good option for local transit.
 - *The market (ridership) for locally scaled transit would have to be evaluated as a part of any study to extend transit on First Ave. There may not be a strong market for ridership here. It would have to be looked at. The Transit Master Plan did not anticipate the strongest ridership in this corridor south of King Street.*

Stadium Area Mobility Discussion

Geoff Wentlandt provided an overview of streetscape design opportunities. Geoff explained features and elements that are commonly referred to as a part of streetscape design. Geoff identified several locations within the study area on First Ave. S., Occidental Ave. S. and Railroad Way, and described existing conditions, as well as character possibilities for future improvement. Precedent images were displayed to spark discussion about future aspirations for the qualities of streets. The focus of the material was primarily for pedestrian use, as well as the district's identity.

- Who will be using these streetscapes? The market and activity may not yet be here to support the types of places being shown in photographs. There might need to be some concentration of activity in certain focus locations.
- We should be mindful of the new SR99 infrastructure and how that impacts streetscape opportunities. At times the ramps are high in the air blocking views etc. The ramps finally come down at grade near the north end of the WOSCA site, and this may be a more appropriate location for streetscape improvements.

- From an activity standpoint, a lot more could be done to activate these streets and make them feel a lot more inviting and safe. This would be a benefit to the district.
- We also need to understand the east / west connections and how they work. There should be a review of where pedestrian pathways connect to the east.
- Attention should be given to how Occidental Ave. changes in different locations. It probably should not be treated the same north of SafeCo Field as it is south of SafeCo Field. There may be a different design intent for these two lengths of the street. The north connects to the city and to Pioneer Square. The south portion – in the stand alone block - doesn't have these same qualities.
- The walk from 1st/Lander north, is about the same as walking from 4th/Lander north.
- Connections from 4th Ave. S. (to the west of the district) into the stadium district are important and they are lacking. There needs to be attention to the east / west connections between these locations. A lot of people access events from the 4th Ave. S. vicinity.
- Remember that First Ave. S. is an extremely busy operational corridor. Tour buses, trucks, and a high volume of vehicles use this road all day long. The opportunities for placemaking and streetscape on First Ave. S. may be somewhat limited due to these factors.
- Regarding activation in the stadium district – there are a lot of other interventions beside retail that can be used to make active places. We shouldn't be too focused on directing retail to all streetscape locations within the district.

Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Gary Johnson concluded the discussion, and reminded the group that the next meeting would be on the Third Tuesday in May.