

AWV Program Parking Stakeholder Meeting

MEETING SUMMARY

MEETING INFORMATION

January 28, 2015

1 – 3 p.m.

Wells Fargo Center, 23 Large/Training Room

ATTENDANCE

Stakeholders

- Leslie Smith, Alliance for Pioneer Square
- Lisa Dixon, Alliance for Pioneer Square
- Liz Stenning, Alliance for Pioneer Square
- Maureen Black, Argosy Cruises
- Nick Hawley, Downtown Seattle Association
- Randy Hurlow, Downtown Seattle Association
- Ryan Smith, Martin Smith, Inc.
- Gary Strand, McKinnon Furniture
- Ben Franz-Knight, Pike Place Market
- Lori Montoya, Seattle Aquarium
- Tim Kuniholm, Seattle Aquarium

Staff

- Meghan Morales, Cocker Fennessy
- Cole Parsons, Copacino + Fujikado
- Bernard Van de Kamp, SDOT
- Brian Henry, Office of the Waterfront
- Meghan Shepard, SDOT
- Michelle Chen, Office of the Waterfront
- Becky Hixson, WSDOT
- Dave Sowers, WSDOT
- En Lammers, WSDOT

Welcome and introductions

AWV Program

Dave Sowers, Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program (AWV) Deputy Program Administrator, Operations, welcomed the group to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

- Welcome and Introductions
- Pike Place Market Expansion Update
- Year in Review
- 2015-2016 Communications, Marketing and Media Relations Plan, 2014 Highlights and 2015 Plans
- Budget Review
- Reporting

Pike Place Market (PPM) Expansion Update

PPM

Ben Franz-Knight, PPM, provided a presentation on the Pike Place Market Public Development Authority's (PPMPDA) plans to redevelop PC-1 North, the current Desimone parking lot west of the market. The new development will include about 300 new, public parking spaces, retail and commercial

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space and low income housing, including a community center focused on social services. Ben added that most of the retail/commercial space is already leased and is excited about the partnerships that will highlight the program offerings such as a social services and cultural center.

Becky Hixson noted that a covenant agreement with the existing Pike Place Market Garage was executed, extending the covenant for low-rate, short-term parking on that facility until 2020. WSDOT is now negotiating a long-term covenant with Pike Place Market for the new parking facility being built as part of the PC-1 North Market Front development.

Ben thanked the group for the parking mitigation funds that have helped his project move forward. He also noted that the City of Seattle has recently approved \$34 million of funding to help complete the project by end of 2016. Late April* may mark the groundbreaking event for this project. The construction is scheduled to be completed in 18 months.

Year in Review; 2015-2016 Communications, Marketing and Media Plan

AWV Parking Mitigation Program (WSDOT)

Downtown Seattle Association (DSA)

Alliance for Pioneer Square (APS)

Becky Hixson, WSDOT Special Projects Manager, introduced the 2014 year in review for the parking mitigation program.

Nick Hawley, DSA Parking Campaign Manager, presented slides of the overall parking mitigation program marketing activities and highlighted key results. He presented findings from the 2014 DSA Four County Survey: 1) Parking as a barrier to coming to downtown Seattle dropped from number one to number two; and 2) One of five surveyed heard of the website DowntownSeattleParking.com.

Hixson noted that holiday lighting along the waterfront was effective, providing benefit to stakeholders. Tim Kuniholm, Seattle Aquarium Director of Public Affairs, Marketing and Events, expressed that the lighting was well-received by his patrons and expressed that he hoped they would stay up throughout the year. Ryan Smith of Martin Smith Inc. concurred with this and requested that the lights be kept up as long as possible and offered to provide a supporting letter of recommendation. At this point, there are no immediate plans to take them down. Tim Kuniholm did note that maintenance might be required if lights go out or strings come down.

ACTION ITEM: Brian Henry, SDOT Senior Planner, Special Projects, will follow up with the lighting company to find out what would be the expected duration for the lighting to stay in good condition and what type of maintenance program might be needed.

Lisa Dixon, APS Chief Operating Officer, presented results of the marketing and outreach activities in Pioneer Square which included First Thursday free parking and free parking around Pioneer Square's Howlidays events.

*The groundbreaking event has been tentatively scheduled for May 7th, 2015.

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Meghan Shepard, SDOT Strategic Advisor, shared about the implementation of free Sunday time limits for on-street parking in the retail core of Pioneer Square in September 2014. Leslie Smith, APS Executive Director, mentioned that because the fine for staying longer in the two hour only parking spaces was less than event parking during sports games, it seemed as though people were not respecting the two hour time limit changes. Liz Stenning, APS Public Realm Director, stated that it was hard to tell exactly to what extent that was happening. SDOT and the Alliance continue to investigate how that parking is being used. Formal evaluations are scheduled to take place in spring of 2015.

Gary Strand, McKinnon Furniture CEO and President, offered up some of his observations of the parking situation in his area and for his patrons. He feels that off-street or garage parking is often oversold to its members so it is not a good option for his customers. He also noted that time limits for on-street parking make it difficult for his customers to feel comfortable to browse for longer periods of time, a big part of the furniture shopping experience. Strand asked about the possibility to reserve on-street parking spaces for his customers. Leslie Smith responded that this was not possible according to the City policy. Harbor Steps was brought up as a viable choice for proximity to his store and availability of space. Strand offered several times that he would be willing to help subsidize parking fees if we could help him find the parking availability for his customers.

ACTION ITEM: Meghan Morales of Cocker Fennessy will follow up with Strand to better understand his needs and how we can accommodate.

ACTION ITEM: Meghan Shepard will provide Strand more information about on-street parking City policies and plans.

Leslie Smith raised concerns and asked for considerations about what will happen when the garages return to higher rates after the low-rate program ends.

Ryan Smith asked if we have any measurement tools or goals in place that will demonstrate when or how the marketing efforts and dollars have become effective. He additionally asked:

- *How do we determine the money well spent or that we've achieved what we wanted from the marketing part of this program?*
- *How do we measure the behavioral change we desire from the investment and how do we determine an exit strategy once we've met our goals?*

Hixson shared that one of the metrics in place was to have 100 businesses directing visitors to DowntownSeattleParking.com as the source for parking information. There are currently 59 in place.

Strand asked if there was a possibility of having more Retail Core (\$7 flat rate evenings and weekends) partners along the waterfront. Hawley stated that DSA is still expanding the program and will continue to pursue new garages. Strand also suggested the idea of providing parking pass vouchers or membership to promote parking for those coming from the Eastside.

ACTION ITEM: Nick Hawley will report to the group if new garages are added to the program and agreed to reach out to Strand and Morales.

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Ben Franz-Knight asked if the Retail Core colors (light blue on the website and street signage) are confusing since the official branding colors on the street signs and our website are the medium bright blue. Ben asked if the branding plan could unify all branding across Retail Core branding, street signs and creative.

ACTION ITEM: Nick will research the situation and provide recommendations in the future to the group.

Ryan Smith asked that we move on to hearing from Michelle Chen about the Strategy 1 progress for the central waterfront parking, and to the budget update.

Michelle Chen, City's Office of the Waterfront Partnership Manager, shared briefly about working with the smaller stakeholder group who continue to express most interest in the Spring/Seneca lot. She briefed the stakeholders on the City's negotiations with Equity Residential who own the Harbor Steps garage for potential long-term covenant of a couple hundred spaces, however that deal did not happen in part due to stakeholders no longer being interested in that location and Harbor Steps not accepting the initial offer described in the Letter of Intent. She provided a brief history of City's involvement with the Spring/Seneca property and noted that the City has started conversations with Gonzaga University who now own the Spring/Seneca lot in order to pursue a potential long-term covenant at this location.

ACTION ITEM: Michelle will provide an update to the group at the next meeting.

Budget Review/Update

AWV Program

Dave Sowers shared highlights of the Parking Mitigation Budget. This included the breakdown of budgetary expenses per strategy and the current plan for budget allocation by strategy through 2015. He mentioned that the current plan is to reallocate any realized savings to extend certain aspects of the budget, primarily marketing, through 2018. See budgetary overview presentation attached at the end, as presentation C.

Ryan Smith asked about the awareness of the program and if as much advertising was necessary in 2017 and 2018.

Nick Hawley responded that current marketing efforts have been effective: 1) the number of visitors to the site was higher in 2014 than previous years; and, 2) garage utilization continues to increase. Nick explained that the program is still in its awareness phase and that it is a behavioral change campaign—not only do users have to use the site but also change the way they park. To support this, Hawley stated that while we see a higher number of visits from referrals and direct traffic (demonstrating the use by businesses and routine users), that more than half of the traffic during peak seasons is still brought in via advertising.

He specifically asked if additional mitigation dollars should be allocated, instead of "stretching" dollars originally allocated for a shorter time period. Sowers replied that it is very unlikely more mitigation dollars would be appropriated and that the current Tunnel schedule shows completion by 2018.

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Leslie Smith reminded the group of the agreed importance of prioritizing money left over from underspending for investment in new parking. She was concerned about the plan to put any unused budgetary funds from previous years into more marketing. She suggested that the smaller stakeholder group concerned about budgetary oversight reconvene to discuss the budget forecast and its proposed distribution of funds.

ACTION ITEM: Ryan will circulate the budget forecast with all the small group stakeholders and collect feedback. He will then contact WSDOT to schedule a meeting.

Ryan Smith stated that he felt the goal for the Parking Mitigation program was to replace the 1,200 to 2,000 parking spaces that were lost due to the tunnel project and the new waterfront. He inquired about current planning of replacing these spots to support the neighborhoods and businesses of affected areas. He wanted to know the timeline or projection to build back these spaces for the waterfront community. He believes \$30M was identified in the beginning of the formation of this program to fulfill this purpose. He expressed concern that too much is being whittled away on marketing and other strategies and would rather that we phase out the marketing early in order to put more dollars into the garage plans. The PPM expansion is great, but not enough, in his opinion.

Ryan Smith requested to see the actual money spent in 2014.

ACTION ITEM: Becky Hixson will send out the actual spent report to the stakeholders. ACTION COMPLETED 1/29/15.

Ryan Smith wanted an updated document that showed the overall changes in parking on the waterfront and in Pioneer Square due to construction and developments.

ACTION ITEM: Ryan is going to send the example to Becky Hixson. ACTION COMPLETED 1/30/15.
ACTION ITEM: Meghan Shepard and Brian Henry will lead the effort to update this document.

Reporting and next steps

Becky Hixson suggested to the group that given the data and updates in the monthly dashboard reports, we should make the quarterly monitoring reports currently generated at WSDOT into an annual report for the program instead. Stakeholders agreed to discuss at the next small group meeting.

She also asked of the group to take a closer review of the 2015-2016 Communications Marketing and Media Plan that was passed out and to provide feedback. **This feedback was received, and the Marketing Subcommittee is moving forward with implementation.**