

Denny Sealth School Departure Advisory Committee
Denny Middle School
October 7, 2008
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Draft Meeting Minutes

Committee Members:

Chris Eberly
Angela Ross
Kenneth Coons
Mary Clair Duncan
Don Gilmore
Monica Kenny
Joe Cox
Mary Meullion

City Staff:

Tamara Garrett
Melinda Bloom
Thao Tran

Welcome and Introduction:

The meeting started at 7:05 PM. Thao Tran welcomed all those in attendance and explained the departure process. He continued to say that the public input process is overseen and facilitated by him as the representative to the City of Seattle. This is the second meeting and the meeting focus is to discuss the Seattle Public Schools (SPS) departure request for parking. The SPS's request for the height departure was approved by the Advisory Committee in the first meeting. The committee approved the height departure because we did not see any adverse impact to the neighborhood related to the request. Today the committee must weigh the impact of the parking departure request and work to reach a decision whether to approve the parking departure or not. Thao Tran also explained that the committee ruled this Departure to be a major issue so pursuant to the Seattle Municipal Code rules we are required to have at least three meetings to conclude our public input process.

James Knight, the project manager from Bassetti Architects started the project presentation by referring to the displayed drawings. He stated that Denny Sealth project involves 16 – 17 acres and the scale of the project includes parking at the front of the building on Thistle and north parking space. The existing parking space on the school has areas with 105 stalls, 20 stalls and another 50 stalls which are currently striped and an additional 25 non-striped stalls. What the Seattle Public School is asking for is essentially a departure from the parking requirements. The parking requirement does not have anything to do with the number of people who go to the school, work or drive to the facility. It has to do with school space and primary reason is not specific to a human application similar to the requirements for a shopping mall. At the Denny site there is no parking available relevant to the school. There is a parking lot adjacent to the field but we can not calculating the requirements for this project to include 300 parking spaces that are in that parking lot. We can only include parking within the Sealth School area

boundaries. The parking spaces both on the grounds as well as the parameters of the property have adequate numbers of parking for Sealth High School and Denny Middle School administrative staff and students. The parking projection is based on 2012 estimated needs for Denny and Sealth combined site.

Thao Tran opened the meeting for questions to the architects.

Don Gilmore asked how many staff members are there at the new Denny and Sealth School site combined. James Knight responded that in 2012 there will be 80 staff from Denny, which currently there are currently 60. Sealth School has 130 staff. The future combined staff size will be 210 from both facilities.

Don Gilmore asked how many students park on campus in a daily basis. James Knight responded that currently there are 45 students.

Joe Cox mentioned that when Sealth High School was in operation, everyone parked off site and no one parked on the designated lot. James Knight stated that there was adequate space to park on site and a lot of students and staff chose not to because people felt that it was difficult to get out of a parking area when they wanted to go home.

Monica Kenny asked how the SPS obtained these numbers. James Knight replied the information is in the Transportation Report. Monica asked if it was polling teachers or if they obtain the information in any other manner because the staff numbers she has are different from what is now being presented.

Joe Cox asked if the traffic consultant was here tonight. James Knight said they are not.

Thao Tran asked if these are the numbers the school keep tally on a daily basis and what method was used to obtain this information?

Don Gilmore stated that it's the number of employees and that the principal will know. In addition, a large percentage of staff and teachers use public transportation for both schools. Some are part-time and that Denny is busier in the morning than Sealth.

Angela Ross wanted to know numbers of actual cars parked again because the information is not lining up. According to a handout given last week, currently there are demands for 175 stalls. Angela Ross wants to know what is being lost in the plan and what is being added? James Knight said nothing is being lost and added in parking spaces.

Don Gilmore clarified that the presentation was the proposed plan and Angela Ross asked what is current. James Knight said Traffic Report counts 172 parking spaces plus 25 un-stripped parking spaces.

Robert Steward spoke about the available parking on the slope and James Knight responded that that will not be available.

Don Gilmore asked James Knight to state categorically how many spaces will be provided in the new plan on site? James Knight said 175 parking spaces. Don Gilmore asked how many parking stalls currently exist today? James Knight repeated that there are 172 available striped stalls plus 25 un-striped stalls.

Angela Ross stated that 25 un-striped spaces are being lost during the development and James Knight agreed.

James Knight said correctly the parking area doesn't include spaces for special needs van allowance that takes up additional parking space over conventional parking space. Those parking areas had to be taken into consideration. He said that those numbers do take this into consideration. Don Gilmore asked about whether there is a new playfield in the development. James Knight said yes and pointed to a corner. Don Gilmore asked if that playfield was removed it could be converted to parking and James Knight said it could be.

Mary Duncan asked if that playfield have to be completely removed to make parking spaces. James Duncan pointed to the presentation and said that a total of 50 parking spaces would be gained.

Joe Cox asked which 70 new spots would be provided and where? James Knight said this is based on existing parking calculations that did not include that particular parking spot. Joe Cox said this is not talking about new parking spaces, it is something we are now naming new parking space even if it existed previously as a parking space. James Knight said it was included by the City of Seattle as an acceptable parking area. Joe Cox stated people parked there and the space functioned as a parking lot and stated that this is not really adding new 50 parking spaces. James Knight responded that from a count stand point in the way one looks at it currently and the way the City looks interprets it, we are adding parking spaces. Mary Duncan stated that from the neighborhoods point of view and how it affects the neighborhood these are losses in parking. Mary Duncan stated that what we currently have for parking and what they counted or did not count for parking has never been on a full school day. It will be full between Denny/Sealth; it will be a matter of a few parking spaces compared to how it is to be because there always seems to have 30-40 empty spaces at Sealth in the main parking lot and 3-4 empty in the back. The practical affect to the neighborhood will be smaller than it appears because we had a big parking lot and it was never full.

Don Gilmore asked how many spaces are across the street on the SPS's property to the south. Thao Tran asked to have Mary Duncan's statement verified? James Knight said that it was correct, current parking load is less than the available parking spaces. Angela Ross asked by how much and could you give the date on this? James Knight said currently 197 with 25 un-striped and that on average 160 vehicles are parked on site daily.

Kenneth Coons asked if James Knight worked with Heffern transportation before. He answered 'no'. Kenneth Coons reference his following question to page 13 with a chart

that shows on street parking demand survey results for September 2007. They took three peak surveys, 9:30 AM, 1:00 PM and measured the traffic during an event between Cleveland High School and Sealth High School. Out of the peak times the max utilization of all the total available parking spots along 25th Street, Kenyon Street and 27th Street as resulted in peak utilization equalled to only 14% percent. The school does not require any parking process in terms of labels, or monitoring of who comes and goes from the site. People will still park on the street due to convenience. There is not a school or city that can enforce parking on public roads unless they are parking more than 24 hours. If parking and streets are not at capacity, we need to move towards trying to address mass transit and kids on bikes. Kenneth Coons sees ample parking on site because there will be a blend of parking both on the streets and in the parking lots. He sees this plan to address parking as more than sufficient.

Joe Cox asked to see who from the committee lives near the school and will be negatively impacted. Thao Tran said that there should be two people that live within 600 feet of the school.

Don Gilmore stated that traffic study doesn't dictate where cars park, it only tells what the city describes as available.

Joe Cox thinks what the traffic study is trying to do is to define areas that could be potentially impacted by drivers and where that impact can be diverted. He's saying if there are eight cars going on 27th Ave, north of Kenyon that is going to be a significant problem. Don Gilmore said for him to ask neighbors to get together to ask SDOT for either no parking or limited parking in those spaces. Joe Cox said that will be part of the conditions for the committee to decide, and both Don Gilmore and Thao Tran agreed. Joe Cox said that with the new Denny School coming that a significant change going from 950 cars currently to a potential future with 2100 cars at full capacity of both schools resulting in an increase of 120%. At the same time we are reducing the on-site parking space at that same location by 10%. James Knight commented that middle school students do not drive in, only the staff and teachers.

Kenneth Coons asked if the schools are being held to a standard for commercial parking, so that essentially you are being held to the same standards as Westwood Village. The majority of patrons drive and that increases in drivers are only accounting school age kids that are eligible drivers. We can't count raw head increases, we have to look at those registered drivers.

Monica Kenny expressed that codes exists for a reason and that the Denny Sealth Schools represent the largest group of students in SPS. She is concerned that you will have to get a variance from the start. Don Gilmore stated that all schools have had to ask for a variance and in this one has more available spaces than any other. In addition, because of the parking 60ft across the street, we are not discussing the huge lot that the district has to the south. Monica Kenney said because they are going to minimize that parking lot, SPS's plan is to eliminate 180 spaces and relocate them on the corner of 30th and Thistle St. The plan would try to get students and staff to park up the hill and walk to Denny

Sealth Schools and they also acknowledged that due to human nature that this would not likely be the case.

Tamara Garrett said she believes that the parking requirements are tied to the revitalization of the Denny site in this project. This document when drafted took into consideration the redevelopment of the existing Denny site. Monica Kenny said if that is the case the committee should not be talking about the parking across the street. Tamara Garrett said you should be talking about the parking behind this building but not the parking on this site.

(Tamara Garrett pointed to the illustration on the presentation board)

The parking accessory to the athletic field is what Don Gilmore is referring to. Don Gilmore said that is an allowable mitigation. Tamara Garrett explained that when the school district decides what to do with this site then a whole new review and then this topic will be taken into consideration.

Monica Kenny is concerned that if we say that everyone can park across the street then two years from now when Denny is gone and they say 'no' we are taking away this parking to replace the softball field then that parking will be lost. Tamara Garrett responded that that isn't even part of the consideration. It is not a part of the discussion. Don Gilmore said mitigations are taken into consideration in the study if the committee decides that one of the criteria is that lot should remain as is then so be it.

Joe Cox commented on the subject of holding SPS accountable for commercial standard. If this applies then all 247 required parking spaces would have to be provided on-site, we are not talking about that and we are making concessions. I don't know if 247 spots are reasonable for the concessions.

Monica Kenny resents that the neighborhood is being set-up knowing this was different and significant parking change. Parking spaces compared to other schools are better than what we already allow for Chief Sealth. I do not understand how the district created this when they knew they would need this variance and feel we are being treated unfairly for having questions about it. Don Gilmore said that all schools have required a parking variance and some schools have no on site parking. He has done about 40 projects that have not required a variance because the city wasn't platted like Issaquah and Kent. If we build a parking lot to accommodate that many we would cover the whole site leaving no room for physical building structure. Is this in the best interest of the neighborhood and students, probably not, what's better is a compromise. If the street is covered during a football event it's only 25% which is very minimal. The areas around Roosevelt, Cleveland or Rainier Beach are at 70% capacity during athletic events.

Public Comment:

Bob Stewart who lives on 26th Ave SW for a few years and works as a field inspector for the Seattle Engineering Department witnessed the building of the said street. He said that the street has now gone to pot. Sealth School has arterials all around and two semi-trucks carry heavy loads on a daily basis. These semi-trucks create a lot of noise for the neighborhood.

Tom Riley asked if the plan was to put 50 parking spaces on 26th Street.

James Knight said no. There are 160 parking spaces on 27th St. & Kenyon St.; we don't need 160 additional parking spaces. The departure number is purely an administrative number, it doesn't indicate actual parking means.

Bob Stewart said there are too many cars that are going to be driving through the neighborhood.

James Knight said parking exists in those areas for 25 cars or 13% of the total available parking around the school. In terms of what they anticipate, actual parking usage will be 80%, which does not reach maximum capacity. The reason for the capacity for the school parking is less are due to the fact that the street parking distance is less of a walk to the school but there are ways to mitigate that. You can choose to ask for no parking.

Mary Claire said to put no parking signs in certain areas and that would make sense for Kenyon St. We are hoping to encourage parking on 27th Ave SW, which will be close to the building and easy parking.

Warren Holte said north of the Sealth school there is a church and they use the parking there on weekends but not on school days. Why can't students and staff park in there on weekdays? It's a large lot and would be adequate.

James Knight said there is also a parking lot across the street that we cannot talk about because the code will not recognize that as part of the school parking count. Even at the most opportune time, the spaces parking usage is less than 59%. There are another 25% of daily cars parking in the north lot of Sealth and remaining cars are parked near the community lot. People park where it's easiest.

Mary Claire asked if we could ask to use the church parking lot and felt that the school would be amenable to that idea since the church has always wanted to be a good neighbor. Mary Claire request that the school try and ask the church for shared parking in there lot.

Joe Cox said the church across Kenyon Street have 40 paved parking spots. Is that an opportunity to identify more parking spaces? Mary Claire thinks it is a good option to have zone signs for residents on 26th Street for a certain amount of hours. It might eliminate and force people to move to different areas.

Don Gilmore said residents get stickers. SPS is required to do study, not to state where people park, all the study says is that what street has how many parking spaces available by the ordinance of what the city says is a parking space. The committee has the ability to approve the departure and regulate or recommend the district to go back to the City and if the neighbors agree we can work with the City to sign this street for two hour parking. The committee can recommend we pursue shared parking with the church.

Angela Ross said she agreed with Kenneth Coons, when we look at other options including parking lot across the street from Thistle St. She does not want to see that playfield converted into a parking lot. She would like a commitment from SPS that if the Advisory Committee approves the departure request that the school work to encourage and incentivize the use of the parking lot on site and on Thistle Street that are available. I'm not hearing this, there are creative ways.

Don Gilmore asserted that those are available resources that we are not discussing.

Kenneth Coons said that if the street utilization is 25%, I would say OK. I want to make this as easy as possible. Human nature is not to use the parking spaces. Sometimes we confuse traffic with parking.

Angela Ross agrees but that we can encourage certain behavior.

Don Gilmore said we have many sites that we encourage the administration to create programs to reduce parking. In other cases, encourage on-site parking and ways you creatively suggested already. He spoke about all the different ways. If the committee can make a condition to have administration give incentives to park in the lots that would be great. Thao Tran said that is a role and we can mention other opportunities and solutions when we propose conditions for the departure request.

Joe Cox said traffic and parking impacts each other and he gave an example. Thao Tran said if that's a hazardous potential we can put a no parking sign and that is enforceable. Angela Ross said the issue of establishing this is not easy.

Mary Claire-Duncan – thought the committee could make a recommendation for buses not to go up Thistle and around 27th Street and then down. That way you don't clog up 26th Ave SW. Mary Clair-Duncan understands Angela's concern and she believes that the schools will try to be good neighbors because it is in their best interest. She has confidence that the schools can work with the neighbors.

Joe Cox stated that 26th Street & Kenyon Street according to traffic study at the intersection there will be 505 cars traveling through there at the AM peak time. Parking impacts that traffic, we need to look at the aggregate and put both of these issues into considerations.

Angela Ross is concerned about the potential use of the combined campus and that we don't know what's happening with the parking lot across at Thistle St. She believes that the committee needs some foresight and work towards that future. This design didn't have that with the planning. What happens when it does have that critical traffic mass 5 – 10 years down the road?

Kenneth Coons asked that to depart from 177, where would you propose we put it. (Tape stopped)

Don Gilmore said there are two criteria for city parking requirements, the square footage of assembly or the number of seats in a gym and this doesn't relate too much. The number is relevant to how many people occupy the building on a five day week basis. Unless we add building to the site, they have to go through this all over. The parking is designed for the maximum capacity of the building as proposed here assuming 1 teacher and 25 students per classroom with the number of classrooms in each of the buildings.

Joe Cox said that the important thing for him is parking because the building increases so much capacity. Thao Tran asked Robert Evans for demographics studies and for the number of school attendance rate for the next five to ten years for this school? Robert Evans said 910 last year and 950 this year. Don Gilmore said that the school is designed to anticipate for growing number of student population.

Mary Meullion states that she does not see the number of high school drivers going up. Don Gilmore said the high school students will most likely end up in the lot across the street.

Public Comment:

Michelle Anderson said that there is very little parking in her immediate residential area and she lives three blocks away. She does not think that residents should be punished by allowing staff and students to clog the limited available residential parking spaces.

Warren Holte expressed concern about two hour parking and how that will affect local residents.

Chris Jackins delivered a copy from neighbors who are opposed to departure for parking because it is not justified in terms of educational needs. Seattle Education Association and Custodian Union #609 have voted against this project. There are currently only 197 parking spaces and Denny School demands will make the situation worst. The code talks about event parking and how the school needs more parking. Chris Jackins emphasized that school play area can not be used for parking and that DPD review did not look at the area across the street to develop parking.

Thao Tran said that we can begin to entertain a motion to approve the parking departure request as we need time to discuss the conditions to identify solutions to parking and traffic mitigation.

Don made a motion to move to recommend the departure for 177 parking spaces for Denny/Sealth project.

Joe Cox wants to take more time to understand the specifics of the parking request. Angela Ross also wants more clarifications in regards to the parking departure request. Don Gilmore explained the main motion and amended the main motion for a vote. Joe Cox asked what happens if all voted no to the departure.

Robert Evans said we are following Robert's Rules of Order, which he gave a brief explanation of the process. Joe Cox said that he would feel more comfortable if the committee look at the amendments and come up with a list of conditions and then follow with a yes or no vote on the departure.

Don Gilmore said the motion is now on the floor which conditions the committee wants to place and we should vote on each one of those.

Don Gilmore made a motion for amendment from SPS to SDOT to require no parking on the east side of 26th Ave SW between SW Kenyon and SW Holden streets. Joe Cox seconded this motion.

A question was asked if the community wanted hourly permit parking on certain street. Don Gilmore proposed this motion because community said it couldn't fit parking on both sides. Tamara Garrett asked if the reasoning for this motion is because there will be more traffic from buses, residents, teachers and parents. They agreed it was a combination of all of them. Don Gilmore said the motion could be amended to say 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM or 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM or whatever the committee decides. All district can do is asked SDOT and they have to go to the neighbors and get a certain percentage of the neighbors to agree. Resident Parking Zone has to be voted by either 60% or 80 % to get the special parking zone approved. Don Gilmore suggested 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM then amended his motion to the following: "it would be no parking on the east side of 26th Ave SW and SW Kenyon and SW Holden from 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM". Mary Claire-Duncan clarified the SDOT process for community.

Don Gilmore made a motion that the administration of Denny Middle School and Sealth High School encourage:

- 1) that student's park in designated lots on the district property or
- 2) using mass transit and
- 3) carpooling and
- 4) encouraging parking on 27th Street between Thistle Street and Kenyon Street and
- 5) create angel parking on the east side of 27th Street between Thistle Street and Kenyon Street even if it requires setting back the sidewalk for traffic access. This was seconded by Angela Ross.

Angela Ross made a motion:

6) SPS investigate joint use of parking lots. This was second by Mary Claire-Duncan. Tamara Garrett needed clarification if the suggestion is for daily or events usage? Angela Ross said for daily use.

Angela Ross made another motion:

7) To have no parking between 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM on south side of SW Kenyon Street between 27th and 25th Streets. This was seconded by Don Gilmore. Then questions were asked if this was a load and unload zone. James Knight explained that loading zones have two type of traffic, one is for bus and the other is for pickup and drop off of children. The entrance is separate and apart from the drop off area for vehicles. Bus loading is on-site and parent drop off is up by the parking lot. There is enough room for 35 to 40 cars. Angela Ross also said there is a safety issue. Maybe it should be load unload area for all day.

Joe Cox said there are a lot of vehicles/cars going through 27th Street between Thistle Street and Kenyon Street and end up in the corner with cars coming from the north side which realize they can't get through 28th Street resulting in a traffic jam. A car going through intersection every nine seconds and 397 cars total that will last ½ hour. Don Gilmore thought that side of the street should be a restricted load/unload only area. Joe Cox believes that buses will have to co-exist with cars trying to drop off students. Joe Cox said it's an issue and don't know what the solution is.

Mary Claire-Duncan needed more clarification on this issue. Don Gilmore suggested creating a morning and evening loading zone to relieve the congestion where you can only unload and go on or you make it no parking from 7:00am to 4:00pm. James Knight said the intersections counts, especially this intersection as it is relevant to the nature of the traffic flow and because it is not a one-way traffic situation. Once parents drop off the students they return the same way. James Knight explained that the 396 number of cars is for the same vehicles counted twice from coming and going.

Don Gilmore made a motion:

8) SPS will ask SDOT to require no parking on the south side of SW Kenyon between 28th and 25th between the hours 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Angela Ross asked if they need to have a 3rd meeting. Joe Cox asked if the committee will get a copy of the final report. Thao Tran explained that the code requires the completion of a report within 30 days after the last meeting. He said that he will send a draft for the committee's review before submitting it to DPD.

Joe Cox asked not to allow parking or some limited parking for two hours on 27th Ave SW between SW Kenyon Street and SW Holden Street which is only 15 feet wide. Tamara Garrett suggested that it should be limited parking.

Angela Ross made a motion:

9) Principals of Sealth and Denny Schools will continue to work together to not have events on same nights and avoid when Metro or other entities have large sports events. Don Gilmore restated the motion to spell out that there should be no concurrent major athletic or school event and that SPS publishes a yearly event schedule. Angela Ross amended motion #7 to paint the corners around driveways for all buses, parents, and students drop off for good buffer and clearer signage. Don Gilmore said SDOT already have those things done.

Tamara Garrett made comment clearer signage for parent drop off.

Angela Ross proposed to have the parents be routed similarly to the buses. This can be added to one of the other conditions. Joe Cox asked about church parking, which was covered already.

Don Gilmore restated the conditions for approval:

- 1) No parking on east of 26th Ave. between Kenyon Street and Holden Street between the hours of 7:00 PM to 4:00 PM,
- 2) Staff at Denny Sealth Schools will encourage parking on-site and work to minimize congestion and impact off-site,
- 3) Denny Sealth Schools staff will encourage the use of mass transit and carpool,
- 4) Denny/Sealth staff will encourage parking on 27th Ave. SW between SW Thistle Street and SW Kenyon Street,
- 5) SPS will recommend to DPD that 27th Ave. W on the east side will be recommended for angled parking,
- 6) SPS will encourage shared parking with the church on SW Kenyon Street between the school and the church,
- 7) SW Kenyon Street between 28th Street and 25th Street will be no parking 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM on the south side of the street. Signs will display the off limits hours.
- 8) SPS will propose that there be no parking on both sides of 27th Street.

Angela Ross wanted to withdraw the last amended conditions. Joe Cox asked what is the alternative. Angela Ross then further proposed an amendment that we have a requirement of 30 feet clearance from driveways of school property. Don Gilmore restated his proposed condition to no parking between 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM on the south side of SW Kenyon Street between 27th Street and 28th Street and there will be a 30 foot clearance at access driveways off of SW Kenyon Street and Holden Street.

- 9) The district will avoid concurrent major athletic school events and publish a yearly schedule of events within 600 feet of the property.
- 10) Site signage will clearly describe parking and access to the site.

Thao Tran asked the committee to now vote on the departure request and if the committee approves the departure than we should move to a vote on the conditions.

Don already made the motion and proposed a friendly amendment to add all conditions, therefore the conditions are now a part of the motion. Angela Ross seconded the motion.

**The parking departure was approved by the following vote:
7/1 (yes, no), Angela Ross voted no, there were no abstentions.**

Meeting ended at 9:25.

Next Meeting: Monday, October 20th at 7:00 PM at Denny Middle School.

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