

WSF Triangle Improvement Task Force



Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Date: Thursday, March 29, 2018
Location: Fauntleroy Church Fellowship Hall
9140 California Ave SW, Seattle

Objectives:
Introduced new Southworth task force member
Reviewed results of pre-ticketed lane trial
Fauntleroy paving project updates
Discussed sailing schedule next steps
2040 Long Range Plan updates

DRAFT Meeting Notes

Announcements

The group reviewed last month's meeting notes and approved them. WSF Task Force sponsor John Vezina updated the group on two topics.

1. WSF's supplemental budget was signed on March 27. The budget included \$25,000 to increase the hours of the Fauntleroy police officer. The budget also included \$75,000 for the University of Washington to study Fauntleroy dock operations. For the next budget cycle, WSF will submit requests to WSDOT in October.
2. Julie Nardi was selected by fellow Southworth representatives as the new Southworth task force member. She will replace Richard Wheeler.

Results of pre-ticketed lane trial

Terminal Manager Trevor Sharp reviewed the benefits and challenges of the pre-ticketed lane. Most of the task force members were able to observe Fauntleroy terminal operations for several days during the pre-ticketed lane trial.

The group went around the room and described their experience observing the pre-ticketed lane:

- I had a number of impressions. The thing that impressed me was watching the team work together, including how they worked with the police officer. Sheri and Dorothy (both splitters) would look at their cellphones to track where the officer had walked to. I was particularly interested in the police officer's duties, because during the economic recession there was no funding for officers. Everyone will appreciate the additional funding for the police officer.

As for the pre-ticketed lane, sometimes the pre-ticketed booth put a lot of cars through. During a Vashon only sailing, they pulled all of the Vashon cars out of the line until there were none left. Sometimes the splitter put a car in the pre-ticketed lane to buy a ticket because the lane was unused.

- I was sad that the pre-ticketed booth did not work. It was one of changes we had discussed a long time ago. I still think we have not done enough to encourage people to buy their tickets in advance. The lane did not work because some drivers were confused. What constitutes a “pre-ticket?” Would the lane work better if there was a huge public information campaign to buy tickets in advance?

Observing terminal operations was also a great example of why we do not want single destination sailings in the afternoon. The Fauntleroy dock is a second by second, minute by minute puzzle. Watching the dock was the biggest argument for dual destination sailings. The only boats not full were Vashon boats and the police officer had walked as far as he could to get Vashon cars. I would like to see dual destination sailings from 2-7 p.m. I would like WSF to go ahead and make a new schedule. With dual destination every car is the right car and the dock can figure it out.

When we pursue the UW study the UW students need to experience the loading process and see how efficiently the WSF staff is working.

- I was at Fauntleroy dock on Thursday and Friday, because I thought those days would be the busiest. I was impressed by how the police and the splitter worked together. One of the things I noticed was that there was often miscommunication on when the police officer should walk the line and when they should assist in offloading. There needs to be a clear mandate for the police officer outlining their responsibilities. I also think they need to start ticketing line cutters.

If anything needs to be changed, it is the safety issues with the splitter. The splitter works well, except when a car starts to block traffic. Cars were blocking pedestrians. I would like to see cars stopped farther up so that people can come in and out. Or, WSF could put a pivoting arm at the intersection.

I think a good public outreach program for letting people know that there is a pre-ticketed line would be helpful. I also feel strongly that there should be a pre-ticketed booth only when it's needed, on a discretionary basis. I think there should be a better way to communicate with drivers to ask if they already have their ticket. There is going to need to be some explanation for Vashon folks on why the boats are still not filling. Southworth has no trouble filling the boats, but to get Vashon cars to the dock is still very challenging. I'm wondering if Vashon cars had trouble getting on the 4:05 p.m. and moved to a different sailing.

- I observed at the Fauntleroy dock for two days. I would echo many of the observations that we have already heard. The motivated police officers do a great job. All of the staff is working hard and doing the best they can. Every time operators changed to pre-ticketed there were at least a few cars that went through without a ticket. It also did not work because there were not enough Vashon cars to use it.

When I observed, about 95 Southworth cars came through before a single Vashon car. I counted all of the traffic on six boats and ended up with 279 Vashon cars and 320 Southworth. The answer lies in the WSF schedule. The schedule is wrong. WSF needs a schedule that can fill the boats.

- I noticed that “what is a ticket” varies widely. There are people raving about the pre-ticketed system and how well the dock works. I have realized that this really is just our new loading system. It is working much better now than it used to be and it is dealing with the lighter winter/spring traffic. I wonder if they think it is working just because of the pre-ticketed lane.
- I was not able to go to Fauntleroy and observe but I do understand that there are just so many Southworth cars at the dock. There is no way you can clear out the Southworth traffic in time for the Vashon sailings. The police officer cannot find the Vashon cars. I would echo that we look at changing the schedule and adding dual destination sailings in the afternoon.
- I would like to see the pre-ticketed lane tested in the summer when there is more traffic, and when there is more publicity encouraging people to buy tickets in advance.

The group agreed that the pre-ticketed lane did not measureable improve vehicle throughput at the tollbooth. Terminal staff may occasionally use the pre-ticketed lane if needed, but regular operational procedures for the dock will not be changed.

Sailing schedule concepts

Senior Planning Manager Ray Deardorf had an opportunity to review some afternoon sailing schedule concepts with the terminal staff at Fauntleroy. These were the same schedule concepts he presented to the task force at the January meeting. The terminal staff’s feedback included a long term solution of changing all sailings after 1:40 p.m. to dual destination, and a short term solution, adding one lane of Southworth traffic to the 3:00 p.m. sailing. At this time the 3:00 p.m. sailing only takes Southworth foot traffic and vanpools.

Deardorf also reviewed the timeline for the new schedule. Public outreach regarding the new schedule will be conducted in the fall, the schedule will be finalized in the winter, and the schedule will go into effect in summer 2019.

The group then went around the room and asked questions about the schedule:

Afternoon schedule

- How would more dual destination sailings impact Vashon riders traveling westbound? Would there be allocations? Would there be more frequent sailings? It will be all about perception if we present a dual destination schedule to Vashon.
- What would be the impact of adding a lane of Southworth traffic to the 3:00 p.m. sailing?
 - It would help get more Southworth cars off the dock in Fauntleroy to clear the dock for Vashon cars.
- How many cars board in Vashon on the 3:00 p.m. from Fauntleroy?
 - About 20-30 cars and trucks.
- How do you load the dual destination sailings?
 - The same 2:2:1 procedure that we use for current dual destination sailings.

Morning schedule

- There are so few opportunities for Southworth commuters to get to Seattle. Southworth still needs more sailings for those with strict working schedules. I would like Southworth people to be able to get to work in Seattle at 8:30 a.m. My sensitivities have to do with the suggested times for Southworth direct sailings. A 9:00 a.m. direct sailing from Southworth is too late.
- I want to be sure this schedule is looking further ahead. The 8:10 a.m. from Southworth is useless because it does not get more people to work. I would urge that there are at least two direct sailings from Southworth for a 9 a.m. work start in Seattle.
- What are the current morning allotments?
 - 35% of allotments are for Southworth.
- Landside travel is getting worse. Southworth cars need to get to Fauntleroy between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. to get to Seattle.
- Looking at the suggested new schedule there are only five sailings from Southworth to Fauntleroy. There are eight sailings from Vashon to Fauntleroy.

The group agreed to have Deardorf work on a schedule with more dual destination sailings and to have Deardorf move forward with adding one lane of Southworth traffic to the 3:00 p.m. sailing in the summer 2018 schedule.

Fauntleroy paving project update

Strategic Communications Manager Hadley Rodero informed the group of the upcoming pavement maintenance and preservation project in Fauntleroy. The work will help to preserve the Fauntleroy Ferry Terminal by re-paving the dock and approach, re-striping the lanes, and adding fencing along the pedestrian walkway. In an effort to complete this work before the busy summer season and during less-busy ferry travel times, the work will be conducted at night.

WSF 2040 Long Range Plan update

Planner Ray Deardorf and Strategic Communications Manager Hadley Rodero shared an outline of the 2040 Long Range Plan public meetings. Rodero reiterated the Long Range Plan timeline: A draft plan will be available for public comment in September and the final plan is due to the legislature by January 1, 2019.

Task force members have the opportunity to attend the Fauntleroy Long Range plan public meeting, as it will follow their regularly scheduled task force meeting on May 17.