



Meeting Notes

Albany Bicycle Coalition Monthly Meeting

2/25/21

7:00 PM – via Zoom

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Reports

- **Transport Troy (Pam)** – Met via Zoom to design units to furnish "parklets" on downtown streets. Looking for a space for the prototype. Units expected to be a useful component of downtown life as living in a pandemic requires more space and amenities to support businesses and community cohesion. Discussion continues on laying out an updated missions, values, and vision statement for Transport Troy. General discussion of work with partner groups and plans for warmer weather.
- **Treasurer Report (David P.)** – No report.
- **Cycle Schenectady (Art via email)** – At Zoom meeting with mayor *et al.* we discussed the coalition's goal of reducing city's default speed limit from 30 to 25 mph. Mayor said he was open to the idea, at least in residential areas. Under state law, municipalities do not have authority to reduce speed limits. They need home-rule legislation to do so, something in which the mayor seemed interested in pursuing. There is a bill in the Assembly (co-sponsor, Patricia Fahy) and Senate to give municipalities the option of reducing speed limit to 25 mph maximum. City Council has put a resolution of support on the agenda for its meeting, and I will speak in favor. The Safe Streets campaign – that Cycle Schenectady has undertaken with Schenectady United Neighborhoods – is gaining traction. We have gotten three City Council members talking about the speeding problem, and one of them is focused on dangerous streets and intersections. The council has approved \$20,000 for speed bumps. Last week we had a Zoom meeting with the mayor, his director of operations, the city engineer, and city planner – a meeting they initiated – at which they made no commitments but started by saying they were in favor of complete streets. They ended by saying they wanted to implement the until-now forgotten 2017 bike master plan. Cycle Schenectady has been involved in several meetings about forming a regional bike advocacy group, Capital Region Bike, to support and foster collaborations among the various local groups, and increase their political clout and grant potential. The county has started a series of in-house Complete Streets workshops with CDTC. The county planning department was talking about doing this but had not scheduled until we started asking about it. On 3/31, Cycle Schenectady will present a Zoom talk on the bike master plan led by CDTC's Rima Shamieh (rshamieh@cdtcmpo.org). (Rima worked on the plan when she was with the city's planning department.) At the meeting with city officials, I asked if they would participate and got some positive nods of the head but no commitments. I will be emailing them this week to follow up.

Old Business –

- **Albany Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan (Ed)** – Final report due date extended to end of February.
- **Root Damage MHBHT (David)** – No report.
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee CDTC 2/9 Meeting (John via email)** – Mike Burns, Planning Department, Town of Glenville, spoke about the draft "Glenville Greenway Trails Plan" which includes Scotia. The Town of Glenville was awarded \$845,000 for developing and maintaining existing trails. They were awarded \$434,000 for safer routes. Grant funded through the NYS Empire State Development. The grant is hiring a consultant and

drawing up 10-foot-wide multi-use paths as well as bicycle lanes and wide shoulders on the busier roads. They hope to connect into the "Long Path Trail" that starts at the George Washington Bridge and travels north to Thatcher Park and finally to its end point at Northville. This trail is primarily for hiking. The town has identified three Priorities: town center with dog park, Alplaus Trail ([Best trails in Alplaus, New York | AllTrails](#)) connection to the Empire State Trail ([Empire State Trail \(ny.gov\)](#)), and Rt 50. Jen Ceponis updated on the Coexist Mini-Grant applications. CDTC will evaluate individually seven proposals totaling \$23,000 out of the funded \$25,000. Rima Shamieh discussed May's "Bike to Work." The 2020 Pledge to Ride alternative ran between mid-May and June but had only 100 participants. This was a huge drop from 2019 with over 600 participants. Rima stated that 2021 will be held virtually again but she is striving to get more participants who are riding to work opposed to recreation. Send comments or ideas this month to Rima at rshamieh@cdtcmpo.org. Public comments for the National Standards for Traffic Control Devices due by 5/14/21. CTDC Planning Initiatives/Technical Assistance is being provided to the Town of Colonie Regulations Department. The Public Participation Plan will be presented for approval by the Policy Board on 3/4/21. New Visions 2050 is proceeding and additional comments are requested by CDTC (Jennifer Ceponis, jceponis@cdtcmpo.org, (518) 458-2161). Next CDTC BPAC meeting is Tue, 3/9/21, 9:00 AM pre-registration required. As a side note, Mayor Tom Tobin of the Village of Colonie has been appointed to the CDTC Policy Board. Next BPAC meeting - 3/9 Tue, 9:00 AM. Join Meeting –

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84839470316?pwd=VFpZeWVtckJ0YnlpY1BtT1FVQmViZz09> , Meeting ID: 848 3947 0316, Passcode: 662326

- **Project Proposals in Albany** (Lorenz) – Blog posted 2/21 ([Follow Up on ABC Project Proposals for the City of Albany | Albany Bicycle Coalition](#)). Letter to Mayor 2/20 to which there has been no response. Lynne noted that the mayoral race, in which there are several primary challengers and a Republican hopeful, might be an opportunity to poll the candidates as to their support for cycling (and related) issues. We would post the response on our website and by email.
- **South End Connector Enhancements** (Mark) – We had a rewarding meeting with Sonia Frederick, Common Council member, Ward 1. We presented our Connector concerns and reported that they were sent to the Planning Department, Traffic Engineering, and the mayor. As early as June 2020, we had raised these issues with the city. Our emphasis was on safety at Broadway and Quay and at Broadway and S. Pearl St. at the entries to the Connector. While the Connector as a standalone facility is satisfactory, its junctions with other connections (*i.e.*, Broadway, Corning Riverfront Park, Basset St., S. Pearl St.) are lacking. Sonia seemed interested in pursuing these issues with city officials. We will write to Derek Johnson, Ward 2, from whom there has been no response in an effort to engage with us on our concerns.
- **Washington Park and Walking-Riding Collaboration** (Ed) – We are waiting for the Washington Park Traffic Study project proposal (RFP) as it extends into many of the prime downtown walking areas including Washington Park, Lark St., parts of Central and Washington avenues, and Center Square as far East as Swan St. This is a large mid-town area that contains several opportunities as follows: (a) to improve cycling troubles spots such as the park entrances along Madison Ave., State St./Henry Johnson Blvd., and Henry Johnson Blvd. and Washington Park Rd., the Madison/Lark intersection, and intersection of Henry Johnson Blvd./Central Ave.; (b) to calm traffic in Washington Park (such as eliminating some motor vehicle thru routes); and (c) to improve cycling "through routes" (Dove St., State St. , Madison Ave., and Western Ave.). We will continue to work on areas of common interest with the Walkable Albany members. [These notes were augmented for clarity post meeting.]
- **Albany-Colonie Connector** (Lorenz, John) – Map and routes delivered 1/22 to P. Mahan. No update.
- **Albany-Shaker Rd. and the Wolf Rd. Gap** (John) – No report.
- **Grants (Ride, Bike Day)** (John) – Report in March.

- **Patroon Greenway Project** (Ed) – We reviewed the \$100,000 study grant received by the City of Albany. It was noted that (as in the case of the Washington Park study) we do not get to review the terms of RFPs before they are issued to evaluate their merits with respect to the interests of people on bicycles. That is, the RFP could feasibly constrain the scope of a study in a way that is not favorable or is limiting in some way even if unintended.
- **YMCA Ride Against Racism** (Ed) – Ride is on Sat, 5/1, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. We agreed to offer our services (e.g., staff one of the starting points with and “ABC Quick Check”) and to support financially the ride. Contact - Jamie Crouse, jamiec@ywca-gcr.org.
- **Rapp Rd. Campaign Coordinator** (Hugh, Ed, Lynne Jackson of Save the Pine Bush) – Hugh gave a run down on activities to date. The Pine Bush Commission feels the same way about protecting all the Pine Bush Land. Hugh Johnson will determine whether or not there are actual residences on the east side of Rapp Rd. to north of Washington Ave. since there were questions about that. Proposed options for making Rapp Road more bike friendly include the following: repaving the road and adding bike lanes (as on School House Rd.), installing a multi-use path on the west (land fill) side, and closing the road (since it has been hard to determine who would maintain it). If closed, make only a portion of it available for a multi-use path while gating off the rest from other vehicles. We had a lively discussion on the criticality of Rapp Rd., its layout and condition, its impact on the Pine Bush Preserve, and the apparent lack of interest by the involved municipalities. It is the only north-south connection in that area as is critical to the Six-Mile Trail and the proposed Albany-Colonie Connector. It, combined with other bicycle-friendly roadways is one of the few connections between Albany and the Town of Colonie that are suitable for bicycles. Lynne, representing Pine Bush interests, emphasized the importance of the land along the road that is dedicated to the Pine Bush and noted there may be restrictions on creating any bike/footpath along Rapp. We believe that there are ways to meet all needs but a clear understanding of the “official” layout of the roadway right-of-way is essential to further discussion.
- **Dott Ave. Bypass** (Lorenz) – Proposal sent to Town of Colonie 1/12. Followed up on 2/19. Referred by planning to the Commissioner of Public Works about feasibility and timeline. Town staff seem interested in the proposal and are conducting a site survey. Glenn prepared a special report and map to illustrate the value of a “Dott Ave. Cutoff” to enhance access to the University at Albany, Six-Mile Trail, the Crossings, and the Town of Colonie in general.
- **Keeler Proposal and SAVE Colonie** (John, et al.) – No report.
- **Monkey Wards Way** (Ed, all) – We noted that the Connector is open and is safe to ride albeit with some detail work remaining. Glenn plans a site visit and re-assessment relative to the CapitalNYBikeMap.
- **LaSalle Annual Donation** – Ed will follow up with David.
- **Crashes/Road Rage and Related (Ed)** – No recent developments. The response from various officials has been underwhelming. We have no update on the Madison Ave. bottle throwing incident.

New Business –

- **History of ABC** (Ed) – Lorenz will investigate. He noted that Lynne as a “charter member” of ABC had turned over a file on the early days in which we hope to find definitive information.
- **Bike Capital Region** (Ed) – New umbrella bicycle organization. First efforts might be “slow roll” style rides in May hosted by each of the main communities. Our emphasis was on the “community ride” aspect as being critical to attracting riders of various abilities, ages, and genders. We discussed the Slow Roll movement and noted the substantial overhead and funding involved in running a long-term Slow Roll ride series.
- **Spring 2021 Rides – Preliminary Discussion** (All) – We discussed resuming group rides – Earth Day Ride, Ride of Silence, and Tri-City Ride. Concern expressed about impact of COVID-19 on our hosting large rides using the model of past years. While all were anxious and committed to have Ride of Silence this year, we debated different formats – ride only with no

stops at ghost bike sites, staggered groups of riders, etc. Ed will ask John, the ROS leader, to develop a proposal.

Zoomers –Mark, Ed, Pam, Rob, Lynne, Glenn, Claire, Hugh, Margaret, and Lorenz.

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