

Meeting Notes

Albany Bicycle Coalition Monthly Meeting

8/26/21

First In Person Meeting Since 2020 - With Zoom Attendance Optional

In Attendance: Pam, John G., Glenn, Pam, Hugh, Ed and guest John Major of Champlain Canalway Group

Treasurer's Report: David submitted his Treasurer's Reports indicating ABC remains in the black.

Before the regular meeting we were treated to a live demonstration of a unique and rare Pedersen bicycle by Henry Meudt. Even after over 100 years this 11 lb bicycle design is still radical. (See here for more on Pedersen bicycles – [Pederson Bicycle – The Ride for You | Albany Bicycle Coalition](#))

Transport Troy Update - Pam reported that there are several events for the Troy City Ramble that can be found at <https://www.hudsonrivervalleyramble.com/ramble>. On September 25th she will be conducting a Kayak event with Upstate Kayaks for beginners, "A Mile on the Hudson" starting at 10:30. Three shorter guided outings on the Hudson are scheduled for those who want to try out kayaking with a volunteer guide. This route circumnavigates Adams Island, just north of the Collar City Bridge & below Ingalls Avenue Launch.

Cyclists may be interested in the September 18, 2021, 11:00AM slow roll bike ride highlighting the wonderful libraries in the area! This will be a group ride at a comfortable pace for all riders along bike paths whenever possible. We'll start at the Troy Public Library downtown, then meander across the river to the Cohoes Public Library, then cross back over the river to the Lansingburgh Branch, and finally ride south to return to where we started at the Troy Public Library downtown.

Cycle Schenectady Report – Art Clayman reported their last neighborhood slow ride of season is coming up Sept 11 on Hamilton Hill. Riding with us and speaking about the neighborhood will be black City Councilwoman Marion Porterfield (and perhaps some of her City Council colleagues.

CS also conducted a ride to visit upgraded parts of the Empire State Trail in Rotterdam and held a bike giveaway/fix-it day/bike rodeo on Hamilton Hill in cooperation with the

Electric City Bike Rescue. Both are on the lookout for kids bikes to give away. CS also manned a bike corral set up at a Schenectady beer garden for Cycle the Erie Canal riders. They report working with Metroplex Authority Chairman Ray Gillen to champion better bike trail and fixit station maintenance with an eye towards more improvements.

Transportation Projects

Washington Park/Center Square Study - Mark and Ed reported attending the slapdash public meeting held by the Traffic Department and their contractor. The poorly advertised, sparsely attended event was held in Washington Park to solicit public input on transportation safety in the crown jewel of Albany's Parks. It was reported they would only permit public input until August 1st so they can make their report to the Mayor by September.

Rapp Rd. Campaign - though we had made many inquiries about how Rapp Road might be improved for cyclists and pedestrians, the City never told us they already planned a repaving project for Rapp Road which began the week of August 23rd. We inquired whether there would be a designated shoulder for cyclists and pedestrians along this ultra-hazardous but vital connection between the Six Mile Waterworks Trail and Colonie. There has been no response as yet.

Patroon Greenway Project - Ed reported the City of Albany is moving forward with the Patroon Creek Greenway Feasibility Study to identify a feasible, multi-use trail connection between Albany's Hudson River waterfront west to Six Mile Waterworks Park. They sent a speaker and documentation for riders participating in the Arbor Hill/West Hill Slow Ride sponsored by ABC and the Underground Railroad Education Center. See <https://www.patroongreenway.com/> for more information and upcoming events.

New Scotland Avenue Traffic Study Update - a recent article in the "Getting There" column of the Albany Times Union noted that the City remains committed to the Study's "recommendation for New Scotland Avenue between Whitehall and Manning . . . to stripe the corridor as a three-lane roadway with one lane in each direction, a two-way left turn lane (TWLTL) and alternative side parking." The Study held three public meetings. There was extensive public comment. Citizens were polled about what they were most concerned about. Safety was high on the list - parking was the dead last concern. The number of respondents in the bar graph was presented in each bar except for parking; the area of the bar representing citizen concern with parking was too small for a number. Comments at the meetings fell along the same lines. Many people were enthused about bike lanes both for the general traffic calming effect as well as the benefit to cyclists. When at the last meeting the decision to opt to maximize parking on

New Scotland was announced ABC member Ed Brennan asked what happened to the bike lanes. The presenter explained to the large crowd of people that they opted out of the bike lanes because 1) they wouldn't connect to any other existing bicycle infrastructure and 2) it should be left to the pending new Bicycle Pedestrian Plan.

The Albany Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan left the status of New Scotland Avenue hanging by designating its design as "to be determined". However, page 51 of the plan now shows three connections to bicycle infrastructure along this section of New Scotland Avenue 1) a protected bicycle lane for Manning 2) a bicycle boulevard for Euclid and 3) a bicycle boulevard for Hackett. By their own statements, the reasons provided for not installing bicycle lanes on New Scotland Avenue are no longer valid.

South End Connector - Mark had a brief discussion with Bill Trudeau regarding two safety issues on the South End Connector that ABC has been pursuing. Mark was able to clarify that one issue was at the Southern End of the Connector, making the transition from the Connector turning onto South Pearl St. This would be for individuals who wish to reach downtown Albany, via S. Pearl, or those who are making the trek up McCarty Ave. Mark also explained the issues with the Broadway/Church St. end (near the USS Slater), particularly for those coming off the Connector onto the MHBT, where vehicles turning south on Broadway just have a Yield sign, with a sweeping turn. Mr. Trudeau said he would look into these things.

As yet, nothing has been done at the South Pearl end of the Connector. At the Broadway/Church end, the City has installed two yellow pedestrian crossing signs. However, one of the signs is confusingly pointing away from the bike/ped crossing. We also noted a pedestrian crossing signal - though it was only for pedestrians crossing from the river side of Broadway to the median and not for crossing the troublesome "yield" area. We will continue to follow up with the City. More may be coming, but nothing, in that regard, has been communicated to ABC so far.

Rides

Slow Roll Rides:

* **Arbor/West Hill.** - On the picture perfect Sunday afternoon, August 15, the Underground Railroad Education Center and the Albany Bicycle Coalition jointly conducted an Arbor Hill/West Hill "Slow Roll" bicycle ride (see stats at end of this post). The fun, safe, low-stress, low-speed bicycle ride took advantage of numerous bicycle lanes, trails, and low congestion streets in the neighborhood. The group of 14 riders stopped at several points where speakers led discussions on the history and future of the neighborhoods. Stops included the Harriet and Stephen Myers Residence, Arbor Hill Park,

Tivoli Lake Preserve, Bleeker Stadium/Swinburne Park, and the Arbor Hill Library. The Tivoli Preserve stop highlighted the 9-mile Patroon Creek Greenway Trail currently undergoing study by the City of Albany (see <http://albanyny.gov/800/Patroon-Greenway-Feasibility-Study>). The new Greenway Trail would connect the Albany Waterfront to the Six Mile Waterworks and points beyond with access from Arbor Hill and West Hill. We also discussed the daylighting of the Patroon Creek and making nearby mountain bike trails more accessible to Tivoli Preserve and its adjoining neighborhoods.

* ***Bike the Library Branches Ride*** - Saturday, September 25, 2021 - 1 - 3pm - Gather the family, hop on your bikes, and ride to several APL branches for our 2nd Bike the Branches ride. Cyclists age 12+ are invited to participate in this free ride that travels to three of APL branches

Daily Grind Ride – We have postponed the Daily Grind Ride pending the re-opening of the Troy Daily Grind Shop. If the stars align, this will happen in October

New Business –

- **Delmar Traffic Calming Referendum** - After a campaign by some opposing business interests, the Delmar traffic calming project will now be put up for a Bethlehem Town Referendum on November 2nd. We urge all friends of Complete / Safe Streets in the Town of Bethlehem to VOTE YES for Bethlehem Prop 6 and to urge their friends and neighbors to do the same. The Delaware Avenue Complete Streets Project team is producing a video emphasizing the benefits of Traffic Calming using Madison Ave. as an example. For more information see <https://www.bethlehemcommunitystreets.org/>
- **Bike Map Updates** - Glenn reported capitalnybikemap.com has been greatly expanded into Saratoga County to include the Zim Smith Trail and connecting routes in Malta. Reaching out to media proved successful in getting the map featured in the August 30th Times Union "Getting There" section.

- **ABC (Albany Bicycle Coalition) TV!** - ABC has been invited to develop 30 or 60 minute segments for public access cable TV. We will be exploring how segments can be shot at the Washington Avenue Library studio and converted for digital use in an ABC YouTube Channel.

Upcoming – Rides/events/issues? (Go here - <https://albanybicyclecoalition.com/resources/events/>)

Meeting Dates – ABC meets the last [not the 4th] Thursday of each month unless there is a conflicting holiday. Upcoming dates are as follows: 9/30, 10/28, 11/18 (not 11/25), and 12/30.

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