

Albany Bicycle Coalition January 27, 2022 Monthly Meeting Notes

Due to COVID restrictions, this meeting Zoom Only. We hope to return to holding hybrid meetings over Zoom and in person at LaSalle School in Albany in February.

ATTENDANCE: Hugh Johnson, Lorenz Worden, Darlene McGraw, Samuel Johnson (of Colonie), Glenn Sandberg, Thomas Hoey, James Rath, Mark Maniak, Dennis Gaffney, Ed D, Andrew Reilly, David (of Troy), JanetteKaddo Marino, Pam Bentien and Ed Brennan.

Special Topic - Mayhem on the Roadways

- Having bandied about language of a joint statement or letter for several months it was generally agreed that any usable statement about the state of safety on our roadways and what needs to be done really needs to be uniquely geared to the intended audience. It was proposed that we consider what we have now as more a statement to ourselves of what we all agree are the problems we face regionally and what needs to be done to address those issues.
- We are all in general agreement that we need to raise awareness of the dangers to cyclists on our roads and that we need to fight for policies and “concrete” changes to make the roads safer. The list below is from Art’s last edit of our joint statement draft:
 - Complete Streets Policy that requires roadway improvements to be designed with the safety and convenience of all roadway users in mind
 - Policies to prevent or discourage dangerous driving, with a focus on reducing vehicle speeds on roadways in residential and mixed-use areas
 - Adopt Vision-Zero - a strategy to eliminate roadway fatalities
 - Make all bridges, crossings of interstates and intersections safe for pedestrians and cyclists
 - Include people who walk, bike, and use public transit as their primary modes of transportation in the design process
 - Include money for meaningful multi-modal infrastructure improvements in local budgets
- Rather than further focusing primarily on the verbiage of a joint statement, it was proposed that each of our organizations move more to an action phase of addressing our concerns and proposals to our local legislators, leaders and media while still invoking the larger group when helpful to say that these problems are recognized region wide and the proposals are part of our mutual effort.
- The groups should continue to meet to share their efforts and strategize
- Ed reported that as part and parcel of the Stop the Mayhem effort, Albany Bicycle Coalition had joined the statewide NYS Safe Streets Coalition whose goal is to pass the NYS Crash Victims Rights and Safety Act. The seven bills in the CVRSA will permit municipalities the option to lower their speed limits, mandate 3 foot clearance when passing cyclists, support Complete Streets initiatives that improve road safety for all

users, better educate drivers to protect vulnerable road users and provide support to those personally impacted.

- For further information see <http://nysafeststreets.org>
- Ed encouraged all groups to join the effort to pass the CVRSA by signing on at:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdk36LaboEA-Jv9uq4RnYTm4jsRCi4hka3vRuFVH3Vs2lxR5Q/viewform>
- Ed reported working on ABC's behalf with Walkable Albany and Leah Golby of the New York Bicycling Coalition and several Albany City Council persons to have an Albany City Resolution passed encouraging the state to pass the CVRSA
- Ed reported that he was asked by the City Treasurer for ABC's support for speeding cameras in the City of Albany. Councilman Hoey remarked that there was consideration of putting these first by school zones. It was noted that the City has had a few years of experience with red light cameras, but not speeding cameras. The notion was generally approved by those in attendance.
- Ed noted that we had been discussing finishing this year's Ride of Silence at Central Avenue where recent pedestrian and cyclist deaths have been added to its long tragic history. Walkable Albany also expressed an interest in some kind of joint event there to cap off the ROS with a joint ceremony that might draw media, public and governmental attention

Special Topic - Capitaland Spoketacular. Ed Reported

- We still don't have a big cosponsor
- Had meeting with Discover Albany rep who might have a CDPHP contact
- Had meeting with Carm Basile and requested their United Way ride contact
- Has scheduled meeting with Capitalize Albany
- Spring is coming soon, we'll keep at it but we may need to do something less ambitious as far as numbers of riders and any side event

Reports

- **Treasurer's Report**
 - David was not present but submitted his spreadsheets by e-mail showing ABC was still doing well financially
 - ABC voting members are reminded to send in their \$25 membership dues
- **Transport Troy Update** - Pam reported that Transport Troy had a short zoom meeting in January with no major developments. They look forward to a busier February meeting.
- **Cycle Schenectady Report** – Email report from Art Clayman

- They submitted comments on the Schenectady County Wayfinding Plan developed by 2k Associates of Clifton Park. Plan was quite good to begin with, but they made some suggestions that will make it even better.
- President Art Clayman met with police chief and chief traffic investigator to review the report on and handling of a mid-November cyclist fatality. They showed Art actual video of the cyclist before and at the time of the crash, satisfying him that police (this time at least) were right in concluding that the cyclist was at fault and the driver, who was pulling a trailer at the time of the crash, likely didn't know there had been one. Therefore, this was not a case of hit-and-run, as it first appeared.
- Art earlier this week contacted the police seeking more information about another crash, 10 days ago, in which a cyclist was critically injured and the driver arrested for hit-and-run. Among other things, he asked why the name of the driver was not released, as is normal when someone is arrested.
- They had a meeting with board members of Schenectady Greenmarket, a Sunday farmers market that attracts large numbers of people,
 - about having bike racks at the market to encourage people to ride there.
 - Cycle Schenectady would purchase one or two portable racks, each of which can accommodate 8-10 bikes, and set them up each Sunday. The racks would have some kind of sign saying "Courtesy of Cycle Schenectady," and,
 - as often as possible, be accompanied by someone from the organization, who would watch the bikes, hand out literature, and otherwise schmooze with the public.
 - The Greenmarket people were enthusiastic.
- The City Council has a new president and several new members who have expressed support for Cycle Schenectady agenda in the past. They decided to ask them for
 - a Complete Streets ordinance with real teeth: requiring the city to make accommodations for cyclists and pedestrians whenever they so much as repave a street.
 - at least one bike boulevard in each neighborhood, with safe connections between neighborhoods.
 - a measured one-mile bike and pedestrian loop in Central Park suggested by one of our members (see map below). The city will be using federal recovery and infrastructure money to make changes to the park, including a new swimming pool (the old one no longer meets code) and multi-use paths in and around the park. The time

could be right for this plan, which we are asking the city to have the consultant incorporate into the larger plan.



- **CDTC Bike Ped Committee November Meeting** - Ed attended the 1/11 Zoom meeting
 - The TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) process was discussed which provides something like 60 to 65 million dollars in funding for projects
 - There are videos and webinars available on the TIP process and new federal infrastructure funding, see <https://www.cdncmpo.org/news/nv-webinars>
 - Applications must be from state or local governments or transportation authorities in our region
 - Evaluation process was discussed and how bicycle and pedestrian factors fit into qualitative and quantitative evaluations
 - March 2022 - begin 60 day public review period - here is where we can make comments
 - Noted DOT released a bulletin about shoulder improvement - as they are repaved roads limiting to 11 foot lane and adding shoulder
 - Look for new Capital Coexist 2.0 program in April
 - Look for upcoming comment period for Livingston Avenue Bridge
 - It was noted the Saratoga Greenbelt connector Trail was going out for bid
 - next meeting Feb 8, 9am
- **Old Business –**
- **Transportation Projects**

- **Patroon Greenway Project** Dennis Gaffney pointed out the Patroon Creek Greenway is looking for people to do their online survey. Please find and do the survey! See: <https://www.patroongreenway.com/>
- **E-Bikes Update** - Lorenz had been studying the wacky e-bike laws passed last year. He noted:
 - under the NY current law, “legal” e-bikes cannot be used on roads with speed limits in excess of 30mph. Thus such e-bikes couldn’t be used on New Scotland Avenue past the Albany City Line where the speed limit is 35mph and where normal bicycles are certainly allowed.
 - in Albany County helmets are required for Albany County residents riding e-bikes - but apparently not for non-residents!
- **Washington Park Traffic Study Update** - Ed reported attending a Creighton Manning Zoom report on the state of the park traffic study
 - The 17 participants included Dan McEneny, Council member Romero, retired council member Conti and legislator / parking authority administrator Matthew Peter, Ms. Gonzales of Walkable Albany and persons from the neighborhood and a representative of the Washington Park Conservancy. Bill Trudeau, City Traffic Dept. set up the meeting.
 - Presentation was by Mark Sargent of Creighton Manning (CM) with the assistance of Mr. Vogel and Mr. Pangburn - highlights:
 - Complete banning of traffic in the park appeared to be off the table
 - CM seemed to be leaning toward one way traffic for Washington Park Road from State to Madison/New Scotland
 - Curb extensions/raised crosswalks to protect pedestrians
 - Park Conservancy commented on the importance of using national preservation guidelines for areas that were reworked
 - CM proposed eliminating some intersections (such as Sprague)
 - CM proposed a turnaround at State/Henry Johnson for Washington Park Road traffic coming from the Englewood Entrance making the State/Henry Johnson entrance just one way for traffic coming from Henry Johnson
 - A major reason for the one way going from Henry Johnson to New Scotland is for emergency vehicle traffic
 - Inevitable questions about estimates of traffic delays for traffic from New Scotland to Central/Henry Johnson were outside scope of study
 - A separate Lark Street study is handling increased Lark Street congestion issues
 - CM looks to close the park road along the lake closest to Madison
 - It was noted that they would leave the traffic cut thru across the main walking path. Mr Trudeau noted the pedestrian traffic signal

there provided priority for pedestrians - I assume he meant all traffic was stopped when passengers could cross

- **Rides**

- **Earth Day 2022** - Glenn reported the current idea for the ride would include a visit to Radix Environmental Center, which includes a composting operation, a visit to the nearly completed Skyway (a recycled interstate exit ramp), and visits to repurposed buildings in the warehouse district and perhaps Menands. There was also a proposed stop at the Mohawk Hudson Animal Shelter which accepts recycled bottles and cans in their efforts to find loving homes for “recycled” dogs and cats.
- **Slow Rides for 2022** - the call went out to bring ideas to the next meeting

New Business –

- **Thruway Bike Trail!** - Albany Council Member Thomas Hoey joined us to introduce his idea for a bike-hike trail on the Normanskill Golf Course side of the NYS Thruway that would give access to downtown and the Albany County Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail
 - He is working on a city council resolution for a feasibility study and to reach out to the State and CDTC
 - Will also be taking the trail idea to Zach in the City Planning Dept. and Pat Fahy
 - He will be coming back to ABC with the resolution for comments
- **ABC TV** - Ed played the YouTube clip ABC produced to promote the CVRSA. See: <https://youtu.be/2qpVRHWNd1A>
- **Colonie Connector Update** - Glenn reported he and David Pratt of River Road in Colonie spoke at the Colonie Planning Board meeting considering new Keeler proposals on the north side of Troy-Schenectady Road (Rt 7).
 - Glenn pointed out the need to connect the extensive bike trail network ending where British American Blvd meets Rt 7 with the Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail (as documented in the CDTC Trails Plan).
 - Glenn also pointed out there might not be a better opportunity to build that connection than incorporating it into the Keeler expansion plan
 - David Pratt gave an excellent, extensive presentation of why the connection is so important for the safety and recreational future of Colonie residents and why the special interests of a few NIMBY neighbors should not stop the connector from moving forward
 - As there were no further comments or questions from the Planning Board concerning the connector, it remains to be seen whether it will enter into their considerations
- **Bike Capital Region** - Ed and James Rath reported
 - James and Kyle Hatch were still working on coming up with funding for staff for a regional cycling organization

- They participated in a meeting with CDTA CEO Carm Basile and Ed discussing how the new regional organization might also serve in a mobility advocacy role for CDTA
- **South End Connector** - Hugh reported that he will be following up with Jasleen Jaspal concerning persistent broken glass problems on the SEC -

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: 2/24, 3/31, 4/28.

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