

Albany Bicycle Coalition September 29, 2022 Monthly Meeting Notes

In Attendance: Zoe Schacht-Levine, Shawn Newton, Jill Haimsen, John Gillivan, Ed Brennan, Lorenz Worden, Glenn Sandberg, David Pisaneschi, Chester Bennet, Dennis Gaffney, Mark Maniak

AGENDA

Special Topic - Mayhem on the Roadways - Legislation Update

- 25mph Local Efforts - Ed reported Albany's 25 mph ordinance was introduced and assigned to the Public Safety Committee. Ed has since learned Albany is seeking a Vision Zero grant funding for a traffic study. Common Council Persons in Saratoga Springs, Troy and Schenectady are all pursuing this. It is not clear from the legislation exactly what kind of traffic study will suffice. Perhaps CDTC could play a role here.
- Speed Cameras
 - Ed reported this would require state legislation. The Safe Streets Coalition is looking at promoting such legislation for 2023.
 - The topic came up at a recent Normans Kill Neighborhood Association meeting as a way to get around the lack of traffic enforcement in Albany due to the City Police Force being understaffed.
 - Pat Fahy's office has been contacted about supporting NYS legislation
 - The City of Buffalo had a recent unpleasant experience with speed cameras around schools. They have since turned the cameras off:
https://buffalonews.com/news/local/buffalos-last-school-zone-speed-camera-shut-off/article_40f5ecba-e5a4-11eb-a95d-b7af3e35f5cb.html
- Speed Humps - after trial period in West Hill and Mount Hope Albany is looking to expand the use of [Speed Humps](#) (not "speed bumps") around the City
- Complete Streets Bills - Ed reported members of the Safe Streets Coalition would be presenting testimony at the Assembly Transportation Committee Hearing on Complete Streets on Monday, October 3rd.
 - Under consideration were two bills not passed last session that would expand the types of road projects that are given Complete Streets consideration.
 - Ed spoke regarding Assembly Member Rivera's bill (A7782). That bill includes, when possible, complete street design features in resurfacing, maintenance and pavement recycling projects.
 - There were several other local participants. ABC friend Patty Sawyer was among the mothers of victims of traffic violence that attended. Guilderland

Town Planner, Kenneth Kovalchik spoke to barriers thrown up to Complete Streets efforts in Guilderland/Crossgates projects and the Bethlehem Delaware Avenue Road Diet Project. Ken Grey, Chair of the Complete Streets Advisory Board in Saratoga Springs spoke to efforts there and in favor of the bills. Jeff Olson, a local e-charging entrepreneur with long experience in transportation spoke in favor of the bills and the need to avoid letting the mania for EV's turn our roads into havens for killer EV monster trucks. NY Bicycle Coalition Board Member and Albany resident Rosanna Coto-Batras also spoke eloquently of the need for the bills.

- The Safe Streets Coalition Legislative Recommendations for Next Session. Ed reported the coalition is narrowing down objectives. Under consideration are:
 - Sammy's Law - permitting sub-25mph speed limits in NYC
 - The Complete Streets Bills not passed in the last session (see above)
 - Upstate Speed Cameras
 - Stop and Stay Stopped at Crosswalks (following the NJ model - NY is currently a "yield" state)
 - Move Over Law for Vulnerable Road Users (rather than 3 foot law)
 - Rating Vehicles for Pedestrian Impact Survivability - as is done in Europe/Japan
 - "Safety Stop" - AKA the "Idaho Stop" for bicycles
- Updating Bike Ordinances - Proposed "Scooter" Definitional Change
 - We noted the proposed "scooter" ordinance change in Albany (see text below). It was noted that the proposal seems to want to remove these devices from streets. Devices for the handicapped are excluded. We wondered if these devices were also too fast for use on sidewalks. We presume this in response to the increasing number of individuals riding around on "one-wheels" on city streets.

Reports

- **Treasurer's Report** - David reported but that our dues income was down. It was noted that a dues income drop was expected since we are no longer requiring dues from members unless they wish to be voting members. David reported t-shirt sales did produce income and that our accounts remain in good shape.
- **Transport Troy Update** - Pam reported there was nothing new to report as the state of Transport Troy remains unresolved
- **Cycle Schenectady Report** - Art Clayman sent in the following report:
 - CS tabled at the Schenectady Greenmarket at the end of July, alongside the Electric City Bike Rescue, which did bike repairs.
 - They had a fairly ambitious agenda for their upcoming board meeting. Among other things:

- some kind of publicity event with the neighborhood groups to pressure the City Council to adopt 25 mph speed limit.
 - reaching out to the various health organizations and trying to get their support for the same, as well as Complete Streets policy on the part of the city.
 - participation in this year's holiday parade
 - a series of bike rodeos next year at the different county library branches.
 - Meanwhile, there has been progress on some needed bike infrastructure in the city and county.
 - A contract has been signed for a long-awaited contra-flow lane to get riders from Riverside Park in the Stockade to the bike path at Schenectady Community College.
 - The existing trail in Riverside Park has been repaved and widened.
 - Federal funding has been secured for a bike lane on Craig St. connecting the Hamilton Hill and Mont Pleasant neighborhoods.
 - State funding has been secured to create a paved path from Freeman's Bridge on the other side of the Mohawk to Scotia. This will create a nice, family-friendly 5-mile loop on both sides of the river.
 - Some very nasty stretches of the canal trail in Rotterdam Junction have been repaved, following up on the under-the-railroad tunnel work done last year that filled a gap in the trail.
 - The county planning dept. has submitted a grant proposal to the state parks department to replace a bridge over Nott St. that was removed 15 years ago creating a dangerous at-grade crossing and another gap in the trail.
 - County officials also asked CS to submit some possible bike rack designs and tell them where they should be located.
- **Bikeatoga Report** - Ed Lindner reported:
 - They had behind-the-scenes conversations with 3 of the 5 council members about 25mph and the response so far has been good. After meeting with the most enthusiastic Commissioner, he sent him (again) the CVRSA fact sheet on 25mph - really useful because it has all the links to studies on safety. It's not clear how soon this will make it to the council table, but Ed L. said he'd keep us posted.
 - In other news, Bikeatoga got a \$6k grant from Saratoga County, which will help keep their workshop parts inventory well stocked. They had 409

bikes adopted from the workshop in 2021 and they are on pace to match that figure again this year.

- They were meeting with Commissioner Jason Golub to publicly announce a partnership with DPW. DPW is putting up a sign and allocating space at the City transfer station to accept bikes for the workshop. Bikeatoga would head over once a week to collect the bikes that can be repaired rather than send them for scrap metal, which is what they have been doing.
- Finally, there will be a public workshop on October 12th 6:30 - 8pm at Empire State College, 2 Union Avenue, where we'll get our first look at proposed city bike lanes on Union Avenue from Congress Park to East Ave (NYSDOT is scheduled to build 5 ft bike lanes on the portion of Union from East to Henning Road next spring). When Bikeatoga formed the Saratoga Safe Cycling Coalition a year ago, Union Ave was one of their first priorities - they stressed that a DOT bike lane from Henning to East was mostly useless if the City didn't complete the route to downtown. The City hired JMT planning to do the design and engineering, and JMT is looking for public input on their plans.
- **CDTC Active Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting. Ed reported:**
 - Next Meeting will be 10/11/22 9am
 - Hiam of CDTC reported the following Traffic Trends compared to Pre-COVID (he noted study locations were all not necessarily consistent with prior studies)
 - From 45 Traffic counts in April 2022 he noted:
 - traffic down 12% from prior pre-covid traffic count
 - peak hour down 18%
 - 12 of 45 locations saw increases
 - down 40% for large office complexes - corp woods, harriman campus, global foundries, renn tech park & a 51% peak volume decrease
 - rural roads 3.6% fewer vehicles 7% less for peak periods
 - urban roads 14% fewer vehicles, 20% less for peak periods
 - CDTC started redeploying "eco" trail counters with better security (one was "lost"). They will be counting the Skyway Sept 20 - Oct 4. They hope to have more frequent, regular counts
 - Crosswalk compliance was discussed - it was noted that pedestrians need to pass the "[fog line](#)" for driver to be required to yield
 - It was noted vehicle compliance is perhaps dependent on whether enforcement is around
 - The GoEZY Smartphone App launched by Fed'l Highway Admin

- follows you for a while and starts making suggestions for alternatives (including alt transport methods)
 - See www.metropia.com/smartphone-rewards
- CDTC still has CoExist funds for LCI and pd supported programs
- CDTC smart mobility survey see: <https://www.cdtcsmartmobility.com/>
- The upcoming dedication for the “Monkey Wards” menands connection over 787 to the MHBHT was noted (it is now called the Ronald H. Miller Memorial Bike Trail)
- Nate Owens, Bethlehem Senior Planner reported
 - They will be devising an active transportation plan
 - They are looking at a public safety campaign around crosswalks. They may do video/radio spots.
 - Looking at speed humps on some specific areas of problems.
- Lastly CDTC noted Oct. 5th would be Walk and Roll to School Day. They have a kit on their website. LED bracelets available.

Old Business –

● Transportation Projects

- **Patroon Greenway Project Next Steps** - We all discussed things we could do to move the proposals in the new Patroon Creek Greenway Study toward reality:
 - Look to local Council People to Start Ball Rolling with Traffic Division
 - Take up with Pat Fahy’s Office
 - Take up with New County Bike - Ped Committee
 - Take it up at the next CDTC Meeting
 - Start e-mail campaign and phone campaign to City Council people, Pat Fahy, Phil Steck, Neil Breslin
 - Bring it up at Neighborhood Associations
 - Start a Reddit Campaign - on the Albany Page
- **MHBHT Connector Update** - John Gillivan had nothing new to report on this project. It was suggested this be raised with our friends at PTNY. It was also suggested the idea be brought up with the airport execs given they are getting so much funding of late
- **New Scotland Avenue Update** - Ed reported due to lack of bid responses and supply chain shortages this project will likely be put off til the Spring - but that Bike Lanes were still planned for New Scotland from Manning Blvd to Whitehall.
- **South End Connector** - Hugh said he will be meeting with someone from Albany Planning office on Oct 6th

New Business –

- **T-Shirts Order Status** - Our t-shirt order was placed on time - but a shortage of larger sizes was delaying delivery of anything but the complete order. We hoped to have them before the next meeting.
- **Rides**
 - **Champlain Canal Carnival/Bike Safety Day Report** - John Gillivan reported - 4 Saratoga County Sheriff's Department deputies participated. The Cooperative Extension passed out bike helmets. Due to a conflict with a nearby parade earlier in the day there was not a great turnout. They would coordinate with other local events in the future.
 - **Capital Corruption Tour Report** - Zoe and others agreed the event was fun and successful. We had 18 along for the ride and others that participated in the great lunch discussions with Leon Van Dyke of the Brothers at the end of the ride. Our friends at the Museum of Political Corruption expressed a strong interest in repeating the ride and perhaps doing a new ride covering corruption in other time periods.
 - **Halloween Ride** John G. reported that he is scheduling the ride for Saturday October 29th. Tentatively the time is 11:30 to 1:30. Riders would all meet at the Albany Rural Cemetery entrance by 378 & Van Ren Blvd.
 - **Party Rides & Social Rides** - this was to be discussed at an upcoming Zoom meeting with other area social riders.
- **Membership Outreach/Tabling**
 - **Tabling**
 - **Upper Madison Street Fair** - Ed reported he would be riding the "Book Bike" to the event for Grassroots Giving. Negotiations for a table for ABC at the fair went back and forth for too long to get anything organized for this year.
 - **Menand's Safety Day - October 15th** - John Gillivan promised to reach out to the organizers of this event to see what we could do to assist - perhaps participation in a Bike Rodeo
 - **Farmer's Markets** - Washington Park was to be holding its last market the upcoming weekend. We will look to do this next year.
 - **Business Cards** Glenn reported that we now have our new business cards and that he has been distributing them to local bike shops and libraries https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/fog_line
- **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: 10/27, 11/17, 12/29

<<<<<<<<<<<<< Albany Scooter Ordinance Proposal >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

22.101.22 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 359 (VEHICLES
AND TRAFFIC) OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALBANY
DEFINING MOTORIZED SCOOTERS TO INCLUDE DEVICES
WITHOUT HANDLEBARS

Council Member Farrell introduced the following:

ORDINANCE 22.101.22 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 359 (VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALBANY DEFINING MOTORIZED SCOOTERS TO INCLUDE DEVICES WITHOUT HANDLEBARS

The City of Albany, in Common Council convened, does hereby ordain and enact:

Section 1. Subsection A of Section 359-7 (Motorized scooters) of Article I (Bicycles and All Motor Vehicles) of Part II of the Code of the City of Albany is hereby amended to read as follows:

A. Definition of “motorized scooter.” For purposes of this section, the term “motorized scooter” shall mean any wheeled device that has handlebars that is designed to be stood or sat upon by the operator, is powered by an electric motor or by a gasoline motor that is capable of propelling the device without human power, is less than 24 inches in height and is not capable of being registered with the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles. For the purposes of this section, the term “motorized scooter” shall not include wheelchairs or other mobility aids designed for use by disabled persons, electric- or gas-powered devices not capable of exceeding 15 miles per hour or “electric

personal assistive mobility devices” defined as self-balancing, two-non-tandem-wheeled devices designed to transport one person by means of an electric propulsion system.

Section 2. This ordinance shall take effect immediately.

APPROVED AS TO FORM THIS

23RD DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2022

Corporation Counsel

To: Danielle Gillespie, City Clerk

From: Jake Eisland, J.D., Research Counsel

Re: Common Council Legislation

Supporting Memorandum

Date: September 20, 2022

Sponsor: Council Member Farrell

ORDINANCE 22.101.22

TITLE AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 359 (VEHICLES
AND TRAFFIC) OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALBANY

DEFINING MOTORIZED SCOOTERS TO INCLUDE DEVICES
WITHOUT HANDLEBARS GENERAL PURPOSE OF LEGISLATION

The purpose of this legislation is to change the definition of “motorized scooter” to include devices without handlebars.

NECESSITY FOR LEGISLATION AND CHANGES TO EXISTING LAW

In 2005, Albany enacted Ordinance No. 39.122.04, defining the term “motorized scooter” and restricting their use on public streets and roadways. One factor defining these “motorized scooters” was having handlebars. Since then, the increased popularity of devices such as electric unicycles has created a loophole where laws applying to most

motorized devices do not apply if they do not have handlebars. This ordinance will close this loophole and make our streets safer.

FISCAL IMPACT(S)

None.