

Albany Bicycle Coalition Meeting Notes December 2022

ATTENDEES: **Zoomers:** Glenn, Andrew, Chester, Lorenz, Pam, Jill, Geri, Peter, John G., David P., Ira, Mark, Hugh. **In Person:** Naqiy, Jaime, Leah and Ed

Special Topic - New Proposal: A Capital District Alliance for Vision Zero.

- 2022 saw some positive local press and recognition of traffic violence issues by some local government entities but little in the way of actual prevention.
 - The November World Day of Remembrance protest was an especially positive, collegial effort with participants including Albany Bicycle Coalition, Walkable Albany, New York Parks and Trails and Assemblywoman Pat Fahy
 - The event was covered by Channel 13 News, Spectrum News and the Times Union. There were additional followup OpEds by Chris Churchill and Naqiy McMullen
 - 2022 also saw the most pedestrian deaths in Albany since at least 1999.
- How do we put Vision Zero and Complete Streets on the front burner in 2023?
- Ed Proposed - ABC join with other organizations and individuals in a **Capital District Alliance for Vision Zero** to:
 - keep each other informed about what is happening - or not happening in our respective cities and towns,
 - share ideas on how to keep Vision Zero and Complete Streets in the news and spread understanding of what is meant
 - perhaps coordinate local campaigns or protests (like Rides of Silence in May and World Day of Remembrance for Traffic Victims Protests in November)
 - provide mutual support where appropriate to pressure local government
- The proposal received support by all in attendance. There were many ideas about different groups to reach out to
- Ed would work on getting an organizational e-mail out for the New Year

Special Topic - Mayhem on the Roadways

- **BIG NEWS** - The Pat Fahy Complete Streets Funding Bill Was Signed This Week by Governor Hochul! Additional state funding will be available for

Complete Streets Projects. A “chapter amendment” gives the DOT ability to make sure the project in question meets requirements.

- Local Efforts to lower speed limits to 25 mph seem to be on hold. Albany’s proposed Local Law M is awaiting a grant funding decision to support a citywide traffic study.
- Speed Cameras - Pat Fahy’s office is looking into getting permission from the State for Albany to deploy speed cameras
- Speed Humps - Councilperson Jack Flynn said more of these will be placed on select neighborhood roads in 2023.
- The Statewide Safe Streets Coalition, which includes ABC
 - Finalized their recommendations for the next legislative session:
 - It is now called the “SAFE Streets Act” not the “Crash Victims Rights and Safety Act”
 - The collection of bills includes (bill numbers will change in the next session):
 - Sammy’s Law Allows lower life-saving speed limits in NYC S524 (Hoyleman)/A4655 (Gottfried)
 - Complete Streets Application. Will expand the state’s current complete street design principles policy to include all state, county and local transportation projects that are undertaken by the DOT or receive federal, state or both federal and state funding. S8394 (Ryan)/A08624 (Barrett)
 - Complete Streets Maintenance. Includes, when possible, complete street design features in resurfacing, maintenance and pavement recycling projects and further enables safe access to public roads for all users. S5130 (Kennedy)/A7782 (Rivera)
 - Vehicle Safety Standards. Would mandate standards in new vehicles including intelligent speed assistance and other features. S9528 (Hoyleman)
 - Crash Victims Bill of Rights. Guarantee rights & a voice for crash victims and their loved ones in legal proceedings. S8152 (Hoyleman)/A9152 (Glick)
 - Safe Passage. Require drivers pass bicyclists at a safe distance of min. 3 feet. S4529 (Harckham)/A547 (Steck) - Note - they are looking into amendments to adopt the NJ approach which considers such factors as speed and different road scenarios (see appended NJ Law)
- Ed raised the question of which of the following matters not taken up by the Safe Streets Coalition might ABC want to pursue with other partners?
 - Permitting Speed Cameras Outside of NYC

- Improved Safety for Persons in Crosswalks
- Increased Felony Penalties for Hit and Run.
- Safety Stop - aka “Idaho Stop”
- Rating Vehicles for the Survivability of Vulnerable Road Users Struck
- E-Bike Definitional Clarifications
- E-Bike Subsidies
- Decriminalizing Jaywalking
- Creto-Kade Bill for Vehicular Violence Accountability

Special Topic - Tivoli Preserve Mountain Bike Trails - Skye Van Der Laan was unable to attend this meeting. We hope to discuss his proposal in January.

Special Topic - Albany High School Area Traffic Calming - Chester Bennett discussed a proposed traffic calming effort for the roads around Albany High School and College of St. Rose. See:

<https://albanybicyclecoalition.files.wordpress.com/2023/01/ahs-area-traffic-calming.pdf>

- The plan was developed in cooperation with associates at Walkable Albany
- Improvements to the area are deemed highly important given the number of students - a group that disproportionately lacks motor vehicles
- Most of the proposed improvements are already in Albany’s Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan, but may not be receiving the attention they deserve
- Next steps: to take the ideas to the school district, PTA, St. Rose, UAlbany, local Neighborhood Associations and City Councilmembers.

Reports

- **Treasurer's Report** - David P. told us
 - ABC is still well in the black but explained our year over year revenue was down - especially with respect to dues.
 - Ed noted that we no longer require dues except for those that wish to be voting members.
 - There was a recent uptick in donations since Secretary Mark Maniak’s Appeal e-mail went out. David noted, many of those donations will appear in 2023 as the books needed to be closed for 2022 on December 22nd.
 - David also noted we still have an inventory of t-shirts that can be sold
- **Bikeatoga Report** - Ed Lindner reported via E-mail:
 - On the Bike Lane Proposal for Union Ave in Saratoga:

- On January 17th, Mike King, principal at Traffic Calmer and an internationally recognized expert on bike and pedestrian friendly infrastructure, will give a presentation to the City Council that you don't want to miss! Mike has designed beautiful and functional streetscapes around the country and around that world that slow down cars and prioritize green space, pedestrian safety and bike routes. He will present his ideas on how we can achieve that same result on Union Avenue.
- A public hearing will follow the presentation
- note: it is not clear if the 6:40pm time is the presentation time or the hearing time.
- Anyone in Saratoga that wants to see a safer Union Avenue should go out and speak at the hearing!
- It is assumed that the presentation and hearing will be viewable via the Saratoga Springs City Website.
- No movement on the proposal to lower the Saratoga Springs speed limit to 25 mph
- **Cycle Schenectady Report** - Art Clayman reported via E-mail:
 - CS had a meeting with Greenmarket people asking for guidance on what kind of permanent bike rack or racks to install
 - Metroplex Chairman Ray Gillen said Metroplex will pay for bike racks in city and county, with CS suggesting design and location
 - In November CS helped conduct a bike rodeo at Martin Luther King Elementary School in the Hamilton Hill neighborhood
 - CS participated in the Schenectady Holiday Parade for the first time, riding bikes (and, in one case, a unicycle) with lights, decorations, and a banner with the Cycle Schenectady logo
 - CS produced a brochure to educate the public and political leaders, with examples of good bike infrastructure.
 - For 2023: CS is partnering with the Schenectady County Public Library system for a series of bike rodeos for kids at three different branch libraries. They have applied for a Capital District Transportation Committee grant to facilitate this, which they have a good chance of getting.
 - CS is considering regular weekly rides that start and end at a local brew pub.
- **CDTC Active Transportation Committee December Meeting** - Ed Reported the meeting featured:
 - A Report on the Rensselaer Waterfront Connectivity Study -

- It looked at the Rensselaer boat launch area to the north of the Livingston Avenue Bridge
- It would improve access for people hauling boats as well as bikes and peds
- It would provide a connection along the river to the Hilton Center Project just to the south. That project would in turn connect to the new Livingston Ave bridge
- CDTA Cycle! Final numbers showed all around increases in usage everywhere over last year's record setting season - over 80,000 rides, up almost 10,000 rides from 2021
- CDTC is Looking for ideas to re-imagine bike to work since so many more people are working from home
- **Transport Troy / Capital Streets Update -**
 - There was no status update for Transport Troy - but Capital Streets reported they are planning some kind of kick-start announcement in March 2023.
 - Pam reported she went to a Troy-Menands Bridge Study Meeting.
 - There was no plan at this point - DOT was seeking input about what a plan should include
 - Any changes are likely a couple of years away
 - Pam also reported displeasure with the Troy Federal Street Proposal as several people expressed concerns (posted on the Facebook page containing the survey) that the series of roundabouts would create a steady stream of motor traffic that would make life more difficult for bikes, peds and anyone not in a vehicle. Hoping that the planners pay attention.

Old Business –

- **Transportation Projects**
 - **MHBHT Connector Update** - John and Ed noted they still need to setup a meeting with David Pratt and perhaps other Save Colonie folks to discuss a proposed means of connecting the Ann Lee Trail system to the Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail (Empire State Trail) via vacant airport property
 - **I787 and Livingston Avenue Bridge Updates** - Ed 5 min
 - New bridge work with bike/ped path is reported to begin in 2023
 - Ed attended a conference on “Reconnecting Communities: Building a More Equitable Future” - by eliminating superhighways thru cities
 - Experiences and ongoing projects in Rochester, Syracuse and Buffalo were discussed and how such projects can improve transportation equity and rectify injustices by these “urban renewal” projects of the 60’s and 70’s.

- 787's separation of Albany from the River and the wreck it and Empire State Plaza helped create economically and socially to the South End and downtown were discussed
- Fahy discussed her \$5M allocation for I787 planning
- Three Proposals discussed for I787
 - The Blvd Option - lowering the elevated highway to street level (presumably with signaled crossings)
 - The Landbridge Option - ala Philly Penn's Landing this would be a large green space comprising perhaps a couple of blocks that would be constructed over 787
 - The Canal Option - first conceived by artist L.F. Tantillo, this option would bring the Hudson under 787 and into the City by rebuilding a canal
- All at the conference agreed that a key to getting a good outcome for any 787 project was early and active public involvement and not to leave the matter to engineers and politicians.
- Albany Bicycle Coalition has signed on as supporters of the Albany Riverfront Collective
- **Washington Park Traffic Calming Proposal** - the City held another stakeholders meeting to preview the report they will soon be making public.
 - The Lark St/Delaware Ave, Little Lark St, Madison Ave rework was removed from this project and included in the Lark St project since that will start next spring. It essentially bumps out Dana Park to narrow and simplify the intersection making crossings safer
 - Other than some proposed crosswalk improvements to crosswalks at Hudson and Willett, there were no other major changes
 - The last public feedback is scheduled for January, then the project moves on to grant seeking and State Historic Preservation review
- **South End Connector Glass Issues** - Hugh reported he is looking to schedule a South End Connector Ambassadors organizational meeting in January

New Business –

- **T-Shirts** - Ed reported - we still have a limited quantity of t-shirts available for sale. Anyone interested should e-mail albanybicyclecoalition@yahoo.com
 - Performance T-Shirts \$26
 - Qty 1 2XL, 4L & 1M
 - Standard Cotton T-Shirts \$18

- Qty 4L & 3M
- **Holiday Bard & Baker Ride/Game Night Report** - Ed reported a Holiday ride was held the crisp evening of Wednesday, December 14th with many festively lit bicycles. The ride began and ended at Bard and Baker on Madison Avenue in Albany. The route had to be adjusted because the City had still failed to clear snow and ice from the bike lanes on Madison from the snow event the weekend before (we had complained on Tuesday). After the ride the group enjoyed refreshments at Bard & Baker and played Jenga until closing.
- **Champlain Canal Bike Rodeo/Safety Day** - John G. reported he is planning a Bike Rodeo/Safety Day in May in Waterford. The event will be sponsored with the Champlain Canal Trail Working Group. Date and details will follow. He is looking for volunteers!
- **Ideas Needed for 2023 Earth Day Ride and Ride of Silence!**
 - We usually switch up routes for these events.
 - For our last Earth Day Ride we visited the Radix composting works along with other sites along the Albany waterfront. Glenn suggested an Albany City Parks Ride as was done a few years ago. Hugh proposed a ride from Jennings Landing to Peebles Island Park.
 - Last year's Ride of Silence was coupled with a remembrance for the many traffic violence victims of Central Avenue.
- **Upcoming** – Rides/events (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: 1/26, 2/23, 3/30

<<<<<<<<<<<< N.J. Stat. § 39:4-92.4 >>>>>>>>>>>>

Section 39:4-92.4 - Definitions; procedures

- a. [definitions omitted]
- b. The operator of a motor vehicle approaching a pedestrian, bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, low-speed electric scooter, or any other lawful personal conveyance located or operating in an area designated for pedestrians or those conveyances, as appropriate, on the roadways of this State shall approach with due caution and shall, absent any other direction by a law enforcement officer, proceed as follows:
 - (1) when possible under existing safety and traffic conditions, make a lane change into a lane not adjacent to the pedestrian or personal conveyance;

(2) if a lane change cannot be made pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection, leave a reasonable and safe distance of not less than four feet while approaching the pedestrian or personal conveyance and maintain a distance of at least four feet until the motor vehicle has safely passed the conveyance; or

(3) if it is not possible, prohibited by law, or unsafe to make a lane change pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection or to leave a reasonable and safe distance of not less than four feet pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection, the motor vehicle operator shall reduce the speed of the motor vehicle to 25 miles per hour or a lower posted speed and be prepared to stop; the operator may pass the pedestrian or personal conveyance only if, considering the size and speed of the motor vehicle, traffic conditions, weather, visibility, and the surface and width of the roadway, passing does not endanger the safety of a pedestrian, operator of the personal conveyance, or any other person on the roadway.

c. A person who commits a violation of the provisions of this section which results in bodily injury as defined in N.J.S.2C:11-1 shall be fined \$500 and assessed two motor vehicle penalty points; if no bodily injury results, the violator shall be fined \$100 and shall not be assessed any penalty points.

d. Nothing in this section shall be construed to preclude or limit a prosecution or conviction for a violation of any offense defined by the laws of this State or for any violation of Title 39 of the Revised Statutes.