

Albany Bicycle Coalition Meeting Notes for 7 PM July 25, 2024

Attendees: Andrew Matrai, Darlene McGraw, David Pisaneschi, Ed Brennan, Glenn Sandberg, Hugh Johnson, Lola Grillo, Norm B., Peter Thomas

Note: The ABC May Meeting was a special event held together with other local advocacy groups at the Albany City facility on Henry Johnson Blvd. There was no June meeting.

Special Topic - Mayhem on the Roadways

- **Albany City**
 - New 25 MPH City Speed Limit will be Effective January 1st - A bill signing event was held on Monday the 29th.
 - Kingston Common Council public safety committee voted to approve 25 mph on all but three Kingston streets on July 24th
 - Times Union reporting suggests Schenectady and Cohoes may be next
 - The City Council also approved an Albany City Active Transportation Commission - Ed is looking into how one applies to serve on it
 - Central Avenue Reconstruction Project
 - Mark, Chester and Ed attended the City sponsored meeting on July 18th.
 - Presentations were made by our new City Engineer Howard Goebel and CHA Consulting.
 - About 40 attendees broke up into 6 groups to pick their top 3 concerns and ideas about the corridor. The following were mentioned repeatedly:
 - pedestrian/child safety
 - Double parking
 - People not using crosswalks
 - Lack of bicycle lanes/amenities
 - Public comments for this initial round of public outreach should be sent by August 5th to: engineeringdept@albanyny.gov
 - For more information see the City project site:
<https://www.albanyny.gov/2327/Central-Avenue>
 - Town of Colonie Central Ave “Study” - Ed reported the proposed study which was funded by a grant last year by CRTC appeared to be in limbo because of changes in Town personnel. The study appeared to be mostly about developing

business on the corridor and not concerned with the continued mayhem on our region's most dangerous road.

- **Safe Streets Coalition Update**

- The coalition is still working on a slate of bills to support for the next NYS Session. It is likely we will be pushing for the same slate of primary bills as last year. It was thought one or more of these would have passed if the end of session was not overshadowed by the controversy over the Governor's halt of NYC Congestion Pricing. There will be a longer list of "supported bills". The primary bills will get the most effort.
- The Coalition was circulating a letter opposing an E-Bike/E-Scooter Registration, Inspection & Insurance Proposal (A9114/S9180)
 - The bill would make owning e-bikes more costly and burdensome without sufficient justification
 - Ed noted an adult male bicyclist on an 80 lb e-bike would need to achieve a speed of over 100 mph to create the kinetic energy of a typical SUV going 30 mph.
 - By law class 1 & 2 e-bikes top speed is 20 mph. Class 3 is 25 mph and only legal in NYC.
 - Attendees agreed we should support the letter of opposition

- **New Yorkers for Transportation Equity**

- Last year ABC participated in their legislative efforts to increase funding for non-motor vehicle transport
- Andrew agreed to be the ABC liaison with this group going forward

Reports

- **Thank you to Everyone That Chipped in for a Busy May!** ABC members contributed to a very busy May. Collectively we successfully participated in:
 - Tabling Tulip Fest
 - Three Legislative Lobby Days with the Safe Streets Coalition, NYers for Transportation Equity and Parks and Trails NY
 - Ride of Silence - visiting the sites of three fallen cyclists with the participation of two impacted families. The event was given coverage by TV news:

<https://www.news10.com/news/ride-of-silence-to-remember-fallen-bicyclists/>

- Waterford Canal Fest Ride and Tabling in coordination with the Champlain Canal Working Group
- Advocacy Group Powwow on Henry Johnson Blvd along with Capital Streets, Walkable Albany, CDTA Cycle!, Albany Bike Rescue, the City's Neighborhood Specialists and others.
- Bethlehem Walk, Bike and Roll tabling event
- **Juneteenth Tabling Event** - Andrew reported a good event with lots of contacts. He gave out a great deal of literature and candy. He also suggested updates for our Cycling Resources handout and other tabling opportunities. The Director of the Boys and Girls club showed an interest in a Kids Trail Ride with ABC.
- **Cycle Schenectady Update** - Art Clayman reported Cycle Schenectady would support lowering the City speed limit to 25 mph before their City Council. ABC and others shared documents prepared in support of the successful effort in Albany.
- **Bikeatoga Update** - Ed Lindner reported
 - They unveiled historical markers on Union Ave. One commemorated an early bike touring expedition and another about the 1898 dedicated bike path that ran out Union Ave to Saratoga Lake. The latter is notable because some of the Union Avenue residents objected to a bike lane on the grounds that it was antithetical to the history of Saratoga Springs!
 - Things were moving forward for continuing the Union Ave bike lanes to Congress Park. Unfortunately, action on the proposal was postponed again due to the resignation of the Public Works Commissioner.
- **CRTC Active Transportation Committee Report**
 - Vision Zero Action Plan - information can be found at
 - <https://www.capitalregionvisionzero.org/participate>
 - Interactive map for feedback on areas with safety concerns and proposals for safety improvements.
<https://map.proxi.co/r/CapitalRegionVisionZero>
 - Public Meetings are as follows
 - **Watervliet: August 14, 2024, 4:30-7:30PM**
Watervliet Senior Center, Open House Format
 - **Albany: August 15, 2024, 4:30-7:30PM**
Washington Ave. Branch Library, Open House Format

- **Virtual: August 20, 2024 @ 6:30PM**
Register at: tinyurl.com/CapitalRegionVisionZeroWebinar
- **Saratoga: August 21, 2024, 4:30-7:30PM**
Saratoga Springs Public Library, Open House Format
- CRTC In Motion: The Plan to 2050
 - The initial survey results showed a strong interest in “sidewalks, bikeways and trails” and more transportation options
 - New Survey:
<https://form.jotform.com/crtcmopo/long-range-survey>
- **July CRTC Planning Committee Meeting** - We all expressed concern about a series of disturbing comments made by some members of the Capital Region Transportation Council’s Planning Committee. The Planning Committee develops recommendations about our transportation policies, plans, and programs. We agreed to express our concerns to the committee by a letter which a number of members contributed to over the following days.
 - See <https://www.youtube.com/live/ewnUKXcSm-c?si=la1EFFOiiBG0aOCs>
 - starting 1:28:30. Accusation of ABC of skewing survey results (1:30:50), disparagement of traffic calming 1:34, inaccurate understanding of e-bikes 1:37 and joking about "dooring" 1:40
- Our letter was acknowledged. Regret was expressed along with notice that a statement would be forthcoming soon.

Transportation Projects

- **County Rail Trail / SE Connector Updates** - Hugh reported DGS is doing a better job of keeping up with SE Connector glass. Also the exercise areas under 787 are nearing completion. Peter reported he spoke with Dan McCoy after a dedication ceremony at the Slingerlands lot. Coming “Soon”:
 - The “little red shack” moved and converted into a lavatory
 - Expanded parking at the Slingerlands lot
 - A park with rocking chairs east of the new New Scotland trail bridge
 - The old freight depot will become a “health station”
 - New “information stations” will be appearing along the trail
 - Additional improvements to the Hilton Barn
 - More safety & “pet sanitation” signage along the trail

- **Livingston Ave Bridge and Brevator Work Begins** - Ed reported underwater work for the new Livingston Ave Rail Bridge should be underway, though it is probably hard to see. Work is underway removing the old Brevator concrete roadway and building a new macadam roadway with multi-use path.
- **Manning Boulevard Improvement Project**
 - “Final Plan”, see: <https://www.albanyny.gov/2201/Manning-Boulevard-Improvement-Project>
 - Perhaps the plan can be re-evaluated in light of the new 25 mph limit.
- **Colonie Connector Update** (connecting Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail to the Airport and Ann Lee Trails)
 - Ed reported he and Susan Laurilliard conducted a tour with a new Albany County Intern that was tasked to look into the trail connection proposal. We visited potential connection points as well as places that would be made more accessible to local walkers and cyclists and visitors following the Empire State Trail.
- **NYBC To Conduct Active Transport Law & Safety Training for Local Law Enforcement** - this is scheduled to take place in August.

Rides & Other Business

- **Expanding Capitalnybikemap.com** - Glenn noted that he will be exploring trails and routes to add in Southern Saratoga County and was in the process of adding routes in the Town of Bethlehem.
- **Annual Albany-Troy Coffee Shops Ride** - August 17 10 AM. Albany Daily Grind to Troy Bard & Baker and back. See the [Events](#) page for details.
- **Bike the Branches 2024** - September 14 11:15 am. This year each Albany Public Library stop will have a poetry reading. See the [Events](#) page for details.
- **ABC Status with Charities Bureau** - Ed reported all of ABC's documentation was updated in the Spring, but the bureau said it might take 18 weeks before we see ABC properly listed on the charities website.
- **Outreach in 2024** - Ed was looking into tabling at the Delaware Avenue and Washington Park Farmers Markets
- **Albany Social Cycling** is holding weekly “Slow Roll Albany” Rides
 - Thursdays - meet at Washington Park Playhouse 6pm, roll 6:30
- **League of American Cyclists Slow Roads Save Lives Campaign**

- Pledge here to slow yourself down when driving in your neighborhood:
<https://bikeleague.org/take-action/slow-roads-save-lives/take-the-pledge/>
- **New York State Transportation Master Plan**
 - Survey 1: <https://publicinput.com/1748>
 - Survey 2: <https://publicinput.com/g4063>
 - <https://nytransportationmasterplan.com/>
- **New York State Active Transportation Survey!**
 - <https://nysdotwalkbikeplan.com/>
- **Upcoming** – Rides/events (Go here -
<https://albanybicyclecoalition.com/resources/upcoming-events/>)
- **T-Shirts** - Ed reported we still have a limited quantity of t-shirts available.
 - Anyone interested should e-mail albanybicyclecoalition@yahoo.com
 - Performance T-Shirts \$26 1 x 2XL, 3L, 1M
 - Standard Cotton T-Shirts \$18 3L
- **Upcoming Meetings:** Aug 29, Sept 26, Oct 24th (moved from Halloween night)
- **Treasurer's Report** - David reported ABC is still sufficiently funded, but revenues are down this year. Ed noted we have been delaying our annual appeal letter until we are properly listed with the Charities Bureau.