

Albany Bicycle Coalition Meeting Notes

Tuesday October 29, 2024

ATTENDEES: Chester Bennett, Ed Brennan, Edmund Doyle, John Gillivan, Mark Maniak, Ira Share, Hugh Johnson, Sam Johnson, Gary Lessard, Jesse Newkirk, Claire Nolan, Glenn Sandberg, Peter Thomas

Special Topic - Ending Mayhem on the Roadways

- **World Day of Remembrance for Victims of Road Traffic** - Ed reminded everyone we will be gathering at Academy Park on November 15th at 11am to remember local victims of traffic violence. This year we will be reading the names of persons killed in Albany County over the past five years. Media announcement has gone out. Invites to County and City legislators, the Mayor and County Supervisor have gone out.
 - This year's asks are:
 - First: Implement pedestrian safety and protected bike lane improvements on the keystone Central Avenue Project in the City of Albany.
 - Second: Albany needs a roadmap for implementation of its 2021 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
 - Third: A County law that requires motor vehicles to keep a distance of four feet from vulnerable road users.
 - PLEASE ATTEND THE EVENT IF ABLE - we had great media attention last year and several electeds and officials came - we can't make our case without supporters showing up. Please RSVP to: albanybicyclecoalition@yahoo.com
 - We still need help researching crashes and creating signs - email albanybicyclecoalition@yahoo.com if you can spare some time
- **Albany City Budget Notes** - The Mayor emphasized speed reduction efforts, road, sidewalk and Washington Park safety improvements in her intro to the 2025 budget. The following come from the budget proposal, which can be found at: <https://www.albanyny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/11461/2025-Proposed-Budget-PDF>
 - \$1M/yr for ADA compliance

- \$600K for sidewalk reconstruction (increasing \$50K per yr)
- \$14.8M for street reconstruction rising to near \$15.3 by 2029
- \$150K/Yr for road studies
- \$1.1M/Yr for traffic signal improvements rising to \$1.5M by 2029 (I assume this will include pedestrian signals)
- \$1M/Yr traffic speed reduction (I assume this is the \$1M for speed humps in 2025 the mayor announced)
- \$200K from Feds in 2025 for Central Ave & Frisbie
- \$762K in 2025 and \$5.733M in 2026 for Washington Park Traffic Reconfig
- **School Zone Speed Camera Backlash & Misinformation** - Ed noted that social media, especially the Nextdoor site are littered with anger and misinformation about speed cameras and speed humps. Among the claims:
 - the \$6M budgeted revenue from the cams are just a City money grab (Ed noted the City probably had to estimate the revenue, and that it will probably go down in future years as people adjust their habits)
 - people will get fined for going 1 mile per hour over the limit (not true - there is no auto-ticket unless you go 10 miles an hour over the limit. Drivers may still get a warning if they exceed the 20 mph limit).
 - if the City actually cared they would have actual police out to enforce (the APD has been trying unsuccessfully to hire more officers and probably has less than 10 officers to do all traffic enforcement)
 - Speed bumps are going to damage cars (the City installs speed "humps" not speed bumps, humps are lower, gradual and do not harm cars that pass over them at the recommended speed)
- **New Albany City Proposed Active Transportation Ordinance** - Ed reported a conversation with a Center Square Assn member that is adamant that many sidewalks are too narrow and crowded with pedestrians for sidewalk riding and that e-bike riders will ignore the rule that only human powered devices could use sidewalks. I agreed some sidewalks should be signed for no active transport use by adults.
- **Albany City Active Transportation Commission** City Council Person Deborah Zamer expects a call to go out for applicants to the new commission in the weeks after the City budget adoption process is completed on November 18th.
- **Safe Streets Coalition State Legislation Update** -

- State Lobby Days - are scheduled January 28th & May 13th
- Mark your calendars. These are great opportunities to speak with the people that can move the legislation we need to make our roads safer for cyclists and pedestrians. They are also a great chance to meet other advocates coming from all over the state. We only need to travel downtown!

Reports

- **NY Bike Summit Report & ABC Ride Report** - Ed reported the Bike Summit was a great event with great speakers and panel discussions. Wes Marshall, author of "Killed by a Traffic Engineer" was great and his book is a great read. NYSDOT panelists were talking the right talk: advocating the "Safe Systems Approach", making roads more inviting to all users and moderating speeds. The next Summit may be moved up to Spring of 2025. ABC sponsored a successful Summit Ride for about 25 riders on a beautiful day.
- **Kids Learn To Ride Event Report** - Ed reported a very successful event led by accomplished trainer Rich Conroy who joined us from NYC. Several kids learned to ride in under 2 hours. The City not only allowed us to use the "Learn to Ride" pocket park under 787, they cleaned up the area beforehand, moved the Mayor's ribbon cutting to coincide with the event and threw a block party.
 - Big thanks to Rich Conroy, Claire and Hardworking Johnny V, Wheels Up, Electric City Bike Rescue, NYBC, Albany Housing Authority & the City
 - Ed shared happy pictures
- **Capital Region Vision Zero Public Meetings/Process** -
 - We encourage everyone to use the online interactive map tool which allows anyone to note problem areas
 - <https://www.capitalregionvisionzero.org/participate>
 - CRTC In Motion: The Plan to 2050 New Survey:
<https://form.jotform.com/crtcmo/long-range-survey>
- **Cycle Schenectady Update** - Art Clayman reported
 - He joined the Kids Learn to Bike program in his Electric City Bike Rescue capacity and wants to try to put in a cool learning space like the one we have under 787.
 - CS met with CRTC Vision Zero folks who are working up safety data for Schenectady
 - Schenectady officials talk like 25 mph for their City is a matter of "when" not "if"

- They are gearing up for Christmas Parade with a bike towed Erie Canal Themed mini-float
- **Albany County Rail Trail / SE Connector Update** - Peter reported the restrooms by the Slingerlands parking area are under construction. We can't wait!
- **CRTC Active Transportation Advisory Committee** -
 - Ed gave a presentation on October 8th about the World Day of Remembrance for Victims of Road Traffic
 - See: <https://www.youtube.com/live/Svl9uQRNva0>
- **Upper Madison Street Fair Report** - We had a very busy time table, showing people our bike map and other resources and sharing our advocacy work. Thank you to Andrew, Dan Plaat & Mark for helping out!

Transportation Projects

- **Central Avenue - Albany**
 - <https://www.albanyny.gov/2327/Central-Avenue>. The City page hasn't been updated since before the event in July. We expect another public meeting announcement.
- **Central Avenue West Corridor Study - Colonie**
 - The Town of Colonie is finally moving on its Central Ave project from New Karner Road to the Niskayuna border. This area includes the spot where cyclist Joseph Crandall was struck and killed last year in broad daylight.
 - Open House/Public Meeting: November 13th from 4 - 7pm at the Midway Fire Dept Bldg: 1956 Central Ave, Colonie.
 - Please complete and share the survey found on the project website: <https://www.coloniecentralavestudy.org/participate>
- **Resilient Broadway Draft Concepts** -
 - Are more bike/ped infrastructure improvements coming to Broadway?
 - The concepts were presented Saturday morning Oct 26th at Menands Farmers Mkt - which unfortunately conflicted with our Halloween Ride
 - The firm doing the work promised to post their work soon at: <https://www.resilientbroadway.com/>
- **Route 4 North Greenbush Corridor Study** - final report published
 - Ding Dong the proposed two lane traffic circles are dead! (they would have rendered the bike lanes useless and been ultrahazardous for pedestrians)

- The proposed extra northbound lane is postponed indefinitely (more lanes only leads to more and faster traffic)
 - <https://www.nyroute4study.com/documents-1>
- **Brevator Street** - Ed reported that paving the West side of the street and the new median construction are underway. On the East side concrete is being removed for repaving and the new multi-use path.
- **Livingston Ave Bridge** - Work continues and will for years to come. The TU reported \$215M in federal support on October 25th.
- **Blessing Road Trail Progress** - Glenn provided a post meeting update that the multi-use trail along the East side of Blessing from Krumkill to Eton Drive appears completed EXCEPT for a dangerous trench at the Eton Drive terminus. Hopefully, that will be corrected very soon. Peter reported the trail is expected to be extended to the Rt 85 traffic circle next year.
- **Frisbie Ave Project Update** - we noted no apparent construction or news since the last public meeting. However, Frisbie does crop up in the City's 2025 budget proposal as having federal dollars.
- **Re-Imagining 787 Oct 23rd Open House Report**
 - Ed reported attending the open house at the Capital Center. The plethora of proposals is now down to five concepts. Most appear to advocate some kind of "boulevardizing" of 787 and opening more street access from 787 into the City and across 787 from the City to the Hudson.
 - <https://webapps.dot.ny.gov/draft-pel-report-and-materials> (Oct 2024 docs are here if you scroll down!)
 - Comment Link: <https://arcg.is/We5yb> or Contact: 787@dot.ny.gov
 - Next Open House:
 - 11/6 5-7 p.m. Howe Branch Library 105 Schuyler St, Albany
- **NYS Transportation Master Plan**
 - <https://www.nytransportationmasterplan.com/>
 - Draft "Vision" and "Goals" with survey <https://nytransportationmasterplan.com/#tab-52620>

Rides & Other Business

- **Halloween Ride** - Was another success with 14 happy riders on a crisp fall day.
- **Albany Social Cycling** is still holding weekly "Slow Roll Albany" Rides
 - Check this [Instagram link](#) for info, they are rolling earlier as days shorten
- **We decided to hold our November 21st meeting at Lark Hall** - 351 Hudson Avenue (by corner of Lark St). There will be a Zoom option.

- **Instead of a December meeting, we will hold an evening Holiday Lights Bike Ride** - likely to be followed by a trivia night at some venue. Details to be announced.