

Pien, Janet

From: David Long [dlong@ssc.wisc.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, November 28, 2012 11:08 AM
To: Tolley, Sabrina; Pien, Janet
Subject: vocal but under-informed Bike Federation members

As a member of the Bike Fed of WI, I just got received a rallying cry from Amanda White, the associate director of the federation. Per her e-mail, I'm sure you will be hearing from many members tonight and in days to come, so I wanted to share with you my reply to her (below).

While the problems with the existing lighting have been better articulated by others, my basic concern with respect to the upcoming hearing is that many of those who will weigh in in support of the lighting have not actually seen the proposed lighting. Simply put, I believe they would feel very differently if they had.

Thanks for your hard work and attention to this issue,
Dave Long

Original Message -----

Subject:Re: REMINDER! Final Support Needed for SW Path Lighting TONIGHT
Date:Wed, 28 Nov 2012 10:48:59 -0600
From:David Long <dlong@ssc.wisc.edu>
To:amanda.white@wisconsinbikefed.org

Dear Amanda,

I'm a longtime bike fed member and an avid year round commuter on the SW path and while I'm eager to encourage bike commuting, I *really* don't like the proposed lighting.

While lighting may or may not be a idea in principal I think most who have experienced the glare from the test lamp (adjacent to Gregory) will agree that the proposed design is awful. I suspect when push comes to shove that most riders would rather see the path illuminated by their headlamp than face the head on glare produced by the test lamp. The baffles simply don't work as intended.

It might be too late now, but I hope the members who are going to speak on it's behalf have all had a chance to see the proposed lighting. If the design doesn't go through a major overhaul I think it will make the evening commute will feel unpleasant at best.

Any chance that you would encourage the members you've rallied in support of lighting to also rally for a better design?

Dave Long
PS: I am not an adjacent property owner :)

On 11/28/2012 10:25 AM, Amanda White, Wisconsin Bike Fed wrote:

REMINDER: Please attend TONIGHT's public hearing for lighting the SW Path or write the Common Council (see details below).



ACTION ALERT!

FINAL decision being made on lighting Madison's Southwest Path

After a long debate around lighting the SW Bike Path, the issue will be voted on by Madison's Common Council in December. Before the vote, a FINAL public hearing is being held by the City of Madison's Pedestrian Bicycle Motor Vehicle Committee and Public Works Committee next Wednesday. The Bike Fed encourages you to attend this very important public hearing and stand in favor of lighting the path. This is our **last chance to show support** for improving safety and visibility on Madison's most popular bicycle path. There will be very vocal opposition, so your positive comments WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE in the final decision. (See below for talking points on why lighting is vital)

To continue to build a vibrant city where people enjoy many convenient transportation choices, we must make bike paths and other transportation facilities as safe and accomodating as possible. The outcome of this decision can impact opportunities to light future paths in our community. Please attend and support bicycling in Madison.

SW Bike Path FINAL Public Hearing
Wednesday, Nov. 28
7:00pm
City County Building Room 201
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd

If you are unable to make the meeting next week, you can still have a **strong impact by emailing** members of the Common Council at allalders@cityofmadison.com AND members of next week's hearing at stolley@cityofmadison.com and japien@cityofmadison.com before the 28th.

For more information on this project, visit the City's [website](#). **The City has done a good job of listening to all feedback and revising the lighting option to meet all users' needs.**

If you have questions or comments for the Bike Fed, please don't hesitate to contact Amanda White at (608) 251-4456 x1 or Amanda.White@WisconsinBikeFed.org.

Talking Points

- **Provide an enhanced feeling of safety for potential bicyclists:** If we as a bicycling community want to encourage more people to bike in Madison, we must make improvements such as lighting. Moms, kids, seniors, and other casual bicyclists do not choose to bike in conditions, like the SW Path after dark, that feel less safe. In July, Bike Fed conducted a SW Path lighting survey, and found that 71% responded that they would feel more safe biking at night with lighting.

- **Heavy usage:** The SW Bike Path is our most popular path, with over 3,000 users per day in peak periods. It has become a high-traffic corridor for bicycle transportation. For safety reasons, this bike highway should be lit just like any sidewalk or street in heavy-traffic, urban areas.
- **WisDOT classifies the SW Path as a Transportation Corridor:** While the path is enjoyed by a variety of users, WisDOT has classified the path as a transportation corridor. Considering the heavy usage, we must light this corridor just like any other urban traffic thoroughway to ensure all users' safety. Biking and walking are legitimate modes of transportation and should be provided the same amount of support (lighting, signage, etc) as other transportation options.
- **Reduce collisions:** We've received numerous complaints over the years about collisions on the path at night due to limited visibility. While we always encourage bicyclists to use lights and all users to wear reflective clothing, the truth of the matter is too few people make themselves visible.
- **Avoid path debris:** While we all love the mature trees that hug the path, they also drop a lot of debris (Acorns, sticks, wet leaves, etc). We've heard stories of bicyclists not seeing this debris, given the pitch-black nature of the path. People have been thrown from their bikes from hitting debris or even small critters that come out onto the path at night.
- **Why not solely encourage and enforce bike light usage?** We do and should enforce bike light usage. However, even if every single person using the path did have a bright white front light, this would not solve the safety problem. Most affordable bike lights are not meant to illuminate the road or path in front of the bike like a car headlight is meant to do. Their sole purpose is to make the bicyclist more visible to oncoming road/path users. This still leaves bicyclists vulnerable to debris on the pavement and collisions with other walkers and bicyclists who are coming head on without a light or reflective clothing. We've also heard the complaint that bicyclists with expensive, high-powered lights that do illuminate dark conditions, have the negative impact of blinding oncoming bicyclists and walkers.

Thank you and see you next Wednesday!

This email was sent to dlong@ssc.wisc.edu by amanda.white@wisconsinbikefed.org
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