

Pien, Janet

From: Shawn Schey [shawnschey@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, November 26, 2012 4:58 PM
To: ALL ALDERS
Cc: Tolley, Sabrina; Pien, Janet
Subject: Lighting the SW Bike Path between Breese & the Beltline

Dear Alderpersons:

I am a user of the SW bike path, and no, I don't live on it. But I am against lighting it.

Visual acuity and ability to see well would be greatly compromised by 20'-high lights. And a large number of people use this path specifically at dusk and dawn because of the beauty of the sky and serenity of the woods while the natural light is changing at those times. Lighting the path would obliterate that beauty.

A sensible design would involve some tasteful illuminated signage, some painted stripes along the sides of the path and selective placement of low-height no-glare low-powered "visual reference" fixtures.

I believe that our city should be a pioneer in responsible lighting design for natural transportation corridors like this. It will never happen if we adopt inappropriate, antiquated overhead lighting fixtures borrowed from the world of motorized vehicles and retrofitted with first-generation LED glare panels that are then pitched as "green" technology.

Please don't support lighting the path.

(1) *"The lighting design for the Southwest Bike Path between Breese Terrace and the Beltline Highway, if built as described at the July 19 public meeting, will create an unsafe situation for both bikers and other users of the path."* - David Leibl, author of the lighting section for the WI Department of Transportation Bike Path Design Manual. (in comments on 7/20 to the city's project website)

(2) Sergeant Jim Dexhiemer of Madison Police Department stated at the July 19th meeting at Edgewood College that crime was not a valid rationale for this lighting project. Amy Streff, outreach coordinator and victim advocate at the Dane County Rape Crisis Center, stated at the same meeting that based on her professional experience working with sexual assault victims and police, the glare and shadows of overhead lighting on this isolated path would likely increase the relative risk of any type of assault.

The UW intentionally does not light many isolated paths for this very reason. Overhead lighting in isolated public corridors (particularly a long, linear path with few intersections) benefits a potential assailant far more than a potential victim because it allows easier concealment, victim selection, and verification of whether others are approaching. This may be counter-intuitive, but it is obvious to many regular night-time users of this and similar paths.

As it is now, the only "crime" that ever really occurs on the unlighted section of the SW Path at night is (rare) graffiti, and that always occurs within view of an existing overhead light.

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