

**From:** [Bidar-Sielaff, Shiva](#)  
**To:** [Tolley, Sabrina](#)  
**Subject:** SW Bike Path Lighting - Email from Alder Bidar-Sielaff  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 27, 2012 6:10:47 PM

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Dear Sabrina,

Please forward my email below to the members of the PBMVC. Thank you so much.

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Dear PBMVC members,

I am unable to attend your meeting on 11/28 due to a scheduling conflict. As one of the alders through whose district the bike path runs, I have been closely involved in the discussion, neighborhood meetings and receiving feedback from my constituents for over a year now. I have carefully listened and evaluated this proposal. Please find below the email I shared with my constituents through our neighborhood listserves with my thoughts on the proposal.

I know you have been receiving numerous emails you have received and will most likely listen to many citizens provide testimony at your meeting.

Everybody wants a safe path. Everybody wants to support a good biking infrastructure. Everybody wants to have a pedestrian friendly path. So, why so much controversy? Because I do not believe we have yet found the appropriate type of lighting that would provide a good return on investment for lighting this corridor. Sometimes, time helps come up with better and cheaper technology- I think this is the case for this corridor and any claim of urgency to get this done now is not based on facts since there have not been actual safety issues on this path. It is also important to point out that there is an assumption that all bikers support this project and the only opponents are the homeowners adjacent to the path: based on the emails I have received from my constituents this is not the case.

I am committed to continue to support bike/ped project that are in my humble opinion higher priorities than this one and in tough fiscal times we should focus on high priority/high return on investment.

Thank you so much for your service on the PBMVC.

Best,

Shiva Bidar-Sielaff  
District 5 Alder  
(608) 220-6986

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**From:** Bidar-Sielaff, Shiva  
**Sent:** Monday, September 24, 2012 8:52 PM  
**To:** [regentneighborhoodassn@googlegroups.com](mailto:regentneighborhoodassn@googlegroups.com); [regentneighbors@yahoogroups.com](mailto:regentneighbors@yahoogroups.com); The Green  
**Subject:** SW Bike Path Lighting Update

Dear neighbors,

First and foremost I want to thank you all for your patience as citizens, city staff, and alders have been discussing whether to add lights to the SW Bike Path for the past nine

months or so. It has been a passionate debate on both sides of this proposal. I would summarize the main points as:

- Those in favor see lighting the bike path as a necessary step to promote a sense of safety for users and support more commuters biking through this very busy bicycling commuting route. One can indeed argue that just as streets have lights, so should other major transportation corridors such as a bike path.
- Those opposed have raised concerns over how intrusive the lights could be for those living immediately adjacent to the path. In addition, they have pointed out that the dark nature of this path is part of its attractiveness in an urban setting and that there have not been major safety issues on the path. They have also raised the issue of cost/benefit and whether, given the cost, this project is a top priority for improvement of pedestrian and bike infrastructure within the city.

Alders Solomon, Ellingson, Schmidt and I met last week to discuss this project and where we are at based on the input we have heard from citizens and staff. I expressed to my alder colleagues that at this point I do not support moving forward with this project. My main reason for not being supportive at this time is that, in balancing the feedback I have received on the project (I would qualify it overall as pretty much split in the middle in support and in opposition) and the city's long list of non-controversial pedestrian and bike infrastructure improvements, I see the allocated funds better used in other projects. I do believe that there are compelling arguments on both sides and I hope we can continue to have a civic and civil discussion on how to improve Madison's pedestrian and bike infrastructure.

Next steps? Any alder can decide to pursue this project. Certainly the 4 alders whose districts are affected do not all need to be in agreement for one of the alders to decide to pursue the project. If an alder decides to pursue it, it would go before the City Board of Public Works for approval of a contract bid for light installation and then before the City Council. If that were to happen, I will make sure to let you know so that you can email and/or testify. Again, I want to thank all of you who have shared your opinion on this project with me. I realize that my position will be supported by some of you and opposed by others. I hope that regardless of where you stand on this issue we can continue to work together to improve the bike and pedestrian infrastructure for our city.

Best,

Shiva Bidar-Sielaff

District 5 Alder