

From: Jennifer Munger [jhmunger@wisc.edu]
Sent: Sunday, May 25, 2008 5:13 PM
To: Traffic
Subject: Pedestrian/Bicycle/Motor Vehicle Commission

Dear Members of the Pedestrian/Bicycle/Motor Vehicle Commission,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to those concerned regarding the numerous wonderful bike paths found throughout Madison, and for the inclusion of bike paths on all new street construction. I have found that even with this snowy icy winter, the bike paths have been quite clean--often in much better condition than the city streets (I imagine since there were no parked cars or heavy traffic to contend with when plowing). These paths make being a year-round bike commuter much nicer. Most motor vehicle drivers are courteous and alert regarding bike paths and cyclists; I appreciate that as well.

Thank you for holding a hearing on 6 p.m. on Tuesday, May 27, 2008. If I can make it (I'm changing jobs right at that time) I will. If not, please let this email suffice. There is one project I can think of that would be excellent if it is possible: many cyclists in my area travel downtown by biking down Mifflin and Dayton streets from their beginning on the east side of town, getting to the Yahara crossing by going along the back side of the what once was called the Fiore Shopping Mall (where Sentry used to be, now I believe there is a paint store and some other things there). Next we cross the rail road tracks at Burr-Jones field, after which here is a nice paved spot to join up with a number of different routes, which is excellent. I'm wondering if there is any possibility of linking the back of the mall with the paved section, which would involve a bit more paving and putting out some of that rubber matting around the track as is found on streets and sidewalks that cross the rail road lines. To make that route fully usable would also mean keeping snow plow tailings away from the back corner of the Fiore parking lot--and also at the end of the lot of the building on the other side of the Yarara (I think it is owned by the state)--so that those headed for downtown directly can continue through that parking lot as well to meet up again with Mifflin Street. Many of us do it, but the rail road tracks cause a bit of an obstacle, and snowfall means that the plow tailings close off the route.

I understand this would require help and cooperation from the rail line, and the building owners and managers so that may mean a bigger challenge than is feasible. But I sure appreciate having the option of taking that route (riding down E. Johnson is horrible, E. Wash is pretty good actually, but it is nice to make a choice to have something less traveled by cars, and the Willy st. bike path is nice, but a bit out of the way). So if there is a way to make this possible, I'd love it! And I'm happy to do what I can to help if there is any way for me to do so.

A second thing: the underpass at the Yarhara and East Washington is wonderful! I do wonder why the path on the north side of the river does not meet up with--I believe it is Wilson street as does the path on the south side. That would make the path much more useful. Right now the path just loops back up to E. Wash, so you end up where you started. Therefore it doesn't get used, and, as a result, I've noticed a collection of cardboard and other evidence of people who apparently spend the night there because the area is undisturbed. Continuing the sidewalk along the river next to the lumber yard would mean more pedestrian/bike traffic, and thus discourage overnight lingerers.

Thank you for the opportunity of sharing my ideas. I would love to hear from you on its feasibility. Best wishes to you on your plans and recommendations.

With warm regards,
Jennifer Munger