

## Pien, Janet

---

**From:** Zac Albrecht-Heiks [zac.albrecht@shopbop.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 28, 2012 11:57 AM  
**To:** ALL ALDERS  
**Cc:** Pien, Janet; Tolley, Sabrina  
**Subject:** I'm AGAINST lighting the SW Path

As an avid cyclist, a bike commuter, and lover of cycling at night, I would like to weigh in on the debate over lighting the SW bike path. I am **opposed** to lighting the path for the following reasons:

1. Riding in unlit areas is safer because the cyclist's eyes may adjust to the darkness, giving them better general visibility. Frequently passing the city lights makes it difficult to see the less visible spaces in between each light, and can actually be disorienting as your eyes attempt to adjust to multiple levels of darkness. I find riding down the dark part of the John Nolen path much easier than riding in a well-lit area. I've been riding around dark bike paths every night, for years, and have not had an incident yet.
2. Lighting the path is a waste of resources. Even with the lighting, bike lights will continue to be required in other areas, which means the lighting will be excessive. Money would be better spent on other, less controversial cycling/pedestrian initiatives. (More frequent sweeping of the path?)
3. Light pollution in this city has worsened in the years since I've lived here. If it were possible to light the path with dim LED bulbs that were less than a foot high, and the lights were pointed directly at the path instead of the surrounding area, I *might* reconsider. But even that feels like too much, when we already have people riding with lights on their bikes (as a law!).
4. One of the things I've long valued about the west side of town is the calmness and darkness of the SW path at night. Lighting the path would make a formerly beautiful area ugly. I would ride less on that path if it were lit, and cut through a neighborhood instead – arguably more dangerous. I would feel sorry for the homeowners who live along the path. If I were deciding to buy a home near the path, the lighting would be a deal-breaker on an otherwise good house.

If we do this at all, let's do this right.

**ZAC ALBRECHT**  
[zac.albrecht@shopbop.com](mailto:zac.albrecht@shopbop.com)

**SHOPBOP**