

Public Comment Submitted Post-Meeting to PBMVC for 5/22/12 Public Hearing

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From: Steve.Arnold@Fitchburg.WI.US [mailto:Steve.Arnold@Fitchburg.WI.US]

Sent: Tuesday, May 22, 2012 3:06 PM

To: Traffic

Cc: Steve.Arnold@Fitchburg.WI.US

Subject: Please program and fund the connection of Perry Street over the Beltline

Members of the Pedestrian/Bicycle/Motor Vehicle Commission:

I regret that I will not be able to be with you tonight because of conflicting meetings of the Fitchburg Public Safety and Human Services Committee, and the Fitchburg Common Council, on which I serve. Please accept this written testimony. I would greatly appreciate your acknowledgement and response, either as a body or individually, at the address below.

On behalf of current and future residents of eastern Fitchburg and Madison south of Wingra Creek, please consider adding an overpass over the Beltline at Perry Street to the Madison Capital Improvement Program.

Before I became active in politics, I'm told that a reconnection of Perry Street was discussed, approved, and funded, but that the project was later derailed, and the funds used to improve the Todd Drive/Beltline underpass. I am not certain of this history, but I can say that a Perry Street connection is now more important than ever.

The limited-access Beltline traversed undeveloped farmland when it was first built, but now separates and isolates neighborhoods. Between Fish Hatchery Road and Park Street, the Beltline separates the primarily residential Burr Oaks neighborhood to north from the industrial and commercial Stewart Street neighborhood to the south. In particular, it separates residents who need jobs from opportunities for employment. It concentrates automobile traffic and public transit onto Fish Hatchery Road, and serves as a complete barrier to bicyclists and pedestrians (except when vandals cut the Beltline fences to enable pedestrians to cross the Beltline on foot!).

Fitchburg is unusual, and perhaps unique in Wisconsin, in including many square miles of undeveloped agricultural and wild land within its municipal boundary, and for that reason, in having a fifty-year regional development plan. The regional plan follows the concepts of UW Landscape Architecture Emeritus Professor Phil Lewis: Develop urban centers along transportation corridors (rivers, canals, and railroad), except where the transportation corridors are crossed by environmental corridors. Thus Fitchburg has adopted an urban development boundary focusing future development along its eastern rail line, and adopted three neighborhood plans for transit-oriented development (TOD) along that corridor.

The comprehensive plans also calls for four principle north-south bicycle transportation routes: Seminole Highway/Badger State Trail, Fish Hatchery Road, the eastern rail line/Syene Road, and CTH MM/Rimrock Road. The third of these connects Fitchburg's future TODs, including Nine Springs, now under construction between the rail line and US Highway 14, with Madison's Park Street corridor and Metro's South Transfer Point, except for the Beltline barrier at Perry Street. Without the Perry Street connection, cyclists must detour west to Fish Hatchery Road, or east to Rimrock Road, to get over the Beltline, discouraging active transportation to Madison from these areas.

Should the City of Madison complete the Perry Street connection, economic activity, and property values, on both sides of the Beltline will increase. Travel distance between Stewart Street and Burr Oaks will be cut to a half or a third, to easy walking distance, and congestion on Badger Road, Fish Hatchery Road, and Greenway Cross will be dramatically reduced. Metro Transit routes, including 16 and 40, can be rationalized to run faster and better serve Madison's and Fitchburg's neighborhoods. New Fitchburgh neighborhoods, such as

Nine Springs, which are being built and marketed as "bicycle friendly", will contribute transit riders, bicyclists, and customers to the Park Street corridor instead of more single-occupancy private vehicles to Fish Hatchery Road.

There is frequently pushback from current residents against any kind of new connection because of the fear of through traffic. I argue against this pushback by demanding to know why residents should be able to enjoy a "quiet neighborhood" while being able to drive through any of the other neighborhoods of our cities. I offer instead a "fair share" concept: with lots of connections, people have many options for getting from one place to another, and no neighborhood is burdened by excessive traffic. I hold that new traffic patterns over a Perry Street connection should not be burdensome, and the decrease in congestion elsewhere, and better accessibility, will be ample compensation.

In the past, it has been asserted that what the Stewart Street neighborhood really needs is for Post Road to connect west to Fish Hatchery Road, and that this connection (in Fitchburg) should be the top priority. Fitchburg is now well along to making that connection, with one home purchased and demolished, a second purchased for demolition or moving, the remaining property acquired, funds allocated, and development agreements authorized to begin roadbuilding this year. I ask that Madison now do its part to make the critical Perry Street connection over the Beltline barrier.

I am encouraged that the state Department of Transportation is making safety improvements to the Beltline at Fish Hatchery Road and Park Street, and is preparing to study the Beltline as a whole. I am grateful that Federal highway projects can now fund mitigation of pedestrian and bicycle barriers near the project, and am hopeful that this could be a source of funding for the Perry Street connection. In any event, connections over or under limited access highways like the Beltline and US Highway 14 are critical to mitigate congestion by keeping local traffic off the regional highway system, and Fitchburg will continue to invest in crossings. I hope Madison will do the same.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Steve Arnold, Fitchburg Alder, District 4, Seat 7
2530 Targhee Street, Fitchburg, Wisconsin 53711-5491
Telephone +1 608 278 7700 · Facsimile +1 608 278 7701
Steve.Arnold@Fitchburg.WI.US · <http://Arnold.US>
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From: Ted Voth Jr [mailto:tedvothjr@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, May 23, 2012 12:00 AM

To: Tolley, Sabrina; ALL ALDERS; Mayor; MABA

Subject: More on PBMV Comm

Split Brain

“Split brain” is a lay term to describe the result when the [corpus callosum](#) connecting the two hemispheres of the brain is severed to some degree. It is an association of symptoms produced by disruption of or interference with the connection between the hemispheres of the brain...

A patient with a split brain, when shown an image in his or her left visual field (the left half of what both eyes take in, see [optic tract](#)), will be unable to vocally name what he or she has seen. This is because the speech-control center is in the left side of the brain in most people, and the image from the left visual field is sent only to the right side of the brain... Since communication between the two sides of the brain is inhibited, the patient cannot name what the right side of the brain is seeing. The

person can, however, pick up and show recognition of an object (one within the left overall visual field) with their left hand, since that hand is controlled by the right side of the brain.'

[<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Split-brain>]

'Split brain' is the perfect metaphor to describe the City's Transit/Parking Commission, since in this time, when our atmospheric CO₂ parts per million, is 385 ppm and counting, rather than the optimal 350 ppm, in great part due to automobile emissions. One way to boost walking and biking, and use of Metro, by discouraging automobile use, would be to use parking revenues to augment Metro capital and operating budgets, the T/PC— 'slash' used deliberately— has suffered, or rather was set up to imitate, a '[corpus callosotomy](#),' 'the surgical operation to produce this condition.'

So, repair this 'split-brain' commission, and let it function as a whole, not a schizophrenic madman.

For while walkers, bikers, and drivers are all intrinsically mutually antagonistic, Metro coexists quite happily with all three estates.

When you think of the Pedestrian/Bicycle/Motor-Vehicle Commission, think of a food chain. Imagine a 'Mouse/Cat/Dog Commission:' A normal dog will chase a cat, but may ignore a mouse; however a normal cat will chase a mouse.

However, pedestrians interface quite nicely with Metro; we ride readily if we have a long way to go, or if our bad leg is kicking up.

Likewise, bicyclists: consider the immense success of the bike-racks on our buses.

And there are even the Metro's 'choice riders,' about whom Metro used to brag so much [until some smart ass pointed out that the French word for 'choice' is *élite*...] that is, the 9-to-5, 5-day-a-week commuters who find it easier and more economical to leave the SUV and the monster pick-up in the garage and ride Metro to work.

Consider a remarkably similar geographical situation to our Isthmus, which so unsuits our city for automobiles, like our Isthmus a narrow strip of land bordered by water, stretching from NE to SW— I refer, of course, to the island of Manhattan: folks living on Manhattan have essentially long since up given on privately owned automobiles, and rely on Shank's mare, and public transit, cabs, buses, and their superb subway, to get around their island.

After all, isn't Madison 75 square miles of reality surrounded by the rest of the United States? Hasn't Mad City been fortunate to learn much culturally from our immigrants and refugees from the Big Apple and other Eastern Cities? Let's adopt their sophistication here as well.

It makes nothing but sense to use our City parking revenues to improve Metro; incidentally, to discourage our America addiction to automobiles;

But immediately:

- to make it easy, not punitive, to ride Metro
- to restore lost Metro routes,
- to restore late-hour Metro service,
- to extend Metro service early and late, so 2nd-shift workers can ride home from work, and 3rd-shift workers can ride in to work,
- to restore lost Metro bus stops,
- to restore 15 or 20 minute Metro headways,

- to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, fares,

[Hey, after all, don't motorists drive 'free' on our 'free'

streets? Don't they park 'free' in 'free' parking spaces? Fair is fair, and 'Turn-about is fair play...']

- to establish Metro Bus Rapid Transit, 'BRT,'

[Madison Area Bus Advocates, mabaa@tds.net, or devos@ssc.wisc.edu, of whom I'm one, have the route map and the plans.]

- ultimately, to establish safe, comfortable, frequent, 24-7 Metro bus service as the preferred means of travel throughout the humane, urbane city that Madison is and ought to be,
- and to assist in extending that service to our surrounding county .

I also suggest to you, urge you strongly, and not so much as a 'taxpayer,' but as a Citizen, one of us the sovereign people of Madison, and as such one of your employers, tell you, to require all City of Madison employees, officers, and elected public officials, to walk, bike, and/or Metro to and from work, especially City Engineering and Madison Metro officers and employees, but not excluding anyone one else.

Truly Yours,

TV2

—

Jesus is Lord.

Ted Voth Jr,
tedvothjr@gmail.com
1335 Williamson #2
Madison Wisconsin 53703
[\(608\) 257-1799](tel:(608)257-1799)

From: Peter Herreid [mailto:peter.herreid@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, May 30, 2012 5:46 PM

To: Traffic

Subject: Bike Infrastructure Improvement Input

Madison Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Motor Vehicle Commission,

Thanks for requesting suggestions on bike infrastructure improvement from the public. I have been pleased with all of the improvements to Madison's bicycle infrastructure in recent years. However, there is more work to be done in order to get to a ride share of 20%. Please excuse me if I am repeating what others have commented or what you have discussed in committee, but here are a few ideas:

Create multi-use Lake Mendota Path from James Madison Park to Union Terrace: I know the city planning department has been working on this and it is in the Downtown Madison Plan, but it isn't clear that the future path would be wide enough to accommodate bikes. The Lake Mendota Path is not specifically included in a city bike infrastructure planning document that I am aware of.

Install sharrows on Arboretum Drive: This is a popular road for jogging, walking, and bicycling, but it is narrow with motor vehicle traffic. Some motorists seemed annoyed if bicyclists are not biking on the edge of the road. Sharrows would let everyone know bicyclists belong in the middle of the lane.

Facilitate better crossing of John Nolan Drive at Williamson, Broom, North Shore Drive, and E. Lakeside St. I know the committee is well aware of these intersections, so I won't repeat things. However, I have noticed that cars sometimes blow through red lights on the North Shore Drive intersection when they are coming off the causeway. I always pause and look again before crossing, but others may not.

Improve Broom Street for bicycling from John Nolan Drive through Wilson St. intersection. Bicyclists are told to take the lane on such sections of roadway, but this is pretty intimidating for most people on bike. This block-long section of Broom Street is a mess to navigate for bicyclists (and pedestrians to some degree).

Improve route between Beltline Bike Path and West Towne Mall. From where the Beltline Bike Path ends at Grand Canyon Drive to West Towne Mall, it is difficult for bicyclists to navigate, particularly the short stretch along Odana Road and the intersection at Odana and Gammon roads.

Lobby and possibly contribute city money for an off-street bike path route to Devil's Lake. The DNR has talked about creating a path on the railroad corridor from the Badger Ammunition Path to Devil's Lake. Making the off-street bikeway contiguous all the way to Madison would benefit Madisonians. This would also be a step towards completing the off-street route from La Crosse to Milwaukee running through Madison.

Improve city's Bike Madison webpages. Unless you are a policy wonk, it is hard to decipher what the city is currently doing in terms of infrastructure improvement projects and what it has planned. Some of the pages are out of date or loaded with text where a simple map or graphic would serve the reader better. Ideally, it would include an interactive map displaying current and future routes.

Thanks,
Peter Herreid

-----Original Message-----

From: Jon Standridge [mailto:jstandri@facstaff.wisc.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 9:27 AM
To: Tolley, Sabrina
Cc: porchchat@gmail.com
Subject: RE: bike paths

Thanks for forwarding my comments and thanks for the info related to Shorewood. I'll see what I can do to influence them.

I had another observation while riding the bike path on Wingra Drive heading East. At the stop light at Wingra Dr and Park St the "right turners" get the "go" at the same time as the bikers who are continuing across Park St. The right turning cars often do not yield to the bikes. This has been fixed at Wingra and Fish Hatchery with "yield to bikers" and a longer "red" for cars. Could this be done at Wingra and Park also?

Thanks, Nnacy