

TOWN OF NISKAYUNA
Complete Streets Committee

A G E N D A

January 28, 2022

2:30 P.M.

IN THE TOWN BOARD ROOM

Hybrid Attendance Available

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. MINUTES

1. December 10, 2021

IV. OLD BUSINESS

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2022 Goals

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Question 14 Summary – Community Survey (attached)

2. Complete Streets Map (attached)

3. Powerline Trails Research (attached)

VII. REPORTS

1. Comments to Metroplex (attached)

2. Planning Department Updates

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

NEXT MEETING

February 18, 2022

At 2:30 pm

**TOWN OF NISKAYUNA
COMPLETE STREETS COMMITTEE
Hybrid Meeting
Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2021**

Members Present: William Chapman, Chairman
Jim Levy
Tess Healey
Paulina Manzo
Karla Duggal
Andrew Millspaugh
Dart Strayer
Elise Corbin, Student Committee Member

Also Present: Laura Robertson, Planner

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 2:30pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Ms. Catherine Kuzman was absent/excused today.

III. MINUTES

1. October 29, 2021

The minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC CONCERNS

No public concerns today.

V. OLD BUSINESS

No old business today.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2022 Calendar – The Committee voted to accept the 2022 calendar.

VII. DISCUSSIONS

1. Planning Department Updates

- School Outreach
- Schenectady County Projects
- 1356 Balltown Road

Ms. Robertson discussed where the Town is with the School and the improvement project. She stated she reached out to the Superintendent to set up the meeting and is waiting for response. Ms. Robertson explained to the committee where the County is with their improvement project. She noted to the committee that the County has put Grand Blvd on the list for improvements to the sidewalks. Ms. Robertson reviewed with the committee the plans for the proposed development.

2. Chairman Discussion

- Empire State Trail
- CDTC
- Utility Companies Trails

The Committee discussed the Empire Stated Trail signage project. Ms. Duggal commented that there seems to be a lack of directional signs on the plan for the path and they could be very helpful for families using the bike path. Ms. Manzo stated in the plan where there will be signs on the path. She stated that additional signs could be helpful. She added that she did find the County signs a bit busy and fears there is too much information on them for visitors to read. Ms. Robertson suggested they forward Ms. Manzo's work to Metroplex to possibly see if they wanted to use this design. Chairman Chapman discussed a way to use QR codes to relay information to people on the path regarding locations and information for visitors. Chairman Chapman discussed with the committee about the continuous speed issues on Fieldstone and Dean Street. Ms. Robertson informed Chairman Chapman that the Police Chief appointed an officer to be liaison for speed and safety control.

Chairman Chapman discussed a possibility of utilizing utility company's trails for public walking and biking trails. He stated he would like the committee to start looking for possible trails within Niskayuna. Mr. Strayer stated he believes some of the trails are established and noted that this would really benefit the Town. Mr. Millsbaugh stated he had researched some information and found the Albany Hudson Electric Trail that has an established map of trails on National Grid owned land. Ms. Manzo asked if any precautions for safety are taken on these trails. Mr. Strayer stated in his experience, the trails have been very safe and marked well. The bottoms of the utility poles are usually fenced. Ms. Manzo added that this will also keep the paths maintained.

Chairman Chapman stated his interest in exploring this more and invited the other members to continue looking into this as well. Mr Strayer stated he would be interested in being a part of that subcommittee.

93 **3. REPORTS**

94 Chairman Chapman reviewed the goals accomplished in 2021 and on some of the goals from
95 2021 that will be carried into 2022. Some of these will be based on the survey that was
96 conducted in 2021 and will be finished this year.

97

98 **4. ADJOURNMENT**

99 With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.

DRAFT

Niskayuna Complete Streets Committee Goals for 2022 (draft Jan 2022)

1. Write up results of Survey of **Town Residents on walk-ability and bike ability** issues in the Town conducted in February and March of 2021. Thank-you to Jim Levy for making the final edits to the survey and to Laura Robertson for releasing the survey to Town Residents on Feb 9 2021 and to Committee members who recommended questions or topic areas that should be included in the survey. Town residents can now fill out the survey. Thank you to committee members for helping to tabulate and categorize narrative replies to questions.
2. Plan and execute a **demonstration project for 2022**. The Committee would like to plan and carry out a demonstration project in 2022. One possible idea that we have discussed is painting bike lanes on Lexington Parkway from Clifton Park Road to Dean Street. This project would provide residents with an opportunity to experience riding or walking in a designated bike lane on a local street. And it would give residents on this section of Lexington an opportunity to experience a bike lane on their street and provide comments to the committee on this experience.
3. **Send out 2022 priority letters** to State of New York, Schenectady County, Town of Niskayuna, and Niskayuna Central School District. Each letter identifies 3 priority items for each government entity as recommended by the Town Complete Streets Committee. The priority letters sent out in 2021 produced useful discussion with the County, the Niskayuna School District and the Town on pedestrian access, bike access and traffic issues articulated by the Complete Streets Committee.
4. **Improved bike ability and walk ability of each Niskayuna school campus**. On Tuesday Feb 9, 2021, Niskayuna voters approved two bond issues one for 68 million and one for 19 million to be used for improvements to the 8 school campus locations and the bus garage on Hillside Avenue. Earlier in 2020 the Complete Streets Committee provided input to the School District design and engineering consultants on ways that the 8 school building campuses could be made more bike and pedestrian friendly. We plan to stay in touch with the School District Supt and the School Board members to ensure that these improvements are part of the roadway, parking, bike and pedestrian access improvements that the School District will be implementing with these newly approved bonding funds. The Committee would also support and advocate for a 20 mile per hour school speed zone on Balltown Road near Craig Elementary School and a 20 mile per hour school speed zone on Rosendale Road (county road) in front of Rosendale Elementary and Iroquois Middle School.
5. **Possible Utility Corridor Trails in Niskayuna**. The Complete Streets Committee will continue to investigate the possibility of bike and pedestrian trails that would lie under power line corridors in the Town of Niskayuna. We have viewed successful examples of bike and hike trails on Utility Corridors in a recent chapter of Rails to Trails Magazine. Use of these corridors could be a very valuable means of linking bike and pedestrian paths (many using existing roads in the Town) that are reflected on our Complete Streets map of non-motorized bike and walking routes that assist residents in reaching schools, businesses, work, recreation areas, and other neighborhoods in the town. We would need to learn what steps other communities have taken to work out an arrangement with Utility Companies to make trail access possible. What would need to be done before we could encourage our Town Board

to consider a partnership with a Utility Company that could make creation and use of these trails a possibility.

6. **CO-OP block project and Crescent Road recommendations** Committee members have reviewed the intersection of Crescent Road and Clifton Park Road and made suggestions to the town on how the segment of road on Clifton Park Road that is on the west side of the CO-OP block can be designed to improve auto traffic movement, pedestrian movement, parking in this area, the sidewalk on West end of CO-OP block, and the Crescent Road connection to Clifton Park Road. Committee members would welcome the opportunity to review the final design for this intersection. Committee members will hopefully have the opportunity to review the final design of the CO-OP block project that we believe will be underway during 2022.
7. **Source document on Traffic Calming Examples** This document shows examples of traffic calming measures that are offered in the research studies on methods that have been found useful in calming auto traffic and speed of cars on roadways and which also promotes pedestrian access. The Committee will continue to add relevant examples to this document. This document would have examples that the Complete Streets Committee believe could be options for Niskayuna that could be examined by the Town Planning office, the Planning Board, the Highway Dept, the Conservation Advisory Council, and developers. We would try to provide examples where a local municipality has used the option and people could drive and see what it looks like in a real application.
8. **Crosswalks on Nott Street at Regent Street and also on River Road at ST Joseph's Drive.** Based on collecting actual usage data and input from Town residents the Committee believes that push button crosswalks at these intersections will promote improved safety for walkers and bikers who cross the busy county roads of Nott Street and River Road. We have provided our recommendations to the County Highway Department and will continue to support these additions.
9. **Rosendale Road sidewalk and sidepath improvements** The School District plans to send all 7th and 8th grade students to Iroquois Middles School and to send all 5th and 6th grade students to Van Antwerp Middle School. The Complete Streets Committee has been a strong advocate of neighborhood walk-able schools. There are improvements to largely asphalt walk paths needed to make Van Antwerp Middle School more walk able, but it is a campus where many students can now bike or walk to arrive at school. Iroquois Middle School resides, in contrast, on a very busy county road (Rosendale Road) that has pedestrian access only for the segment from Mayfair Drive to RoseHill Boulevard. Safe access for walkers and bikers on Rosendale Road would open access to many students and other residents who live on the North and South side of Rosendale Road. A side path on Rosendale Road would also link several neighbors together and allow safe bike and pedestrian movement along a busy, winding county road. The Committee will continue to do a review of Rosendale Road to examine feasibility (including cost estimates and possible grant sources) of a sidewalk from Upper Union to Mayfair Road, and asphalt side path from RoseHill BLVD to the entrance to the Liska-kill Nature Preserve.

- 10. Complete Sidepath along Hillside Avenue** There are segments along Hillside Avenue that connects Providence Avenue with Banker Avenue that do not yet have a side path constructed. These segments include property owned by National Grid, the United State Army (Army Reserve Center), apartment complexes, and two homes. The Committee could explore ways to move completion of these missing segments. Perhaps a letter to National Grid and a letter to the Army Reserve Center would be a way to start the process moving. They may have resources that could be used to complete this work that would be part of their standard community outreach/good neighbor policy. Hillside Avenue is a busy road with much truck traffic. It is also an important link between homes south of Providence Avenue and the Town Community Center and Swimming Pool. This road is also an important linking road to the Mohawk Hudson Bike Path for residents on the West side of Niskayuna.
- 11. Support efforts by Schenectady County for improved safety signage on the Bike Path.** Schenectady Metroplex is supporting informational and safety signage on the bike path. The Committee has offered suggestions to Metroplex for improved signage and will continue that effort, not only on the bike path but in other parts of Niskayuna.
- 12. Update Chapter 7 on Transportation of the Town Comprehensive Plan** This update would reflect the Town Boards adoption of a Complete Streets Policy for the Town. It would identify areas where the Town could take steps in the planning process to strengthen improved safe movement of cars (see traffic calming above), improved bus access, improved bike and pedestrian access throughout the Town. Having policy objectives reflected in the Town Comprehensive Plan will help guide the planning process for developers, the Planning Office, the Town Planning Board, Conservation Advisory Council, the ZBA, County Planning and other Boards as well as town residents. We also believe this update can help improve the success of applications submitted by the Town to Federal, State, County and private sector funding sources so as to be able to locate money that can make improvements to the Town infrastructure possible.
- 13. Make additions to the Town's website on information concerning the Complete Streets Committee.** Possible items to add to the Website on Complete Streets Committee would be our enabling Town Board Resolution (2016); Town Board Complete Streets Policy; Roster of Current Committee members; Complete Streets Committee accomplishments in each year 2018 to 2021; Updated Complete Streets map of Niskayuna showing suggested bike and pedestrian routes that residents' can use to safely walk or bike to destinations in the Town.

(draft by WRC January 25, 2022)

Question 14: If you have any additional thoughts on pedestrian bicycle safety in the Town of Niskayuna, please provide them below:

From the survey responses of Question 14 (open ended in nature) we were able to extract 7 ideas that reflect the concerns of the town residents regarding how pedestrian and bicycle safety can be improved in the Town of Niskayuna. These ideas are highlighted below.

1. **More Pedestrian and Bicycle Routes** - The most discussed issue with regards to addressing pedestrian and bicycle safety in the town involves the creation of additional pedestrian and bicycle routes. Possible solutions from residents included: the addition of more bike paths and sidewalks (39), more bike lanes and sharrows (18), as well as widened shoulders (5). Residents emphasized the importance of improving hike and bike connections to schools, parks, bike path, CDTA stops, commercial centers, workplaces as well as interconnections between neighborhoods. *Residents expressed concerns about a number of town streets that needed attention. Rosendale Road, River Road, St. David's Lane, Balltown Road and Nott Street were cited multiple times.*

2. **Community Education** – A number of residents stressed the importance of educating the community about pedestrian, bicycle, scooter, and automobile rules and laws (23). Two examples of Safe Driving Campaigns were discussed as a means to address this issue. One resident talked about the Safe Street Pledge Campaign which has been used successfully in other communities (e.g. <https://www.belmont.gov/departments/public-works/be-street-smart/safe-streets-pledge> and <http://longbeach.gov/goactive/b/take-the-safe-streets-long-beach-pledge/>) Another resident suggested an annual Safe Driving Campaign, an education program that could be implemented at the high school level, could target students before they begin driving. The program would serve to emphasize pedestrian and bicycle safety as well as rules of the road.

3. **Control Speeding** – Residents expressed the importance of controlling automobile speeding as a means to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety (22) Suggestions from residents of possible solutions are as follows:

- *Police enforcement and use of speed monitors (7)
- *More stop signs (3)
- *Lower speed limit (1)
- *The use of speed bumps (1)

1. **Police Enforcement of General Driving Laws** – Residents suggested more police enforcement of general driving laws to improve safety (11) Some suggestions are as follows:

- *Police enforcement of vehicles to stop at stop signs (7)
- *Police enforcement of parking on correct side of road (1)
- *Police enforcement of texting laws (1)

2. **Add More Crosswalks and Enhancements to Existing Crosswalks** - Survey respondents called for more crosswalks (10) and enhancements to existing crosswalks (4) (e.g. flashing lights, activated by walker) to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in the town.

3. **Better Snow Removal/Maintenance** Residents suggested better snow removal/maintenance on existing sidewalks, streets, bike path, and at crosswalks ((9).

4. **Additional Lighting on Streets** Survey respondents recommended more street lights on roads to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety (7).

Laura Robertson

From: Elise Corbin
Sent: Sunday, January 9, 2022 10:51 AM
To: Complete Streets

Subject: Follow up
Flagged

Follow Up Flag:
Flag Status:

Hi Complete Streets,

Last week I sent everyone a google map specifically for the utility corridor project, but I thought I should also send along this more general one that pinpoints locations for ongoing and completed projects, grants, and examples of things we're trying to implement (like the access point for the Albany Hudson Electric Trail). Everyone with the link I've attached has edit access so anyone can update it when necessary. If a version of this kind of resource already exists online, that's fine, but since it's often useful for Complete Streets members to visit and scope out the locations we're trying to improve, I thought it might be good to have a customized google map for the ongoing Complete Streets projects so people could keep track of where they all are and have easy access to directions if they want to get there.

Please let me know if there are any problems with the link. You should be able to access directions and other information for each location by clicking on the pin on the map that represents it.

Elise Corbin

https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1Y0rHMH2JN2FPAP_PQ681jQIgIt0MDD4u&usp=sharing

Complete Streets map

37 views

Last edit was 2 days ago

Add layer

Share

Preview

Ongoing projects

Clifton Park & Crescent

Plum St

Cornelius Ave

Lions Park/Empire State Trail

Harmon Grove Apartments

Dean St

1356 Balltown Rd

Nott & Regent

River & St Joseph's Drive

Rosendale Rd- Union St to M...

Rosendale Rd- Rosehill Blvd ...

Hillside Ave- south of Provid...

Examples

Mordella Road

Albany Hudson Electric Trail...

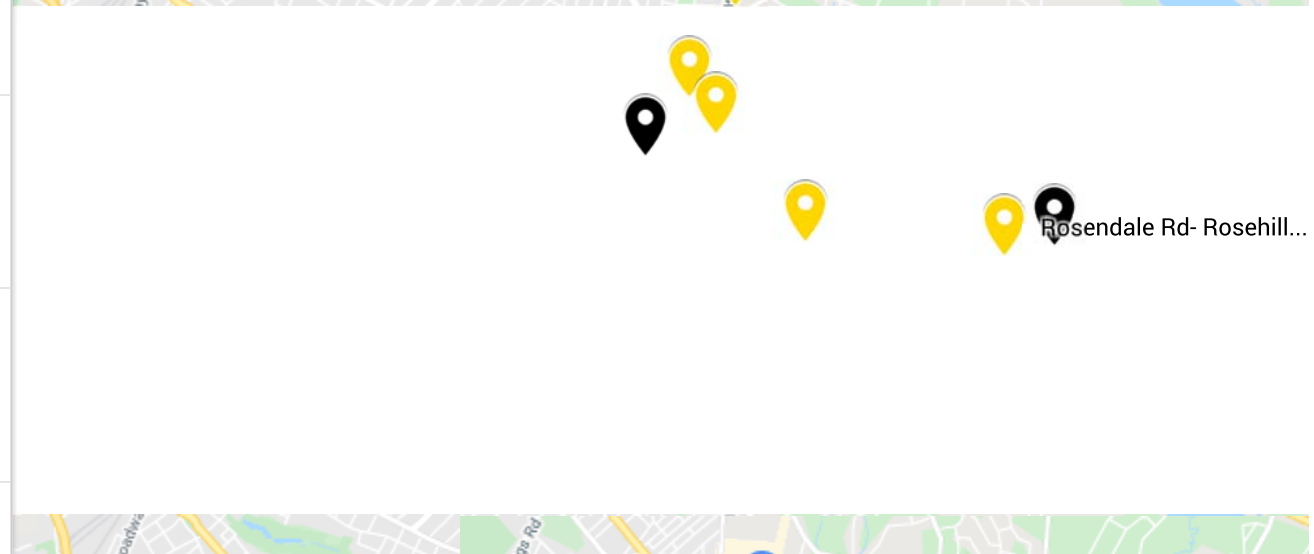
Grants

Co-op block

Nott St from Baker to Lexing...

Completed projects

For a better printing experience, select "Print map" in the file menu in the left panel.





Hi Complete Streets,

I agreed to do some research on current utility corridor access and infrastructure in Niskayuna at the December meeting, and I'm forwarding everyone the photos and comments I sent to Bill and Laura this evening, with attachments included. The links should be shared with everyone but if anything is inaccessible to you please let me know.

To clarify, I did not find a comprehensive map of utility corridors in Niskayuna. I just explored what seemed to be the most prominent ones I could find- if anyone knows of any more, or has found an official map, I'm happy to take similar photos of more corridors and add to the google map. I can also give the committee edit access to the google map so you can add your own photos and comments.

Finally, I mentioned in one of the emails below that I had explored the Albany Hudson Electric Trail system. I know many committee members have already been on this trail, but if anyone hasn't, here is what some of the signage and infrastructure looks like.

The Albany Hudson Electric Trail has both on-road and off-road portions, which are both very well marked in our area at least. In East Greenbush, the on-road trail is a marked bike lane, with signs like this at trailheads:



There are also some smaller roads part of the trail, which are still considered on-road, but have even more signage (especially at intersections), as well as railings in some places:





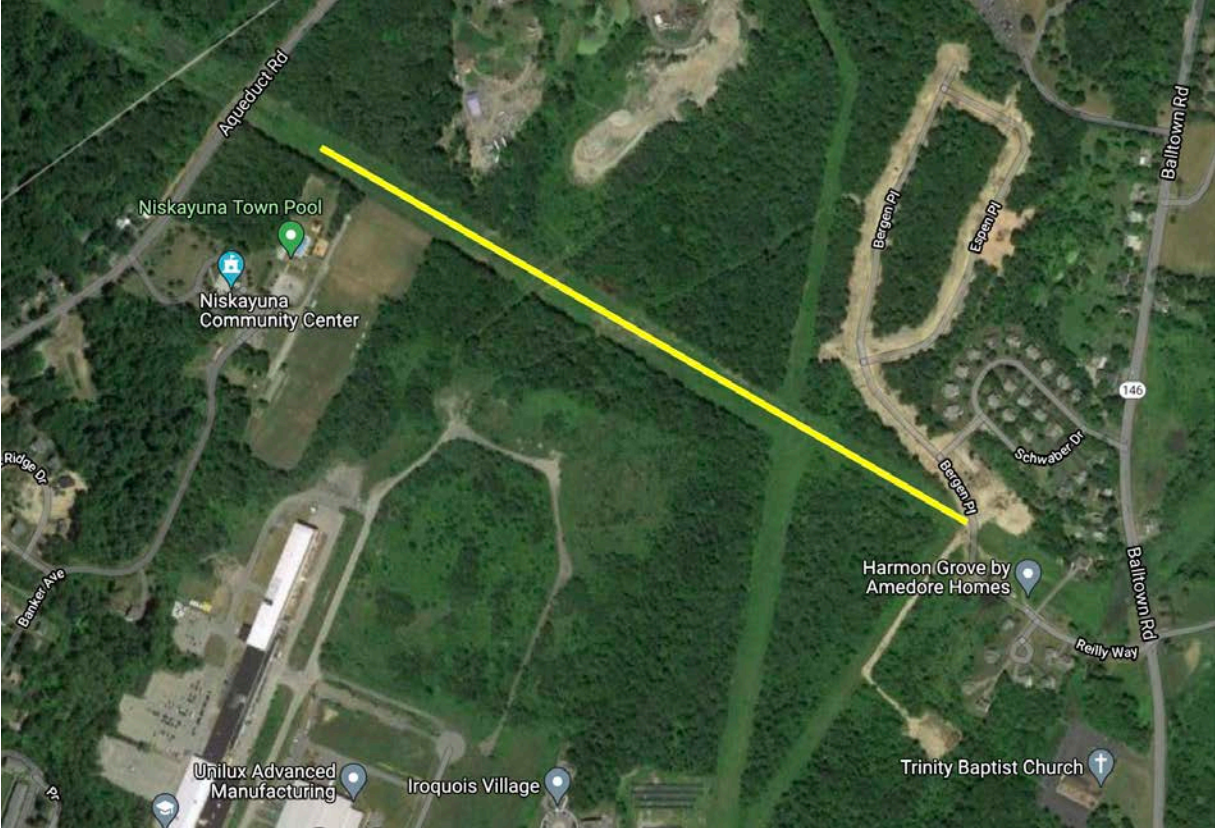
"Off-road" trailheads (which are still paved, although a little bit of this route is gravel) are marked with "No Motor Vehicles" signs, as well as little trash receptacles:

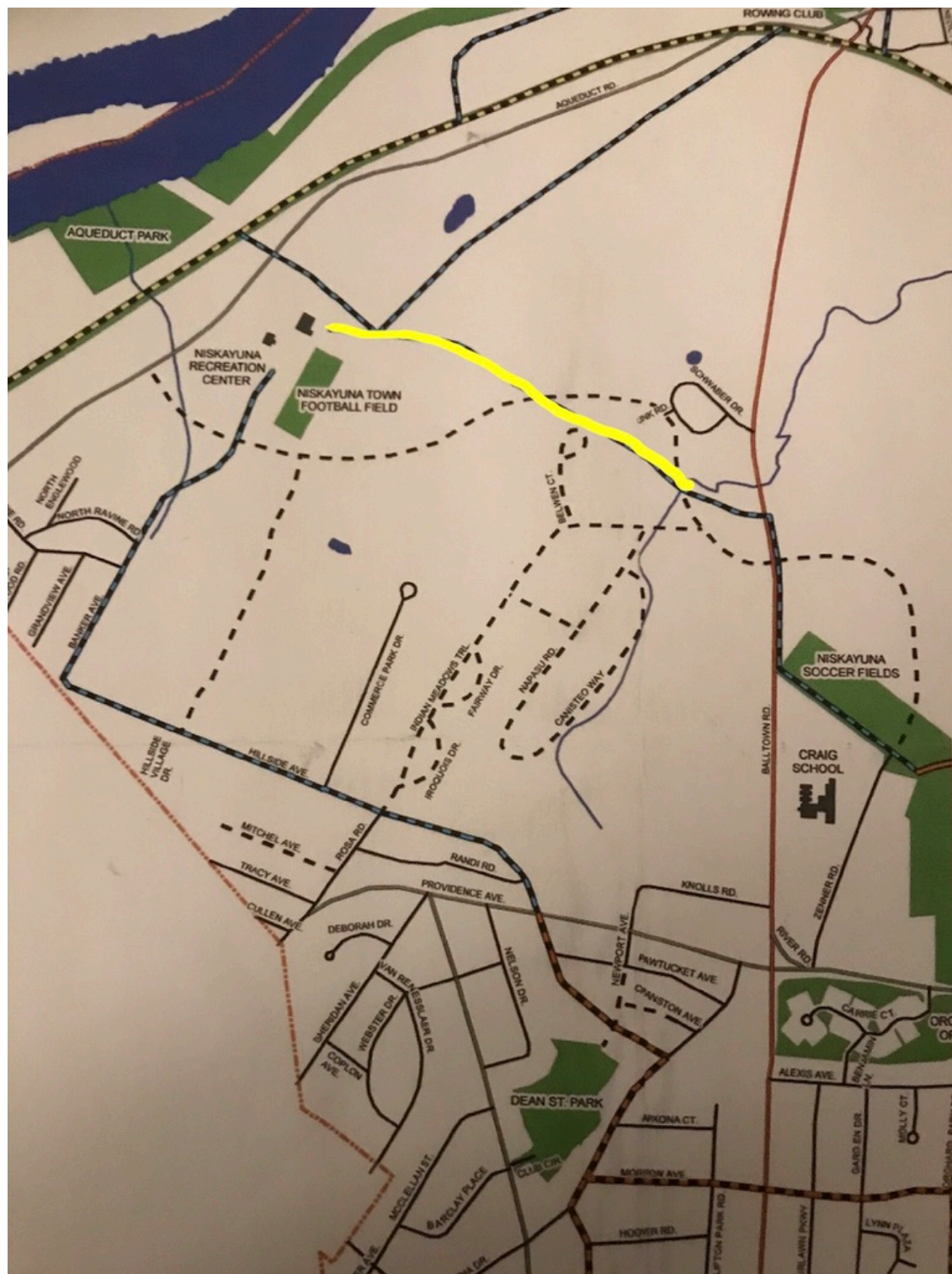


Also worth mentioning that the off-road trail has very well maintained paint, historical landmark signs (like those we were considering on the Mohawk Hudson trail), and well marked intersections with "stop ahead" signs:

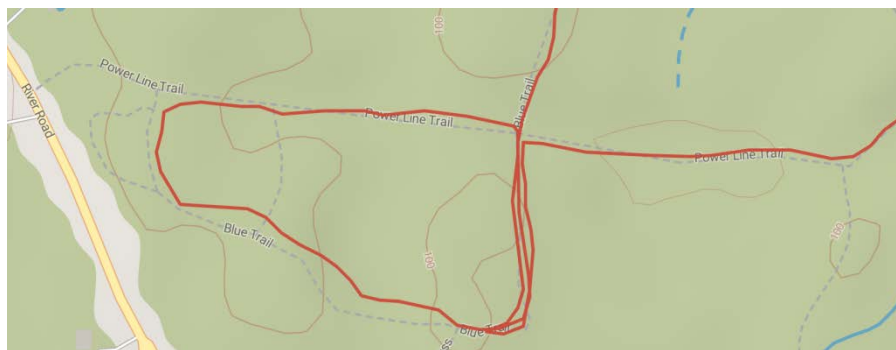
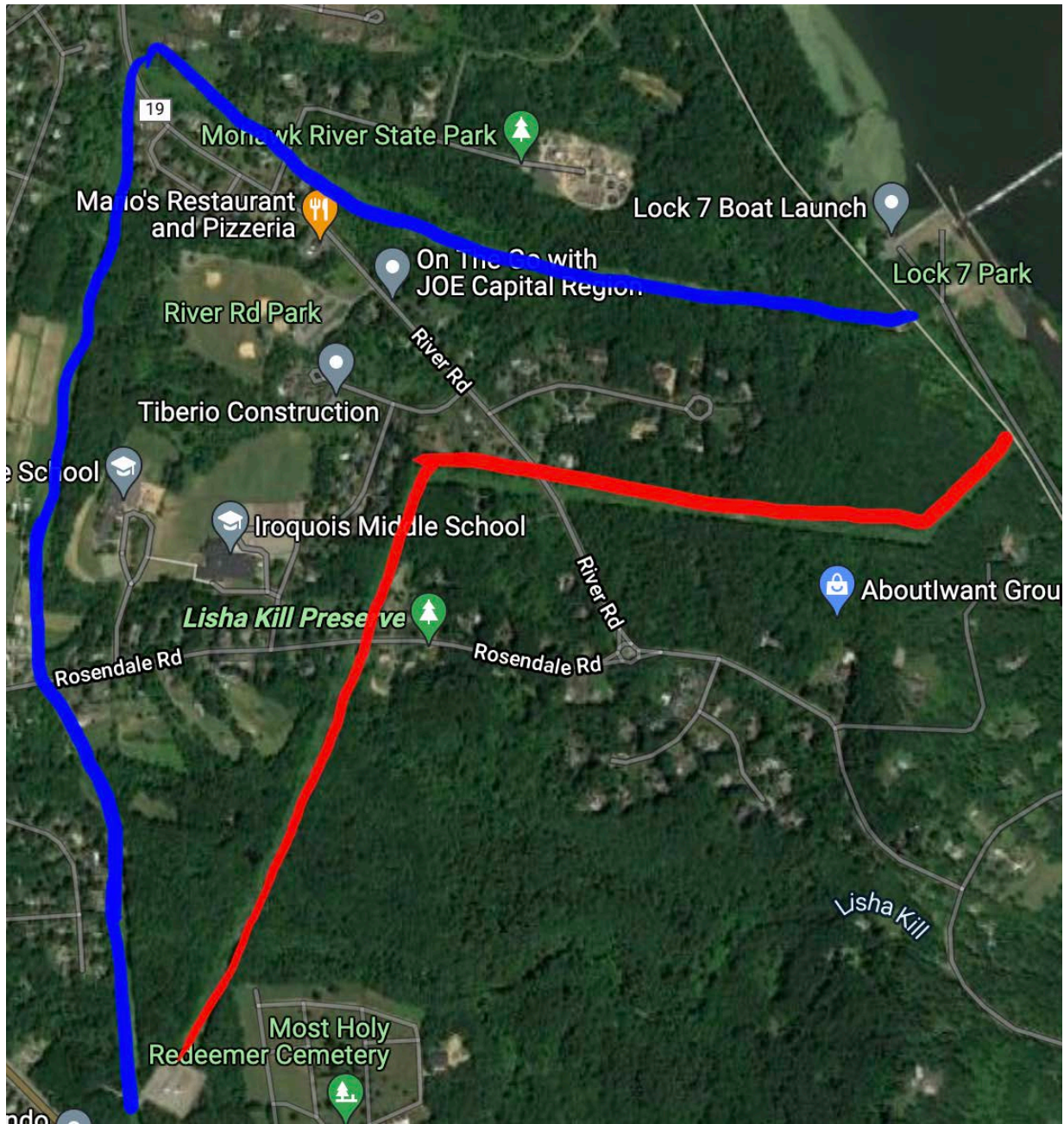


Hope you all had a great holiday season, and happy new year!
Elise Corbin









William R. Chapman
Chair, Niskayuna Complete Streets Committee
1465 Clifton Park Road
Niskayuna, NY 12309
wchapman@nycap.rr.com
December 30, 2021

Ray Gillen, Chair
Schenectady Metroplex Economic Development Authority
433 State Street
Schenectady, N.Y. 12305

Dear Chairman Gillen, RE: Schenectady Trails Comprehensive Wayfinding Plan

Members of the Niskayuna Complete Streets Committee have reviewed the "Schenectady Trails Comprehensive Wayfinding Plan" that was prepared by 2K Design for the Schenectady County Metroplex Development Authority and released to the public on November 5, 2021. The Metroplex Development Authority has asked for public comment on the Comprehensive Wayfinding Plan.

After discussion at our most recent December 10, 2021, meeting, the Niskayuna Complete Streets Committee would like to offer for your consideration the following comments.

1. QR code for Niskayuna Complete Streets map showing Hike and Bike Trail System for the Town of Niskayuna.

This QR code would include a link to the bike trail system for the Town of Niskayuna so that users of the Empire State Trail would be able to utilize a trail network to access destinations in the Town that are off the Empire State Trail. These destinations could be businesses, parks, residences, or municipal services located in the Town

2. Use of additional brief safety signage

Niskayuna Complete Streets committee members support the rules for use of the Empire State Trail that are listed on page 3 of the Wayfinding report. These rules will be presented to users at every major entry point to the Empire State trail. The report notes that trail users should be "boldly and consistently reminded of the rules of the road". The Town Complete Streets Committee member Paulina Manzo drafted a safety sign made up of 5 very brief bullet points (draft enclosed below). We believe these brief bullet point signs posted along the trail will alert users to some extremely critical trail use rules and will reinforce the more detailed set of rules that will be placed at the main trail entry points. Not all trail users will carefully review the set of 13 rules presented on page 3; but we are hopeful that a sign with a few briefly stated rules of the road will draw their attention and help promote courteous and safe use of the trail.

3. More extensive signage near Blatnick Park electronic crosswalk on River Road

As part of the development of the former Kelt's property in Niskayuna a pushbutton crosswalk will be installed by the developer on River Road across from the Blatnick Park little league baseball fields that will connect the hike and bike path extension from Windsor Drive to the Empire State Trail that runs along River Road in Blatnick Park. This signage could display the location in or near Blatnick park of auto parking, bathrooms, picnic areas, tremendous view of Mohawk River from the hill at the top of the capped landfill, baseball fields, playground, golf driving range, and the connecting trail to the business district at the center of the Town. In addition to the amenities in or near Blatnick Park a QR code on this physical sign would alert riders to the nearby businesses and other establishments in the Balltown Road/Nott Street East area such as dining, pharmacies, hardware store, grocery stores, gas station, banks, US Post Office, library, Police Dept in Town Hall, etc. These amenities near Balltown Road would be accessible by using the bike path that runs along Windsor Drive and Nott Street East in the Town of Niskayuna.

4. River Road and St Joseph Drive as "access way" instead of parking lot.

Complete Streets Committee members suggested that the Empire State Trail that runs near the intersection of River Road and St Joseph Drive in Niskayuna be designated as an "access way" instead of a parking area. Schenectady County highway staff have concerns about a too large a parking area at this intersection due in part to the speed and volume of cars along this section of River Road. Please contact Laura Robertson, Town Planner for draft of a parking area at this intersection (518-386-4500).

Also, we recommend a QR code on a sign on the bike path near the St Joseph Drive and River Road intersection like the QR code proposed above for Blatnick Park that would alert Empire Trail users of services available to them in the Balltown Road/Nott Street East area. Bike path users could access these services by using St Joseph Drive, then Orchard Park Drive, and then Nott Street East to get to the Balltown Road/Nott Street East intersection and amenities located around there.

Also, page 6 of the report identifies "River Road (bottom of hill, below GE Research Circle)" as a Tier 2 signage area. Is this signage that would be at Blatnick Park or signage that would be near to the bike trail at the intersection of River Road and St Joseph Drive? The traffic circle below the GE Research Center entrance has considerable automobile volume and automobile speed and it may not be a desirable area for pedestrians or bicyclists to enter or exit the Empire State Trail. The specific physical location of this Tier 2 location needs more clear identification in the Wayfinding plan.

5. Regulations pertaining to E-Bikes

Niskayuna Complete Streets Committee members indicated that there should be regulation regarding "bicycles with electric assist". Speed and possible reckless use of E-Bikes on the Empire State Trail were concerns of committee members (see also the attached news clip on hazards of motorized vehicles in bike lanes by Christopher Ketchum, 12/16/2021). Accordingly,

we recommend that Metroplex consider regulations on E-Bikes put forwarded by the “Hudson River Greenway Policy on Use of Electric Bicycles (E-Bikes) on the Albany Hudson Electric Trail (AHET Trail)” (see <https://hudsongreenway.ny.gov/albany-hudson-electric-trail>)

Section 102-c of the NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law places bicycles with electric assist into three classes: Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3. (See the attached 2 pages from the Hudson Valley Greenway that defines the classes). The Hudson River Greenway only allows Class 1 and Class 2 E-Bikes to use the off-road section of the Albany-Hudson Electric Trail. Class 3 E Bikes are prohibited by the Greenway from use on the Albany-Hudson Electric Trail.

Also, should there be a speed limit for E – Bikes?

6. Signage at East and West End of Empire State Trail in Schenectady County identifying destinations of interest in adjoining counties

Complete Streets Committee members suggested signage at Lyons Park (near East end of the Empire Trail in Schenectady County) that would inform trail users of destinations in Albany County that might be of interest such as Mohawk River Landing Park (4071 River Road), the Fox Nature Preserve (4228 River Road), and Cohoes Falls. Trail users that are Eastbound on the bike path from Lyons Park would be informed of recreational, environmental, or historic sites they might visit while riding the Empire State Trail; especially sites that could be visited on a day trip out and back from Schenectady County. A similar type of signage or QR code could be created for destinations on the Empire State Trail that are immediately West of Schenectady County.

7. Tier 1 designation for Fox Nature Preserve (4228 River Road)

Committee members recommended that the Fox Nature Preserve in the Town of Colonie be a Tier 1 location. Perhaps this recommendation could be passed along to planning staff in the Town of Colonie.

Thank-you for making the Schenectady Trails Comprehensive Wayfinding Plan available to the public for comment. And thank-you for your kind consideration of our input. If you have questions on any of these recommendations please feel free to contact Laura Robertson, Niskayuna Town Planner (LRobertson@niskayuna.org phone 518-386-4500) or me (wchapman@nycap.rr.com phone 518-573-9737).

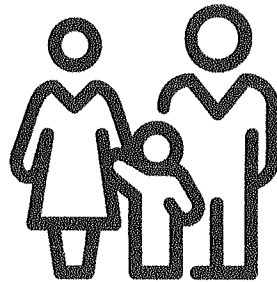
Sincerely,



William R. Chapman
Chair, Niskayuna Complete Streets

CC: Laura Robertson, Niskayuna Town Planner
Niskayuna Complete Streets Committee

Share the Trail



- **Keep Right / Pass on the Left**
- **Travel at a Safe Speed**
- **Don't Block the Trail**
- **Keep Animals Under Control**
- **Keep the Trail Clean**

(Town Logos here)



Hudson River
Valley Greenway

E-Bikes

**Hudson River Valley Greenway Policy
Use of Electric Bicycles (E-Bikes) on the Albany-Hudson Electric Trail
Effective July 8, 2021**

HRVG Policy

The Albany-Hudson Electric Trail (AHET) is a 36-mile bicycling and pedestrian route in Rensselaer and Columbia Counties, constructed and operated by the Hudson River Valley Greenway (HRVG). The majority of the AHET route is an off-road, improved 10 to 12-foot wide trail, with a paved asphalt or stonedust surface designed for shared use by bicyclists, walkers, and runners. The remainder of the AHET route consists of on-road sections, where the route is designated on the shoulders of public roadways.

This HRVG policy authorizes the public to ride Class 1 and Class 2 Electric Bicycles (herein “E-Bikes) on the off-road sections of the AHET Trail, subject to the limitations described below. E-Bike users must ride safely at all times, including slowing down when approaching other trail users, when the trail is busy, or when trail conditions dictate slow speeds. The AHET trail is open dawn to dusk only.

Conversely, Class 3 E-Bikes and two-wheeled Electric Scooters (“E-Scooters”) are prohibited on the AHET trail.

This policy applies to off-road sections of the AHET trail only. HRVG does not have jurisdiction over public roadways. Rather, use of E-Bikes and 2-wheeled Electric Scooters on public roads is governed by the NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law and local ordinances.

Background

In April 2020, New York State enacted legislation governing the public use of “bicycles with electric assist,” typically known as “electric bicycles” or “E-Bikes”. State law now allows E-Bikes to be operated on public roadways posted with a speed limit of 30 mph or less (unless otherwise regulated by local ordinance). In addition, the law states E-Bikes are allowed on public trails if affirmatively authorized by the public entity that owns and operates a specific trail.

HRVG’s policy allowing E-Bike use on the AHET trail is consistent with policies the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the NYS Canal Corporation have adopted allowing Class 1 and Class 2 E-Bikes on the Empire State Trail and other improved “rail trails” and “canalway trails” under their jurisdictions.

E-Bikes

Definitions

Section 102-c of the NYS Vehicle & Traffic Law defines “bicycles with electric assist” in three classes:

- Class 1 “pedal assist” E-Bikes have no throttle, and provide electric power assistance up to 20 MPH only when the rider is pedaling;
- Class 2 E-Bikes have a throttle which can provide electric power up to 20 MPH, whether or not the rider is pedaling; and
- Class 3 E-Bikes have a throttle which can provide electric power up to 25 MPH and are prohibited anywhere in NYS outside of New York City. Accordingly, Class 3 E-Bikes are prohibited on the AHET trail.

New York State does not require E-Bikes to be registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles. However, as of June 2022 all E-Bikes must have a manufacturer’s label affixed identifying the bike as either Class 1, 2, or 3 in accordance with state Vehicle & Traffic Law standards.

Two-wheeled “E-Scooters”, which the user stands on and are powered solely by an electric motor, are motorized devices which are prohibited on the AHET trail.

Note: This policy applies to the general public’s use of the AHET trail. HRVG has established a separate policy governing use of powered devices on the AHET trail by people with mobility disabilities.

Any questions regarding HRVG’s policy regarding use of E-Bikes on the AHET trail should be directed to: EST@hudsongreenway.ny.gov

Cops cultivate bike-lane chaos

E- Bikes, etc.

BE OUR GUEST

BY CHRISTOPHER KETCHAM

A cyclist in this city since the age of 4, I got hit by my first — and only — car when I was 6, as the driver came to a screeching halt and rolled me onto the pavement in front of my house in Brooklyn. Unharmed, I got back on the bike. I have skirted injury or death many times in rain, blizzard, ice storms and crazed traffic, and to this day I still get around the city mostly with my mountain bike.

I never thought I'd see the day, however, when one of the threats to my safety as a cyclist was the New York Police Department. That's a harsh allegation, I admit, and it's not made frivolously.

What it comes down to is this: The NYPD is making the city more dangerous for cyclists by its almost nonexistent enforcement of laws governing the bike lanes that were created to free us from the mayhem of motorized vehicles.

The vehicles in question are not cars and trucks, but Vespa-type scooters and mopeds, both the gas-powered and electric kind. They are a plague in bike lanes. I cross the Manhattan Bridge on my bicycle practically every day, and every day I see them illegally riding and at very high speeds. And just as often, I see them passing police officers who do nothing to stop them.

Not long ago, one of these vehicles nearly clipped me on the Manhattan's bike path, traveling at what I estimated was 30 miles an hour. (The speed limit for stand-up e-scooters and e-bikes — the only motorized vehicles allowed on bike paths — is 20 or 25 miles per hour, depending on the type.) On a streetside bike lane in Brooklyn last spring, an e-moped, silently racing up on my 9-year-old daughter and me as we cycled, brushed her and sent her into a wobble from which she deftly recovered.

The driver, who was traveling at least four times our speed, would've severely injured her if this had been a direct strike.

The mopeds are being operated lawlessly, with impunity. Something needs to be done.

I'm not the only journalist to take note of this chaotic situation. Last June, reporters with Fox 5 New York, under a headline that blared "mopeds are invading NYC bike lanes," documented over the course of one hour on the Queensboro Bridge "between 30 to 40 small motorcycles crossing the bridge using either the lane for cyclists or the one for pedestrians."

Last week, crossing the Manhattan Bridge bike path from Brooklyn and nearly getting blown aside by yet another two-wheeled motorized oaf, I happened upon two NYPD officers stationed at

the foot of the bike path where it meets Canal St. I accosted them, for I was angry.

Why, I asked — I was yelling, according to the ticket they later wrote me — were they doing nothing about the motor vehicles riding illegally in bike lanes?

"We're here for the bikes," answered Officer Faber, who was accompanied by an Officer Coughlin. Here for the bikes. It went south from there.

Faber looked me up and down. "Where's your bell?"

"What?"

"Your bell."

"I don't have a bell."

Then they wrote me a \$98 ticket for not having a bell. In 2019, cyclists were handed 35,000 tickets for all kinds of infractions, from not having bells to running red lights. That was 400 more tickets than truckers that year received, though there are about 10 times as many trucks on city streets as bikes, according to the pedestrian and cycling advocacy group Transportation Alternatives.

Working like a scholar on my ticket, Officer Faber did something that was genuinely helpful: He added to the printed document a written addendum, in block capitals entered into the "Description/Narrative" portion, that explained what I think is the real reason it was issued: "Ride up to me to yell @ me with no bell."

In other words, complain loudly to the NYPD on your bicycle about anything to do with a threat to cycling safety and you will be busted on a charge of whatever.

Meanwhile, in the 10 minutes it took to process my "no bell" prize, another cyclist was stopped for running a red light upon entering the Manhattan Bridge bike path — while two mopeds raced up the same path, without a word from either officer.

"Cycling is everything cops are acculturated to despise: urban, improvisatory and joyous rather than suburban, rulebook and buttoned-up," says my friend Charlie Komanoff, a veteran cyclist and former head of Transportation Alternatives.

I think the cultivating of chaos on bike paths, coupled with the routine harassment of cyclists, is an expression of this deep-seated contempt for cycling that the NYPD has long been accused of. Time for that to end.

Ketcham, a writer in New York, is the author of "This Land: How Cowboys, Capitalism and Corruption are Ruining the American West."

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County Roads in the Town of Niskayuna	
Road Name	Mileage in Town of Niskayuna
Old River Road	0.22
Niskayuna Road	0.36
Lishakill Road	0.88
Ferris Road	0.22
Mohawk Road	0.69
Nott Street	0.5
Pearse Road	1.28
Providence Avenue	0.72
Consaul Road	1.63
Aqueduct Road	1.81
St. Davids Lane	1.74
Taurus Road - Central Ave	0.7
River Road	3.57
Van Antwerp Road	1.97
Grand Boulevard	0.5
Dean Street	1.4
Rosendale Road	4.29
Upper Union Street	0.43