

Thursday, December 1, 2005 Go-alition Meeting

In attendance: Joel Creswell, Melinda Tuhus, Jane Coppock, Steve Harris, Paul Wessel, Alec Gosse, Dave Menninger

Steve Harris reported on the status of the bike racks the city was planning to install over the summer: Apparently there was a problem with the order, which delayed the process. Ron Cohen at the Department of Public Works is working to fix the problem and the racks will be installed as soon as possible. The racks will be installed in 15 different areas of the city.

We discussed a plan to include more bike-related language in the state driver's manual: Steve Harris downloaded manuals from several states and recommended New Jersey's and Virginia's as models. He recommended trying to get the state to create a "Bike Facilities Plan" in the State Conservation and Development Plan. This would basically create a comprehensive, statewide plan for bike transportation and related issues. He believes this would trickle down into improved language in the driver's manual.

Jane Coppock reported on the Drive 25 campaign that was recently started in the Quinnipiac East neighborhood: at the heart of the plan is the goal to convince drivers to voluntarily obey the speed limit within the city. The Quinnipiac East Neighborhood Management Team voted to start a neighborhood-wide campaign. Jane ran the plan by the Mayor and Police Chief Ortiz at the last mayor's night out in her neighborhood, both of them were supportive. She's currently working to build a coalition of organizations and individuals who want to participate. She encourages people to become "pace cars," i.e. to simply drive the speed limit, regardless of how fast people around you want to go. She has been driving 25 mph for three months now and has not experienced any problems.

Paul Wessel suggested combining the Drive 25 campaign with the effort many ElmCityCycling members are making to encourage the mayor and the police to enforce traffic laws (a meeting was held to discuss this issue this past Tuesday, Nov. 29, at The Devil's Gear, and a group is going to talk to the mayor at Mayor's Night In this coming Tuesday, Dec. 6). He suggested picking a week in the spring when we could mount a citywide campaign to encourage people to follow traffic laws. If we were to get the city involved, they could create marketing materials and generate publicity, and this would hopefully establish the idea of driving lawfully within everyone's consciousness.

We decided to create a Go-alition email list for such purposes as announcing the meetings and discussing business specific to the Go-alition. We will continue to send announcements out to ElmCityCycling. Automatically included on the list will be people who have attended Go-alition meetings within the last year (unless they opt out). If you think you may not be automatically included and would like to be, please email Joel Creswell (joel.creswell@yale.edu).

Joel announced an effort being made by Richard Stowe, who was unable to be present, to get bike spaces included in the design of all new railroad cars bought by the state. Having bike spaces on commuter trains is very common, and diverse places such as the Bay Area, CA, Portland, OR, Houston, TX, and Denver, CO. There is a piece of legislation that he is working to get into the state legislature right now that would require bike spaces to be designed into all new cars. Richard encourages everyone to call their Connecticut state senators and congress-people to encourage them to support the bill.

Paul Wessel reported that the city is in the process of planning several new parking garages, and now would be a good time to talk to them about having bike racks put in. Bill Kilpatrick at the New Haven Parking Authority would be the person to talk to.

The next Go-alition meeting will be Thursday, February 2, 2006, from 5:30-6:30 at City Plan.