


Iris
Weinshall/CENTRALOFFICE/
CUNY

12/17/2010 06:51 PM

To "Norman Steisel" <Norman@EnesscoStrategies.com>

cc

bcc

Subject Re: nyt editorial 

Yes.....will try

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

From: Norman Steisel [norman@enesscostrategies.com]

Sent: 12/17/2010 04:33 PM EST

To: Iris Weinshall

Subject: nyt editorial

havent heard anything. do you know anyone there you can call to
promote our letter?

Iris
Weinshall/CENTRALOFFICE/
CUNY

12/18/2010 11:39 AM

To "Norman Steisel" <Norman@EnescoStrategies.com>
cc
bcc
Subject

Called my contact at New York Times.....she said she would see what she could do.....



Norman Steisel
<normansteisel@me.com>
12/20/2010 03:39 PM

To Iris.Weinshall@mail.cuny.edu
cc
bcc
Subject Re: letter to editor

georgia. she is trying to get randy, but if not she thought we should take this as a prelim to meeting with him possibly friday or betwn holidays.

on our side---me, you, louise and lois.

i circulated call in info earlier.

On Dec 20, 2010, at 3:36 PM, Iris.Weinshall@mail.cuny.edu wrote:

Who is putting together the conference call for tomorrow?

From: Norman Steisel [normansteisel@me.com]
Sent: 12/20/2010 03:29 PM EST
To: Louise Hainline <lhainline@gmail.com>; Louise Hainline <LouiseH@brooklyn.cuny.edu>; Iris Weinshall
Subject: Fwd: letter to editor

see nyt revised version . just spoke with her. theyd like response in half hour. looks ok to me . only change is to say our observations approx half dot counts on weekdays. do you have thoughts?

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Mermelstein, Sue J." <mermes@nytimes.com>
>

Date: December 20, 2010 3:24:18 PM EST

To: 'Norman Steisel' <normansteisel@me.com>

Subject: RE:letter to editor

Hi. We are considering your letter for publication in the next few days, either in the printed paper and the Web site, or on the Web only. Below is an edited version of your letter. Please let us know if you approve of the changes. [FEEL FREE TO TWEAK, BUT DON'T MAKE IT ANY LONGER PLEASE.]

A few standard questions we ask our letter writers:

Do you have a professional affiliation, or any other connection (including financial), that bears on the topic of your letter or that our readers should know about? (If you are writing in a private capacity and not on behalf of an organization, that will be considered in the decision on whether to use an ID.)

Did you write the letter, and is the letter exclusive to the Times?

Was your letter sent in response to the prompting of a Web site or anyone else?

And, by agreeing to have your letter published, you are consenting to our right to republish it, in any and all media, and to license third parties to publish it as well. Many thanks for writing.

Sue Mermelstein
Staff Editor
212-556-4466

To the Editor:

Your editorial about the problems caused by law-evading bicyclists mentions data released by the New York City Department of Transportation that purport to show that the 50 miles of bike lanes it is adding each year “calm” traffic and cut down on fatalities.

But as the rest of your editorial suggests, the connection between encouraging biking — which we also strongly support — and making our streets safer and more pleasant for all users is far from established. The D.O.T. data produce more puzzlement than enlightenment.

When new bike lanes force the same volume of cars and trucks into fewer and narrower traffic lanes, the potential for accidents between cars, trucks and pedestrians goes up rather than down. At Prospect Park West in Brooklyn, for instance, where a two-way bike lane was put in last summer, our eyewitness reports show collisions of one sort or another to be on pace to be triple the former annual rates.

Furthermore, the D.O.T. data’s lack of credibility is reinforced by our own videotapes. These show that the Prospect Park West bike lanes are used much less than the D.O.T. says, and that cyclists are riding for recreation rather than commuting.

Finally, your point about the difficulty of giving tickets to cyclists who break the law is well taken. Educating bikers is a nice idea. But requiring them to be licensed like other potentially life-threatening high-speed vehicles is the only thing that will make enforcement any easier in the long run.

Louise Hainline

Norman Steisel

Iris Weinshall

Brooklyn, Dec. 17, 2010

The writers are members of Neighbors for Better Bike Lanes. Ms. Hainline is its president. Mr. Steisel is a former deputy mayor and sanitation commissioner of New York City, and Ms. Weinshall is a former transportation commissioner.

From: Norman Steisel [<mailto:normansteisel@me.com>]

Sent: Friday, December 17, 2010 10:55 AM

To: Letters, NYT

Cc: Iris Weinshall; Louise Hainline; Norman Steisel

Subject: Bike Lanes

To the Editor:

Your editorial about the problems caused by law-evading bicyclists mentions data released by the NYC Department of Transportation which

purport to show that the 50-miles of bike lanes it is adding a year “calm” traffic and cut down on fatalities. But as the rest of your piece suggests, the connection between encouraging biking—which we also strongly support—and making our streets safer and more pleasant for all users is far from straightforward.

The complexity of this issue is reflected by the data to which you refer, since far from answering the public’s legitimate questions about how these hundreds of miles of new bike lanes are actually affecting our common quality of life, they raise new ones. On Prospect Park West, for example, where a two-way “trial” bike lane was put in last summer—rather than the one-way lane, linked to another one-way lane on parallel 8th Avenue, as was called for in the City’s master bike plan, or a parallel two-way lane inside the adjacent Prospect Park—the DOT claims, on the one hand, that traffic is now “calmer” because it is, on average, 7 miles per hour slower, and on the other, that travel times from one end of the street to the other are virtually unchanged. Without details about how these apparently discrepant data were collected, it is impossible to accurately interpret them, but at the least they produce more puzzlement than enlightenment. Even more troubling are the contradictions between historical accident data and the accidents that have occurred since the lane was installed. As you point out, speeding cyclists ignoring traffic laws do indeed pose a danger to pedestrians. But when new bike lanes force the same volume of cars and trucks into fewer and narrower traffic lanes, and move a parking lane into a narrower channel in the middle of the street, the potential for accidents between cars, trucks, and pedestrians also goes up rather than down. Our eye-witness reports show collisions of one sort or another to be on pace to triple the former annual rates. (And this *sense* of decreased safety is reinforced by surveys of thousands of Brooklynites.) Furthermore, the DOT data’s lack of credibility—as suggested by Borough President Stringer’s information-collection efforts—are reinforced by our own videotapes, which show that the bike lane is used much less than the DOT says it is, and that the cyclists are riding for recreation rather than commuting.

Finally, your point about the difficulty of giving tickets to cyclists who break the law is well taken. Educating bikers is a nice idea. But requiring them to be licensed like other potentially life-threatening high-speed vehicles is the only thing that will make enforcement any easier in the long run.

Louise Hainline, Norman Steisel, Iris Weinshall

The authors are members of Neighbors for Better Bike Lanes. Dr. Hainline is its president. Mr. Steisel is a former first-deputy mayor and NYC sanitation commissioner. Ms. Weinshall is a former NYC transportation commissioner.

*Norman Steisel
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