



"Whalen, Ryan"
<RWhalen@cityhall.nyc.gov>

08/09/2010 04:45 PM

To <Iris.Weinshall@mail.cuny.edu>

cc

bcc

Subject Re: New bicycle lane along Prospect Park West - I agree with your views . . .

Putting it on his desk now

On Aug 9, 2010, at 4:38 PM, "Iris.Weinshall@mail.cuny.edu" <Iris.Weinshall@mail.cuny.edu> wrote:

Can your print this out and share with Howard....this is an excellent letter and treally captures the issue! Thanks

----- Forwarded by Iris Weinshall/CENTRALOFFICE/CUNY on 08/09/2010 04:37 PM -----

"Markowitz, Marty" <marty@brooklynbp.nyc.gov>

08/09/2010 03:50 PM

To "DePalma, Luke" <lukedepalma@brooklynbp.nyc.gov>, "Sinagra, Laura" <lsinagra@brooklynbp.nyc.gov>

cc

Subj FW: New bicycle lane along Prospect Park West - I agree with your views . . .
ect

this constituent says it all....precisely correct.....amen.....marty

From: Louis Gonzalez [<mailto:Louisg@apexxog.com>]

Sent: Monday, August 09, 2010 11:27 AM

To: AskMarty

Subject: New bicycle lane along Prospect Park West - I agree with your views . . .

Dear Mr. Markowitz:

First, I would like to thank you for your many years of service as Borough President. You have done many great things for Brooklyn (too numerous to name here). I am very grateful, and you have won my vote "ad infinitum"!

It has come to my attention that you were opposed to the creation of a bicycle lane along Prospect Park West between Grand Army Plaza and Bartell Pritchard Square. I heartily agree with you!

This issue is crying out for rebuttal by motorists. All over the city access to roads is being reduced, leading to longer commutes and more starts and stops, which in turn increase

gasoline use and pollution. The longer the commute, the longer cars will be on the roads. I've lived here all my life, and for the first time in my memory the city itself is causing congestion by reducing lanes in many locations.

I too am an avid bicyclist, I have a family, and I realize that the city is a dangerous place to ride. However, I do not expect to inconvenience hundreds of thousands of commuters who face ever increasing travel times for the sake of my bicycling interest. Prospect Park is already a place where bicycling is permitted and encouraged.

I believe that reducing Prospect Park West to two lanes was a selfish act instigated by "special interests" which actually inconveniences a far greater amount of people and does nothing to improve safety.

Anyone who drives realizes that the difference between two and three lanes is much more than just one lane. Whereas with three lanes, a double-parked car or other delivery truck can be relatively easily and safely passed without stopping the entire flow of traffic, two lanes, by their very nature, do not. Once a vehicle is blocking one out of two lanes, traffic comes almost to a halt, causing those farther behind to miss the traffic signal sequence, further adding to delays.

At any given time, it has been my experience that there is now always at least one obstacle along Prospect Park West which causes traffic delays and a potential safety problem. I have read local newspaper articles where bicycle advocates claim the new configuration reduces the speed of cars along the road, but this is only a natural consequence of the obstacles and the remaining narrow stretch of road.

I would like to make the following points against having a bicycle lane along Prospect Park West . . .

- Prospect Park already allows bicycling
- Failure to recognize that Prospect Park West is a major thoroughfare for thousands of motorists. The number of motorists who drive through the area significantly exceeds the number of bicyclists
- The only reason that traffic is now slowed down is because of reduced space and increased obstacles to traffic flow (delivery trucks, cars slowing down to pull over to park, double-parked vehicles, etc.) Any time a vehicle stops to park, it leaves only one lane available. There is no longer enough space for a vehicle to actually and effectively "pull over"
- Apparently no consideration was given to the coming winter months when there is less bicycling, and overall reduced usable road space due to snow and ice (even after plowing) which will also contribute to unsafe conditions.
- The reduction to two lanes (and necessary traffic signals) causes traffic to backup on Grand Army Plaza sometimes all the way to Flatbush Ave. during rush hours.
- False sense of increased "safety". With only two lanes available, it is now more dangerous for a car trying to park (or leave a parking spot). Cars are now parked in the middle of the street, with passing cars on the right side, and passing bicyclists on the left. There is also less room for a vehicle to take evasive action should a pedestrian, bicyclist, or other vehicle accidentally wander into oncoming traffic. Accidents can and will happen.

I believe I speak for many motorists in saying that we are very unhappy with the ever increasing driving delays caused by unrealistic and ill-planned traffic restrictions. Lanes and roads are being reduced or closed all over the city. Let us not forget that this is already in addition to the other

problems facing citizens during this economic crisis. If current trends continue, commuting in the city will reach a point where it is simply unbearable, and many weary individuals will seek out greener pastures, resulting in a loss of tax revenue.

I hope that this helps to reinforce your stance on this issue, and that something can still be done to reverse this. I am especially concerned about the coming winter months and the effects that snow will have on this new configuration. Is there anything that can be done?

Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

Louis Gonzalez
Brooklyn, NY 11215 (Park Slope)

P.S. - Other examples of recent access reductions on Major Brooklyn Thoroughfares . . .

On Flatbush Avenue, every year the traffic gets worse because access is reduced. First the city completely closed off access to Hanson Place (at 4th Ave.) forcing all motorists who had to go northbound at that location to make a right turn one block west instead, at Lafayette Avenue. That change alone now causes traffic to back up all the way between 5th Avenue and Tillary Street, especially during rush hours. Adding to the congestion is the fact that not only left turns, but even some right turns are not allowed on Flatbush Ave. between 5th Avenue and Tillary St. The results of this are increased congestion - there is nowhere to go. Motorists are not allowed to seek alternate routes - they are all forced to be in the same place at the same time. The traffic is so congested in the mornings that several traffic agents have to be present to direct traffic. That costs the city money. Now other parts of Flatbush Ave. are closed off for construction as well.

Vanderbilt Avenue between Prospect Park and Atlantic Avenue, where a few years ago a four lane avenue was reduced to a single lane each way to build an arbitrary and useless "Boulevard", knowing full well that there are businesses all along that avenue (which means delivery trucks have to be present, and often will double-park). Demonstrating a lack of planning, the remaining single lanes were further reduced about a year ago by adding bicycle lanes to both sides. Do we honestly believe it was a good idea to add both a Boulevard and bicycle lanes in the same location?