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Date: Mon, 1 Jun 2020 15:14:53 -0400  
Subject: Cycling improvements on Mass Ave

Hi,

My name is Amanda Zangari. I currently live in Somerville, but my partner and I closed on a condo in East Arlington on Milton Street on May 18. We're going to move in at the end of the month, as soon as the lead paint in our place is abated.

Why did we decide that we had to buy a house in the middle of pandemic, paying tens of thousands over asking for the privilege? Because the house is near the Minuteman, so I can bike safely to Alewife, or nearly directly to my job at Lincoln Lab in Lexington, which is near the Minuteman.

Last February, I got hit by a car riding my bike to Alewife from my apartment in Somerville. The accident occurred on Highland Ave and Willow Ave in Somerville on February 20. I'm alive because of two things, 1. I was wearing a helmet and 2. because the driver come to a complete stop before turning left into me while I was going straight through a green light.

I was encouraged to write to you all because of the death of Charlie Proctor. He died on May 9 while biking down Mass ave and Appleton Street. He was killed by a driver, also trying to turn left. I don't know Charlier or his partner Allison who was also injured, but his accident seems to be under similar circumstances as mine and its a sad connection to have. Having lived, I had to write in.

When I wrote to my office's mailing list asking for post accident advice, I learned that about 20 people on the list had experience with collisions on bicycles, and several of them had a similar accident to myself and Charlie—left turning traffic that ignored oncoming bicycles.

I learned from my office's cycling mailing list that you might be discussing this issue today. From that email, I learned that this intersection had been flagged as unsafe nearly a decade ago. It's sad that an accident like this happened when traffic was a fraction of its normal volume. It will always be unsafe unless something changes.

With public transit as a vector for COVID spread, cycling will be a more important method of transit than ever. The Minuteman, while an awesome asset to Arlington, is only as good when the surrounding streets be save for biking. In the winter, many people choose Mass Ave over the Minuteman if they don't have studded tires.

I'm not a traffic engineer or an expert in these accidents, but I do know that slowing down turning traffic is vital for saving lives. Please consider improving the intersection where Charlie died and other similar intersections.

You will never hear about the people who didn't die from improving the intersection, but the value will be priceless.

I'm looking forward to many happy years in Arlington, getting around safely on my bike (and not just on the Minuteman!)

Thanks for reading.

Sincerely,  
Amanda Zangari  
Soon to be Arlington resident