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Date: Mon, 1 Jun 2020 21:25:59 +0000 (UTC)  
Subject: Advocacy for Safer Cycling Infrastructure on Mass. Ave./Appleton St. in Arlington

Dear Board of Selectmen & Town Officials -

I am writing in regards to the unfortunate fatal crash of a motor vehicle that killed cyclist Charlie Proctor in Arlington last month. I understand that this will be discussed tonight.

As a cycling commuter and one who cycles regularly with my family through Arlington and nearby communities, I ask that safer accommodations for cycling be added to this known dangerous stretch of Mass. Ave. I suggest the following general safety improvements be considered for this section of Mass. Ave., as well as for other locations in Arlington:

(1) Add protected bicycle lanes on this stretch that are separated from traffic and parked vehicles. Protected bicycle lanes could either be bollards or raised curbs that separate motorists from cyclists and walkers.

(2) Signalize this intersection with a stop light for Mass. Ave., given the volume of cars and unsafe conditions.

(3) Increase enforcement against motorists driving too fast and unsafely in this area, which endangers cyclists and walkers. Also provide education of motorists about safe passing of bicyclists.

(4) Lower speed limits for motorists. Studies show crashes between cars and cyclists where car is moving above 20 mph are likely to cause life-threatening injuries to cyclists. Therefore, roads where cyclists must share the road with drivers should have speed limits closer to 20 mph.

(5) Reduction of on-street parking. On-street car-parking creates very unsafe situations for cyclists, requiring cyclists to take the full lane to safely pass unpredictable cars in the parking lanes. This is an unsafe situation along much of Mass. Ave., including this specific section. Move on-street parking to side streets, not main thoroughfares. Replace on-street parking with more bicycle parking. Studies show that encouraging more cycling provides greater stimulus to local businesses as compared to maintaining predominant access for cars. Cyclists shop more locally, and approximately ten cyclists can park in the same area needed for just one car.

(6) I ask that you please pass this issue along to the Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC) and have them work together with the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) to make recommendations to the Selectboard on improvements to this roadway.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these suggestions!

Jeff Roth (ABAC member, 2008 - 2010)  
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