

Bike Lanes Conflict with Vision Zero

Despite rising traffic fatalities, on October 5 the bike lobby represented by the Washington Area Bicyclists Association (WABA) presented Council member Charles Allen its Vision Zero award. The Council, under Allen's leadership, funds WABA more than \$1M annually.

As chair of the Council Committee on Transportation, Allen can do much for the bike lobby in drafting laws, calling hearings and funding grants. He styles himself a champion of bike lanes in neighborhoods throughout DC to make DC the 'city of the future,' regardless of suitability, evidence to the contrary, and growing community opposition.

Allen proposed four bills at a hearing on Wednesday, Oct. 4, to make streets safer by punishing car drivers but did not propose regulating bikes which today are a major cause of street mayhem. Bikes are the only mode of transit in DC not regulated. On the contrary, last year the Council made it legal for riders to run stop signs, through passage of the 'Safety Bike Stop' provision. Last month responding to the scarce use of an expensive bike lane network, the Council approved rebates for e-bikes, which can speed to 28 miles an hour and whose batteries can explode in dangerous fires. If Allen were serious about safety, he would propose bike regulation - registration, licensing, insurance, certification and helmets.

Allen acknowledged support from ANC commissioners at the hearing on Wednesday and at the WABA award ceremony on Thursday. Not a lot of lean athletes, the commissioners were nonetheless zealous, like the one who suffered a broken elbow last year when a speeding biker ran him down on the sidewalk.



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Well, piffle. Broken arm. See surgeon tomorrow afternoon.



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The DC Safe Streets Coalition ([www,DCSafeStreetsCoalition.org](http://www.DCSafeStreetsCoalition.org)) testified that promoting Protected Bike Lanes (PBLs) on city streets conflicts with Vision Zero. Protected Bike Lanes cause traffic congestion, confusion, and road hazards.

Allen and other city officials will not say Protected Bike Lanes are safe for children. Why not? Meanwhile WABA encourages parents to claim city streets as playgrounds! City streets were made for cars and trucks. Look both ways when crossing the street, we are told, because the streets are dangerous. Tax-funded playgrounds are made for children. If the streets are also for children, what is the plan for cars and trucks? Failure to accommodate the needs of all road users will delay our arrival at the city of the future. We are headed in the wrong direction.

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