

## **‘Lawyer of Year’ Slams DC Bike Lanes**

Four-time “lawyer of the year“ Patrick Regan called out the District bike lanes as “incredibly poor planning,” reports Justin Smulison in “A Better Roadmap for Bicycle Safety in D.C.,” *Washington’s Best Lawyers 2024* (Oct. 2, 2023). <https://issuu.com/bestlawyers/docs/dc-best-lawyers-2024> Personal injury lawyer and bicycle enthusiast, Regan is the president of the law firm Regan Zambri Long.

“ . . . the District system is frequently the result of incredibly poor planning by the city, and no one has explained why it was designed this way,” Regan said.

Regan compares DC with many European countries, where traffic systems were decimated in World War II and cars had to be re-introduced to bicycle dominated roads. Unfortunately, Regan notes, US cities are doing the opposite, working to “retrofit automobile routes for bike commuters.”

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) reported an average of 334 crashes involving bicyclists in DC each year over a five-year period. While many accidents are caused by reckless or negligent driving, Regan observed that many victims are injured simply following the signs and bike paths laid out for them by the District, Smulison reports.

Regan's criticism comes at a time when the DC Safe Streets Coalition is voicing community opposition to the DC bike network. The Coalition sees the Mayor bowing to the inordinate influence of the bike lobby and the DC Council has contributed to the mayhem. The Council made it legal last year for bikers to run stop signs. Last month to encourage use of bike lanes, it approved rebates for the purchase of e-bikes, which go faster and whose batteries cause fires.

Ostensibly to improve road safety Councilmember Charles Allen introduced four bills this session to punish car drivers but he proposed nothing to regulate bikers, whose reckless behavior is notorious. Under the District Major Vehicle Collision Recovery Act, Regan points out, defendants must now prove that a cyclist or pedestrian was more than 50% at fault to demonstrate contributory negligence.

"Biking is the only mode of transit in DC that is unregulated," said Nick DelleDonne, speaking for the Coalition. Last week Allen accepted the bike lobby's Award for Vision Zero, though fatalities are climbing.

Nick DelleDonne

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