

Bikes v Safety on Connecticut Ave. - Allen Evades Sherwood Query on WAMU 'Politics Hour'

On WAMU's *Politics Hour* Friday, Councilmember Charles Allen, who chairs the DC Council's transportation committee, evaded the one question that matters. In his provision to forbid any safety improvements on Connecticut Avenue unless they come with protected bike lanes. Despite direct questioning from co-host Tom Sherwood, Allen evaded the question, just as the show ended.

- **Sherwood:** ...Does your Council legislation say that if bike lanes are not included, then the Mayor can't spend money for the redo of Connecticut Avenue?
- **Allen:** ...Let's focus again on what...the Council's trying to do and what my leadership at the Transportation and Environment Committee is doing. Let's make sure we're making the safest decisions that we need to help assure we take care of our residents no matter how they get around.

While Allen refused to affirm he aims to withhold funds for safety improvements, clearly he wants us to think he is. For Allen and the bike lobby, who profess to want safety above all else, their provision paints them as intransigent, 'my way or the highway' zealots.

Moreover, how is Allen's claim of leadership advanced with an ultimatum that offers the Mayor the option to do nothing?

Council Chair Phil Mendelson, who disapproves of many aspects of the city's bike program, said at his public meeting on Saturday that he will probably vote for Allen's resolution, expecting it to have no impact on the Mayor.

"Mayor Bowser and new Transportation Director Sharon Kershbaum deserve the thanks of DC residents for a courageous decision to reverse 'a safety program that morphed into a bike program,'" said Nick DelleDonne, organizer of the DC Safe Streets Coalition. "The bike lobby claims for cyclists the most dangerous routes in the city, and demands the city make them safe."

Nick DelleDonne

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May 21, 2024