

On Thu, May 26, 2016 at 1:33 PM, Elinor Auge wrote:
Dear Jane Prince and Luke Hanson,

Thank you for your efforts on our behalf, Jane. I have forwarded the information to the district council as you requested.

Public Works Bicycle Traffic Count 2014 - please take a look at page 10 for the count for Upper Afton Road and compare that to the rest of the numbers on the page.
https://www.stpaul.gov/DocumentCenter/Government/Public%20Works/Bicycles/Bicycle%20Traffic%20Count/2014%20Saint%20Paul%20Bicycle%20Pedestrian%20Count%20Report_201501061048330499.pdf

The above link should take you to one of the items which was sent to KSTP. It is a copy of the 2014 Bicycle Count produced by Saint Paul Public Works. I was unable to locate a 2015 count. It occurred to me that materials presented to City Council included a parking count for Upper Afton Road, but did not include this information. If you look at the top of page 10, there are two entries for Upper Afton Road. Although this count is for a single moment on a single day, if you compare it to the rest of the numbers on that same page, it is pretty obvious that, relatively speaking, there is not a high volume of bicycle traffic in this area.

I'll repeat what I said in my original email, and that is that I do very much enjoy bicycling and I have never felt unsafe cycling on Upper Afton Road, even without specified bicycle lanes.

I love the path along lower Afton Road and have often come up Point Douglas Road from there. The biggest benefit I could see to bicycle trails in this area, is to create a connecting trail from the Point Douglas Road / Battle Creek parking lot to the Scenic Overlook, along Highway 61, so that it would not be necessary to choose to ride up either the winding trail in the park or to ride under 61, along Pigs Eye Lake to end up on Warner/Shepard Road. Both lovely rides, but not necessarily useful to commuters.

My impression from the presenters in support of the current proposal on May 18th, pretty much all of whom did not live on or near Upper Afton (one from Minneapolis), was not that they were eager to find their way to our lovely part of town and spend time enjoying a scenic ride throughout our community, but rather that they were looking for an expedient way to commute through the area. If the goal is to get to 3M, the Margaret Street lanes ought to be perfect for that, and if the goal is to get to Woodbury, the Lower Afton trail is a delightful way to go.

During the warm weather months, bicycle clubs seem to have chosen Upper Afton Road as a preferred route and we do see long lines of bicycles coming through on the weekends. Traffic on Upper Afton during weekend days is not at all heavy and single lane riding along the side of the road has, again, always felt safe to me. What we tend to see happen with these casual riders, is that they will ride two, three, sometimes four abreast.

I do not feel that it should be necessary for the tax paying residents of this community to have to give up all of their on-street parking in order for these bikers to be able to disobey the rules of the road. The Lower Afton trail would be the perfect place for them to ride in this manner.

For the twenty plus years that I have lived in this neighborhood, I have enjoyed pleasant walks in the beautiful Ramsey County Open Use Space that is so easily accessible from my home. It is a wonderful resource and I have often appreciated having given up the crowded walks around Lake of the Isles in Minneapolis, for the quiet pleasure of these spaces.

Over the years, there has been increasing traffic on these trails. Fine. Good. Others are enjoying the space. Unfortunately, the off-road bikers have found their way to these trails and have been tearing them up and I'm sure costing Ramsey County some extra expense in maintenance. Generally, these bikers come in with their bikes on their cars, park and then commence to destroy the trails and the vegetation along the trails. But some of them do ride their bikes to the area.

I do not believe that these bikers need a special bike lane on Upper Afton Road, at the expense of those of us who live and pay taxes and roadway fees here. The Lower Afton trail, via Warner/Shepard Road and Pigs Eye Lake should be perfectly sufficient for them to reach the park trails.

I would like to suggest again, looking at the option of a single bike lane in one direction on Upper Afton Road with a corresponding bike lane in the opposite direction, either on Burns or Third Avenues.

Thank you.
Sincerely,

Elinor Auge
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