

Meuler, Louis

From: Tim Ice <spokice@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 12, 2014 10:40 PM
To: Meuler, Louis
Cc: 'Wilma Flanagan'
Subject: FW: like the plan for Ben Burr corrected version

Mr. Meuler,

I have been encouraged by the plans and funding for Ben Burr trail improvements. I am a 62 year old lifelong biker and hiker. I commute to work most of the year by bike and use the Centennial Trail daily. I work in downtown Spokane with frequent commutes to the Valley, where my wife works, or up near Ferris High School, where we live. When running errands that find me in the University District or in the East Sprague Neighborhood there are no reasonable routes back up South Hill without going downtown. Carnahan, Freya, Ray and Altamont are all unfriendly on a bike heading south.

Several months ago after reading of planned improvements to the Ben Burr Trail I biked home from downtown following what I could find of the route. I have lived in the area for 35 years but had never been on this trail. I was struck by the beauty of the route from Liberty Park to 14th and the ease with which it got me past the obstacle of Altamont hill. I was the only biker but I passed perhaps 10 happy dog walkers, runners, and hikers.

Being both a biker and a hiker I enjoy seeing both on area mixed use trails. The current small group voicing concern about trail improvements are clearly current users. Commuting hikers and bikers who would appreciate the all weather changes are not at the meetings because they don't know the trail is there.

Commuter trails like Burke Gilman in Seattle and the Centennial Trail here have generally been resisted on inception by close neighbors. They soon become huge boosts to the vibrancy of the communities they pass through.

I remember Jerry Numbers as one of my son's teachers at Grant in 1989. He and the immediate neighbors of this trail are largely responsible for planning changes in the early 80s that kept this route available today. He is a fine teacher and community leader but we differ on where we go from here. I support a fully paved trail with compromises on width for specific isolated obstacles. I believe this route can ease the structural isolation of Liberty Park from downtown caused by I-90 and provide a safe route from Liberty Park to upper Altamont and through Lincoln Park to upper South Hill.

The basic plan as funded is sound and advantageous to the immediate neighborhood and the city as a whole. The funding came with stipulations that, while not anticipated by the trail neighbors, are based on lessons learned from other projects. It took many years and much work to get here. I hope that we don't let these final details derail this fine project.

Thanks, Timothy Ice 448-6847