

**BMTS Article Digest
June – July 2015**

BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee Members:

The following is a compilation of articles that may be of interest to BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee members. This and past digests can also be accessed in the Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee page of www.bmtsonline.com.

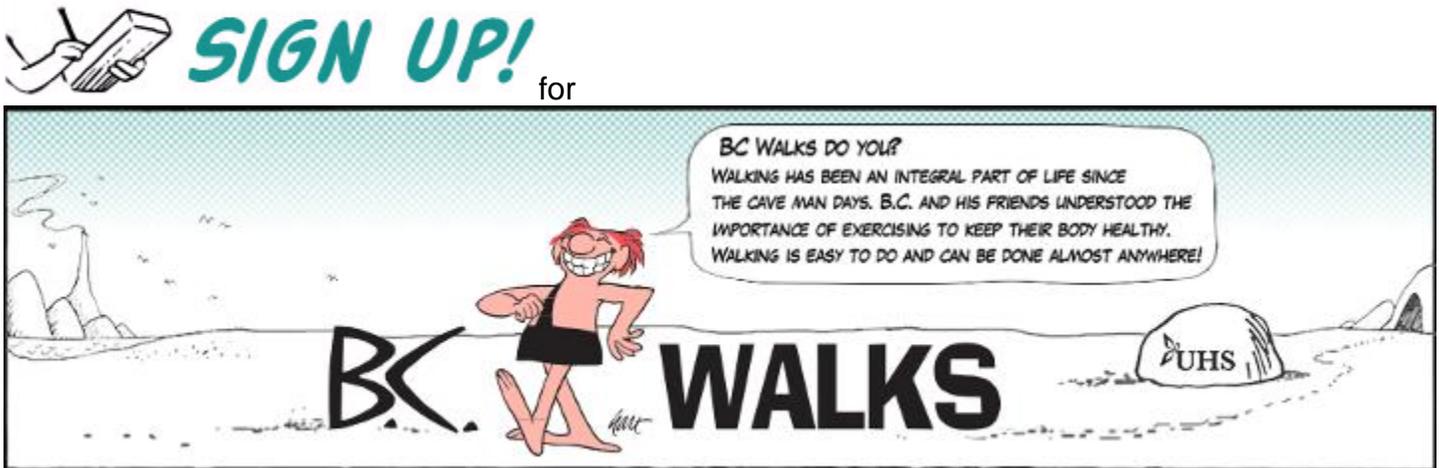
Scott



Take a look at the National Center for Bicycling & Walking's newsletter, **CenterLines**. You can also arrange to have it emailed directly to you.

See <http://www.bikewalk.org/newsletter.php>.

CenterLines is the bi-weekly electronic news bulletin of the National Center for Bicycling & Walking. **CenterLines** is our way of quickly delivering news and information you can use to create more walkable and bicycle-friendly communities.



Go to www.BCWalks.com!

Check out this website for Bike & Pedestrian Information!



www.coexistnys.org

In particular, view the interactive educational video clips.

June 16, 2015

Downtown parking study set to begin

A study of downtown Binghamton parking, aimed at assessing parking needs and developing a new parking management plan, begins this week.

The team behind the study is focusing on a combination of data gathering and public outreach, according to the office of Mayor Richard David, which announced the start of the study start this week.

The city is encouraging resident to participate in an **online survey** on downtown parking at www.binghamtonparkingsurvey.com. The public is also invited to a workshop- style open house in the lobby of the Metro Center on June 16. The open house is scheduled to run from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

In a press release, David said a comprehensive study of downtown parking will allow the city to put together an effective strategy to meet long-term economic development needs.

“We want to hear from residents, business stakeholders and visitors about their parking experiences and obtain the objective data needed to make important parking policy decisions,” David said in the statement.

GUEST VIEWPOINT

Planning now for region's transportation needs



A state Department of Transportation crew prepares for the opening of a new Route 17 West bridge last summer over the Chenango River, which is part of the Prospect Mountain project.

GUEST VIEWPOINT - July 8, 2015

Planning now for region's transportation needs

CYNDI PADDICK

Every day and throughout our lifetimes we make transportation decisions that impact how we spend our time and live our lives.

Where we live, work and play are largely dependent on the various transportation options available to us. Whether it's riding the bus, driving a car, walking or bicycling, we all engage in some type of transportation activities daily.

We are all pedestrians at some point in our daily life. We park our car and walk to our destinations, we walk to or from the bus stop, or we walk from our homes to work or school. On a much larger scale, transportation impacts everything in our lives. Mail, FedEx, and UPS deliveries and merchandise that we purchase in stores and food from the grocery store all find their way to the local store shelves via truck deliveries. Lumber, steel and grain bulk deliveries reach their destinations on freight trains.

We usually don't talk about transportation unless there is a problem, such as: streets in terrible condition, riddled with pot holes; a bridge in jeopardy of being closed because of its structural condition; a sidewalk that's cracked and uneven; buses that don't run frequently enough and are in poor condition; inefficient or unnecessary traffic signals; and a lack of signed, safe and efficient bicycle routes. Taxpayers question why more money isn't being spent to improve these conditions?

The reality is that road construction and transit services are expensive. The Binghamton Urbanized Area receives funds from New York State and the Federal Government to be used in conjunction with local funds for the preservation and construction of the local transportation system. This money is funneled through the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study (BMTS) to set priorities and distribute the funds in an efficient and comprehensive manner. Unfortunately, it's expensive to run a transit system, build bridges and reconstruct streets. The plethora of needs is always greater than the resources available.

In order to set priorities and make wise investments, we need community input. What do you see as the major issues facing our urban area relating to transportation? New bridges? Preserving the infrastructure? Additional greenways? Better bus service? More sidewalks? Efficient usage of traffic signals? Over the course of the next 20 years we anticipate that the Binghamton Urbanized Area will receive approximately \$570 million in Federal funds to be spent on transportation. How should these funds be invested to improve and maintain our future transportation systems?

Please join us as we kick off the BMTS Long Range Plan, "Looking Forward 2040." There will be a series of meetings this week from 6 p.m.-8 p.m. July 8 at the Binghamton University Events Center and July 9 at the Town of Dickinson Town Hall. We encourage the public to stop in and share your ideas with us. If you are unable to attend a meeting you can still share your thoughts by participating in a short survey at [http:// Lookingforward2040.questionpro.com](http://Lookingforward2040.questionpro.com)

Cyndi Paddick is executive director of the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study.



Weinstein: Vestal Coal House makes fitness a priority

**Matt Weinstein, pressconnects.com | 10:51 a.m.
EDT June 9, 2015**

(Photo: File photo)

Mark Mushalla had a vision for the Vestal Coal House when he took over operation of the building in 2012.

"Three different elements I saw as far as the future: an operating café, a small room on the second floor for staging events and the third piece, and by far the biggest, was special events," the 55-year-old from Vestal says. "I saw a good opportunity to make the whole place a community gathering place, and that's exactly what we're doing."

In addition to hosting trivia nights and live music, Mushalla spends much of the focus of special events on fitness. In addition to weekly "Wednesday Night Workouts," the Vestal Coal House hosts several road races during the season.

Mushalla and his wife, Eileen, are focused on healthy living for everyone by offering a wide variety of activities — not just runs and competitions. The goal is for every activity to be accessible to as many people as possible and the Mushallas collaborate with different groups and non-profits to help put the events together.

The upcoming schedule for "Wednesday Night Workouts" include crossfit by GSR CrossFit, workout session instructed by Be the Change Fitness, and martial arts by Five Element MMA.

The events are free of cost, usually beginning with an instruction period and then a brief session. Classes include refreshments and United Health Services are on site for blood pressure screenings and to provide education. Last year the Vestal Coal House hosted the Wednesday workouts once a month, but this year it's every week.

A new senior program is beginning for anybody age 55 and older. Sponsored by Good Shepherd Communities and Excellus, the program is for those who may not have kept up on their fitness and provides an accessible way to get back on track to healthy living. The end goal of the program is for the participants to run a 5-kilometer race in August. The Triple Cities Runners Club will provide training and take the folks through the necessary steps.

The Vestal Coal House's most popular attractions are the road races. The Paul Kerns Memorial 5K last week drew 140 runners and walkers and raised more than \$6,000 to benefit the Vestal Cagers. On July 25 it hosts the Guts and Glory Trail Run, a 4-mile run with obstacles and fitness challenges. Obstacles include a tire throw, fireman's carry, army crawl and crossfit challenges. Registration is open at eventbrite.com and triplecitiesrunnersclub.org.

Ten years ago the building was named a historic landmark but sat vacant for years at its current spot near the Stage Road entrance. Mushalla's company, M Squared Staffing, won the bidding on the coal house in 2012 when the town decided to take proposals for privatization. The first-floor café sells healthy smoothies and snacks (as well as ice cream) and the second floor can host small events.

Other events include comedy nights and open-mic nights, as well as live music. Go to the Facebook page (www.facebook.com/VestalCoalHouse) for a schedule of events. Some events are free and others have fees associated with them.

"On the ones that are free we usually try to get different a business to collaborate with us," Mushalla said. "It's really nice to see the community and businesses get involved. We have a lot of exciting events and it all benefits the community.

"We try to make it fun for all but still have a level competition for those who want to compete. We welcome walkers to our runs and encourage first timers to come out and give it a try. Get outside and get some exercise."

Weinstein is the Active Life reporter for the Press & Sun-Bulletin. Contact him at mweinstein@pressconnects.com

VESTAL COAL HOUSE

Website: www.facebook.com/VestalCoalHouse

Upcoming events

July 15: Wednesday Night Workout: Five Element MMA, 5:30 p.m.

July 17: Rail Trail Relay, 6 p.m.

July 22: Wednesday Night Workout: GSR Crossit, 5:30 p.m.

July 25: Guts and Glory Trail Run, 10 a.m.

Police: Bicyclist seriously hurt in Binghamton hit-run

Anthony Borrelli 10:51 a.m. EDT June 24, 2015

Binghamton police are on the lookout for a driver that struck a 28-year-old woman Tuesday night on Liberty Street, then fled the scene.

The victim was left in serious condition, police said, and the accident happened just before 9 p.m.

Witnesses told officers that the victim was riding a bicycle in the roadway when she was struck by a possibly silver-colored Dodge Stratus traveling north on Liberty Street at high speed, according to police.

The vehicle that struck her would have front and passenger side damage, police said, and the driver was a male.

Witnesses told investigators that the vehicle frequently drives through the Liberty Street area, police said.

Anyone with information is encouraged to contact Binghamton police detectives at (607) 772-7080.

Binghamton police make arrest in hit and run

Anthony Borrelli, 10:21 a.m. EDT June 26, 2015

Binghamton police have made an arrest in a June 22 hit and run on Liberty Street that left a woman seriously injured.

Markus Imes, 25, was charged with a felony count of leaving the scene of a personal injury accident, police said Friday. He was arraigned in Binghamton City Court.

The hit and run happened just before 9 p.m., according to police.

A 28-year-old woman was riding her bicycle in the roadway when she was struck by a Dodge Stratus traveling north on Liberty Street, police said.

Witnesses told responding officers that the vehicle had been traveling high speed, and it received front and passenger side damage in the accident.

City of Edmonton's Award Winning Bicycle Safety Videos

http://www.edmonton.ca/transportation/cycling_walking/cycling-video-gallery.aspx

Belgian city launches 'text walking lanes' for smartphone addicts



By Trevor Mogg

Published June 15, 2015

People's apparent eagerness to stay connected at all times means we're seeing more and more folk walking the streets lost in their phones. Well, we would see them if we weren't staring at our own handsets, right?

The thing is, this growing distraction means many smartphone addicts are risking life and limb as they go about their day, with near misses and collisions occurring at an increasing rate.

In an effort to put phone users on the right track and ease the stress of the disgruntled pedestrians that have to dodge them, a city in Belgium has created several "text walking lanes."

Following in the footsteps of Washington, DC, and Chongqing in China, the special lanes have been painted onto a number of Antwerp's busiest shopping streets. While the measure is, in reality, a marketing stunt by local mobile firm Mlab, it's likely that many in the area wouldn't mind keeping the markings.

'Everyone text-walks'

An Mlab spokesperson told [Yahoo News](#), "Everyone text-walks. You probably walk through the streets while texting or sending WhatsApp messages to your friends and don't really pay attention to your surroundings -- only to whatever is happening on your screen.

'This causes collisions with poles or other pedestrians. You could, unknowingly, even be endangering your own life while you text-walk when you cross the street without looking up.'

Indeed, there have been all manner of stories in recent years of phone addicts [walking off piers](#) or [into canals](#).

Research firm Pew [said recently](#) that according to U.S. ER data, pedestrian injuries due to handset distraction has risen by 35 percent in the last five years.

Its report points out that in an effort to reduce the number of accidents linked to distracted walking, states such as Utah and New Jersey have experimented with fines for wandering texters who put themselves in hazardous situations. In addition, speed limits were reduced last year in parts of New York City for safety reasons. The move should mean that if a smartphone user does wander into the street without realizing, the driver may be able to take avoiding action instead of mowing them down.

6/16/2015 - Press and SunBulletin

Appeal Denied In Fatal Binghamton Hit And Run

ANTHONY BORRELLI

A state court has denied an Endicott man's bid to overturn his conviction in a fatal Binghamton hit and run.

Kevin L. Buie, 31, was convicted in July 2013 and sentenced to 12 to 15 years in state prison. The state appellate division issued a decision May 28 to uphold his conviction for vehicular manslaughter and other charges.

The fatal hit and run happened Sept. 15, 2012, after a black Plymouth Breeze, driven by Buie, ran a red light while making a left turn from Main Street to Front Street in Binghamton. Jonathan Pratt, then 35, was killed in the crash and another pedestrian was seriously injured.

Police said Buie fled the scene, and he was later apprehended.

Buie's appeal centered on an argument that his guilty plea was not knowing, intelligent and voluntary, because the court failed to ask him whether he was under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time.

In its decision, the appellate division said Buie made no statements during his plea in court that were inconsistent with this guilt or called into question whether it was voluntary.

The court record is "devoid of any suggestion that (Buie) was under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of his allocution," the appeal decision stated.

Buie pleaded guilty to felony counts of second degree vehicular manslaughter and second degree assault in the hit and run.

He also pleaded to second degree burglary in connection to an Aug. 25, 2012, incident, when he unlawfully entered the Endicott apartment of a former girlfriend and attacked her, prosecutors said.

The day before the fatal hit and run, Buie had been bailed out of the Broome County jail on a \$20,000 bond.

Buie is not eligible for release from state prison until June 2025, according to state records.

26 Jun 2015 - The Globe and Mail (Ottawa/Quebec Edition)

ZOSIA BIELSKI

'Texting lanes' lay bare our absurd self-absorption

The zombies weave, speed up, slow down, eyes beady and intent on their screens, faces bathed in a blue glow.

RICK BOWMER/AP Utah Valley University administrators divided a staircase into three lanes: one for running, one for walking and one for texting.

Now, they've landed their own special highway for it all. From Utah to China to Antwerp, "texting lanes" are proliferating. Painted on sidewalks, these lanes are for the super-busy set.

At Utah Valley University, administrators splashed neon green labeling up a staircase: one lane for running, one for walking and one for texting.

"When you have 18- to 24-year-olds walking on campus glued to their smartphones, you're almost bound to run into someone somewhere; it's the nature of the world we live in," Matthew Bambrough, the school's creative director, explained in a blog post. He said the texting lane was initially planned as a stunt to engage students, to "let them know we are aware of who they are and where they're coming from." (That's a depressing thought.)

Texting lanes have also popped up in Belgium, China, Philadelphia and Washington – in some cases as marketing stunts. In Washington, texters overlooked the lanes completely. “Many people actually using their phones did not notice the markings at all. Of course they wouldn’t: They were staring, oblivious and glassy-eyed, at the screens of their mobile devices,” Rob Pegoraro, Yahoo’s tech columnist observed.

Much has been made in the coverage of the accident risks of texting while walking, when everything but your phone becomes a blind spot. (Casey Neistat, the director of a short film about the etiquette gaffe, elucidated the proper way to text on public streets: Stop walking, put your back against a wall and let foot traffic sail by unimpeded.)

The occasional bump aside, texting while walking says far more about our limitless distraction. Brigid Schulte, a Washington Post journalist and author of the book *Overwhelmed: Work, Love, and Play When No One Has the Time*, described our “always-on technological haze,” one that “splinters the experience of time into thousands of little pieces.”

Schulte believes we’re on the bleeding edge of technology and haven’t quite yet mastered it. “I think over time – I’m hoping – we’ll adapt and become smarter about how we use technology. It is using us right now,” Schulte told me in an interview last year. She’s right. Exhibit A: our bottomless in-boxes. Exhibit B: being increasingly incapable of walking a short distance without scanning your digital dog leash.

Phone lanes also lay bare our absurd self-absorption. As one comedian put it on Twitter, “You wanted flying cars and hover boards? Sorry, you get texting lanes and selfie sticks.” The future isn’t cool, it’s narcissistic.

One thing the texting lanes might actually be good for, if zombies even notice them? Public shaming – singling out the most self-important among us into a divided stream, for all to see.

<http://www.twcnews.com/nys/binghamton/news/2015/06/23/binghamton-bike-routes-often-mean-cycling-on-major-roads.html>



Binghamton Bike Routes Often Mean Cycling on Major Roads

By Gabrielle Lucivero

Tuesday, June 23, 2015 at 07:35 AM EDT

VESTAL, N.Y. -- The Greater Binghamton Area has more than 50 miles of bike routes, and with all of that ground to cover, the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study is looking to keep cyclists as safe as possible as not all of those miles are free of cars and are on major roads.

There were 96 bicycle-vehicle accidents around the Greater Binghamton area between 2012 and 2014 -- a number local leaders are hoping to bring down by providing designated bike routes and safety information.

"It's very hard to choose the best bike route. Bicyclists, when they're bicycling, especially for transportation, it's like a motorist, they want to get there in the most direct and efficient way," said Reigle.

The Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study has outlined seven routes in hopes of helping bicyclists get to their destination safely. But the most direct way sometimes means biking on busy roads, like Routes 17C or 434, which can lead to accidents.

"Well, we find it's a combination of bicyclists needing to follow the rules of the road themselves as well as motorists being on the lookout for bicyclists and needing to share the roadway with them," Reigle said.

And while it's important for everyone to be careful, there are some precautions cyclists can take to ensure a safe ride.

"You always wear a helmet. Make sure you always wear a helmet. That's very important. It might be a little uncomfortable but it's worth it," said Roger Clark, a bicyclist.

But if you're still not comfortable riding on a main road, there are more than a few trail options at Otsiningo Park, along the Chenango River or on the Vestal Rail Trail.

"And we're looking to expand those and connect those so they will be a continuous trail system. But again if you're a bicyclist, bike where you feel most comfortable and as you are out more and more, you tend to gain more comfortable and will be able to venture out as you get used to sharing the roadway with motorists," Reigle said.

Fourth of July bike parade is an Aldrich Avenue tradition

Andrew Thayer – Press & Sun-Bulletin

3:38 p.m. EDT July 4, 2015

(Photo: ANDREW THAYER / Staff Photo)



Despite the rain a Fourth of July neighborhood tradition continued on Saturday morning as about 50 people gathered for a bike parade along Aldrich Avenue in Binghamton.

About a dozen children decorated their bicycles and scooters with red, white and blue streamers for a short parade along the quiet residential street followed by a block party, continuing a tradition that began in 2002.

"I have a lot of joy in my heart, just seeing how many people came out even though it was raining, that it means that much to them and it means a whole lot to

me," said Patti Fiato who lives at 87 Aldrich Ave. and came up with the idea for the parade thirteen years ago.

"I saw the idea in FamilyFun magazine and thought it was a good idea," said Fiato. "This is such a great street and always has been for kids and now they're grown up but they still all come out."

Sergeant Conor Heslin of the Binghamton Police led the procession in his squad car and was closely followed by a large hand-written banner held by Patti Fiato's sons Justin, 13, and Matt, 15. Neighbors braved the rain to wave and cheer on the youngsters from their front lawns.

"It's great, the neighbors all come out, you get to see them rather than just in passing you actually get to socialize with them and all the kids get together and have a good time," said Sergeant Heslin who has been a resident of Aldrich Ave for the past six years.

Following the parade children and grown-ups alike lined up for a Mr. Frosty ice cream truck which served vanilla and chocolate soft serve along with plenty of sprinkles. Children played basketball in the rain, threw water balloons, and enjoyed treats like watermelon, cupcakes, punch and popcorn as the adults mingled underneath a tent in the driveway of the Fiato's home.

Mike Howell who walked in the parade along with his three-year-old son Nicholas, said he attended the block party for several years before moving to Aldrich Avenue two summers ago.

“Now that [Nicholas] can ride a bike he loves going down the block after the police car,” said Howell. “I like watching all the kids have a good time on the Fourth of July. It’s great, especially since we just moved here, to know there are kids and it’s a community.”

For the teenagers of the neighborhood the annual Fourth of July Bike parade has become a part of their childhood.

“Now it’s something we do for the younger kids on the street, we stopped riding our bikes and now we walk the banner,” said Patti Fiato’s 17-year-old daughter Julia Fiato.

According to Fiato, the Fourth of July celebration began as a small gathering has grown to include people from nearby neighborhoods and family and friends. While Fiato holds a small raffle to pay for the ice cream, popcorn machine, and decorations, neighbors contribute a significant amount to make sure the tradition continues.

“It is definitely a group effort,” said Patti Fiato.
