

## John Long

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**From:** Aaron Greiner <aaronbgreiner@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 22, 2019 3:44 PM  
**To:** Transportation; Mayor; City Council  
**Cc:** City Clerk Contact; somerville@cambridgebikesafety.org  
**Subject:** Powder House Blvd protected bike lanes

Hello,

I will not be able to make the meeting tonight about Power House Blvd, so I wanted to give some feedback in writing. Most importantly, I want to put my full support behind PROTECTED bike lanes. Paint is not protection, and bike lanes that are not protected do little to make a safe cycling network. I have many friends who do not bike because they do not feel safe biking on the road (and who can blame them!). I urge the city to do the right thing and put protected bike lanes along Power House Blvd.

Thanks  
Aaron (Somerville resident)

## John Long

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**From:** Rachel Thuerk <rjh2001@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 06, 2019 11:42 AM  
**To:** Transportation; Mayor; City Council  
**Cc:** City Clerk Contact; somerville@cambridgebikesafety.org; TobiThuerk@gmail.com; info@somervillebikes.org  
**Subject:** Meeting Regarding Protected Bike Lanes on Powderhouse - Follow Up

Good Morning,

I would like to start by thanking each of you and everyone in the city and the counselors who are working hard on meeting the needs of a community with divergent views on the future of our city.

I attended the community meeting (two small children + stroller in the front, if you were there) on May 22nd, and I would like to address a few of the items brought up in the meeting. There were a number of frustrated residents that seem to feel something that belongs to them is being taken away, but I contend that public rights of way are for all travelers and that storage of private property on public space (such as parking automobiles on public roads) should be secondary to the safe travel needs of all users.

Specifically, though, two comments made at the meeting stood out to me that I want to highlight in this email. The first was from an owner of a multi-family home along the boulevard who bemoaned the loss of parking because it might lessen the rent he can collect from his tenants. Leaving aside the fact that most data sources I have found show increases in property values following the installation of bike lanes (with evidence from cities such as [Brooklyn](#), [Atlanta](#), and [San Francisco](#)), it strikes me as particularly unreasonable for someone to object to safe travel lanes in order to maximize his own personal profit.

The second was a comment made by a firefighter towards the end of the meeting. He rightly identified increased congestion as a problem in our community; however, he wrongly asserted that maintaining parking would be the best way to mitigate this issue. On this count, I wholeheartedly agree that car congestion is a problem. But, the way forward is to prioritize alternative means of transport, especially biking and public transit such as the GLX, not to continue to make parking as easy as possible. When we make biking safer, we do more to decrease congestion than almost any other measure. Per the [European Commission](#), a 1/3 reduction in car trips in a city can cause 30% less traffic jams, 25% reduction in motor vehicle emissions, 36% CO emissions, and 9% reduction in the number of people suffering from noise pollution, among other benefits, such as improved physical fitness and lower healthcare costs. Making parking less convenient may even be a benefit, as it decreases the appeal of car ownership, and when paired with quality biking facilities, gives residents a better alternative for navigating our urban environment.

Again with thanks,  
Rachel

On Thu, Apr 25, 2019 at 9:11 AM Rachel Thuerk <[rjh2001@gmail.com](mailto:rjh2001@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Good Morning,

My name is Rachel Thuerk, and I live in West Somerville just north of Powderhouse Blvd. I have one child currently in Kindergarten at WSNS, another currently in ECIP, who will be attending WSNS in the fall, and a third who needs to grow a few years before entering SPS. I am writing in support of removing one lane of parking on Powderhouse Blvd in order to upgrade the biking facilities to protected lanes in both directions. We are a bike-heavy, car-light family, and plan on leaning further into this arrangement as our children grow up. I currently bike as my main mode of transportation year round and frequently carry one or both of my older children on the back, including a daily trip along Powderhouse from WSNS to Capuano.

Protected bike lanes will not only make current cyclists safer, they will encourage new ridership, better connect the neighborhood for current and future families, and improve bike access across the city via the planned re-do of the rotary and Broadway facilities. This is an investment in what we want the future of Somerville to be, a city that is designed to be safe and welcoming for all modes of transport.

I attended Tuesday night's informational meeting at WSNS and plan on attending the May 22nd meeting as well, but I also wanted to put my support in writing to you all.

Many thanks,

Rachel