

BICYCLE SAFETY / SEGURIDAD DE BICICLETA

*RI State Law

Be predictable. Be visible. Follow the rules of the road.
Esté previsible. Esté visible. Sigán las normas de circulación.



SHARE THE ROAD.
COMPARTÉ EL CAMINO.

	Obey all traffic signs and signals. Obedezca todas las señales de tráfico. Ride in the same direction as the traffic.* Conduzca siempre en la misma dirección del tráfico.*		Make eye contact with motorists. Haga contacto visual con los automovilistas.
	Always use hand signals. Siempre use señales de mano.		Check the road behind you often. Mire el hacia atrás constantemente.
	Do not ride on sidewalks if you are 13 years or older.* Manténgase fuera de la acera, si usted tiene 13 años o más.*		Watch out for suddenly opening car doors. Cuidese de puertas de auto que se abren repentinamente.
	Give pedestrians the right of way.* Dé a los peatones el derecho de paso.*		Stay in a straight line. Avoid dodging between parked cars. Manténgase en una línea recta. Evite esquivar entre autos parqueados.
	Use the appropriate lane. Do not stay in a right-turning lane when going straight. Use el carril apropiado. No se quede en el carril de giro a la derecha si quiere seguir de frente.		Always use lights at night and early morning. Utilice siempre luces en la noche y al amanecer.
	Be careful at intersections. Watch for turning vehicles. Tenga cuidado en las intersecciones. Vigile para vehículos que giran.		Wear a helmet. REQUIRED up to 15 years old and smart for EVERYONE.* Use un casco. REQUERIDO hasta los 15 años y la decisión inteligente para TODOS.*

Safety

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island shows there is more awareness about the issue of bike safety locally and across the state.

"I'm really, really excited about (the bike-way)," Chesterton said, as he got ready to board his bike and head out. "I know a lot of bikers see a bunch of different benefits from a project like this."

Bicycling safety has been in the public eye on Aquidneck Island after two high-profile fatalities involving bicyclists last year.

In response, the state Department of Transportation and local municipalities have installed dedicated bike lanes on Memorial Boulevard in Newport and Coddington Highway in Middletown.

About two dozen bicyclists attended Monday's announcement at the Midway Pier property near Greene Lane.

"I try to encourage people to ride to work all the time, and a lot of them say they don't feel comfortable riding around here," said Chris Tompsett of Newport, also a member of Bike Newport, an organization founded several years ago to advocate for improved bicycling opportunities. "The bikeway should help make that a lot more possible than it is now, and I think it will be a good way to get across the island."

Tompsett said he rides his custom cargo bike with wooden decking to work at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center, or just for fun.

The most he's toted on his bike is 120 pounds, he said, including a couple bags of cat litter, after a trip to a local discount store.

Tompsett said he's appreciative of the work that's been done to assist bikers locally, and particularly enjoys using the Memorial Boulevard bike lane on his way home from work.



Bike Lane Shared Lane (Sharrow)

Bike Lanes and RI Passing Law

There are two bike symbols on Newport's roadways — one for dedicated bike lanes and one for shared lanes:

BIKE LANE — A narrow separate lane for bicycles only. Cyclists are protected in the bike lane, but continue to have a right to the main road and will move into the road whenever a hazard exists in the bike lane. Cars should never be in the bike lane and should cross the bike lane with extreme caution.

SHARED LANE (or SHARROW) — This travel lane is marked for shared use by cars and bicycles. A cyclist should ride in the right side of the lane when possible, but ride the center of the lane in the vicinity of parked cars to avoid car doors, when preparing to turn left, or to prevent a car from passing too closely.

RI Passing Law: Rhode Island state law mandates that a motorist may not pass a cyclist unless there is enough room for the cyclist to fall over sideways into the driving lane and not be hit by the vehicle. This law is written to protect cyclists from serious or fatal injury. Please be patient and courteous when sharing the road.

"I intentionally go out of my way to use the lane that's there," Tompsett said. "It's been really good so far and it makes you feel a lot safer than before. Hopefully, (drivers) continue to honor it."

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School

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no longer afford the constant increases in school budgets. Every one of our communities has suffered this season trying to make things work," she said. "None of the school committees have been satisfied with the money they've been allocated by the towns and we've given as much as it's possible for us to give."

Sen. Louis P. DiPalma, D-Middletown, said he would support the council in its effort however he could, including seeking financial assistance.

"From a state perspective, there's not a hearing that we have, where a person comes before a Senate finance or Senate education committee, where myself or someone else on the committee doesn't ask, 'So what have you done to try to become more efficient?'" DiPalma said. "The second question, right after that, is 'What have you done to be more effective?'"

According to DiPalma, the state currently provides an additional 2 percent in housing aid costs for each grade level that is regionalized. Also, DiPalma said, the state offers an additional 2 percent under the state funding formula in the first year of regionalization, 1 percent in the second year (there is no additional state aid in subsequent years). It was unclear Monday night what the move could mean in state aid and savings for Middletown,

Newport and Portsmouth.

The concept of merging the three public school districts on the island has come up on a number of occasions through the years.

In June 2009, the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council released a report showing the three communities on the island stood to save close to \$13 million by consolidating by fiscal 2013, which ended June 30.

To date, the concept has been a nonstarter, with talks gaining little traction, but most on the council said they'd like to see that change.

In voting against the resolution, Long asked, "Is it appropriate for the town administrator to do this? It seems that the expertise lies with the School Department."

In response, other council members said they had no doubt Brown would use the expertise of educational officials to come up with the best model possible.

A staunch proponent of regionalization in the past, Town Council President Christopher T. Semonelli said he was skeptical that other communities would come forward to participate, but it was worth a try.

"It's a math thing and it's real easy to determine financially it's needed," Semonelli said. "We reached out to people in the community and we got no one to participate. I'm not being a naysayer. I'm at the point where I think someone from the state has to say, 'You

have to do this.'"

But others said the time seemed right to revisit the concept on a local level, starting with a regional high school.

"Those boundary lines need to be broken down at some point of time," Councilman Paul M. Rodrigues said. "I support Mrs. VonVillas and Mr. Adams for bringing this forward. Certainly, there are a lot of facts that need to be gathered and it takes real leadership to move this thing forward."

"This is a must now," said Robert J. Sylvia, council vice president. "We can't ask our taxpayers any longer to keep tightening their belt. They're hurting. We can no longer support the services that we have."

Earlier in the meeting, as part of an unrelated conversation, School Committee Chairwoman Theresa Silveira Spengler said she would be meeting with representatives from the Newport and Portsmouth school districts to see if there were areas in which they could work together, primarily focused on maintenance and related matters. Silveira Spengler said wholesale regionalization was not on the table at this point.

Adams said he was excited about the possibility of exploring the issue, wherever the matter took the council and the rest of the community.

"We may not exactly know where we're going, but we'd better get going," he said.

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Tick

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For the past 20 years, Mather has headed a statewide program to count deer and infected ticks. Last year was a record year for nymph stage deer ticks, he said. But this year, the count on Beaver-tail — one of two Jamestown sites monitored in the study — is up 300 percent from that, Mather said.

Despite that alarming news, it would be difficult to convince people the deer population needs to be reduced, he said. Mather called it "the Bambi effect."

"The deer-killing thing, generally speaking, is a very

polarizing thing," Mather said.

Town Administrator Bruce R. Keiser agreed. He has approached residents who own at least five acres of land to see if they had any interest in allowing town-approved hunters to hunt deer on their property, he said.

"The deer kill approach does not appear to be one that offers us an opportunity to attack the problem," Keiser said.

Mather said the town needs a "dual approach" that combines reducing the source of the problem — deer — and educating people about how to protect themselves against disease. People should wear clothing that is treated with tick repellent or treat their yards to keep ticks out, he said.

Mather even suggested the town hire a public relations firm to inform residents of the problem and potential solutions.

The council decided to hold a public forum on the issue in August.

"We certainly are interested in protecting the public safety of the island," Council President Kristine S. Trocki said.

"We don't need more data. We need a plan of what we're going to do, who's going to do it and how much it's going to cost," Councilman Eugene B. Mihaly said.

"We have some answers. We just don't have people willing to listen," Mather said.

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WEATHER

COASTAL RHODE ISLAND

Tonight, partly cloudy with patchy fog. Low around 69.

Wednesday, mostly sunny. High near 84. Wednesday night, partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers and thunderstorms.

EXTENDED

Thursday, mostly sunny with a slight chance of showers and thunderstorms. High near 86. Thursday night, mostly cloudy with a slight chance of showers and thunderstorms. Low around 74.

Friday, mostly sunny. High near 84. Friday night, partly cloudy. Low around 74.

MARINE

Tonight, south wind 5-10 knots, becoming southwest after midnight. Waves 1 foot or less.

Wednesday, south wind around 5 knots, increasing to 5-10 knots in the afternoon. Waves 1 foot or less. Wednesday night, southwest wind 5-10 knots. Waves around 2 feet.

TIDES

Wednesday's sunrise 5:26, sunset 8:16. High tides: 2:46 a.m., 3:26 p.m. Low tides: 8:18 a.m., 9:39 p.m. Monday's temperatures: high: 91, low 73.



Jacqueline Marque | Staff photographer

A map displayed during Monday's presentation shows the route of the proposed 18-mile-long Aquidneck Island Bikeway.

Favor

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Transportation Alternatives Program.

"For all the talent and ability we have in Rhode Island, one of the things we enjoy the most, I think, is having a really terrific quality of life," Whitehouse said. "And to be able to add a resource like this so that people can bike up and down this side of the island and get back and forth to work, to get to the beach or just go out for a bike ride and have some recreation, this will be a real addition that we're going to work hard to make sure happens."

An avid bicyclist, Cicilline said he believes the bikeway makes sense not only for quality of life and to make a dent in climate change, but that it would help the economy, too.

"Not only is it important to protect the environment, but to provide alternative modes of transportation to help enhance tourism, so people can see the magnificent beauty of our state," Cicilline said. "But also for the larger employers like Raytheon and (the Naval Undersea Warfare Center) and others, this gives employees alternatives as well. It has huge benefits and this is

the beginning of a very wonderful, long partnership."

The island bikeway could connect to 55 miles of other bike paths, giving bicyclists safe places to ride around the state.

"This bike path will be an anchor for Aquidneck Island that will spread out along southeastern Rhode Island to provide magnificent opportunities for recreation, for healthy exercise and to get cars off the road," Dolen said. "To have the ability for bikers to stop and go into a little shop or go to the beach, take a walk, it's a wonderful way to travel."

The cost of the project has been estimated at up to \$4.2 million. The van Beuren Charitable Foundation recently contributed \$75,000 to pay for a yearlong study by consultants Vanasse Hangen and Brustlin to review the proposal and address potential obstacles that could stand in its way.

"This is an exceptional project," said Elizabeth Lynn, executive director of the van Beuren Charitable Foundation. "It's grounded in community planning. It's regional in scope. It's appropriately scaled as a public-private partnership and it has multiple benefits that we all care about: health, recreation, safety, transportation, economic development."

Newport Mayor Harry Winthrop said the bikeway could become a symbol of much more for the entire island.

"I find it rather exciting that we are now going to be able to link our three communities by bicycle," Winthrop said. "We've been linked by roads for years and years, but we should use it as a symbol ... of what else can we do to create a 'single community.' "Aquidneck Island is a single community, as far as I'm concerned, with three separate municipalities," he said. "We should be looking at, somehow, some way, melding our services and our schools together."

Portsmouth Town Council President James A. Seveney and Middletown Town Council Christopher T. Semonelli agreed.

"It's a great synergy," Seveney said. "I know for a fact that the more northerly towns (on the East Bay Bike Path) have had a wonderful experience with the bike path that goes up to East Providence. It's just a draw of tourists and people to this area."

"This could be a symbolic first step towards looking at regionalization," Semonelli said. "Maybe it's the word that we have a problem with, because there's certainly plenty of desire."

CORRECTIONS

The Newport Daily News seeks to be fair and accurate in reporting the news. If you believe we have published an error, please let us know. Call the city editor at 849-3300, Ext. 254, send an email to CityDesk@NewportRI.com or write us at 101 Malbone Road, Newport, RI 02840.

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2 tickets to the

Newport Jazz Festival!

Visit www.NewportRI.com to enter.

Winner be notified by Friday, July 26th.

Winner will be chosen at random from all qualified entries.