

Suburban Pittsburgh leaders push for bicycle lanes

By BILL ZALATOS (bzlatos@tribweb.com), [TribLIVE](#)

October 12, 2014 PITTSBURGH, PA — Emulating Pittsburgh, leaders in Ross and other suburbs hope to make their communities a safe haven for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Ross commissioners recently voted to urge PennDOT to add bike paths on a 1.2-mile stretch of Babcock Boulevard between McKnight and Evergreen roads as part of a planned repaving project.

“It’s my hope that we have bike lanes on the entirety of Babcock Boulevard and other roads through Ross Township,” Commissioner Jeremy Shaffer said. “It’s very important that Ross Township improve its bicycle and pedestrian friendliness.”

In Millvale, the borough received a grant from The Heinz Endowments to improve pedestrian and biking infrastructure. Biking enthusiasts are trying to encourage Shaler to mark its most frequently used bike paths with signs indicating that the routes are for bikes and cars.

Dave Lampe, 51, of Shaler is a member of the Millvale Bike Committee and the Western Pennsylvania Wheelmen, a bicycle club. He commutes 12 miles one way to work at Duquesne University, Uptown, where he teaches biology.

The Wheelmen, he said, “are trying to get suburbs to improve bicycle infrastructure. There is only one sign on Babcock Boulevard that says, ‘Share the road.’ ”

The Ohio River Trail Council plans a 41-mile bike trail that would run along the Ohio River through 26 communities. It would connect the Montour Trail to Beaver County's border with Ohio and tie into other trails, including the Great Allegheny Passage and the Great Ohio Lake-to-River Greenway.

The Sewickley Valley Community Fund is helping to pay for the plan, which would extend the trail from the Ambridge-Aliquippa Bridge into Ambridge, Leetsdale, Edgeworth and Sewickley. It would pass over the Sewickley Bridge into Moon and Coraopolis.

Lampe endorsed the efforts by Ross leaders to encourage the state to build a bike path — noting their timing is good. “When the time comes to repave, the most rational way to install bike lanes is when the repaving is done,” he said.

PennDOT has not made a decision, spokesman Rich Kirkpatrick said.

“We have to meet with the township to see what they have in mind,” Kirkpatrick said.

Shaffer said Ross would like PennDOT to widen the shoulders of Babcock by 3 or 4 feet on each side for bike lanes. He said he will introduce a resolution Oct. 20 to recommend that the township establish a pedestrian-bicycle advisory committee.

Shaffer ran for office last year on a platform of encouraging bicycle safety in the township. When weather permits, he bikes 7.5 miles from his home in Ross to the North Shore, where he works.

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Source: [TribLIVE](#)