



2/6/25

David Saltonstall
Vice President for Government Relations, Policy & Community Affairs

Erica Sopha
Vice President for Park Use & Stewardship
Central Park Conservancy

Dear Ms. Sopha and Mr. Saltonstall,

On behalf of New York Cycle Club's three thousand members, we call on the Central Park Conservancy, as well as the NYC Departments of Transportation and Parks & Recreation, to forgo aspects of the CP Drive redesign that would jeopardize cyclists' safety.

Overview

For more than 100 years, cyclists have trained and raced on the Drive in early morning hours—some of whom would go on to represent the U.S. in the Olympics and on pro tours, including Evie Stevens, Kristin Faulkner, Stalin Quitero, Nelson Vails and George Hincapie.

Cycling the Drive has also become a major attraction for the 42 million visitors each year. The number of bike rental companies around the Park have contributed to the significant increase in cyclist visitors—many we note, are inexperienced and more prone to crashes.

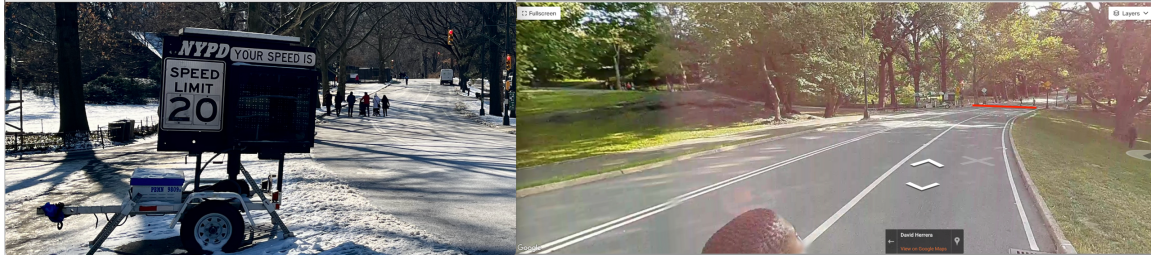
Maintaining conditions on the drive that maximizes safety for all classes of cyclists will contribute to the City's desirability as a destination to visit live and work. It will also sustain local bike shops and tour organizers that rely recreational riding for the bulk of their profits.

First, we call on you to forgo installation of "tabletop crossings" as depicted in item #2 of p. 54 of the [Central Park Drive Safety and Circulation Study](#).



P. 54, Item #2, CP Drive Safety and Circulation Study, NYCDOT, 10/24

Note that the portion of the Drive spanning the Winterdale Arch and the crossing by the Delacorte, mentioned as a candidate for such treatment, comprises a 20 foot drop over the 0.1 mile—enough to propel even casual cyclists to speeds over 20 mph.



Descent approaching the Delacorte. RidewithGPS.

Further note guidance from the USDOT-Federal Highway Administration:

“Avoid placement of a speed hump in an area where high bicyclist speed is expected. ... A bicyclist approaching a 3-inch hump at 20 mph may lose control.” Effects of Traffic Calming Measures on Non-Motorized Users, USDOT FHWA, 7/17/24, <https://tinyurl.com/5c2nfz5a>

Plainly then, placing a 3-6” high tabletop crossing by the Delacorte would be like installing a curb at the bottom of a hill. It would not only cause cyclists of all types to crash, but also [handcyclists](#), [wheelchair racers](#) and users of [personal assistive mobility devices](#).

This will also incur potential liability for the Conservatory. Note that the [Williamsburg Bridge](#) bike path originally included 2” high expansion joint covers. These were found to have caused [multiple crashes, resulting in millions of dollars in lawsuits](#) before they were [ultimately replaced with flush fittings](#).

Second, we ask the Conservancy to formally recognize the [Central Park Protocol](#) and alert Park users to expect groups of cyclists training on the Drive in the early morning hours.

Such alerts, which indicate that cyclists are the Drive’s principal constituents—should be noted on signage at crossings, on the CPC website and in the [Central Park Bike Map](#).

As a practical consideration, user-activated lights should be timed out during these hours to eliminate the scenario of a pedestrian activating a beacon too late for a group to stop safely.

Since DOT is due to commence upgrades on the Drive in 2025 and 2026, we regard this matter with urgency and welcome discussion on all measures to enhance Drive user safety.

Respectfully,

Colin Taber
President

Neile Weissman
Public Relations Director
New York Cycle Club