

3.12.24 GGIL Meeting: Making Your Community a Better Place to Bike

- The second GGIL meeting of 2024 began with a welcome, some announcements, and updates. Some highlights from the chat include:
 - 4/27 - 9:00-11:00 AM → Highland Park EV Show (message Kim Stone or see <https://www.gogreenillinois.org/> for details)
 - Glenview Energy Fair on 4/28 (see <https://www.gogreenillinois.org/>)
 - Post a local plant sale on our website!
 - [Events – Go Green Illinois](#) - use this link to view local programming
 - 5/15 - IEC Lobby Day (registration link: <https://ilenviro.org/2024-zero-waste-lobby-day/>)
 - **From the Chat:**
 - Solar Ambassadors are available for events. Request one at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSchYP1uaDKbTAKH3mTNn_gkemE1k9BWJr9_AHWec-xFc9eBy0w/viewform
 - Solar Tiny House available: <https://www.illinoissolar.org/iseasolarhouse>
- The program, Making Your Community a Better Place to Bike, then proceeded as follows:

1. Introduction - Beth Drucker

2. Ken Obel, North Shore Cycling Advocates, Advocacy Groups

- Affiliated groups: Northshore Cycling Advocates (email list) & Bike Walk Wilmette (local group)
- Has been involved with bike advocacy since 2013
- Local bike advocacy groups are essential as many larger organizations do not have the resources for representation in each neighborhood
- Pros to local bike advocacy groups/having “wheels on the ground”:
 - Energy on the ground level
 - Pre-existing, local connections = easy community involvement
 - Able to have a presence at local governmental town halls or meetings to push active transportation legislation and programming

3. Maggie Czerwinski, Active Transportation Alliance - Overview

- *Chicagoland Bicycling Advocacy*

- Maggie also started with bike advocacy around 2013
- A non-profit focused on Chicago
- Bike the Drive → Sept. 1, 2024
 - An annual event where a major Chicago street is shut down just for bicyclers
- 2024 Priority Campaigns:
 - Safe Streets for All - focuses on designing safer streets for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists
 - i. i.e. buffered bike lanes, a protected and separate bike lane, streetscaping, a road diet, etc.
 - ii. Local bike advocacy groups can help achieve these goals (formal or informal)
 - iii. County Safety Action Plans will be launching in many local communities this April!
 - Transit That Works
 - Clean & Equitable Transportation
 - i. Transportation is the largest Greenhouse Gas emitter in Illinois, though a transit bill is currently underway that will remove GHGs from this sector
 - ii. Action alerts, witness slips, a May 9th Lobby Day, etc. are available
- Hosts Suburban Advocacy Calls each month
- **From the Chat:**
 - Sander O: It's because I moved from bike mekka Amsterdam to Chicago in 2013 😄.
 - Ken Obel: No doubt!
 - Robert Flinn: The Niles Howard St project is a shining example of what is possible in the suburbs. Is there more history you can share for how this came to be? To me, this is the standard we can point to at all of our local levels to prove what is possible.
 - Kim Stone: If your community doesn't have a policy or plan, it's useful to check the database Maggie mentioned to find examples that you can use to advocate for adoption of a policy in your community.
 - Tom Lucas: Copy that link here please??
 - Maggie Czerwinski: Bicycle Pedestrian Database (to find if your community has a Complete Street Policy,

Bike/Ped Plan, Advisory Committee, etc):

<https://bike-ped-database-metroplanning.hub.arcgis.com/>

- Kim Stone: Complete Streets Policy toolkit:
<https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/programs/local-ordinances-to-olkits/complete-streets>
Activetrans.org/makingthecase
- Brad Olson: Can you tell a little more about what the Street Team participants do, Maggie?
- Maggie Czerwinski: Niles road diet: Their village planner Nathan Bruemmer provided an overview about this project on this webinar recording:
<https://metroplanning.org/events/perspectives-on-planning-a-webinar-on-developing-community-bicycle-pedestrian-plans/>
- Maggie Czerwinski: Register for Transportation Lobby Day on May 9:
<https://ilenviro.org/2024-climate-action-lobby-day/>
- Maggie Czerwinski: Street Team Advocate Training (March 12 tonight is virtual, March 25 is in person) - The focus of the training is getting advocates more deeply involved in our priority campaigns (Safe Streets for All and Transit that Works), learn about advocacy strategy, and meet others with a passion for active transportation. Here's the registration link: <https://p2a.co/J76be4K>
- Maggie Czerwinski: If you're interested in starting a local walking/biking group in your community, here's a link to an online training on how to develop your own group. We're also planning an in-person training later this summer:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWBFnIQ1UP8&list=PLbBtyCHWIRLknbFjJhPPLoIMzfe4gbRrv&index=21>.
And here's my email - feel free to contact me!
Maggie@activetrans.org

4. Anna Tang, League of American Bicyclists - Bike Friendly Communities Award

- A national organization; the oldest national bike advocacy group (c. 1880)
 - Though Tang got her start on a local level

- Advocacy/policy, education, and the National Bike Summit are just some of their main areas of focus
- Bike Friendly Communities Awards are all available through an online application
- There are rankings of success that can be assigned to communities, incentivizing progress (none are yet at the highest, “Silver” level)
- First year of Bike Advocacy Training
- Should be an event next year in Chicago
- **From the Chat:**
 - Anna Tang:
 - Bike Audit Tool Kit: <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/aarp-bike-audit-tool-kit/>
 - Bicycle Friendly America: <https://bikeleague.org/bfa/>
 - Idea Book: <https://bikeleague.org/bfa/bfc-idea-book/>
 - Newsletter Subscription: <https://bikeleague.org/contact/subscribe/>
 - Bike Walk Advocates Google Group: <https://forms.gle/QbYMRWBYENBhWZgJ8>
 - National Bike Month <https://bikeleague.org/events/bike-month/>
 - National Bike Summit link: <https://bikeleague.org/events/summit/>
 - League Cycling Instructor link: <https://bikeleague.org/ridesmart/become-instructor/>
 - Community Spark Grant landing page: <https://bikeleague.org/bfa/about-spark-grants/>
 - Please reach out: anna@bikeleague.org
 - Beth Drucker: Can groups that are not 501c3’s get grants from LAB?
 - Anna Tang: Unfortunately individuals can’t receive funds. Grants are available to 501c3 organizations and government groups.

5. Dave Simmons, Ride Illinois - Bike Safety Programs

- Ride Illinois Update
 - Mission and Vision: to make Illinois better through biking, because everyone benefits when communities are more bike-friendly, even those who do not own a bike

- Goals include greatly reducing and ultimately eliminating bicyclist fatalities and increasing revenue to increase impact
- Illinois is currently #15 in a national Bike-Friendly Ranking
- Annual member meetings, “I Can bike There” campaign, Regional Action Teams (RATs), state and federal level advocacy, education, increasing youth involvement, “Let’s Ride, Illinois,” etc. are some of their numerous projects/focuses
- **Illinois is the only state in the country where bicyclists are seen as welcome, but not “intended” road users**
- Can find them on social media!
- **From the Chat:**
 - Beth Drucker: What about liability for organized rides? How does a small group protect itself?
 - Dave Simmons: We typically recommend purchasing insurance from American Specialty through League of American Bicyclists
 - Dave Simmons:
 - BikeSafetyQuiz: <https://rideillinois.org/safety/bike-safety-quiz/>
 - 2024 Ride Guide (FUN!): <https://rideillinois.org/events/ride-guide/>
 - Materials Request Form: <https://rideillinois.org/safety/request-materials/>
 - I Can Bike There campaign: <https://www.icanbikethere.org/>
 - Thanks all! My email is dave@rideillinois.org

6. Phil Kaplan, Working Bikes - Bike Collections

- Located here in Chicago, but works internationally (about to celebrate their 25th anniversary)
- People cannot bike without a bike, which is where Working Bikes comes in
 - Bikes are transported all over the world
- **From the Chat:**
 - Phil Kaplan:
 - <https://workingbikes.org/donations/>
 - <https://workingbikes.org/about/>
 - Phil@workingbikes.org

- Beth Drucker: Organizing a bike drive/collection is really easy with Working Bikes. They make it easy!

7. **Barbara Ann Miller, Evanston Bike Club, EBC Grants & Local Bike Route Maps**

- Info on the Evanston Bike Club's Ride Local routes - available to the public - can be found on our Route Library here:
<https://ridewithgps.com/events/127529-bike-local>
 - Great for those who want to bike somewhere, but are not sure how to get there
- Info on the small grants available this year from Evanston Bike Club can be found on the website home page at evanstobikeclub.org. Scroll down and hit the button to get to the application, which gives the basic parameters.
- **From the Chat:**
 - Phil Kaplan: Thanks for EBC for the grant program

8. **Tom Lucas, Bike Palatine Club**

- Started as an advocacy group and has since morphed into a club
- Echoed a call for youth
- Recommends working with local libraries to get traction for any bike event

9. **Ralph Banasiak, Bicycle Columnist, The Daily Herald**

- Not presenting but will be available as a resource and to ask questions
- Ralph did highlight the importance of establish connections (i.e. visibility available from libraries) and the long, but worthwhile process of bike advocacy work
- **From the Chat:**
 - Beh Drucker: Great point - Community advocates need to communicate with Village staff and look six years ahead!

● **Q&A**

- Beth Drucker spoke on the value of bike shows as the line between bikes and vehicles blurs
- **From the Chat:**
 - Tom Lucas: Here is a great YouTube video by a vlogger from Calgary highlighting Paris' street dieting plans in place since 2012
<https://youtu.be/f2xAzyQODHk?si=NDr2LAVGT6fqBNyL>

- Dorr St. Clair: I speak for Friends of the Green Bay Trail, and applaud the dedication of the orgs that spoke today!
- Beth Drucker: Please add program ideas for future GGIL meetings.

- **Community Reports**

- Wilmette
 - Discovering the value of sending folks to other communities' events
 - LRS Recycling Seminar recording available on the Go Green Wilmette Youtube Page
 - 4/28 → Repair Cafe!
- Winnetka
 - Village is now in the process of establishing their first sustainability staff position
- Buffalo Grove
 - Has hosted an annual Green Fair for the past 12 years, featuring bike involvement
 - Have done road clean-ups
 - Many new members with diverse interests, therefore they are trying to get members involved with more inward facing policies in order to make them more outward facing
 - End goal: the establishment of a Sustainability Commission
- Park Ridge
 - Much of the bike discussion falls under the local Sustainability Commission
 - Have a Bike Plan and a Complete Streets Plan
- Morton Grove
 - A bike group used to exist, but they either got burnt out or burned by the relevant authorities
 - **Great resource for sustainable merch!**
 - Reach out here: Gia.schultz@gmail.com
- Highland Park
 - New sustainability proclamations, including one for DarkSky International
 - Current tension over a sidewalk and the changing of sidewalk policy