

I am writing to express my opposition to the plan to place a bicycle lane on the odd side of Pearl St and eliminate day parking. I have lived on Pearl Street for more than 30 years. I bike and walk the street daily. I have a driveway so I think that I can be objective about the reconstruction plan.

The proposal for a bike lane and the removal of parking the length of Pearl Street doesn't make sense. There are already dedicated bike lanes from Central Square to the river on Sydney St and soon on Western Ave, with Sydney just 2 blocks from Pearl. Pearl St doesn't have enough car, bike or bus traffic to warrant this plan and there is the risk that it will increase both the speed and number of vehicles using the street as it becomes a better short cut to the river. The problem biking down Pearl St is the condition of the road surface. The cyclist has to weave around potholes and cracks, slowing the passage of drivers behind them. This will be solved by resurfacing the road. Cars already drive too rapidly down Pearl St. They don't need to be able to pass the cyclists over the whole length of the street. We can share the road.

While I have off street parking, many of my neighbors do not. Some of them are elderly, while others have small children and need to park near their houses. My understanding is that people will have to move their cars each morning by 8am. The net effect will be to make every day a snow emergency day on Pearl St. This will encourage people to drive to work rather than leave their car parked at their homes. The experience of snow emergencies suggest that there will not be enough parking when the odd side places are eliminated. Many people go to garages or parking lots because they can't find street parking in the area. On even-side street cleaning days, there will be no parking on the length of Pearl St, a complete disaster.

Pearl below Chestnut will become particularly terrible people living on Pearl St, where the side streets are all one way in the wrong direction (they feed into Pearl St). To find an available parking space the residents will have to drive down to Granite, over to Brookline and back up to Chestnut St. This will become a daily hardship. Regardless of the final plan, provision should be made to allow people to exit Pearl on either Glenwood or Tufts St.

Pearl St is primarily a residential street, different from both Brookline and Sydney Streets both of which have bicycle lanes. These other streets are more industrial and office buildings and have less need for residential parking. Therefore the city's experience on Brookline St is not a good example for what Pearl St should become. Reconstruction of Pearl St should support the residential character of the neighborhood and not simply facilitate the movement of vehicles through the neighborhood.

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