

The current intent of the portion of the path within Junction Park is to be a shared use (pedestrian, park users and bikers). The current requirement is for bikers to: 1) utilize the path that diverts around the Depot; and 2) dismount along this section and within the park. My understanding is that the current issue is that bikers are not complying with these requirements, including: 1) crossing the tracks directly; and 2) not dismounting.

In consideration that the rail trail is to be a shared use, it is a reasonable expectation that the balance of shared use should vary somewhat along the trail to accommodate specific conditions. Obviously, the conditions of Junction Park are that it is, fundamentally and first-most, a pedestrian park. I traverse and use that park extensively, and that assumption is consistent with my observations of how the park is used. Also - my expectation is that the pedestrian-centric park use will increase given its proximity to the two restaurants, increase in outdoor dining and congregation, etc. - all of which are very desirable and appropriate uses of the park space. I am also a biker and, in that context, do not think that it is an unreasonable expectation that this is a location where bikers should dismount. Frankly, it is not a “big ask” and I find it disappointing that it seems to be treated that way. I also realize that bikers are not currently complying – even though there is significant signage.

Each and all of the alternatives proposed by the committee (short term and long term) are not balanced – rather they clearly favor bikers and are intended to create a situation that bikers do not dismount.

This, in my opinion is completely inconsistent with the original goals, the actual current use of the park and the desired future use of the park. I suggest that rather than looking at alternatives that promote a mounted bike thruway, the Town should continue with the original objectives and look at measures that maintain a shared, although pedestrian-centric use with the expectation that bikers will dismount. These would typically be achieved by installing park features (obstructions) that are ADA-compliant but force dismounting – such as additional tables, seats, planters, water fountains, etc. This approach would also be significantly less costly and not require a fundamental redesign and/or reconstruction of the existing park.

We have a very long and nice rail trail, but very few “urban” parks. And Junction Park, given its unique location, proximately to restaurants, etc. is great Town asset as a shared, but pedestrian-centric park. In my opinion that this is its best current and future use. Please do not turn Junction Park into something that is primarily a bike trail.

Daniel C. Stapleton