

I continue to be amazed at the amount of time and hypothetical dollars being spent trying to avoid the need for cyclists to dismount and walk through the Park. People seem to forget that cyclists have to dismount and wait anyway to cross Main Street. What's the big deal? My husband and I walk our tandem bike through the Park as a matter of course. It takes about one minute.

Do we consider these one-minute strolls to be a pleasant experience and not a downer? We do! It's an attractive space and is socially enhanced by ever-changing moments of community as people come and go, rest and play.

Cyclists who stop that long or longer for water or discussion are not rare sights along Concord roadsides. So, I am baffled that walking for one minute through a pretty place (that also has a water fountain), where you have to stop and negotiate with a traffic light anyway, is seen as a problem worthy of an expensive, disruptive solution.

Also, the Park serves pedestrian traffic flows to more than two points on the compass, not simply the flow of the Rail Trail. Designating a lane exclusively for bikes leaves no safe way to cross the bike flow in the Park -- unless everyone is walking.

Community needs should trump individual ones, but can we get cyclists to make that one-minute walk? I am hopeful. Highway roundabouts are less scary than they used to be because the State conducted a campaign to change the driving culture. It went from "every car for itself" to "entering cars yield to cars in the rotary." And it worked! Surely cyclists are just as civic-minded and adaptable as drivers are.

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