

To the Editor,

On Saturday morning about 50 Chappaquiddickans gathered to hear Chappaquiddick Bike Path advocate Dan Dulaski, funded by the Chappaquiddick Path Committee, give the 3rd presentation of his plan for a two way side bike path along the north side of the Chappaquiddick Road. The timing was such that Path Committee chairman Bob Colvin and member Melissa Kagan could not stop themselves from mentioning the tragic accident involving the young mother falling from her bike which she was attempting to ride on a poorly designed and maintained sidewalk in Vineyard Haven. This, as if the accident along the busy road which carries more than 20,000 cars a day, *ten times* the number ever recorded on the Chappaquiddick road had anything to do with the safety of bicyclists on Chappy.

The case for why the town, state or federal taxpayer's money should be spent ripping up bucolic Chappaquiddick, where 18 wheelers are rarer than piping plovers, was never really made. Dulaski's report was barren of any indication of a Chappy safety or traffic study but was full of "might, could, possibly will happen" fear monger talk.

The fact is there have been only 8 reported bike accidents on Chappy between 1991 and 2009, just 2.5 percent of Edgartown's total of 325. (135 involving motorists). Incidentally, more than 60% of the town's bike accidents occurred at locations where a bike path was available. It is easy to understand why only 85 of 498 Chappy property owners surveyed by Dulaski responded (using the provided prestamped return envelopes) that they wanted a multi-use path along the Chappaquiddick Road.

Dulaski reports that Stuart Fuller of the Edgartown Highway Department could build the sub standard 8 foot wide path, including felling all but a few trees and filling the wetlands as necessary for only \$1.4 million. A vacationing Selectman from Lenox reported that \$6 million (\$2 million/mile) was the cost there. Why either of these amounts would go to Chappaquiddick to satisfy the whims of 17% of those property owners, when cyclists are dying along the roads of mainland Martha's Vineyard, is beyond me.

Bob Colvin indicated he might ignore his friends and neighbors on Chappaquiddick and go to the Edgartown voters looking for approval to build his path on Chappaquiddick. I hope those who are looking to spend money on bicycle safety will follow the Martha's Vineyard Commission's Bicycle and Pedestrian Path Committee's lead. They have studied the present paths and have plans to improve and expand the existing paths and route indicators where there are *real* dangers and traffic conflicts. Hopefully the money could fund the police and safety officers of Martha's Vineyard together with the Chamber of Commerce to provide bicycle safety education for both our residents and visitors, rather than build a path on Chappaquiddick where it is not needed.

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